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The Spirit in the Flesh: The Translation of German Pietist Imagery into Anglo-American Cultures

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**The Spirit in the Flesh: The Translation of German Pietist Imagery
into Anglo-American Cultures**

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Dedication

for my parents, who inspired intellectual curiosity,

for my husband, who nurtured my curiosities, and

for my children, who daily renew my curiosities

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The Spirit in the Flesh: The Translation of German Pietist Imagery into Anglo-American Cultures

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During the Protestant evangelical awakenings of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, widely-circulated hymnals carried the message of evangelicals by way of mouth across great periods of time and vast geographic expanses. This study traces the cultural route of specific religious expressions in these hymns as they crossed national, linguistic, ecclesiastic, social, and other cultural barriers to become ubiquitous expressions found in religious, social, and political discourses.

More specifically, this dissertation traces the route of fleshly-spiritual imagery in Baroque Lutheran and German Pietist hymns as they traveled to England by way of the Wesleys during the eighteenth-century evangelical revival and eventually surfaced during the Methodist revivals of the Second Great Awakening in nineteenth-century America. Fleshly-spiritual imagery, that concretizes spiritual experience in the human body, expressed a change in religious subjectivity experienced by Protestant revivalists in the period. This imagery captures an epistemological change in progress as individuals took authority from the clergy to commune directly with the Divine and judge the validity of that experience for themselves.

Rather than framing this work as a study of specific authors or literary movements, I have traced the historical trajectory of a set of discursive practices as they were used by hymn authors, re-written by hymn editors, and often spontaneously re-edited by participants. This discursive approach without regard to authorship and often in absence of standard texts more clearly illuminates the convergence of religious and public rhetoric, an intersection that remains occluded by traditional studies of a single author, genre, literary period, or national literature.

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Introduction

. . . In the midst of the psalm wherewith their service began, the sea broke over, split the main-sail in pieces, covered the ship, and poured in between the decks, as if the great deep had already swallowed us up. A terrible screaming began among the English. The Germans calmly sung on. I asked one of them afterwards, "Was you not afraid?" He answered, "I thank God, no." I asked, "But were not your women and children afraid?" He replied mildly, "No; our women and children are not afraid to die." From them I went to their crying, trembling neighbors, and pointed out to them the difference in the hour of trial, between him that feareth God, and him that feareth him not. At twelve the wind fell. This was the most glorious day which I have hitherto seen.

--John Wesley, Journal, January 26, 1736

"The Germans" who had so impressed John Wesley with their unwavering faith were members of the Moravian Brethren, a Pietist group *en route* to establish the first Moravian community in North America. Although the Moravians failed to establish a lasting settlement in Georgia, this historic trip resulted in a wide and lasting dissemination of German Pietist spirituality expressed in sacred song.

On October 14, 1735, John Wesley boarded the Simmonds for a mission trip to Georgia with his brother Charles Wesley and two other members of the Oxford Holy Club. Within three days, John Wesley "began to learn German, in order to converse with the Germans, six and twenty of whom we had on board" (Journal October 17, 1735). On October 27, Wesley reports "9-30 began the hymn book," the 1735 edition of the "Hymn Book of the Congregation at Herrnhut" (Herrnhuter Gesangbuch).¹ According to his journal entries, Wesley systematically worked through approximately two-thirds of the hymnal on board and reports "began the third part with the Germans" one month after

¹ Quoted in John L. Nuelson, John Wesley and the German Hymn (Calverley, Yorkshire: A.S. Holbrook, 1972) 16.

landing in Georgia (March 23, 1736). Upon arrival, Wesley began the work of translation that occupied him for the next two years. His Journal from the period includes numerous notes to that effect like “translated German Psalms,” “wrote German,” “transcribed in German,” and “translated German.”

Wesley’s thirty-three translations of German hymns during his two-year missionary stay in Savannah, Georgia mark a significant moment in translation history and cultural contact: the translation of German Pietist spirituality into English hymnody. Wesley’s German translations enjoyed wide dissemination as part of the Wesleyan hymnody, a body of song that dominated the English evangelical revival in the eighteenth century and took center stage in the Methodist revivalism in North America a century later. Several German translations appeared in Wesley’s standard 1780 Collection, in the subsequent English and American Methodist standard hymnals, and in numerous unsanctioned hymnals used outside the official branches of Methodism. Thus German hymns were broadcast to all English-speaking countries over the last two and a half centuries in the millions of copies of Methodist hymnals circulated worldwide.²

Hymn texts, my primary source of documentation for the present project, offer a unique, under-studied body of literature that can provide insight into the evangelical revivals as popular religious movements in ways that the study of official creeds,

² Some of the most well-known and widely circulated hymn books into the early twentieth-century that contain Wesley’s translations include: The Fellowship Hymn-Book (Revised Edition). (London, 1933); The Baptist Church Hymnal (Revised Edition) (London, 1933); Songs of Praise (London and Oxford, 1931); New Alliance Hymnal (London, 1931); Redemption Songs (London and Glasgow, 1929); The Church Hymnary. Revised Edition (Oxford, 1927); Hymns of Worship (London, 1927). The Public School Hymn-Book (London, 1919); The English Hymnal (Oxford and London, 1906); The Methodist Hymn-Book (New York, 1905 and 1935; London 1904 and 1933); The Hymnal Companion to the Book of Common Prayer (London, 1890); The Hymn-Book of the Holiness Church Movement (Ottawa, 1902); The Evangelical Hymnal (Cleveland, 1921); The Hymnal (Presbyterian) (Philadelphia, 1911 and 1913); Hymnal Companion (Reformed Episcopal) (Philadelphia, 1908); Pilgrim Hymnal (Congregational) (Boston, 1912); Evangelical Lutheran Hymn Book (Missouri Synod) (St. Louis, 1916); Hymns of the United Church (Disciples of Christ) (Chicago, 1916). For a comprehensive list, see Appendix 1 in Nuelson, John Wesley and the German Hymn 106.

sermons, conversion narratives, and spiritual diaries cannot. Singing hymns of original composition distinguished the Lutheran branch of the Reformation from the Calvinists, who restricted themselves to congregational singing of the Biblical Psalms. Whereas German Protestants continued to sing and compose original hymns from the time of the Reformation, the Calvinist practice dominated much of Anglo-American Protestantism into the eighteenth century. The innovations of Isaac Watts and John and Charles Wesley introduced the practice of original hymn singing in England; later the Methodist movement overcame fear, ridicule, and skepticism of the practice and won popular acceptance of hymn singing by the end of the eighteenth century. In America, Puritan (later Congregational) churches and Presbyterian churches adhered to the Calvinist model until the eighteenth-century's "Great Awakening."³ Prior to these Anglo-American, transatlantic awakenings, singing hymns of original composition was outlawed and, in some cases, even criminalized as blasphemous.⁴

Collections of original hymns produced in the wake of the revivals, therefore, reflected popular tastes and a religion practiced outside of ecclesiastical dictates in ways that published homilies and doctrinal tracts did not. Even as church authorities took over the creation of standard hymnals among Methodists and Baptists, the people often

³ Frank Lambert's Inventing the Great Awakening interrogates this monolithic term to reveal the disparities and isolation of the many revivals that collectively became known as the "Great Awakening." The term has been uncritically applied to the period to denote a single, watershed event since the 1842 publication of Joseph Tracy's The Great Awakening: A History of the Revival of Religion in the Time of Edwards and Whitefield. Lambert's challenge to Tracy's monolithic concept of a singular "Great Awakening" in New England is twofold. Lambert challenges the semblance of an act of God by looking instead at the power of print to "invent" a Great Awakening by publicizing distinct, local revivals and representing them as part of a single, coherent movement. He also moves beyond the locale of New England to connect the awakenings to Great Britain. See Frank Lambert, Inventing the "Great Awakening" (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1999).

⁴ See Joanna Brooks, American Lazarus: Religion and the Rise of African-American Literatures (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2003) 54; King George, Forms of Prayer, with Thanksgiving to Almighty God; To be used in all Churches and Chapels within this Realm . . ., (1728); King George III, Characteristics of Public Spirit, and National Virtue . . ., (1788).

dismissed authorized hymnals in favor of rogue publications. For example, American Methodists enthusiastically embraced Robert Spence's Pocket Hymn-Book, rejecting the hymn-book John Wesley sent for use in America.⁵ Unlike creeds, confessions, and other doctrinal statements used to establish ecclesiastical boundaries, hymns flowed freely between various church traditions and revivalist groups.

Wesley envisioned the hymnal as “a little book of practical divinity” devised to bring religion into everyday life. In remote areas on the American frontier, Methodist itinerants and their hymns provided the only form of religious experience available. The illiterate and uneducated masses, the first to embrace Methodism, committed to memory hymns accompanied by well-known folk melodies and sang them in the streets, at meetings, at home, and at work (Nuelsen 10). Moreover, the orality of the texts encouraged the participation and innovation by those previously disenfranchised by organized religion: the illiterate and semi-literate, women, poor whites, and people of color (Brooks 54). Not only did hymns flow freely between church traditions and revivalist groups, but they also crossed over social and cultural boundaries of class, race, and nation. The popularity of hymns committed to memory and the wide dissemination of Methodist hymnals brought “practical divinity” as well as a particular German Pietist imagery into an emergent revivalist discourse.

Furthermore, this revivalist discourse captured in the hymn genre moved beyond the religious sphere and entered into public discourse. Abolitionist reformers used not only the language of revival hymns, but also used the hymn genre to carry forth their

⁵ Robert Spence, Pocket Hymn-Book (New York: W. Ross, 1786). For use in America, John Wesley sent A Collection of Psalms and Hymns for the Lord's Day (Attached to the Sunday Service of the Methodists in North America) (London: 1786).

message of social reform into the realm of public debate. Often overlooked in abolitionist studies, this study brings to light several abolitionist hymnals and the role played in nineteenth-century reform by this genre and its German Pietist imagery.

Using hymns as the texts of cultural transmission, this study traces the lineage of a specific “fleshly-spiritual” imagery drawn originally from German Pietism, imagery that concretizes spiritual experience in the human body.⁶ That this imagery surfaced repeatedly during revivals and periods of church renewal suggests that this shift in religious expression was undergirded by a shift in religious experience. Tracing the largely unregulated language and imagery in Protestant evangelical hymns, the present project will track not only a shift in religious expression, but also the co-extant shift in conceptions of religious experience and subjectivity. It also fills a lacuna in the international history of Protestantism as a cultural force by showing specific moments of contact and influence between churches—moments that lay outside of dogmatic discussions, per se—thus illuminating in new ways the cultural bases of religious institutions.

TRANSNATIONAL AWAKENINGS: GOALS OF THE PRESENT STUDY

This study traces specific expressions of religious beliefs as they appeared in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Baroque Lutheran and German Pietist hymns, traveled to England by way of the Wesleys during the eighteenth-century evangelical revival, and eventually surfaced during the Methodist revivals of the Second Great

⁶ I borrow the term “fleshly-spiritual” from pre-eminent hymnologist Louis F. Benson, who does not explicitly define the term but uses it to describe corporeality in the hymns of sixteenth-century hymnist, Johannes Scheffler (Angelus Silesius), a model for later German Pietist hymnody. Louis F. Benson, The English Hymn: Its Development and Use in Worship (Richmond, Va: John Knox, 1915) 266.

Awakening in nineteenth-century America.⁷ It is my contention that the ongoing connections between German Pietism, Wesleyanism, and the American Methodist revivals have been underestimated, probably because so many histories of religion stress discontinuity, schism, and re-founding rather than continuities. Even as more recent scholarship has sought out connections between transatlantic Protestant groups, these studies of English-speaking communities still suggest a linguistic boundary that occludes continuities between German and American Protestant spirituality.⁸ Few scholars have conducted the kinds of comparative, diachronic studies that would reveal the complex relationships and influences between Protestants of multiple languages, who influenced one another's religious practices and discourse across centuries and vast geographies.

W. R. Ward's Protestant Evangelical Awakening remains one of the few histories of the evangelical awakenings of the eighteenth-century to trace its origins from Germany to the American colonies and back across the Atlantic to the United Kingdom, concluding with the rise of Methodism in England.⁹ Ward also recognizes the significance of continental Protestantism as it was practiced in eighteenth-century North America as a force equal to that of Great Britain, dedicating half of his chapter on the American colonies to the revivals among the Dutch and German settlers. To complete the mapping

⁷ The "Second Great Awakening" is a collective term that refers to the period of great religious revivalism from roughly the 1790s to the 1840s. Methodists and Baptists attained great numbers of converts during the period and the revivals also supported the emergence of the Holiness movement and the Mormons.

⁸ Susan O'Brien Durden focuses on transatlantic communication networks in several studies. See Durden, "A Study of the First Evangelical Magazines, 1740-1748," Journal of Ecclesiastical History 27 (1976): 255-75; Durden, "Transatlantic Communications and Influence during the Great Awakening: A Comparative Study of British and American Revivalism, 1730-1760" diss., Hull U, 1978; Durden "A Transatlantic Community of Saints: The Great Awakening and the First Evangelical Network, 1735-1755" American Historical Review 9 (1986): 811-32. Frank Lambert tackles the transatlantic publicity of the eighteenth-century revivals as part of a larger study in Lambert, Inventing the "Great Awakening" (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1999).

⁹ W. R. Ward, The Protestant Evangelical Awakening (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1992). For a contemporary history that traces the eighteenth-century transnational awakenings from Germany to Great Britain and North America, see the periodical publication by Thomas Prince, The Christian History (Boston: S. Kneeland and T. Green, 1743-45).

of transatlantic Protestant evangelical awakenings begun by Ward, this study proposes a final transatlantic crossing of Methodism as it traveled from England to America in the late eighteenth-century.¹⁰

As the Methodist revivalist movement spread rapidly across the American frontier to become the largest single Protestant denomination in America by the middle of the nineteenth-century, the threads of eighteenth-century German Pietism influencing its theology, social practices, and hymn singing remained occluded.¹¹ By tracing a particular set of images across linguistic and regional borders, this comparative study reveals connections between the revivalist religious cultures of Germany, England, and America, religious movements often studied as distinct developments within national or regional borders. Reconstructing the revivals as not only transatlantic but also *translinguistic*, my dissertation focuses on one thread of eighteenth-century German Pietist influence: Baroque Lutheran and German Pietist expressions of fleshly spiritualism that privilege the physical body, amatory lyrics, and sympathetic excitement.

Although hymnologists Louis Benson and Donald Davie, historian F. Ernest Stoeffler, and nineteenth-century Congregationalist clergyman and hymn collector Lyman Beecher acknowledge the German Pietist influence on Wesleyan hymnody, only two comprehensive studies on this cultural transmission exist to date. John L. Nuelsen's John Wesley and the German Hymn (1972) provides a basic historical context, an

¹⁰ Although historians date the birth of Methodism in America to John Wesley's mission trip to Georgia in 1736, the organization of believers into Methodist societies looking to John Wesley as an exemplar began in 1766. In 1784 the Methodist church in America was founded as the Methodist Episcopal Church. For an account of Methodism's early history in America, see Frank Baker, From Wesley to Asbury: Studies in Early American Methodism (Durham, N.C.: Duke UP, 1976).

¹¹ Methodists made up 34 percent of total church membership by 1850. At that time, it was the largest Protestant denomination, almost one half larger than any other Protestant group. Nathan O. Hatch, The Democratization of American Christianity (New Haven: Yale UP, 1989) 220.

analysis of Wesley's translation method, and an appendix of the original German hymns and Wesley's initial translations. Paul S. Wagner's recent dissertation "John Wesley and the German Pietist Heritage: The Development of Hymnody" traces the origins of language and theological themes from the Methodist hymnody back to John Wesley's early German Pietist translations.¹² However, neither of these studies places Wesley's translations in a multicultural context that stresses interaction rather than a more passive inheritance, and neither moves beyond the translations themselves to investigate their broader influence in the period's religious and secular discourse.¹³

In contrast, this study analyzes complex processes of interaction and adaptation in order to demonstrate the diachronic lineage of a specific group of tropes from German Pietist hymns as they were first adapted by English revivalists and American Methodists and later acculturated by mainstream nineteenth-century sentimental-abolitionists. This translation study is also transcultural, in that I trace the cultural route of fleshly-spiritual imagery as it crosses national boundaries to impact the revivalist cultures of England and America. Following the "cultural turn" in translation studies identified by Andre Lefevere and Susan Bassnett, this study takes into account the possibility of cultural destabilization and negotiation as translated texts enter into new cultures.¹⁴ More specifically, I contend that hymns with fleshly-spiritual imagery translated from German Pietist hymnals succeeded in destabilizing the monopoly of the Church of England in

¹² Paul S. Wagner, "John Wesley and the German Pietist Heritage: The Development of Hymnody," diss., U of Trinity College, 2004.

¹³ Other studies of interest linking continental Pietism to Methodism include Frederick Dreyer, *The Origins of Methodism* (Bethlehem, PA: Lehigh UP, 1999); F. Ernest Stoeffler, "Pietism, The Wesley's and the Methodist Beginnings in America" *Continental Pietism and Early American Christianity*, ed. F. Ernest Stoeffler (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1976) 184-221; Clifford W. Towlson, *Moravian and Methodist: Relationships and Influences in the Eighteenth Century* (London: Epworth, 1957).

¹⁴ See Susan Bassnett, and Andre Lefevere, *Constructing Cultures: Essays on Literary Translation* (Clevedon: Multilingual Matters, 1998); Andre Lefevere, *Translating Literature: Practice and Theory in a Comparative Literature Context* (New York: MLA, 1992).

eighteenth-century England as well as negotiating a new set of images to portray religious experience in nineteenth-century America. These fleshly-spiritual images became absorbed into mainstream American Protestant discourse and crossed over into the secular works of sentimental-abolitionist.

Here, I take hold of the thread of Pietist hymnody as a way to re-examine its role in creating the distinctive fabric of nineteenth-century America's public sphere. In particular, I trace how the religious imagery of revivalist hymns contributed to the rise of sentimental-abolitionist discourse in antebellum America. This study of discursive practices finds no precedent in historical or literary scholarship. Employing a comparative, diachronic, multi-genre approach reveals evidence of genealogical changes in literary forms with potentially far-reaching impact on transatlantic religious and literary cultures. First, the comparative approach highlights how major American Protestant movements derived, in part, from continental Protestantism. Whereas the English roots of Methodism need no amplification, the transmission of German Pietist textual imagery as part of Methodist hymnody remains largely unknown. Second, this diachronic approach links nineteenth-century culture to eighteenth-century English and seventeenth- and eighteenth German Protestant movements, revealing hidden lineages for discursive patterns that American scholars have often described as new to the nineteenth century or as evidence of American exceptionalism. Furthermore, this multi-genre reading of hymns and fiction takes into account audiences that read or listened in multiple genres that together contributed important elements to a public discourse. By recognizing that the hymn-singing of ordinary Protestants profoundly influenced the language in which they expressed religious and social experience, I show how Pietist

images and tropes became ubiquitous in other genres influenced by Protestant writers and editors, especially abolitionist hymns and fiction.

As abolitionists participated in public discourse through hymns, poetry, and novels, they utilized sentimental language with roots in German Pietist imagery, an unknown source that complicates origins of American sentimental-abolitionist discourse. Critics of nineteenth-century American Sentimentalism acknowledge the genre as derivative of English sensibility, but have yet to acknowledge the impact of non-Puritan American Protestant discourses and their continental origins. Yet the presence of such discourse is what distinguishes many works of nineteenth-century American Sentimentalism from the English culture of sensibility and its American offshoots in the early Republic, particularly in the work of sentimental-abolitionists. For example, despite the overt references to Methodism and numerous quotations of Methodist hymns in Harriet Beecher Stowe's Uncle Tom's Cabin (1852), there has been no study to date that examines this Methodist thread as reflecting a real force in American cultural discourse.¹⁵ My reading of Stowe's work and the hymnals of sentimental-abolitionists offers a corrective to literary scholarship that tends to read such works for political rather than religious rhetoric and frames them in an Anglo-American context rather than a more broadly transnational one.

¹⁵ Uncle Tom's Cabin, or Life Among the Lowly (Boston: Jewett, 1852) was published in novel form March 20, 1852. It first appeared in serialized form in the abolitionist periodical, National Era, beginning June 5, 1851. It was the best-selling novel of the nineteenth-century, and the best-selling book of that century after the Bible.

MAPPING FLESHLY-SPIRITUAL IMAGERY: PROJECT OUTLINE

To tease out the multinational and diachronic contexts of this transnational Protestant discourse, I trace this imagery back to each specific historical context: the German origins, the English translations, and finally the American adaptations. I provide the setting for the composition and collections of the hymns, including the theological beliefs and practices that enlighten the function and use of such hymnal imagery. In each case, the imagery reflects the possibility of unmediated spiritual experience, a shift that destabilized established churches of the time. The changes in translations within cultures and as they cross national boundaries illuminate how this imagery was used to revitalize the zeal of religious experience in the face of ecclesiastic conservatism. Once this imagery became absorbed into mainstream American Protestant discourse and crossed over into the secular works of sentimental-abolitionists, I explore how this imagery served to renew religious zeal and convert believers to the abolitionist cause.

Chapter One, “German Pietism and the Origins of Fleshly-Spiritualism,” presents the socio-historical background of German Pietism as it challenged the purported dead faith and empty scholasticism of Lutheran Orthodoxy. In the mass production of hymnals, spiritual autobiographies, and other devotional materials, Pietists rewrote the intellectualism of Lutheran Orthodoxy as unmediated experiential religion. The introductions to Pietist hymnals prove an invaluable source for decoding the new reading and writing practices dedicated to the Pietist aesthetic, one that placed singular value on a work’s ability to emotionally predispose the reader to spiritual experience. The fleshly-spiritual imagery as it appears in these hymnals functions as a portrayal of direct revelation and as a tool to access Jesus Christ outside the sacramental practices of

traditional Lutheranism. This chapter focuses on the hymnals produced in the Pietist communities at Halle and Herrnhut, the textual sources for Wesley's translations.

To locate the "origins" of the fleshly rhetoric used by Pietists, the chapter turns to the Baroque-era of German Protestantism known as the *Frömmigkeitsbewegung* (Piety Movement). Particular Baroque-era hymns laden with fleshly-spiritual imagery were favorites of the Pietists and John Wesley, who included many of these hymns in their collections and used them as models for graphic suffering imagery, physical signs of sympathy, blood and wounds imagery, and bridal mysticism. The connections of Baroque-era hymns to Latin texts from the Middle Ages takes this search for origins further back to poetry, hymns, and devotional tracts of late medieval mystics. Locating and contextualizing the multiple origins of fleshly-spiritual imagery inform the dissemination and acculturation of these tropes as they enter into Anglo-American hymnody.

Chapter Two, "Translating German Language and Imagery into the Wesleyan Hymnody," examines the content, selection, and method of John Wesley's translations and examines this innovation in the context of eighteenth-century Anglicanism. The spiritualized body and hymn singing, two Methodist imports from German Pietism, threatened to destabilize the ongoing monopoly of the Church of England, its traditions, and its sacraments in ways similar to the Pietist movement's undoing of Lutheran Orthodoxy. The social and religious consequences of the Methodist movement on English life cannot be overstated. Revivals and field preaching in the early Methodist movement brought thousands together in public to listen to highly emotional preaching about individual conversion, to sing about religious experience in a new, provocative

language, and to channel the Spirit of God in their bodies. Finally, the lay-led religious societies took the rite of authentication from the clergy, thereby creating democratic public spaces in which Methodists could experience the power of God.

To exemplify these broad socio-cultural changes, this chapter turns to a textual analysis of the fleshly-spiritual imagery in Wesley's translations of German hymns. Even as John Wesley excised the overt bridal mysticism from the German and eventually outgrew the "fondling expressions" of his youthful translations, his brother Charles Wesley kept the German Pietist tropes of suffering/sympathy, bridal mysticism and blood and wounds imagery alive in the standard Collection for the Use of the People Called Methodists (1780), the nucleus of all later Methodist hymnody. The fleshly-spiritual imagery of the hymns created a culture that accepted and even expected physical manifestations of the spirit at Methodist meetings in England, an expectation that traveled abroad to ignite the revivalist spirit in nineteenth-century America.

Chapter Three, "The Second Great Awakening and Pious Antislavery Sentiments," tracks the emergence of fleshly-spiritual imagery as it enters the nineteenth-century American landscape. American Methodist revivalists chose boldly in favor of the German Pietist tropes from John Wesley's youthful translations and Charles Wesley's innovations, hymns the more mature Wesley dismissed as "fondling expressions" inappropriate for worship. Clearly, fleshly-spiritual imagery spoke to the practitioners of experiential religion at Methodist meetings and open-air camp meetings alike. By the middle of the nineteenth century, fleshly-spiritual imagery was ubiquitous in America. First disseminated through the Methodist hymnals, itinerants, and camp meetings, this

imagery began to appear regularly in other Protestant hymnals, interdenominational revivals, and in the sentimentalist hymns and fiction of anti-slavery activists.

As the Methodist movement gained its greatest momentum, mid-nineteenth-century abolitionists utilized the rhetoric of second-wave Sentimentalism and added the culturally-available fleshly-spiritual imagery of physical suffering, sympathy, and sacrifice. Abolition as a reform movement was born out of evangelical concerns for humanity, and religiously-minded reformers culled the language from their Protestant hymnals to write against slavery. In a survey of sentimental-abolitionist hymns, I exemplify the reformers' unique use of fleshly-spiritual imagery that transfers the meditative sufferings of Jesus to those of the slaves. The final reading in the chapter examines the use of this Protestant imagery in Harriet Beecher Stowe's Uncle Tom's Cabin, the best-selling novel that tapped into its language and tropes and became most familiar to antebellum readers in that guise. I conclude by offering a more complex genealogy of nineteenth-century American hymnody and sentimental-abolitionist discourse, one that draws on German Pietist-influenced rhetoric.¹⁶

READING FLESHLY-SPIRITUALISM: NOTES ON METHOD

The theoretical framework of this study draws on the work of numerous scholars and theorists in the fields of literary criticism, history, religion, linguistics, and cultural studies. In the brief outline below I wish to explain the theoretical basis of my methodology as well as acknowledge the work of critics and theorists that has informed my approach.

¹⁶ I define the term "genealogy" simply as the historical development of a particular genre or discourse.

Reading religious texts as rhetoric, that is, as texts with social agency at particular historical moments, requires a framework that draws on several distinct, yet overlapping methods including New Historicism and post-structural theories of language (or critical linguistics). Looking not only at texts within a historical context, but, more specifically, examining the power of texts to impact the social arena in a particular historical moment immediately calls to mind the “New Historicist” approach to literature spearheaded by Stephen Greenblatt and informed by Michel Foucault’s theories of language, power, and knowledge. Certainly, this study owes much to the post-structuralist premise that language as a discursive agent not merely reflects, but rather plays an active role in the creation of a particular historical “reality” constructed by language that lent both spoken utterances and written texts the social power of rhetoric.

Historian and theorist Michel de Certeau in particular provides a model and a critical framework for my study. In the The Mystic Fable, Volume I, de Certeau uncovers a revolutionary political critique in the subtle changes to the “mystic fables,” a genre dismissed as a rearguard action within the Church against the emerging discourse of the Protestant Reformation.¹⁷ He demonstrates that a major epistemological transition requires a change in semantics, one that may emerge as a change in narrative conventions that signals the community’s changing conception of its relationship to the world and the divine. In The Possession at Loudun, de Certeau undertakes historical analysis based on critical linguistics to document a rearguard action against an epistemological transition.¹⁸ In these works de Certeau looks to linguistic changes in religious texts to uncover the latent social and political power of marginalized groups, shifts in individual subjectivity

¹⁷ Michel de Certeau, The Mystic Fable, Volume I: The Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries, trans. Michael B. Smith (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1992).

¹⁸ Michel de Certeau, The Possession at Loudun (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 2000).

and agency, and the workings of social systems during the transitional era between the Middle Ages and the early modern era.¹⁹

De Certeau's conclusion that a major epistemological transition requires a change in semantics suggests an application to the Protestant evangelical awakening that has proven fruitful for my study. The epistemological transition from a religion administered by traditional church hierarchies and clerics to revivalist notions of individual access to God required a semantic change in religious literature. This study addresses one such semantic change: the appearance of fleshly-spiritual imagery in hymns. Bridal mysticism, blood and wound imagery, and ecstatic sympathy provided believers with visual representations of unmediated access to the Divine that gradually changed popular concepts of religious subjectivity.

In the present study of eighteenth-century religious texts, the authority of traditional church hierarchies and institutions are challenged by the new Pietistic fervor of "experimental" or "heart religion," which functions as a revolutionary, minor discourse in opposition to the established churches of Europe. Driving the evangelical movements in early America, England, Germany, and across the continent were the extempore, emotional sermons and exhortations of itinerant preachers and laymen alike. The proliferation of religious texts included devotional literature by ordinary converts as well as the printed sermons and journals of leading evangelical figures like George Whitefield, Count Ludwig von Zinzendorf, and John Wesley.

The ascendancy of laymen, women, peasants, the uneducated, and the reorganization of communities into spiritual sub-communities (known variously as

¹⁹ For a concise explanation of the study of theoretical linguistics and critical historiography, see Katherine Arens, "Discourse Analysis as Critical Historiography: A Semanalyse of Mystic Speech" Rethinking History 2.1 (1998): 23-50.

conventicles, bands, and religious societies) inverted the social hierarchies of Europe, relocating authority in the individual believers and lending spiritual and social credibility to those who had been disenfranchised under the traditional social order. The manner in which the religious revivals unfolded challenged not only the form of traditional church worship, but also the Enlightenment rationalism supported by the conservative religious leaders in early America. The excessive emotionalism, bodily contortions, and fainting common at revival gatherings were the visual manifestations of semantic changes in religious rhetoric that threatened to overturn the dominant discourses of rationalism and traditional religious worship with a new concept of subjectivity and social practice.²⁰

I contend that as a minor revivalist culture became the dominant expression of religion in America, the linguistic changes in their hymns as they traveled from Germany, to England, and finally to America reflected broader changes in religious subjectivity. In their disparate historical contexts, German Pietism, English evangelicalism, and American Methodism functioned as often conjoint revival movements that countered traditional church hierarchies that restricted access to God except by the clergy. In tracing their roots to Pietism, I argue that new reading and writing practices introduced in German Pietist circles permitted the element of human emotion in the nineteenth-century reading and writing of sacred and devotional literature in the United States. This influence sanctioned individual, personal interpretations of everything from sermons to hymns to the Bible, reconfigured the relationship between the individual believer and the church, and granted the individual a new spiritual self-reliance.

²⁰ For an overview of the relationship of the excessive emotionalism of religious revivalism to the discourse of reason and the traditional church hierarchies, see Ann Taves, *Fits, Trances, and Visions: Experiencing Religion and Explaining Experience from Wesley to James* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1999).

In the traditional Anglo-American context, the mere singing of hymns of original composition challenged strict adherence to singing only Biblical Psalms in English and early American churches. This new trend of allowing non-scriptural hymns authorized the human composition of devotional works. Such practices placed a new emphasis on individual authority, self-expression of religion, and scriptural interpretation. It is no accident that this newfound expression of individual authority made use of fleshly-spiritual imagery to express personal experiences of the spirit. Meditations on graphic Passion images in hymns culminated in depictions of individual, physical manifestations of the spirit. Privileging the human body as the proving ground for unmediated spiritual experience took the powers of authorization and interpretation from the clergy and relocated them in the individual believer's personal experience. In addition, bridal mysticism and wound imagery functioned as provocative images of unmediated union in human, physical form that broke down the barriers between individual believers and Christ.

Participating in this key epistemological change, the fleshly spiritualism of German Pietism exerted a far-reaching influence over eighteenth-century English and nineteenth-century American religious and popular discourses. The ramifications of this study complicate standard genealogies of both English and American Protestant hymnody. The detailed study of John and Charles Wesley's adaptations of particular German Pietist hymn tropes modifies standard histories of the English hymn that pay lip-service to this well-known phenomenon with no textual evidence. To acknowledge this lineage of German Pietist imagery across the Atlantic complicates genealogies of American hymnody that emphasize American innovation and distinctiveness. Even as

American hymnody took a very different shape than the English or German hymns, this study demonstrates that key images were, in fact, derivative of continental Pietism.

The German elements in nineteenth-century American religious discourse affected popular literature as well. The hymns and fiction put into abolitionist service crossed genre boundaries and brought religious diction into the secular realm. Thus, this study enriches the genealogy of abolitionist discourse by focusing on revivalist hymns with elements of German Pietism as a significant source. Abolitionists' use of the sentimental mode to convert Americans to the anti-slavery cause also recalls the German Pietist trope of suffering and sympathy and suggests a German precedent in some works of sentimentalism. As we shall see, reading Stowe's Uncle Tom's Cabin in the context of evangelical Protestantism suggests a more complex genealogy of American sentimental-abolitionist discourse, one that acknowledges the diction borrowed from revivalist hymns as well as the accepted English novels of Richardson, Defoe, and Sterne. In short, examining the intertextualities of sentimental-abolitionist and the "fleshly" piety of the Second Great Awakening should open new avenues of exploration for other scholars.

We now turn to the material chain of evidence to support these claims for the cultural power of transnational Protestant discourses. In the chapters that follow, I provide concrete links between the religious cultures of Germany, England, and America through a distinct set of images as they were translated and adapted into various national hymnodies.

Chapter One: German Pietism and the Origins of Fleshly-Spiritualism

Often studied within the parameters of religious history or as a culturally minor movement to the major cultural achievement of the European Enlightenment, Pietism worked in congruity with the Enlightenment to achieve many of the same social and cultural goals. The incipient Enlightenment public sphere, replete with salons and publications, found its counterpart in the conventicles, or Pietist prayer groups, and in the evangelical publications of hymnals and collections of spiritual autobiographies. Along with Enlightenment and Pietist initiatives toward universal education and general social reform, the results of the seemingly disparate movements were the same: social leveling or the rise of the middle class. Consequently, to attribute the terms “secular” and “religious” to the large-scale social and cultural change in this period may be misleading.

Most historians date the beginning of the Pietist movement within Lutheranism to the 1675 publication of Philipp Jakob Spener’s *Pia Desideria*,²¹ a proposal for reform heavily indebted to the works of sixteenth-century German theologian Johann Arndt and the devotional works of English Puritans, which proliferated in German bookstores in the 1660s and 1670s to meet increasing demands (Gawthrop 104).²² Spener’s work, originally published as an introduction to Johann Arndt’s letters, emphasizes his debt to

²¹ The work first appeared as the introduction to Johann Arndt’s 1675 *Evangelienpostill*, but Spener expanded the work and published it as a separate volume: *Pia Desideria oder Hertzliches Verlangen nach gottgefälliger Besserung der wahren evangelischen Kirchen [...]* (Frankfurt: Zunner, 1676).

²² Richard L. Gawthrop, *Pietism and the Making of Eighteenth-Century Prussia* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1993). More than one hundred different English Puritan authors could be found in translation at this time, which made it impossible for authorities to continue the prior practice of “purifying” these texts for theological “errors” (Gawthrop 104). The extent to which the German book market was inundated with Puritanical texts in translation was not thoroughly investigated until the study by Udo Sträter, *Sonthom, Bayly, Dyke und Hall: Studien zur Rezeption der englischen Erbauungsliteratur in Deutschland im 17. Jahrhundert* (Tübingen, 1987).

Arndt's ideas, primarily the notion of a "New Birth" in Christ. Personal regeneration and divine immediacy should, according to Arndt, lead to practical piety or living faith in contradistinction to theoretical theology. To instill Arndtian piety among wayward church members, Spener outlined practical reforms to raise the compromised standards of morality among Lutheran congregants. First among his recommendations was the implementation of conventicles, small prayer and Bible study groups known variously as *collegia pietatis*, *ecclesiolae in ecclesia*, and *collegia philobiblica*. The active lay participation called for by the conventicles would, consequently, take the church back to Luther's belief in the "priesthood of all believers," a central tenet of Reformation theology Spener felt the church had long since neglected. Despite Spener's attempt to present these reforms within a context of Lutheran Orthodoxy, his writings launched the movement that came to be known as "Pietism," originally a derisive title probably coined from the title of Spener's reformist tract.²³

"Pietism" functions as an umbrella term to describe the various branches of the movement that historians have divided into "radical Pietists," those who advocated separatism from the Lutheran church or believed in post-Biblical prophesy, and "church Pietists," who remained members of the Lutheran church while embracing Spener's reforms. Those later termed "radical Pietists" like Gottfried Arnold and the Petersens, believed in direct revelation and often used that tenet to justify unusual social experiments, women's preaching, and anarchistic tendencies.²⁴ "Church Pietism" took various shapes in the locales of Württemberg, Halle, and Herrnhut, Saxony, where the

²³ Spener highlighted the continuity between his reforms and mainstream Lutheranism by frequently citing his orthodox predecessors (Gawthrop 105-6).

²⁴ Lucinda Martin, "Women's Religious Speech and Activism in German Pietism," diss., U of Texas, 2002, 30-1.

first community of the renewed Moravian Brethren (*Brüdergemeine*) was formed. This study of hymnal translations focuses on the latter communities of Halle and the Moravian Brethren at Herrnhut as significant sites of dissemination.

This chapter begins with a brief history of the Pietist communities at Halle and Herrnhut in order to contextualize their hymnals. Johann Anastasius Freylinghausen's two volume Geistreiches Gesangbuch (Halle 1704 and 1714) and Count Ludwig von Zinzendorf's Moravian Herrnhuter Gesangbuch (1735) and supplement, the XII Anhang zum Herrnhuter Gesangbuch (1743), form the primary texts used in the early chapters of this dissertation. The uneasy relationship between Pietists and secular literature, the creation of a body of Pietist literature, and the formation of new set of aesthetic values forms the next section. A more thorough look at the theology, beliefs, and practices as they are represented in the contents of these hymnals guides the discussion of seventeenth-century Pietist imagery and language back to sixteenth-century Baroque Lutherans and the Medieval mystics before them, to whom the Pietist hymns owe much. Finally, the chapter closes with a closer look at the theology, beliefs, and practices of the *Brüdergemeine* at Herrnhut, since the majority of Pietist hymns selected by John Wesley for translation were Moravian hymns he found in the Halle hymnal.

HALLE PIETISM AND THE *BRÜDERGEMEINE*

The Pietists at Halle embraced Spener and his early followers' beliefs that all Christians can experience God authentically and individually, and that this personal experience should culminate in a lived, practiced Christianity to include social and ethical

sensitivity within the Lutheran Church.²⁵ This combination of experience and social concern, the common denominator of Pietism in its various forms throughout eighteenth-century German principalities, became institutionalized in Halle through the efforts of August Hermann Francke (1663-1727). Halle is perhaps best known for the manifestations of its Pietist social ethics, the institutions of social reform including orphanages, hospitals, and universal education.²⁶ The theology behind these social practices spread to the far reaches of the Protestant world via Halle's printing press, which inundated Europe and America with Bibles, hymnals, and other works of devotional literature.

The ascendancy of Halle within Lutheranism was directly related to Prussia's political ascendancy. The Hohenzollern court's desire for strong central government favored the more cohesive force of Pietistic Lutherans over and above the polemical Lutheran Orthodox (Stoeffler 39). The rise of German Pietism can only be fully understood as a reaction against Lutheran Orthodoxy, which had become dominated by scholarly inquiry and had lost touch with the needs of ordinary Lutherans. Francke's theology, heavily indebted to Spener and Johann Arndt before him, enacted a shift from the "dead" faith of Lutheran Orthodoxy to the living, experienced faith of Pietism; from "true doctrine" to right action, from theological speculation to devotional earnestness, from ontological interests to psychological interests, from an intellectualized to an

²⁵ F. Earnest Stoeffler, German Pietism During the Eighteenth Century (Leiden: Brill, 1973) ix.

²⁶ George Whitefield's Journal includes numerous references to Halle and its philanthropic institutions. He based his first attempt at social reform, the orphanage in Savannah, Ga, on the orphanage established at Halle under the direction of August Hermann Francke. Whitefield appended Francke's account of the establishment of the orphanage and hospital at Halle to his own account of his orphanage at Savannah: George Whitefield, A continuation of the account of the orphan-house in Georgia, from January 1740/1, to January 1742/3 : to which is prefixed the preface to the former account, and a plan of the building : there are also subjoin'd, some extracts from an account of a work of a like nature, carried on by the late Professor Franck in Glaucha near Hall in Saxony (London: W. Strahan, 1743).

experiential approach to faith, from systematic theology to biblical exposition, from interest in God acting in history to God working in each person now, and from a focus on God's initiative to human responsibility (Stoeffler 21).

At the individual level, Francke's theology boiled down to "das Nützliche" (the useful), that is, only knowing what is necessary for a new life in Christ (Stoeffler 45). Francke's theology could, therefore, be understood as a narrowing of content and a deepening of religious conviction. Francke believed that human beings were held partly responsible for their conversion, or what he called the "New Birth," and for the application of that newfound Christian perspective in the religious life. According to Francke, the path to the New Birth begins with God's grace, but requires man's faith and repentance; human responsibility for salvation was a new concept (Stoeffler 16.) The anguish that preceded Francke's *Durchbruch* or "break through," was often misinterpreted by his contemporaries and continues to be misunderstood by historians and theologians as a rigid, prescriptive method of conversion;²⁷ many Pietists believed true conversion or New Birth could only occur after a prolonged period of suffering following the conviction of sin. Francke described the results of the New Birth, or the New Being, in mystical terms, as one "united with Christ," as "the bride of the Lamb" or as one whose spirit now "dwells within him" (Stoeffler 18). Images of mystical union including bridal mysticism and the image of the believer dwelling inside Christ, are used to describe "the spiritual affections of a regenerated person" in hymns and other devotional literature emanating from Halle.²⁸

²⁷ "Durchbruch" is a term borrowed from mysticism which simply meant man's opening himself up to God's grace.

²⁸ Joachim Justus Breithaupt, the first professor of theology at Halle, defined the restored image following the New Birth as consisting of the "spiritual affections of a regenerated person, i.e., the stirrings caused by

The printing press at Halle ensured its hegemonic dissemination of the new tenets of Lutheran Pietism through its publication of the Bible and devotional literature including sermons, Bible commentaries, edificatory tracts, and most significant for this study, the Geistreiches Gesangbuch (1704), Halle's widely circulated hymnal.²⁹ First and foremost, Halle printed over two million Bibles, which, for the first time in history made the Bible a book of the people (Stoeffler 55). Among the volumes of devotional literature printed in Halle were the especially popular mediations on Christ's passion, which was widely translated and enthusiastically read in Europe and North America. This interest in the meditations on the crucifixion connects the trope of suffering so prominent in Baroque Lutheran hymns and Moravian hymns back to Halle Pietism as well.

As Halle circulated its Bibles, tracts, and hymnals, the Moravians at Herrnhut developed a related but unique (even radical) community of "church Pietists." The founding of the renewed Moravian community, their beliefs, and practices are intimately bound up with their leader, Count Ludwig von Zinzendorf (1700-1760). Brought up by his Pietist grandmother and influenced by his godfather, August Hermann Francke, Zinzendorf studied for a time at Halle before forming his own Pietist community in Berthelsdorf, Saxony. As most historians describe it, Zinzendorf's failure to experience a tumultuous conversion experience, or *Durchbruch*, put him at odds with Francke's prescriptive conversion method. Zinzendorf's belief was that Jesus paid for our sins in their entirety, enabling an easy, joyful conversion. This precept formed the basis of the beliefs and practices of the *Brüdergemeine*, or the renewed Moravian Brethren.

the Holy Spirit in the heart and mind, as well as in the understanding and will of such a person, which prove effective in this, that God is rightly known and honored" (qtd. in Stoeffler 46).

²⁹ Johann Anastasius Freylinghausen, ed., Geistreiches Gesangbuch (Halle: Verlegung des Wäysenhauses, [1704] 1734).

Following his return from Halle, Zinzendorf bought his estate at Berthelsdorf in 1722 and provided refuge there for seekers of religious freedom including Schwenkfelders, Gechtelians, Separatists, Anabaptists, Roman Catholics, Reformed, Pietists, Lutherans, and descendents of the *Unitas Fratrum* from the Czech province of Bohemia.³⁰ A belief in separation of church and state, strict adherence to non-violence, and abolishment of hierarchies within the church formed the basis of the *Unitas Fratrum*, which broke away from the Catholic Church to form the first Protestant church in Europe in 1457, some sixty years before Luther posted his 95 Theses.³¹ The cacophony of Protestant dissenters Zinzendorf allowed to worship at Herrnhut (translated "Lord protect us" or "The Watch of the Lord") led to inevitable disputes among the various sects, which came to an end when Zinzendorf took an active role amongst those living on his estate, declaring himself the assistant pastor and catechist of the group in 1727, thus bringing them together in dissent.

He first attempted to designate the group according to Spener's notion of *ecclesiolae in ecclesia* within the Lutheran church,³² in order to protect the group from

³⁰ Arthur James Lewis, Zinzendorf, the Ecumenical Pioneer: A Study in the Moravian Contribution to Christian Mission and Unity (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1962) 47; Dietrich Meyer "Zinzendorf und Herrnhut" Der Pietismus im achtzehnten Jahrhundert ed. Martin Brecht et. al. (Göttingen: Vandenhöck und Ruprecht, 1995) 25.

³¹ See Craig Atwood, Community of the Cross: Moravian Piety in Colonial Bethlehem (University Park, Pa: Pennsylvania State UP, 2004) During the social turmoil that followed the execution of Jan Hus in 1415, a group of peasants, scholars, and noblemen gathered in the mountains northeast of Bohemia in 1457 to form the Unity of the Brethren, a group of believers dedicated to living according to the Sermon on the Mount (Atwood 22-3). The group based their beliefs on the writings of Petr Chelcicky, a lay theologian attracted to social radicalism but averse to violence as contradictory to the teachings of Jesus (Atwood 22). In contrast to Roman Catholic practice, priest Michael Bradacius shared the cup at the Lord's supper at this initial gathering with all believers present to implement the spiritual democracy they found missing in Catholic practice (Lewis 35). Since the time of Jan Hus, the cup had become a symbol of the equality of all believers and could be found on buildings, banners, and books all over Bohemia (Lewis 35-6).

³² The idea of *ecclesiolae in ecclesia* was first outlined in Jacob Spener's *Pia Desideria* (1675). The "little churches" within the "church" were made up of smaller groups of worshippers who gathered outside usual meeting times to enjoy fellowship, share in spiritual growth, discuss scriptures, etc. "Ecclesiolae" were also known as conventicles.

separatist charges by remaining loyal to the Augsburg Confession and thereby appearing close to the State Church (Lewis 110). Yet the five descendants of the original *Unitas Fratrum* who had arrived in 1724 refused to be simply absorbed into the Lutheran church, insisting instead on a resurrection of the fifteenth-century church.³³ Simply renewing the *Unitas Fratrum*, however, would have been against both civic and religious law in Saxony, so Zinzendorf made an interesting compromise that guaranteed a position for this new church within the restrictive religious climate of the time.³⁴ The group of worshippers would officially become an *ecclesiola* within the nominally Lutheran parish church at Berthelsdorf but would recognize the apostolic discipline and the fellowship of the original Unity (Meyer 27, Lewis 52). Significantly, they were known in Saxony simply as the *Brüdergemeine*, not the Moravian Church.³⁵

The community at Herrnhut officially commenced on May 12, 1727, when all agreed to the civic rules and religious statutes he had proposed.³⁶ The social organization and daily religious rituals that defined the community at Herrnhut were formed around Zinzendorf's central goal for each inhabitant, "die Gewinnung der Seelen zu Christo" (to win the soul for Christ) (Meyer 26).³⁷ To provide daily opportunities for spiritual awakening, Zinzendorf implemented a series of daily rituals, weekly ceremonies, and

³³ Dietrich Meyer, "Zinzendorf und Herrnhut," *Der Pietismus im achtzehnten Jahrhundert*, ed. Martin Brecht et. al. (Göttingen: Vandenhöck und Ruprecht, 1995) 23.

This group included David Nitschmann, who later became Bishop, David Nitschmann the senior, David Nitschmann the Syndicus, Johann Töltschig, and Melchoir Zeisberger (Meyer 22).

³⁴ Bringing the Thirty Years War to a close, the Treaty of Westphalia forbade the formation of new religious sects, which potentially put the Moravians in the same predicament as the Anabaptists.

³⁵ In the environment of religious freedom in Pennsylvania, the community at Bethlehem became known as the Moravian Church.

³⁶ "Brüderlicher Verein und Willkür" or "Brotherly Agreement of the Brethren from Bohemia and Moravia and Others, Binding Them to Walk According to the Apostolic Rule." Although the statutes were not specifically designed to emulate those of the *Unitas Fratrum*, as Zinzendorf was still ignorant of the ancient church's *Ratio Disciplina*, he was delighted to discover that the religious societies shared many key principles (Meyer 26, 28-30). Zinzendorf did not discover the historical basis for the *Unitas Fratrum* until the following summer during a trip to Silesia (Meyer 26, 28-30).

³⁷ This quote is taken from the civic and religious statutes drawn up at Herrnhut.

regular festivities. Each weekday morning began with an *Erbauungsstunde* (teaching lesson) comprised of a scriptural exegesis and a *Singbetstunde* (prayer and song hour), followed by a *Stundengebet* (prayer hour) and an hourly singing of short verses from 9 to 4 (Meyer 27-8). On Sunday mornings the *Herrnhuter* attended the service at the church in Berthelsdorf, and Zinzendorf repeated the sermon in the afternoon. Zinzendorf also implemented new festive ceremonies including the *Liebesmahl* (Love Feast) and the *Fusswaschung* (foot washing ceremony) performed at regular intervals (Meyer 27-8).

To help foster the spiritual growth of individuals, Zinzendorf organized the community into *Banden* (bands) or small societies of three to eight persons of the same sex and spiritual station (Meyer 28). For Zinzendorf, spiritual needs were determined by sex and station in life, which eventually led to the social organization of the entire community into “Chöre” or choirs, separate housing facilities organized according to age, sex, and station (Meyer 28). Once this living arrangement was fully established, there were separate choirs for single girls, widows, young boys, and in some communities, separate choirs for married men and married women.³⁸ Each of the choirs ultimately practiced their own distinctive religious and social festivities and created a series of administrative positions to direct and oversee the religious life of its members. This gave an opportunity for all laymen and women, regardless of social class, to hold powerful positions within the community’s intricate social hierarchy.

The division of the community into peer groups transformed the social strata of the age, and the creation of daily rituals, ceremonies, and festivities occasioned the

³⁸ In Herrnhut married men and women continued to live together, but in other communities like the one at Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, the married men lived together in a choir and the married women lived in a separate choir. There was a separate house where married couples could arrange to meet for marital relations.

composition of a specifically Moravian religious literature. The litanies, liturgies, and hymns sung daily, monthly, and occasionally, reflected Zinzendorf's unique Christocentrism. His heart religion, crucifixion soteriology (branch of theology that deals with salvation), and blood and wounds theology created a body of Protestant literature that was intended to remain closed-off to the world behind the walls of Zinzendorf's Herrnhut estate. However, Zinzendorf's exile from Saxony propelled this literature into a broader sphere. Zinzendorf's traveling *Pilgergemeine* that preached to Christian communities across Europe and the creation of imitator-communities in the neighboring German and Dutch lands and even in North America brought the Moravian liturgies, litanies, and the hymnal, the Herrnhuter Gesangbuch, beyond the walls of Herrnhut. The transmission that occasioned the greatest audience for Moravian literature, however, was John Wesley's translation of their hymns.

Despite obvious differences in the social organization of the closed community of believers at Herrnhut, the thriving Pietist University city of Halle, and their nuanced theological differences, the similarity in the content of their hymnals is striking as is their shared opinion of the function of religious literature in general. Pietists closed off their communities from the secular world and its literatures, creating in its stead Pietist literature and a new system of value and judgment of that literature. Furthermore, they reconfigured reading and writing practices that privileged the subjective experience of readers, singers and writers over and above aesthetic value judgments innate to a particular work of art. What may be termed the "Pietist aesthetic," that is, the Pietist language, imagery, and its particular set of reading and writing practices, was later

adopted wholesale by the “secular” literary periods that followed the golden age of Pietism, namely *Sturm und Drang*, *Empfindsamkeit*, and later Romanticism.

PIETISM AND LITERATURE

Before the commonplace usage of Pietist aesthetics in subsequent literary periods, secular writers ridiculed Pietists in numerous dramas and prose, while Pietists labeled all kinds of secular literature “sinful amusement.”³⁹ This antagonism between the literary establishment and the Pietists reached its zenith in Halle, where the Pietist university officials succeeded in petitioning civil authorities to forbid theatrical performances including the nativity play in Halle from roughly 1700-1741 (Petig 175-86). The Pietist distaste for drama and all genre of secular literature hinged, in part, on its fictional character or, as they saw it, untruthfulness. For Pietists, only historical events, daily life, and personal experiences were true and worth representing in literature or works of art. Consequently, Pietists labeled authors of fictional works “liars” and actors who portrayed untrue stories “deceivers” (Petig 173). Furthermore, Pietists identified the theater and all secular literature as worldly, sinful activities that chipped away at one’s “precious time” (“edle oder kostbare Zeit”), time that could be better spent in prayer or with amusements that evoked pious feelings and spiritual joy.⁴⁰ To evoke such feelings, Pietists created an

³⁹ For information on the secular literary establishment’s ridicule of Pietism, see William E. Petig, *Literary Antipietism in Germany During the First Half of the Eighteenth Century* (New York: Peter Lang, 1984). Between 1736 and 1745 three anti-pietistic plays appeared on the Leipzig book market: Louise Gottsched’s *Die Pietisterei im Fischbein-Rocke; oder die doctormässige Frau* (1736), Johann Christian Krüger’s *Die Geistlichen auf dem Lande* (1743), and Christian Fürchtegott Gellert’s *Die Betschwester* (1745). The first novel to register a negative reaction to Pietism is Johann Michael von Loen’s *Der redliche Mann am Hofe*, generally acknowledged to be the first Enlightenment novel (Petig 41, 138).

⁴⁰ Secular literature officially fell into a gray area known as the “Adiaphora” or “Mitteldinge,” things not expressly forbidden by the Bible. Whereas orthodox Lutherans left such things as literature, theater,

arsenal of religious literature and replaced the belles-lettres aesthetics with divinely-inspired, affective verse judged solely on its power to move the reader or singer into an emotional state conducive to divine visitation.

In the creation of religious poetry and prose, Pietist authors found that the rules of rhetoric and poetry inhibited their ability to channel the divine spirit and to move their readers emotionally. In this religious-literary climate, the word “Kunst” (art) took on a derogatory meaning. Wolfgang Schmitt notes that almost every preface to Pietist collections of verse and songs includes the “artlessness” of the works collected.⁴¹ For example, Zinzendorf privileges heartfelt expression over and above aesthetic rules in the preface to the Teutsche Gedichte (1735), a sentiment later echoed by *Sturm und Drang* poets: “Meine Poesie ist ungekünstelt: wie mir ist, so schreibe ich. Höhere und tiefere Worte pflege ich nicht zu gebrauchen, als mein Sinn ist. Die Regeln setze ich aus den Augen ums Nachdrucks willen.”⁴² [My poetry is artless: I write what comes to me. I don’t care to use learned and profound words that contradict my meaning. I set aside the rules for the sake of emphasis.]⁴³ Even in the task of translation, emotional acuity trumped linguistic and poetic skill. Pietist clergyman Johann Jacob Spreng first had to

drinking, and worldly pleasures to individual conscience, Pietists believed in no neutral activities and labeled every act in life either a good deed that brought one closer to God or *vice versa*.

⁴¹ Schmitt, Wolfgang, “Pietistische Kritik der Künste: Untersuchung über die Entstehung einer neuen Kunstauffassung im 18. Jahrhundert,” diss., Köln 1958, 45.

⁴² Niklaus Ludwig von Zinzendorf, Teutsche Gedichte in Vol. II of Ergänzungsbände, ed. Erich Bayreuther and Gerhard Meyer (Hildesheim: G. Olms, 1964) 3. It is interesting to note that hymn writers that preceded the eighteenth-century Pietistim including Angelus Silesius (aka Johannes Scheffler) and Tersteegen, both identified as Baroque Lutheran poets, made the same claims about the composition process. Silesius reportedly composed his “Wandersmannes” collection in “kurtzer Zeit” [quickly], and even “meisten theils ohne Vorbedacht und mühsames Nachsinnen” [most of the time without forethought and painstaking reflection] (qtd. in Schmitt 39). Tersteegen makes similar claims about his poetry in his “Blumengärtlein.” His poetry is “ungezwungen” and “gegeben”; he simply wrote down the verses “wie sie in Gedencken kamen” (qtd. in Schmitt 39). Of the 33 German hymns John Wesley translated, two are by Tersteegen and four by Scheffler / Silesius.

⁴³ All translations of prose and hymns in this chapter are the work of the present author unless otherwise noted.

experience the “circumstance and sentiments of the Psalmists” before his heart was “in tune” as David’s once was; only then could he translate the Psalms with quickness and ease (Schmitt 38). When reflecting on the process of composition, Pietist authors routinely privileged temperament over knowledge and skill and condemned the rules of poetics as an impediment to the greatest achievement in religious art: the expression and evocation of spiritual emotion in the reader.

A work’s ability to emotionally impact the reader served as the sole criterion for judging a work of religious literature, which could only be judged by sensitive, believing Pietist readers. By imparting a religious feeling in the reader, Pietist devotional literature had the all-important task of preparing the soul for divine inspiration. According to devotional writer Christian Scriver, the best books were judged to be those that moved the heart: “indem man darin lieset/ einen kräftigen Zug/ und süßen Zwang an seinem Herzen empfindet” (Petig 199). [in which one reads and feels a strong compulsion and sweet compelling of the heart]. The reader’s emotional response was proof of divine grace as well as a sign of true poetry (Petig 199). In the later literary movements, such as *Empfindsamkeit* and *Sturm und Drang*, this emotional response became one of the signs of true understanding (Petig 199).

Individual reader response, or what could be termed the new “Pietist aesthetic,” radically revised older notions of the relationship between the reader/ singer, text, and author. Essentially, the emotional identification between reader and author replaced textual authority. Transferring authority from the text to the subject, the Pietist focus on reader response democratized reading practices, by elevating the feelings of Pietists from varied social backgrounds over a text’s “inherent” aesthetic or moral values as judged by

belles-lettres scholars or orthodox Lutheran clerics.⁴⁴ In essence, Pietists created a new hierarchy in which good readers, or believers who responded emotionally to a devotional work, gained access to the Spirit and became the only readers sanctioned to judge a work's value. In effect, this approach sealed off Pietist literature from secular critics, who, Pietists claimed, lacked the religious sensibilities necessary to experience the spirit and who could not, therefore, judge the work by *belles lettres* criteria.

Pietist leaders and collectors of devotional materials didn't wait for their sensitive readers to judge or "respond" appropriately, rather, in reading guides and prefaces to devotional collections they urged them to share in the emotional state of the inspired writers. August Hermann Francke's "A Guide to the Reading and Study of the Holy Scriptures" contains an appendix entitled "Treatise on the Affections: As Connected with the Study of the Holy Scriptures" in which he defends the role of the affections in Biblical exegesis.⁴⁵ He suggests that one cannot accurately read and understand the Bible without tapping into human emotion:

Sacred Records cannot be adequately expounded, by those who are satisfied with the mere shell, and contemn the precious kernel of Scripture; who watch the lips, but never enter into the feelings of the Inspired

Penmen (126).⁴⁶

⁴⁴ The Pietist shift in emphasis from confessions of faith to affective spirituality can also be observed in the new structure of Pietist hymnals and in the language and imagery utilized by Pietist hymnists. Whereas orthodox Lutheran hymnals grouped the songs objectively according to the church calendar, Pietist hymnals were divided into subjective categories "nach dem unterschiedlichen Hertzens=Zustande glaubiger Christen" [according to different circumstances of the hearts of believing Christians], according to one collector of Pietist hymns (qtd. in Schmitt 55).

⁴⁵ August Hermann Francke, A Guide to the Reading and Study of the Holy Scriptures, trans. William Jaques (Philadelphia: David Hogan, 1823).

⁴⁶ Francke frames this reading strategy squarely within both Lutheranism and Pietism by quoting Luther and Spener in his "Treatise on the Affections." Spener writes to the Philo-Biblical College at Leipzig: "No practice will prove more pleasant or beneficial, and none more suitable to the College, than after fervent,

Francke's insistence that readers enter into the feelings of the "Inspired Penmen" was not limited to the Holy Scriptures. The act of reading devotional materials was deemed just as effective in the soul's preparation for divine revelation, and the reader's emotional communion with the author was considered a step toward spiritual readiness. When reading spiritual autobiographies by their contemporary Pietist brothers and sisters in collections such as Johann Heinrich Reitz's Historie der Wiedergeborenen (1698), "fromme Herzen" (pious hearts) will to be able to read "in einem fremden Herzen . . . was allerdings oder zum Theil auch bei ihnen selbst befindlich gewesen/ oder noch ist . . ." [in a strange heart what was or still is the case with them] and help those in troubled times to again taste the sweetness of the spirit (4).⁴⁷

The prefaces of Pietist hymnals likewise abound with specific instructions for its readers/ singers, namely, to experience the emotions depicted by inspired hymnists. A 1733 Pietist periodical printed the preface to one hymnal which described the process thus: The singer "faßet alle Kräfte und Bewegungen der Psalmen in sich, und beginnet also zu singen , daß er die Lieder nicht als fremde, sondern als hätte er sie selbst abgefasset, als sein eigen Gebet mit tieffer Empfindung des Hertzens hervorbringet." (qtd. in Schmitt 54). [The singer "seizes all of the Psalms' powers and motions in himself and begins to sing as if the songs are not strange to him, but rather as if he had composed them himself, as his own prayer produced with the deeper sensations of his heart."] In

secret prayer, to discriminate and enter into the Affections of the Inspired Writers with sacred attention and perseverance, and strive to unfold their nature and character" (127). In the same letter, Spener quotes Luther's similar suggestion: "an expositor should, as it were, invest himself with the Author's mind, in order that he may interpret him as another self" (128).

⁴⁷ Johann Henrich Reitz, foreward, Historie Der Wiedergeborenen, vol. 1, book 1 (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer, 1982) 45.

short, the singer should identify the heartfelt sentiments of the hymn writer as an expression of his or her own soul.

With such emotional demands placed upon the singer, questions arose about the suitability of any subjective, introspective text for an entire congregation, thereby threatening the practice of congregational singing altogether. Some hymnals restricted the use of certain hymns to singers who shared the emotional states described. For example, the Herrnhuter Gesangbuch reserves certain texts for those “welche in den Umständen stehen” (who are in these circumstances) and labels others “für gewisse Personen und Umstände zu gebrauchen” (for use by certain people and circumstances) (826; qtd. in Schmitt 56).⁴⁸ When no particular song matched the emotional tenor of the ‘Singstunden’ or singing session at Herrnhut, participants either combined verses from various songs or improvised new ones on the spot. In the preface to the Geistreiches Gesangbuch (Halle 1704), Johann Anastasius Freylinghausen (1670-1739) tackles the problem of emotional identification and congregational singing and finds it may well be advisable, “den Gebrauch christlicher Gesänge, bevorab in öffentlichen Versammlungen, gantz und gar abzuschaffen.” [to fully abolish the use of Christian songs in open meetings/assemblies.] At the same time, Freylinghausen rejects the complete abolishment of congregational song, since song has the power to move (“rühren”) sinners, an opinion adopted later with great success by John Wesley (qtd. in Schmitt 57).

Pietist belief in the power of song to move one emotionally and spiritually harks back to seventeenth-century German theologian Johann Arndt’s belief in the power of

⁴⁸ Similar demands were placed on Pietist singers living in less closed, strident communities. For example, the Gesangbuch Hessen-Homburg preface requires singers to make sure that the song “die Beschaffenheit seines hertzens austrucke, folglich mit seinem Begehren, Wünschen, Verlangen, Thun und Lassen übereinkomme” [expresses the state of his soul with the consequence that his desires, wishes, demands, and actions come into agreement] (qtd. in Schmitt 56).

prayer and meditation. Greatly influenced by Arndt and the *Frömmigkeitsbewegung* (Piety Movement), Baroque Lutheran hymnists called on singers to meditate on the crucifixion scene and share in Christ's sufferings. To this end, Baroque-era hymnists like Paul Gerhardt and Johann Scheffler privileged graphic crucifixion scenes, blood and wounds imagery, and bridal mysticism that depicted the mystical union of Christ and the believer in physical terms. As we shall see, Baroque hymnists' borrowed heavily from the fleshly-spiritual imagery popular in Catholicism of the late Middle Ages. Arguably, it was this tradition that trickled down to eighteenth-century German Pietist and Anglo-American Methodist hymnody.

FRÖMMIGKEITSBEWEGUNG: CHALLENGING LUTHERAN SCHOLASTICISM

The term "Baroque" as applied to German literature functions as a generic, all-encompassing term to refer to all literature composed between the Middle Ages and the Enlightenment without signifying specific overarching themes or other unifying characteristics. Even the term "Baroque Lutheran" fails to adequately connote my line of inquiry due to Johann Scheffler's conversion to Catholicism. One music theorist suggests approaching the Baroque period, otherwise associated with Catholic territories and painted ceilings of fleshy cherubs, as a mode of thinking reflecting both Protestant and Catholic adherents.⁴⁹ Important aspects of Baroque thinking are linked to mysticism or spiritualism; Baroque theologians tend to locate heaven in the soul, making it present in a mystical way, and are also drawn to illusion and otherworldly spirituality (Irwin 43).

⁴⁹ Joyce L. Irwin, *Neither Voice Nor Heart Alone: German Lutheran Theology of Music in the Age of the Baroque* (New York: Lang, 1993) 47.

Counter to medieval thinking that separated the heavens and the earth, the Baroque vision reintegrates man's and God's worlds (Irwin 46). Significantly, this reintegration of the heavens by Baroque thinkers is peculiarly sensual, that is, God is depicted as an object of sight, sound, taste, smell, and touch (Irwin 46). The sensuality of spiritual expression is so central to the Baroque period, that musicologist Herman Zenck even includes "the rhetorically based doctrine of affections" as a major component of the Baroque view of music (Irwin 47).

Numerous Baroque Lutheran hymns depicting sensuous, affective spiritual experience enjoyed a renaissance in eighteenth-century Pietist hymnals. Spener and Francke, the co-founders of church Pietism, acknowledge the seeds of the Pietist movement in the early 17th century *Frömmigkeitsbewegung* captured by the writings of Johann Arndt and in the expressions of piety in the Baroque hymns that emerged in the aftermath of the Thirty Years War. To appreciate the origins of Pietist spirituality and the language and rhetoric utilized in their hymns, this section will briefly outline the history and tenets of the *Frömmigkeitsbewegung* and the characteristics of Baroque Lutheran devotional literature in order to contextualize the works by Paul Gerhardt and Johann Scheffler, hymnists who served as models for Pietist hymnody.

Historians identify Johann Arndt (1555-1621) alternatively as the instigator and reformer of piety (*Frömmigkeit*) within Lutheranism, as the father of Pietism, and as a representative of spiritualism and mysticism (Meyer 131). Published during a period of theological in-fighting between Protestants following the Augsburg Religionsfriede von 1555,⁵⁰ Arndt's four-volume devotional work, Wahres Christentum (1605-1610), rejected

⁵⁰ This was the peace treaty that finalized the establishment of Lutheranism in the Holy Roman Empire.

the empty, theoretical theology of the church in favor of an inner spiritualism and an applied, lived Christianity.⁵¹ Arndt addresses the theologians directly:

es nicht allein bei der Wissenschaft der heiligen Schrift bleiben (zu) laßen,
sondern auch die Praktikum und lebendige Übung des heiligen göttlichen
Wortes (zu) studierend und (zu) lernen . . . (qtd. in Meyer 134)
[not only the science of the holy Scriptures alone, but also to learn and
study the Practicum and living practice of God's holy word]

Over and against empty theology, Arndt privileged an individual and subjective piety that went hand-in-hand with a renewed interest in medieval mysticism common at the time. Interest in such mystics as Augustine and Bernhard of Clairvaux was inter-confessional and evidenced in prayer books by Erasmus, reformed Catholics like Georg Witzel and Johann Wild, and also in books by Jesuits, all of which predated Arndt's works (Meyer 127).

Arndt uses mysticism as a means to an end. Inner penance and mystical rebirth are not ends in themselves, but rather necessary steps to an intensified relationship with Christ and the ethical consequences of that relationship: a renewed holy life (Meyer 133). The emphasis on inner and outer change experienced by the "true Christian" are perhaps best summed up in the title to the first volume: "Von wahrem Christentumb, heilsamer Buße, wahrem Glauben, heiligem Leben und Wandel der rechten wahren Christen" (1605) [From true Christianity, holy penance, true belief, and the holy way of living of right, true Christians]. Arndt's concerns with "heilsamer Buße" (holy penance)

⁵¹ Johann Arndt, Von wahrem Christentumb, heilsamer Buße, wahrem Glauben, heiligem Leben und Wandel der rechten wahren Christen (Halle: In Waysenhouse, 1755).

and the ethics that logically follow from living the Christian life were themes taken up with great enthusiasm by later Pietists.

Significant for this study, Arndt's position on the composition and effects of prayer recalls the Pietist theories of reading and composition discussed above, best articulated in the prefaces to Pietist hymnals. Arndt wrote that one should allow words:

aus herzlicher Andacht und aus dem heiligen Geist herfließen. Denn solche Worte wecken unser Herz auf, erheben unser Gemüt zu Gott, entzünden die Andacht, stärken den Glauben und die Hoffnung, und sind denen nützlich, die im Gebet verharren wollen.⁵²

[to flow from heartfelt devotion and from the holy Spirit. For such words wake up our heart, lift up our mind to God, inflame the devotion, strengthen belief and hope, and are useful to those who want to persevere in prayer.]

Arndt as well as many Baroque Lutheran and later Pietist hymnists believed that reading, writing, and singing must be induced by the Holy Spirit and experienced emotionally and individually (Bunnars 225). During the Baroque period, it was widely accepted that poetry should not only educate and delight, but also move readers emotionally. Arndt as well as Lutheran hymnist Paul Gerhardt (1607-1676) take this one step further to give "*Empfindungen*" or sensations the central position (Brunners 225).

Paul Gerhardt's 1666-7 Geistliche Andachten, generally recognized as the highpoint of Protestant poetry in the period, emerged in an era saturated by Arndtian *Frömmigkeit* and reflects Arndt's beliefs in the power of *Empfindungen* as spiritual

⁵² Quoted in Christian Bunnars, Paul Gerhardt: Weg—Werk—Wirkung (Göttingen: Vandenhöck & Ruprecht, 2006) 225.

expression and practical mysticism.⁵³ Arndtian piety also struck a cord with later Pietists, who chose hymns from the Baroque period that express Arndt's concept of a lived, individual spirituality. In the preface to the Geistreiches Gesangbuch (Halle), Johann Freylinghausen conceives of the hymnal as a second book of Arndt's Wahres Christentum, and perhaps interprets Gerhardt's texts as the realization of Arndt's intentions (Bunnens 219). Although many of the themes in Gerhardt's hymns, including the stress on ethical behavior, and a loving community between God and man built a bridge to Pietism, I will focus on the origins and historical context of graphic crucifixion imagery, blood and wounds imagery, and bridal mysticism in Gerhardt's hymns. This imagery served as models for "fleshly-spiritual" rhetoric that re-surfaced in eighteenth and nineteenth-century Methodist hymnody.

The Pietist appreciation for Paul Gerhardt's work can be measured by the inordinate number of Gerhardt hymns included in influential Pietist collections.⁵⁴ Of the 1600 hymns in Freylinghausen's Geistreiches Gesangbuch, Gerhardt's 84 hymns make up 5% of the collection, the greatest number by any single writer. Early Pietist pastor, professor, and poet Heinrich Mueller included 53 Gerhardt hymns in his 1659 "Geistliche Seelenmusik" collection, noting that the songs in his collection could "durch ihre geistreichen und hertzbrechenden Worte die andächtige Seele kräftig rühren und anzünden" (qtd. in Bunnens 225). [powerfully move and kindle the devout soul through their spiritual and heartbreaking words]. Gerhardt's hymns also make up 8% of Johann

⁵³ Even as Paul Gerhardt's writings reflect the spirit of the *Frömmigkeitsbewegung*, he remained firmly planted in the Lutheran Church.

⁵⁴ Spener's appreciation of Gerhardt's work did much for the enthusiastic reception among Pietists. Spener wrote, "Ich habe keine gefunden, die geist- und krafterfüllter wären: sie geben Gelegenheit, über Christen allgemein noch unbekante Materien nachzusinnen und sind doch in ihrer Schlichtheit Herz unseres Christentums" (qtd in Bunnens 226).

Porst's (1668-1728) widely-used 1709 Berlin hymnal and appear frequently in radical Pietist hymn-books and in many that traveled to America (Bunnens 226-7).⁵⁵

Pietists and later Methodists adopted the graphic crucifixion imagery coupled with the emotional sympathy of the believer depicted in Gerhardt's Passion hymns. Gerhardt wrote more hymns for the Passion period than for any other season in the church calendar, which reflected the central point of both Lutheran orthodox theology and the *Frömmigkeitsbewegung* at that time: the suffering and death of Christ. Arndt believed that without the inward "practice" or "übe" of Christ's suffering, God's grace remained dead:

Denn was ist's, das du an das heilige Leiden deines Herrn gedenkest in einer erloschenen, blinden Liebe, bringst aber Christi Leiden nicht in die Übung . . . So wirst du Christum nimmermehr recht sehen können, noch seine Wirkungen in dir empfinden. (qtd. in Bunnens 151)

[For what is it, that you think about the holy suffering of your Lord with an extinct, blind love, but do not bring Christ's suffering into practice . . . Then you will never more be able to see Christianity properly, nor feel its impact within you.]

Gerhardt wrote affective songs about Jesus's suffering, in part, to stimulate this "exercise" in feeling in daily worship as Arndt describes it.

Not only did crucifixion imagery in Gerhardt's Passion hymns stimulate pious affections, but also his texts engaged a particular historical moment. His collections appeared at the close of the Thirty Years War and provided hope and comfort in the wake

⁵⁵ Porst was the priest at the Nikolaikirche in Berlin and was influenced by Spener and Francke. His hymnal has been reprinted into the twentieth century and has contributed to ongoing interest in Gerhardt's hymns (Bunnens 226).

of its destruction. The fighting between Catholics and Protestants devastated German lands, where in some places 90% of the population was killed. Much of Gerhardt's audience had experienced or witnessed brutal physical, and psychological suffering that could be likened to the sufferings of Christ. Perhaps for this reason, in part, Gerhardt depicts Christ's sufferings so graphically and imagistically. For example, he invites the believer to study or meditate on the crucifixion scene, as in "O Welt, sieh hier dein Leben" ("O world, see here your life"):

| | |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Tritt her und schau mit Fleiße: | Walk here and behold with diligence |
| Sein Leib ist ganz mit Schweiß | his body is covered with sweat |
| des Blutes überfüllt; | the blood overflows; |
| aus seinem edlen Herzen | from his noble heart |
| von unerschöpften Schmerzen | from inexhaustible pains |
| ein Seufzer nach dem andern quillt. | One sigh after another. |

Not only do such vivid depictions help the singer "practice" the suffering of Christ in the Arndtean sense, but also, for those who experienced the very real devastation of the Thirty Years War, the sufferings of Christ could not be re-experienced through mere intimations or allusions. Detailed depictions of Christ's body smeared with blood, battered, and torn may have been necessary to jolt a public jaded by their own recent physical suffering while it served to liken their own physical and emotional sufferings to those experienced by Christ.

Gerhardt's Passion hymns function in much the same way as popular meditations on Christ's sufferings in the late Middle Ages did. Baroque era hymnists' use of graphic crucifixion details, bridal mysticism, and blood and wounds imagery each served as a means to unity with Christ in this world. As we shall see, Gerhardt and Scheffler, the favorites of Pietist hymn collectors, found meaningful antecedents for their language and imagery in the works of medieval mystics.

BAROQUE LUTHERAN HYMNS AND MEDIEVAL PRECEDENTS

In tandem with the inner spirituality sought by *Frömmigkeit*-era Christians, Baroque hymnists turned to the medieval mystics' portrayal of enthusiastic love for Christ outside denominational and theological protocols. Medieval mystics like Bernhard of Clairvaux created the possibility for the laity to circumvent the clergy and enjoy a direct, unmediated union with Christ, by meditating on the Passion and sharing in Christ's sufferings.⁵⁶ Medieval thinkers portrayed this mystical union using imagery such as bridal mysticism and blood and wounds adoration, imagery that survived the age to reappear in the hymns of Baroque-era Lutherans, eighteenth-century German Pietists, and nineteenth-century American Methodists.

Bernard was a twelfth-century Latin scholar best known for sermons on his seventeen-year study of the Song of Songs, which reintroduced bridal mysticism into hymns and sermons that continued well into the sixteenth-century and beyond. As sixteenth-century *Frömmigkeit*-era theologians and hymnists sought imagery to express a renewed interest in an intimate, personal spirituality, they drew on Bernard's exhaustive study of Canticles. Arndt makes extensive use of bridegroom imagery in Book Five of Wahres Christentum, and Paul Gerhardt used such imagery frequently. For example, Gerhardt's "Ein Lämmlein geht und trägt die Schuld" ("A Lamb goes uncomplaining forth") closes with an image of the believer entering the kingdom of God and taking his place by Christ's side:

⁵⁶ Bernhard of Clairvaux was a 12th century mystic best known for his sermons on the Song of Songs. Several hymns are attributed to him including "O Sacred Head Now Wounded," part of a seven-part Rhythmica Oratorio adoring Christ's feet, knees, hands, side, breast, heart, and face and "Jesus, the very thought of Thee" from the poem "Jesus, dulcis memoria."

und Dir, dem Er mich anvertraut,
als eine wohlgeschmückte Braut
an deiner Seite stehen.

And there, in garments richly wrought
As Thine own bride, I shall be brought
To stand in joy beside Thee.

The believer as bride of Christ functions in this hymn as the culmination of a pious soul's prayer to Jesus, which reflects the personal, affectionate spirituality that characterized both the *Frömmigkeitsbewegung* and the mystics of the Middle Ages. Gerhardt often used lover imagery, that is, the intimate language of Canticles without express mention of the bridegroom as in "O Jesu Christ: Mein Schönstes Licht" ("O Jesus Christ: My most beautiful light"):

Ach! Zeuch, mein Liebster, mich nach dir!
So lauf ich mit den füßen:
Ich lauf und wil dich mit begier
In meinem herzen küssen:

Oh! My lover, press me to you!
Thus I run with my feet:
I run and want with desire
to kiss you in my heart:

Ich wil aus deines mundes zier
Den süßen trost empfinden,
Der die sünden und alles unglück hier
Kan leichtlich überwinden.

I want to feel the sweet comfort
from the grace of your mouth,
which the sins and all bad luck here
Can easily overcome.

Hymns that read like love letters to Jesus proliferated in sixteenth-century Germany to express the renewal of subjective, affective spirituality that preceded the Pietist movement. Lover imagery and bridal mysticism provided sixteenth-century hymnists a tangible, fleshly way to express experiential religion.

Thus, portraying religion as a subjective experience begins in the Middle Ages, not in the Baroque Lutheran era as scholars of that period suggest.⁵⁷ In the first thousand years of Christianity, Christ was depicted in human form as a warrior to defeat the devil.⁵⁸ In the eleventh and twelfth centuries, Latin scholars like Saint Anselm, Peter

⁵⁷ For example, Christian Bunnens finds Paul Gerhardt's medieval adaptations more subjective by comparison, a reflection of the emphasis on subjectivity characteristic of the early modern period (155).

⁵⁸ A. C. Spearing, introduction, *Julian of Norwich: Revelations of Divine Love* (London: Penguin, 1998) xiii.

Abelard, and Saint Bernard of Clairvaux developed a second image of Christ in human form, one that emphasized his bodily sufferings to arouse compassion in his fellow human beings (Spearing xiv).⁵⁹ A new Christocentric focus on Christ's fleshly existence and a more personal, affective religious devotion flourished in the twelfth century and beyond (Spearing xiv).

In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, a longing to imaginatively experience the bodily sufferings of Christ's Passion attracted the laity as well as those devoted to the religious life to practice meditations on Christ's passion.⁶⁰ Spiritual advisors taught techniques of meditation and visualization and tracts such as the widely popular fourteenth-century Meditation on the Life of Christ written for Franciscan nuns served as vernacular guides to readers throughout Europe (Bynum 231). This experiential text depicts the physiological and psychological sufferings of Christ in agonizing detail to forge the desired identification. This type of meditative identification extended into the sixteenth century in the Exercises of Ignatius of Loyola (1522-24), a month-long spiritual experience to include a week-long contemplation of the Passion of Jesus.

The change in medieval devotion initiated by men like Bernard ushered in an era of emotional piety that privileged the bodily sensations of the worshiper. Sensations such as pain, heat, and sweetness became visual markers of Divine presence and a means of

⁵⁹ Saint Bernard of Clairvaux remarked in one of his sermons on the Song of Songs: "I think this is the principal reason why the invisible God willed to be seen in the flesh, and to converse with men as a man. He wanted to recapture the affections of carnal men who were unable to love in any other way, by first drawing them to the salutary love of his own humanity, and then gradually to raise them to a spiritual love" (Spearing xiv).

⁶⁰ The desire to experience Christ's sufferings were sometimes more real than imagined. From the thirteenth century on, bands of flagellants tore out their own flesh to emulate the sufferings of Christ. One such group in fifteenth-century Thuringia was particularly feared. Also among Dominicans, self-beating to achieve the sufferings of Christ, also known as "taking the discipline," was practiced regularly. Caroline Walker Bynum, Wonderful Blood: Theology and Practice in Late Medieval Northern Germany and Beyond (Philadelphia: U of Pennsylvania P, 2007) 4.

union with Christ. In this new era of late Middle Ages piety, “bodiliness prove[d] access to the sacred,” as medieval historian and theorist Caroline Bynum suggests (Spearing xv). The body remained a proving ground for experiential religion in the Baroque Lutheran era, as numerous Gerhardt hymns testify. At the sight of Christ’s sufferings, Gerhardt’s speakers most often experience his pain through “heaving breasts” and “overflowing tears,” a more sentimental reaction that distinguishes the later period from the more imitative physical co-suffering as depicted in devotional tracts from the Middle Ages.

Arguably, for medieval mystics the Latin lyric functioned as a meditative medium to commune with the crucified Christ through an act of co-suffering. Functioning in a similar way, Gerhardt’s most famous hymn, “O Haupt voll Blut und Wunden,” (“O Sacred Head, Now Wounded”) is a free poetical rendering of a Latin text, concretely linking Baroque and medieval mysticism. The hymn Gerhardt renders belongs to a passion cycle of seven hymns, a seven-part *Rhythmica Oratorio* adoring Christ’s feet, knees, hands, side, breast, heart, and face. Borrowing from the Latin was not uncommon; many medieval prayers and hymns were absorbed into Lutheranism from the Reformation by Luther himself.

Gerhardt’s text functions like a medieval meditation; it invites the reader to fix his/ her gaze on the blood and wounds longingly and lovingly:

| | |
|--|--|
| <p>O Haupt voll Blut und Wunden, voll Schmerz und voller Hohn, O Haupt, zum Spott gebunden Mit einer Dornenkron’, O Haupt, sonst schön gezieret Mit höchster Ehr’ und Zier, Jetzt aber höchst schimpfieret; Gegrüßet sei’st du mir!</p> | <p>O Head so full of Bruises so full of Pain and Scorn, Midst other sore Abuses Mock’d with a Crown of Thorn! O Head, e’er now surrounded With brightest Majesty, Now pitiable wounded! Accept a Kiss from me.⁶¹</p> |
|--|--|

⁶¹ United Brethren in Christ (English Moravian Church), Some Other Hymns and Poems. Consisting Chiefly of Translations from the German (London, 1752) 12.

As Gerhardt's speaker in "O Haupt voll Blut und Wunden" discovers, only through total empathy with Christ's sufferings can one find salvation:

Wenn ich in deinem Leiden,
Mein Heil, mich finden soll.

When I dive in some measure
Into the pangs and toil.

Once Gerhardt invites the reader/ singer to meditate on the crucifixion scene, he depicts Christ's suffering body in graphic detail to stimulate emotional sympathy with the savior. The physical imagery of Christ's suffering body serves as a catalyst to the act of sympathy (or even empathy) between the believer and Christ, an act that breaks down the distinction between Christ and the believer.

It is interesting to note the crucial role Gerhardt's "O Haupt voll Blut und Wunden" played in the development of Zinzendorf's theology and in the practice of blood and wounds worship in subsequent Moravian communities. Hymns like Gerhardt's, which was sung at the funeral of Zinzendorf's father, provided Zinzendorf with his earliest images of the crucifixion. The *Brüdergemeine* sang this hymn as part of their Passion celebration each Friday night as well as on their deathbeds, so that the last image in their minds would be that of the blood streaming down Christ's face.⁶²

Gerhardt's contemporary, Johann Scheffler, rendered the same cycle of Passion hymns from Bernhard of Clairvaux's Latin text, but showed an even greater propensity for blood and wounds worship. Scheffler's collection of 205 hymns, Heilige Seelenlust, oder Hirtenlieder der in ihren Jesum verliebten Psyche (1657) continued to be esteemed

⁶² Craig Atwood, Community of the Cross: Moravian Piety in Colonial Bethlehem (University Park, Pa: Pennsylvania State UP, 2004) 97.

by Lutherans and later Pietists despite his conversion to Catholicism.⁶³ Later known as Angelus Silesius, Johann Scheffler wrote many hymns that Zinzendorf included in the Herrnhut Gesangbuch (1735) and served as models for original Moravian hymn compositions. Zinzendorf's wife, Erdmuth Dorothea, probably came into contact with wounds mysticism through German itinerant mystic Hochmann von Hochenau, who taught wounds mysticism as a direct way to experience Christ in a Pietist conventicle on her childhood estate (Atwood, unpublished paper 15).⁶⁴ Once he introduced the adoration of the wounds to the Moravian church, Zinzendorf found in Scheffler's hymns models for individual and community wounds worship. Hymn 53 from Heilige Seelenlust depicts the wounding of Christ's side and the side wound as a point of entry and safe refuge from Satan:

| | |
|--|--|
| <p>Das Wasser welches auff den Stoß Deß Speers auß seiner Seiten Floß, Das sei mein Bad und all sein Blut</p> <p>Erquicke mir Herz Sinn und Mut . . .</p> <p>O Jesu Christ erhöre mich Nihm und verbirg mich ganz in dich;</p> <p>Laß mich in deine Wunden ein Daß ich fürm Feind kan sicher sein.</p> | <p>The water that from the thrust of the spear from your side flows That should be my bath and all your blood</p> <p>refresh me heart, mind, and courage</p> <p>O Jesus Christ hear me Take and conceal me completely in you</p> <p>Allow me inside your wounds So I can be safe from the enemy.</p> |
|--|--|

The *Brüdergemeine* embraced Scheffler's image of the side wound as a safe haven, a multivalent image translated by John Wesley and proliferated by Charles Wesley.

A metaphor rejected by John Wesley as ridiculous, but whole-heartedly embraced by Zinzendorf's *Brüdergemeine*, originates in several of Scheffler's hymns. In Hymn 52

⁶³ Angelus Silesius, Heilige Seelenlust, oder Hirtenlieder der in ihren Jesum verliebten Psyche (Halle: M. Niemeyer 1901).

⁶⁴ Craig D. Atwood, "Adoring the Bloody Savior: Imaginative Violence and Moravian Pacifism" unpublished paper, Religion and Violence in Early America Conference Yale U, 2006.

from Heilige Seelenlust, included in the Herrnhuter Gesangbuch, Scheffler portrays the adorer of the wounds as a bee buzzing around a blossom:

| | |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Du grüner Zweig, du edler Reiß, | You green branch, you noble twig, |
| Du honig=reiche Blüte, | You honey-rich blossom, |
| Du auffgethanes Paradeiß, | You opened paradise, |
| Gezweig mir eine Bithe; | Extend me a favor; |
| Laß meine Seel ein Bieelein | Allow my to soul be a bee |
| Auff deinen Roßen=Wunden sein. | At your red wounds. |

Scheffler repeats the final two lines at the close of each stanza, accentuating the bee/ blossom metaphor as the hymn's refrain. The *Brüdergemeine* took this unsavory metaphor of the blood and wounds of Jesus to represent the community of worshippers at Herrnhut and wrote many of their own hymns featuring the Moravians as bees buzzing around the side-wound of Christ.

The hymns published by John Wesley as part of a later, formal repudiation of Moravian hymnody took wound imagery out of the context of adoration or spiritual meditation.⁶⁵ The often childlike hymns of the Moravians probably struck Wesley as irreverent. For example, he included a hymn that begins:

Lovely Side hole, dearest Side-hole,
Sweetest Side-hole made for me,
O my most beloved Side-hole,
I wish to be lost in thee. (6)

Removing the side wound imagery from its theological contexts renders it an easy target for ridicule. It is precisely in the context of spiritual meditation on the side wound, the blood and wounds of Christ, and on Christ's Passion more generally that such imagery

⁶⁵ Count Ludwig von Zinzendorf, Hymns Composed for the Use of the Brethren (London, 1749). John Wesley published this collection of Moravian hymns copied from James Hutton's Collection "for the Benefit of all Mankind." Wesley introduces it with a scathing critique of Moravian hymnody: "To the reader: . . . You will easily observe, That they have no Affinity at all to that old Book called The Bible: The Illustrious Author soaring as far above this, as above the beggarly Elements of Reason and Common-Sense."

becomes meaningful. Significantly, the meaningful images of the side wound as a safe haven, popular in the Middle Ages, were carried forth into Methodism.

In the Middle Ages, side wound veneration emerged out of popular images of the so-called Man of Sorrows, initially a dead figure sitting upright in his tomb displaying his wounded hands and side. This image became a progressively more vivid depiction of the living Christ pouring forth streams of blood from his voluminous wounds, and by the end of the fourteenth-century, blood devotion, adoration of the wounds, the side wound and the wounded heart imagery were plentiful.⁶⁶ Believers were encouraged to base their prayers on the number of Christ's wounds and lesions, so that as many as 6,666 wounds were counted.⁶⁷ The side wound, however, remained the most significant in visual arts and devotional tracts in the period; one popular woodcut portrayed Jesus entirely as a side wound (Bynum "Violent Imagery" 3-36).

The origin of side wound devotion lies in thirteenth-century depictions of it over the breast, which could be suckled for nourishing milk or could provide direct access to the heart of Jesus (Bynum, Wonderful Blood 15). Gertrude the Great (d. 1301 or 1302) and Mechtild of Hackeborn (d. 1298), two German nuns credited with initiating sacred heart devotion, write about nourishment and cleansing from the liquid emanating from the side wound over Christ's heart. Portrayals of the side wound over the breast appeared in various forms. In one painting the heart is enlarged and carries all five wounds; the side wound is a vertical slit appearing as a mouth. In other representations it appears as a horizontal slit with erotic overtones (Bynum, Wonderful Blood 14).

⁶⁶ Caroline Walker Bynum, Wonderful Blood: Theology and Practice in Late Medieval Northern Germany and Beyond (Philadelphia: U of Pennsylvania P, 2007) 3.

⁶⁷ Caroline Walker Bynum, "Violent Imagery in Later Medieval Piety," Bulletin of the German Historical Institute 30 (2002): 3-36.

In the fifteenth-century, the side wound was most often hymned as a point of entry or a doorway, providing shelter, refuge, and consolation (Bynum, Wonderful Blood 14). Such imagery, however, appears as early as the twelfth-century in a devotional tract by William of St. Thierry, a good friend of Bernard's. The side wound satisfies the doubts of Thomas, providing tangible proof of Jesus's resurrection and a doorway to his heart:

like Thomas, that man of desires, I want to see and touch the whole of him and—what is more—to approach the most holy wound in his side, the portal of the ark that is there made, and that not only to put my finger or my whole hand into it, but wholly enter into Jesus's very heart, into the holy of holies, the ark of the covenant, the golden urn, the soul of humanity that holds within itself the manna of the Godhead-- . . .⁶⁸

Similarly, Zinzendorf encouraged his followers to doubt like Thomas until they saw the side wound with their own hearts and could enter there.

To close this section on medieval precedents of Baroque Lutheran and German Pietist fleshly-spiritual imagery, we briefly turn to a devotional tract from fourteenth-century England. Julian of Norwich (c. 1342- after 1416) experiences bodily manifestations of the spirit in her meditation on the Passion of Christ. The graphic detail of Christ's crucifixion in her visions, the blood and wound imagery, and the sufferings she shares with Christ serve as a paradigmatic example of late Middle Ages piety that resurfaces in the German sixteenth-century *Frömmigkeitsbewegung* and seventeenth-century Pietist eras. Recommended by the editor to "all those who wish to be lovers of

⁶⁸ On Contemplating God: Prayer: Meditation, vol. 1 of The Works of William of St. Thierry, trans. Sister Penelope, in Cistercian Fathers Series, no. 3 (Spencer, Mass.: Cistercian Pub., 1971) 38-9.

Christ,” Julian of Norwich longs for a “vivid perception of Christ’s Passion” which in meditation she felt “strongly” but yearned to feel “more intensely” (3).⁶⁹ She writes “for I wanted his pains to be my pains, with compassion, and then longing for God” (6).

Her desire to experience Christ’s sufferings is answered in a series of graphic crucifixion images that, according to medieval meditations literature, would draw her and her readers into an experiential co-suffering with the Saviour. As she relates her first vision: “I saw the blood trickling down under the crown of thorns, all hot, freshly, plentifully, and vividly, just as I imaged it was at the moment when the crown of thorns was thrust on to his blessed head” (6). Gazing intently at Christ on the crucifix that hung in front of her, she witnesses later scenes from the Passion narrative: “contempt and spitting, which soiled his body, and blows on his blessed face, and many lingering pains, . . . and all his blessed face covered at one time in dry blood” (12). Finally, with her “bodily sight,” she relates the physical details of his death in minute detail. His face, she reports, became “bloodless with the pallor of death; and then it went more deathly, ashen and exhausted, and still nearer to death it went blue, then darker blue, as the flesh mortified more completely.” She describes the changing color of his lips and his nose as “shrivelled and dried” [sic] (15).

To provide a truly experiential dimension to her “vivid perception of Christ’s Passion” she requests “bodily sickness,” which can be witnessed and thus provides visible proof of Divine visitation. Just before her sickness brings her to the point of death, her body loses all sensation and she feels the “greatest pain” of the “shortness of breath and the failing of life (6).” As she lay suffering in illness for three days and three nights with visions of Christ, she writes “in all this time of Christ’s presence, the only

⁶⁹ Julian of Norwich, Revelations of Divine Love (London: Penguin, 1998).

pain I felt was the pain of Christ” (16), which she understands as the great unifier of Christ and human beings: “Here I saw a great union between Christ and us; for when he was in pain, we were in pain. And all creatures who were capable of suffering, suffered with him” (17).

Co-suffering and unity with Christ renders the image of his Passion joyful, a notion that reappears in Zinzendorf’s exuberant Passion hymns. Her blissful vision stems from the side wound, a widespread image of adoration among late Medieval Christians that resurfaces in eighteenth-century Moravian wound imagery:

Very happily and gladly our Lord looked into his side, and gazed and said these words, ‘Look how much I loved you’; as if he had said, ‘My child, if you cannot look at my Godhead, see here how I let my side be opened, and my heart be riven in two, and all the blood and water that was within flow out. And this makes me happy, and I want it to make you happy.’

Our Lord revealed this to make us glad and joyful. (20)

Julian of Norwich was not the only medieval mystic to report such visions,⁷⁰ but the combination of graphic crucifixion imagery, her bodily sufferings, the salvific images of the side wound, and the notion of a joyful celebration of Christ’s Passion provide a comprehensive medieval precedent to Zinzendorf’s theology, which appeared in its day as a unique aberration of German Pietism.

⁷⁰ See also fourteenth-century devotional writer Birgitta of Sweden.

MORAVIAN BRETHREN—BELIEFS, IMAGES, PRACTICES

Although scholars have been unable to trace the specific origins of Zinzendorf's theology, worship, and imagery he used to express spiritual devotion, a closer look at his beliefs and the hymns of the *Brüdergemeine*'s should clarify his particular use of fleshly-spiritual imagery and its later adaptation by the Wesleys. The fleshly-spiritual images abundant in Moravian devotional literature include bridal mysticism, blood and wounds theology, the image of Christ's suffering, and salvation that stems from the heart, the feelings, and sympathy with Christ's sufferings.

Christ as the sole focus of worship in the Moravian community reflected Zinzendorf's rejection of an abstract, unknowable God. Zinzendorf followed the early church fathers and Eastern Orthodoxy in his belief that Christ was fully human and fully divine, i.e., not part of God or an emanation of God, but as God's complete divinity in human form: "God your Creator, God your Redeemer and Sanctifier, indeed your God, at the same time, your mediator between the deity and humankind" (Atwood, *Community* 78-9).⁷¹ Zinzendorf took this idea even farther, preaching that Jesus is the creator of the universe, the God that passed down the law to Moses, the Jehovah of the Old Testament. This radical Christocentrism, succinctly phrased "dein Schöpfer ist dein Heiland," was central to his interpretation of scripture and to the community's worship of a singular divinity in human form (Atwood, *Community* 81).

The very physicality of Jesus, at once fully human and fully divine, rendered Zinzendorf's borrowings from medieval bridal mysticism a straightforward, non-

⁷¹ This is fundamental to Eastern Orthodoxy, but unusual in Western Christianity. In 1740, the patriarch of Constantinople affirmed the orthodoxy of the Moravian Church in a letter to all Eastern Orthodox churches.

metaphorical set of images to at once represent the unity of Christ and the believer and to sanctify earthly marriage and sexuality. In the 1730s Zinzendorf began preaching

The complete religion, the chief religion, the one that most properly merits the name religion, is marriage, the marriage of the soul, the mega mysterium which the Vulgate calls ‘magnum sacramentum’ and Dr. Luther ‘das grosse geheimniss.’ (Atwood, Community 91)

At the moment of conversion, the believer enters into a physically intimate relationship with Christ the Bridegroom: “And as soon as they are with him, there is an embrace, a kiss, a heart, thus he draws like a magnet, rises them all up to himself, lays them all deep in his holy side . . .” (Atwood, Community 92). This penetration of Christ’s body would suggest a gender reversal by male congregants, but Zinzendorf solves this potential problem by ascribing the feminine gender to all souls.⁷²

Lover imagery and bridal mysticism dominates the language of the Herrnhut hymnal.⁷³ Almost half of the hymns contain phrases like “Jesu, du mein Bräutigam” (89) and “Blutiger Bräutigam” (773) and many hymns simply read like love letters:

| | |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Lamm, Lamm, Lamm mein herzens=Lamm, | Lamb, Lamb, Lamb, my heart’s lamb |
| ich küsse deine wunden, | I kiss your wounds |
| du bist mein Gott, mein Bräutigam, | You are my God, my bridegroom, |
| ich bin mit dir verbunden. (1561) | I am bound to you. |

Zinzendorf often spoke of mystical marriage as an engagement, deferring the consummation of the mystical marriage until the eschaton. One sub-section of the hymnal, “Bey Verlobung” is dedicated to the portrayal of the entire community’s relationship with Christ as a betrothal. But like other mystics, Zinzendorf’s imagery

⁷² The gendering of souls as feminine was common in the Middle Ages.

⁷³ Craig Atwood analyzed the hymns of the 1740s according to the occurrence of particular words. As many as 40% of the hymns from that period contain bridal mysticism (144).

linked Christ not only to the community at large, but also to individual believers. He often used the expression “dein Schöpfer ist dein Mann,” which was depicted over and over again in the hymnal (Atwood, Community 91):

| | |
|---|---|
| Jesu komm doch selbst zu <i>mir</i> , Und verbleibe für und für; Komm doch, werther seelen=freund, Liebster, den mein herze meint. . . . | Jesus come yourself to me, And remain forever and ever Come, worthy soul-friend lover, whom my heart means . . . |
| Du, für mich verwundetes Lamm, Bist allein mein Bräutigam. (my emphasis, 495) | You, for me wounded Lamb Are alone my bridegroom. |

Distinguishing the *Brüdergemeine*'s use of this imagery from the medieval mystics, Zinzendorf connects bridal mysticism to the Atonement.

The sanctity of human sexuality was not a metaphor for the mystical union with Christ, but rather a tangible expression of it. Read in the specifically Moravian context, in which every aspect of daily living carried divine significance, the act of sexual intercourse was interpreted as a liturgy in which the woman plays the Gemeine and the man plays Christ. Zinzendorf takes the sanctity of human sexuality even further; he describes the Incarnation of Christ, in which he became human by taking on flesh and bone, as similar to human sexuality, in which man and woman become one flesh and bone. Through Incarnation, and logically salvation, Christ removed shame from the human body and sanctified every act of human existence from birth to death. (Atwood, Community 93). Zinzendorf's take on the body and the spirit—interpreting the human body as a vessel for the Divine--sounds radical, but it is exactly this non-dual view of the spirit present *in* the flesh, not the spirit *and* the flesh, that define the later Methodist movement.

This prevalent use of bridal mysticism dissolved the flesh/spirit dichotomy of much of Western Christianity and expressed the intensity and intimacy of the Moravian believers' living relationship with Christ, one further intensified by a daily meditation on his crucifixion. Zinzendorf believed salvation was achieved through the death of Jesus, not the Resurrection: "The origin of all grace is to be sought only in the merits and satisfaction of Christ alone who must become everything for us in his bloody form on the cross, and must be the only cause of our blessedness" (Atwood, Community 99). Jesus's death on the cross, however, was not enough to provide salvation. According to Zinzendorf's soteriology, one must not only believe or accept the fact of Christ's crucifixion rationally, rather one must open his/ her heart to see and feel the sufferings along with the Savior. This change of heart at the sight of Jesus is depicted in numerous hymns from the Herrnhuter Gesangbuch. One example, "Lamm und blut, du bist so gut" suffices:

Gottes Lamm an creußes=stamm,
 Das alleine das herz macht froh,
 War fürwahr mir gar nicht klar
 Und ich fühlte, es fehlte,
 Es fehlt mir wo: aber wo?

Ich dachte viel an die sache ohn gefühl,

Aber da ichs Lamm erblickt,
 Bin ich durch und durch erquickt.

Lamb of God on the cross,
 that alone makes my heart glad
 It was earlier not so clear to me
 and I felt something was missing,
 From where was it missing: but
 where?

I thought about it a lot without
 feeling

But when I caught sight of the lamb,
 I was refreshed through and through.

A transformation of the heart through subjective empathy with Christ's crucifixion functioned as *the conversion experience* for the Moravians, one they repeated weekly, if not daily.⁷⁴ This subjective experience of Christ's sufferings formed the backbone of life,

⁷⁴ According to Moravian ritual, every Friday was Good Friday, when the congregants vividly relived the Passion of Christ.

liturgy, and worship at Herrnhut and other Moravian communities throughout Europe and North America.

To achieve this transformation of the heart, Zinzendorf stressed the use of affective and realistic language, what he termed the language of the heart. With the help of the Holy Spirit, Moravian preachers were encouraged to paint a vivid picture of Christ's sufferings for their listeners using imagistic language (Atwood, Community 86).⁷⁵ Through graphic and affective language, Christ's image could be brought before their very eyes so that they may be able to see and feel his sufferings. Zinzendorf scholar Wilhelm Betterman describes his religious language as "biblical realism," that realistically relays the historical and affective events from the Bible.⁷⁶

Zinzendorf called this language "the language of the heart," which communicates directly with the heart and calls for no interpretation or exegesis on the part of a minister. Therefore, litanies and hymns, always composed in the unmediated language of the heart, represented the best ways of expressing one's faith; liturgical and hymnological language was considered heart language that expresses truths directly to the heart of the listener, which, if explained, demonstrated a shortcoming in the texts or the hearer's heart (i.e., unconverted) (Atwood, Community 71). For Zinzendorf, one image spoke the "language of the heart" more immediately and succinctly than all others: the side wound of Christ.

The significance of Christ's wounds in Zinzendorf's theological framework (re)introduced a set of unique images of human salvation to England and North America via John Wesley. For Zinzendorf, wounds theology expressed salvation through grace

⁷⁵ The Moravian communities at Herrnhut and Bethlehem displayed vivid religious paintings used in worship to complement the imagistic language of their devotional literature.

⁷⁶ Wilhelm Betterman, Theologie und Sprache bei Zinzendorf (Gotha: L. Klotz, 1935) 55.

alone without a tumultuous conversion. According to Pietist theologian Wilhelm Betterman, this marked Zinzendorf's departure from Pietism (55). Wounds worship also encouraged the sympathetic sufferings with Jesus, worship that should culminate in the heart's vision of the crucified Christ, marks of the nails and all, as depicted in this Moravian hymn "Ihr blutigen wunden von unserm Herrn" ("Your bloody wounds, our Lord"):

| | |
|--|--|
| <p>. . . Dein heiliges leiden und tod und pein lass uns beständig im herzen sein, deine nägel=löcher und deine schrammen, und die herz=fressende eifer=flammen sind unser text. (1560)</p> | <p>Your holy suffering, death and pain let us keep constant in our hearts your nail holes and your scars and the heart-devouring flames of zeal are our text.</p> |
|--|--|

Since the body of Christ did not decay in the grave, the everlasting wounds became his identifying mark. Just as Thomas refused to believe until he saw and felt the imprint of the nails in Jesus's hands (John 20:25), no one should believe until the marks of the nails have been seen and felt by their own hearts.

Above all other wounds, the side wound of Christ became a compact symbol to represent everything significant in Zinzendorf's theology including the new birth, Atonement, Incarnation, salvation, sanctification, and Christian fellowship: "The holy side of Jesus is a central point from which one can derive everything spiritual" (qtd. in Atwood, Community 107). Consistent with images from the Middle Ages, Zinzendorf contended that the spear wound had been made over the heart of Jesus, rendering the side wound "the door to his heart" (Atwood, Community 107). The Moravian hymn "Lamm Gottes, deine wunden" ("Lamb of God, your wounds") depicts the side wound over Jesus's heart, an opening one may sink into:

Nimm deine blutes=beute,
und drücke sie auch heute
an deine blutge Brust,
und lass sie an dir trincken,
und ganz in dich versincken,
nach aller ihrer herzens=lust.
(my emphasis, 1560)

Take your bloody spoils
and press them today
against your bloody breast,
and let them drink from you
and fully sink into you
according to their heart's desire.

Zinzendorf assured believers that after their conversion, they would experience being “led with body and soul into the side hole,” a canal one must crawl through to enter the body of Christ and Paradise (Atwood, Community 107). The Gospel of John states that there is no way to the Father except *through* the Son; Zinzendorf represents this as a literal entering of Christ's body through the side hole.

Even though some Moravian hymns depict it as a small wound in Christ's side, Zinzendorf describes it as a larger opening able to accommodate and protect all Christian souls. Throughout the hymnal vast places like ports and seas function as metaphors for Christ's wounds, large bodies of water in which one may even drop anchor:

Ich habe in Jesu blut und wunden
den port vom edlen Canaan,
nach überstandnem sturm gefunden,
woselbst mein anker fussen kan. (358)

I have in Jesus's blood and wounds
the port of noble Canaan
found after the enduring storm
Where my anchor can lower itself.

Or one might plunge into the wounds:

Lamm Gottes, deine wunden
sind noch zu diesen stunden
ein ofnes gnaden=meer,
und die sich dahin wagen,
die können frölich sagen,
sie gehn von dir keinmal nicht leer. (1495)

Lamb of God, your wounds
are still at this hour
an open merciful sea
and those who venture there
they can joyfully say,
they never leave from you empty.

Finally, the Moravian hymns took wound imagery even further, combining it with erotic imagery:

Honey from the fairest Side's incision
Is my only gladd'ning Wine,
Hereof for herself a good Provision
The Lamb's Sinner-bride lays in.
Thousand Magd'len kisses, lamb and Saviour,
Take from me, from Head to Feet all over;
All thy Skin, each Pore and hair,
Take of my Salutes its share.⁷⁷

This hymn demonstrates a combination of imagery more extreme and profane than Halle Pietists and English and American Methodists could tolerate. Still, this hymn is one of numerous Moravian examples that demonstrate the combination of medieval bridal mysticism with wound imagery to uniquely express and forge communion with Christ.

Despite obvious differences between the social organization of Halle and Herrnhut, the theological differences between the two have been largely overstated.⁷⁸ What differences exist, however, figure little into the large hymnals collected by these communities. In fact, wound imagery proliferates in Halle's Geistreiches Gesangbuch, in reproductions of Moravian hymns, and in hymns by Pietists not connected to either community. Finally, the similarities between the hymnals is overwhelming. At least 50% of the material is the same in each hymnal. The most extreme imagery represented by Moravian hymns were not translated by Wesley, and were, therefore, inconsequential in the transmission of fleshly-spiritual language and imagery. While scholars have often emphasized differences between Halle and Herrnhut, the metaphoric language I have

⁷⁷ United Brethren in Christ, A Collection of Hymns, with Several Translations from the Hymn-book of the Moravian Brethren. Vol. 3. (London: James Hutton, 1749) 128.

⁷⁸ Scholars have emphasized Francke's notion of a Durchbruch conversion as prescriptive, whereas Zinzendorf's lack of such experience resulted in a joyful, momentous conversion without suffering. Even this monumental difference has been overstated, since Francke's own experience was not, according to some, meant to be prescriptive. A second theological divergence has been suggested by Zinzendorf scholar Wilhelm Bettermann, who finds in Zinzendorf's wound theology an adherence to Lutheran cross theology that overturns Pietism.

been discussing was shared by both—an example of continuity and shared discourse that was introduced into communities across England and America.

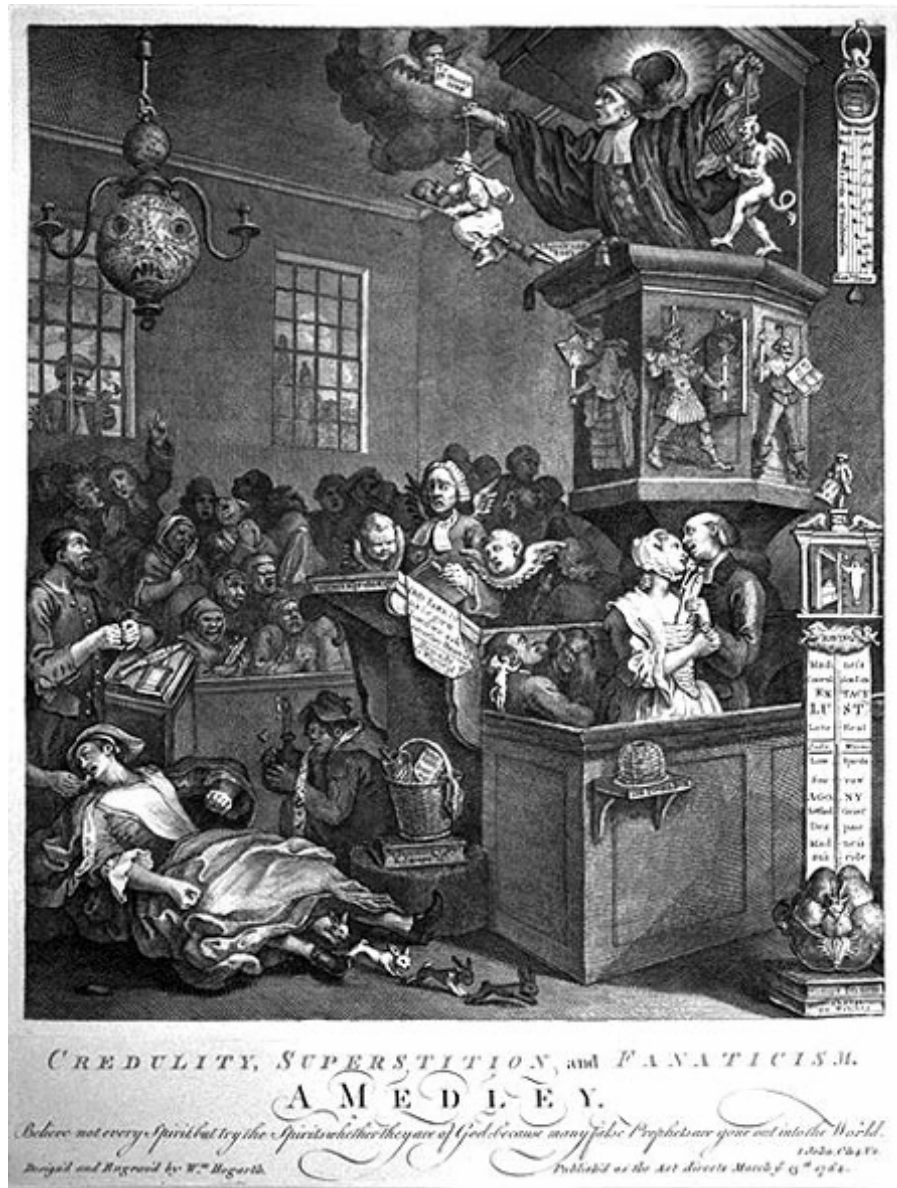
CONCLUSION

As we have seen, many of the images, metaphors, and mystical language used to convey an enthusiastic love for Jesus among eighteenth-century Pietists originated in the seventeenth-century Baroque Lutheran hymn tradition, which was steeped in medieval mysticism. Graphic suffering images coupled with calls for sympathy, bridal mysticism, and blood and wounds adoration enabled seventeenth-century believers and eighteenth-century Pietists to directly experience Christ as they sang hymns in worship. The combination of renewed inner spirituality and lived Christianity sought by *Frömmigkeitsbewegung*-era believers and the imagistic and sensual Baroque literary tradition gave rise to a new religious aesthetic revived and proliferated by eighteenth-century Pietists.

The Pietist demands for emotional identification with the inspired hymnists as outlined in hymnal prefaces correspond to the textual tropes found in Baroque Lutheran hymns emulated with great fervor by later Pietists. In fact, each of the Baroque hymns discussed above appeared in the two Pietist hymnals with most widespread use: Johann Anastasius Freylinghausen's two volume Geistreiches Gesangbuch (Halle 1704 and 1714) and Count Ludwig von Zinzendorf's Herrnhuter Gesangbuch (1735) and supplement, the XII Anhang zum Herrnhuter Gesangbuch (1743). In the chapters to follow, we will see how these hymns in translation came to express the emotional, spiritualized bodies of eighteenth and nineteenth-century Methodists.

Zinzendorf's exile from his estate in Saxony and the *Pilgergemeinde's* itinerant preaching across the continent brought Moravian beliefs and their hymns to England. As we shall see, the renewed spirituality of German Pietism as brought to England via the Moravian Brethren introduced the same type of reform to the Church of England that Spener, Francke, and Zinzendorf had introduced to the Lutheran Church. John Wesley's intercourse with the Moravians sparked a similar system of *ecclesiolae in ecclesia*, the Methodist meetings within the Anglican Church. His establishment of small prayer meetings, a belief in conversion and the New Birth, and the singing of original hymns that reflected an embodied spiritualism took center stage in the English evangelical revival.

Chapter Two: Translating German Language and Imagery into the Wesleyan Hymnody



William Hogarth's 1762 satire of a Methodist meeting house, entitled Credulity, Superstition, and Fanaticism: A Medley, captures the most prominent criticisms of Methodist preaching, worship, and hymn singing. The preacher depicted is undoubtedly George Whitefield, whose falling wig reveals the shaven head of a Jesuit, an allusion to

the popular denouncement of Methodists as secret papists.⁷⁹ The picture depicts the singing congregation in various states of religious ecstasy; a woman sings prostrate on the floor while giving birth to rabbits, some are crying and swooning, and still others sing lustily while groping fellow worshippers. The open hymnal reveals the text:

Only LOVE to us be giv'n
Lord we ask no other Heaven

Hymn by
G. Whitefield
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The text obviously satirizes the lusty groping and drooling of the congregants, a condemnation of the purported sensuous carnality of Methodist worship, reinforced by the thermometer gradations depicted on the right: "Raving, Madness, Convulsionfits, Extacy, LUST, Love-Heat, Luke Warm, Low Spirits, Sorrow, AGONY, Settled Grief, Despair, Madness, Suicide." The thermometer, not coincidentally, sits on top of a book entitled "Wesley's Sermons."

Even as the satirist casts doubt on the validity of true spiritual visitation in the picture above, his depiction of the swooning, crying, groping, and even birthing Methodist hymn singers pinpoints the two behaviors by Methodist practitioners widely perceived as threats to religious and political stability: the spiritualized body and hymn singing. Fears of the spiritualized body were nothing new to the English religious and political establishment, but the singing of hymns, to be discussed below, was a new phenomenon quickly identified as a threat and its power restrained by authorities.

⁷⁹ In a 740-page invective George Lavington, Bishop of Exeter, compares Methodist "Enthusiasts" to the "most ridiculous, strolling, fanatical, frantic, delirious, and mischievous of all the saints of the Romish Communion;" George Lavington, The Enthusiasm of Methodists and Papists Compar'd (London: J. and P. Knapton, 1749) 9.

This chapter will study the language and imagery in the Methodist hymnals as it brings to light a new religious rhetoric utilized by the Wesleys to express the kind of physical and emotional experience of the Spirit satirized in this image. The Methodist images of the suffering body of Jesus, the ecstatic sympathy with the suffering Christ, and the physical manifestations of spiritual experience privileged in the early hymns of John and Charles Wesley recall the so-called “fleshly spiritualism” featured in German hymns from the seventeenth-century Baroque Lutheran and eighteenth-century Pietist movement. I contend here that the Wesleys’s intercourse with the singing Moravians on a missionary trip to Georgia in 1737 introduced the brothers to the primacy of hymn singing in worship and to a new and different “fleshly” religious rhetoric, rhetoric the Wesleys introduced into eighteenth-century English worship and nineteenth-century revivalism.

To historically contextualize this argument, I begin the chapter with a history of congregational singing in English churches from the sixteenth to eighteenth century, with a specific emphasis on the language and imagery used in Anglican and Dissenting worship preceding the Methodist movement. After establishing the norms of English worship, I turn to John Wesley’s translations of German hymns and his rendering of the language and imagery of “fleshly spiritualism” as a largely unacknowledged source for his innovations. The sections that follow examine Charles Wesley’s appropriation and popularization of such language and imagery to demonstrate the persistence of German religious rhetoric in later English Methodism. In conclusion, I discuss the role of the Methodist hymnody in bringing the spiritualized body into the public sphere with an eye to its expression in nineteenth-century America, the subject of the following chapter.

This argument is not restricted to the Methodist context, but addresses a more general feature of evolving Protestantism. The spiritualized body as a vessel for post-Biblical prophesy was considered a threat to the social and political order in the English-speaking world long before the eighteenth-century Methodist movement. Corporeal prophesy disconcerted English Puritans during the English Civil War and Interregnum. Quakers moved by the “indwelling Light” to quake, roll around on the floor in fits, and bark like dogs horrified non-Quaker onlookers and such behavior landed many in prison for heresy.⁸⁰

Over the course of the eighteenth century, the body became revered by some as a reliable indicator of abstract truths. In the wake of Lockean empiricism, Sensibility and Methodism assigned cultural value to tears, fainting, fits, and flutters as physical manifestations of inward motions—signs of inner states. The body and its senses, according to Locke, were instrumental in the formation of consciousness and language and became a glorified meter of humanity in what G. J. Barker-Benfield has termed the “Culture of Sensibility.”⁸¹ The Methodists, in turn, privileged the body as a litmus test for spiritual truth—that is, the physical sensations of the body provided proof of faith and salvation. Despite this cultural phenomenon, the Church of England continued to stress the corruption and fallibility of the body and instead pinpointed the spiritualized body as a sign of dangerous Methodist enthusiasm.

⁸⁰ See Michele Lise Tarter, “Quaking in the Light: The Politics of Quaker Women’s Corporeal Prophecy in the Seventeenth-Century Transatlantic World,” *A Centre of Wonders: The Body in Early America*, ed. Janet Moore Lindman (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 2001) 145-62.

⁸¹ For an in-depth discussion of the “culture of sensibility” and its philosophical underpinnings, see G. J. Barker-Benfield, *The Culture of Sensibility: Sex and Society in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1992). See also Terry Castle, *The Female Thermometer: Eighteenth-century Culture and the Invention of the Uncanny* (New York: Oxford UP, 1995).

Despite John Wesley's own belief in the body's corruptibility, he rarely speaks of his knowledge of salvation without referencing his body as the site for proof.⁸² Even his conversion account at Aldersgate begins with a physical sensation: "I felt my heart strangely warmed" (Journal May 24, 1738). Relying on his own body for assurance of salvation, he feels, and therefore knows, he has been forgiven. What is more, Wesley's "physiology of conversion" does not discount outward signs as indicators of inward change.⁸³ He defends the physical proofs of faith in the face of unbelievers and those that would sooner "explain them away:"

Perhaps it might be, because of the hardness of our hearts, unready to receive any thing unless we see it with our eyes and hear it with our ears, that God, in tender condescension to our weakness, suffered so many outward signs at the time when he wrought this inward change, to be continually seen and heard among us. (Journal May 20, 1739)

Wesley's narratives of Methodist meetings often provide the physical contortions of congregants as proof of God's presence. In journal entry dated April 25, 1739, Wesley writes "if it were [the truth of God], he would bear witness to his word. Immediately one, and another, and another sunk to the earth: they dropped on every side as thunderstruck. One of them cried aloud." In a series of journal entries from May, 1739, Wesley reports numerous examples of his preaching and the physical reactions of the congregants. For example, he reports that "three persons, almost at once, sunk down as dead . . . But in a short time they were raised up, and knew that 'the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin

⁸² George Lawton notes John Wesley's paradoxical notion of the body in John Wesley's English: A Study of His Literary Style (London: Allen and Unwin, 1962) 21.

⁸³ Richard E. Brantley uses the term "physiology of conversion" to demonstrate the similarities between Lockean empiricism and Methodist theology in Locke, Wesley, and the Method of English Romanticism (Gainesville: U of Florida P, 1984).

of the world,” had taken away their sins.” In another case, he describes a woman, who “broke out into ‘strong cries and tears’ . . . till great drops of sweat ran down her face, and all her bones shook” (Journal April 29, 1739). Such recurrent tropes of Methodist experience narratives can be traced back to Wesley’s physiological experience of the Spirit at his moment of conversion: “I sweated. I trembled. I fainted. I sung” (Journal May 24, 1738).

Wesley’s reference to song points out another way in which Methodists departed from Anglican tradition. Singing hymns of original composition was a new phenomenon quickly labeled a threat to the English religious and political establishment, no matter that the Protestant Reformation’s early stages had been aided by Luther’s own hymns. In 1707, the year Isaac Watts published his first collection of hymns, Queen Anne proclaimed An Act for Securing the Church of England, as by Law established. The Act dictated the procedures for uniting England and Scotland politically, but also included the timely reminder that “any alteration of the liturgy, rites, ceremonies, discipline or government of the church as by law established within this realm . . .” was prohibited.⁸⁴ In 1728, the year Methodism first appeared, King George published Forms of Prayer, with Thanksgiving to Almighty God; To be used in all Churches and Chapels within this Realm . . ., which prescribed the exact contents and order of every church service including special holidays with no place for a hymn (Arnold 74). A more direct derision of hymn singing came later in the century from King George III in his Characteristics of Public Spirit, and National Virtue . . ., “By the King, A Proclamation, for the Encouragement of Piety and Virtue, and for Preventing and Punishing Vice, Profaneness, and Immorality” (1788). One of his “Hints for the Exertion of National Virtue” is for his

⁸⁴ Quoted in Richard Arnold, The English Hymn: Studies in a Genre (New York: Peter Lang, 1995) 74.

subjects to “attend the Churches when Sermons are preached” and to “discourage the obscene Songs, which are frequently introduced on these public Occasions” (qtd. in Arnold 74).

What the King labeled "obscene" and counter to civic virtue, the religious authorities identified as the greatest threat to the practices and beliefs of the Church of England. The Sentiments and Resolution of an Association of Ministers, convened at Weymouth . . . sought to quell the power of hymn singing by outlawing “the practice of singing hymns in the public roads when riding town to town” (qtd. in Arnold 69). The practical concerns of parish ministers were bolstered by upper-level clergymen, who portrayed Methodist hymn singing as evidence of papist incursion. In part III of the 740-page invective entitled The Enthusiasm of Methodists and Papists Compar'd (1751), George Lavington, Bishop of Exeter, elides the symptoms of Methodist enthusiasm and madness, demon possession and the Papacy.⁸⁵ In one case study, the Bishop finds that a man is seized with a strange fit after his conversion and “compelled to sing in a strange Manner (292).” Hymn singing, one of the bishop’s signs of Methodist enthusiasm, also appears in combination with other signs like the spiritualized body. The bishop describes the mad behavior of an acquaintance in another case: “Sometimes he was forced into an extreme Laughter; sometimes into Singing . . . with unusual Heavings in his body (291).”⁸⁶ He goes on to report numerous cases of bodily fits and hymn singing before presenting his final argument, a quote from Methodist leader John Wesley himself: “I sweated. I trembled. I fainted. I sung (320).” The Anglican Bishop set out to demonize

⁸⁵ George Lavington, The Enthusiasm of Methodists and Papists Compar'd Part III (London: J. and P. Knapton, 1751).

⁸⁶ The depictions of Methodist hymn singing and corporeal prophesy bare resemblance to descriptions of demon possession in witchcraft literature.

Methodism by comparing it with the Papacy, but his tirade reveals the greatest perceived threats to social and religious order—the spiritualized body and hymn singing, two “dangerous” facets of Methodist behavior to be explored in depth in this chapter.

The singing Methodists were thus both feared and lampooned, but the hymnody, as we shall see, nonetheless proved to be the single most effective evangelical tool for the Methodist movement. The introduction to John Wesley’s 1780 standard Methodist Collection, the culmination of a series of hymnals beginning in 1737, defined the hymnal as “a little body of experimental and practical divinity” and equated the hymnody with the theology of Methodism (iv). John Wesley’s homilies flooded the literary market, but the widely-circulated hymnals reached hundreds of thousands of potential converts in England and America and placed the Wesleys’s carefully chosen words right into the mouths of the worshipers. For many, the hymnals constituted the main source of doctrinal and theological knowledge of Methodism, and, consequently, the theological self-understanding of English and American Methodists was profoundly shaped by the hymns they sang. Ecstatic singing accompanied every step of the Methodists spiritual journey--conversion, conviction, and sanctification-- and the words to the hymns expressed the physical and emotional experience of the Spirit characteristic of Methodism.

I will now reconstitute the context within which this battle of hymns took place in order to see how the essence of German-language Protestantism was moved into the Anglo-American sphere as one of the central identifiers of Methodism.

ENGLISH CONGREGATIONAL SONG

The Church of England derived much of its theology from Calvinism (also known as Reformed theology) that differed from Lutheranism and Lutheran Pietism in certain key respects. Theologically, Calvinism diverges from Lutheranism in the doctrine of election or limited atonement. Whereas Lutherans believe that Jesus's death atoned for all who believe, Calvinists believe that Jesus died to save only the elect. In contradistinction to Lutheran practice, Calvinists preferred simple, unadorned churches without iconic representations and limited singing in the church to Biblical Psalms.⁸⁷

In accordance with Calvinist practice, congregational singing in the Church of England was limited to scriptural songs until the eighteenth-century publications of Isaac Watts and John and Charles Wesley's collections. Such restrictions were inherent in the Reformation movement from the first. Whereas Luther advocated the composition of original hymns and published a collection of his own writings set to folk tunes, Zwingli and Calvin believed that the Psalms dictated to David by the Holy Spirit were the only appropriate texts for congregational song.⁸⁸ Early attempts to introduce Lutheran hymns to English-speaking congregations ultimately failed. Miles Coverdale's work based on the Wittenburg hymnals was poorly written and banned by King Henry VIII in 1546 for overstepping his efforts at church reform (Benson 25).⁸⁹ In Scotland, the Wedderburn Hymnody based on Lutheran models played a significant role in the Reformation and in the organization of the Reformed Church of Scotland. Eventually, Calvin's influence

⁸⁷ For standard histories of Calvinism and Lutheranism see Robert D. Preus, The Theology of Post-Reformation Lutheranism: A Study of Theological Prolegomena (St. Louis: Concordia, 1970); and John T. McNeill, The History and Character of Calvinism (New York: Oxford UP, 1954).

⁸⁸ Using only Scriptural texts (i.e. no Latin) for worship was a way to further distance themselves from Rome.

⁸⁹ See Myles Coverdale's Goostly Psalmes and Spirituall Songes Drawen Out of the Holy Scripture. &c . . . in George Pearson, The Remains of Myles Coverdale (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1846).

triumphed over that of Luther and the Wedderburn hymns were permanently replaced by the metrical psalms from Geneva (Benson 26). The English fell under Calvin's sway when Marian exiles went to Geneva rather than Wittenburg and returned to England with their translation of the first Psalter, "the whole Psalmes of David in English Meter" in 1562.⁹⁰ Queen Elizabeth and the people enthusiastically received the first Psalter in the vernacular which set the standard for English congregational singing for the next 150 years (Gillman 147-50).

Nonetheless, this early enthusiasm for the local adaptation of that text, known as the Metrical Psalmody—the first congregational singing in the English National Church in the vernacular—eventually gave way to criticism. The earliest critiques of the Psalter came from dissident groups who found fault with both text and performance. Stricter constructionist Puritans sought a more literal translation of the Psalmody, an effort which culminated in the production of a new translation, the 1640 Bay Psalm Book of New England, a revision that exercised little effect on the Church of England (Benson 47).⁹¹ During the Restoration, when congregations re-embraced the standard Psalter without delay, the Society of Friends and the Arminian Baptists emerged as hostile to congregational singing (Benson 91). Quaker founder George Fox warned against

⁹⁰ Frederick John Gillman, The Evolution of the English Hymn (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1927) 146. Commonly called Sternhold and Hopkins or the Old Version, the full citation of the English Psalter is as follows: Thomas Sternhold and John Hopkins, The whole Booke of Psalmes, collected into Englysh metre by T. Starnhold, I. Hopkins & others: conferred with the Ebrue, with apt Notes to sing them withal, Faithfully perused and allowed according to thordre appointed in the Quenes maiesties Iniunctions. Very mete to be used of all sortes of people priuately for their solace & comfort: laying apart all ungoldly Songes and Ballades, which tende only to the norishing of vyce, and corrupting of youth (London: John Day, 1562). A section of hymns appears before and after the collection of psalms that suggests the possibility of the use of hymns in English Churches. Historian Louis Benson dismisses these appendices as hymns primarily intended for private use (as indicated in the title) and finds no material there to account for the nucleus of a later English hymnody (27-32).

⁹¹ The Whole Book of Psalmes Faithfully Translated into English Metre, trans. Richard Mather, John Elliot, and Thomas Weld (Cambridge, Ma: Stephen Daye, 1640).

metrical psalm singing as something that “quenched the Spirit,” because it lacked the spontaneity he found central to worship, and so he condemned singing from a book as a “carnal formality” that had at best value for the senses, not for spirituality (Gillmann 178).⁹² Baptists, also concerned with this kind of formalism, outlawed the Psalter (Gillmann 178).

By the turn of the eighteenth-century, Dissenters and loyal Anglicans alike registered their aversion to the metrical Psalms. Following the common line of critique, devoted Anglican John Wesley condemned the “wretched, scandalous rhyming” of the verse and the formalistic, mechanical singing by the congregation (Nuelson 21). Real circumstance justified such condemnation: in numerous country parishes where many were illiterate, for example, the clerk read each line aloud before the congregation sang, so it could be committed to memory (Gillman 198). Wesley lambasted this practice of “lining out” as “disgusting tuneless repetition” (Nuelson 21). Independent Isaac Watts also regretted the debased performance of the Metrical Psalmody in the Preface to Hymns and Spiritual Songs (1707):⁹³

But of all our Religious Solemnities *Psalmody* is the most unhappily manag'd. That very Action which should elevated us to the most delightful and divine Sensations doth not only flat our Devotion, but too often awakens our Regret, and touches all the springs of Uneasiness within Us. (iv)

The concerns shared by Watts and Wesley have been corroborated by historians; by all accounts, congregational singing in the Church of England had fallen to such a dismal

⁹² The Society of Friends was not hostile to all congregational singing and originally allowed spontaneous song during meetings. Only later was singing altogether excluded from Quaker worship (Benson 94-6)

⁹³ Isaac Watts, Hymns and Spiritual Songs (London: J. Humphreys for John Lawrence, 1707).

state that there was even talk of turning it over to a choir made up of “charity children” (Nuelson 21).

Criticism was not confined to the performance of the metrical Psalms; the text of the standard Sternhold and Hopkins Psalter was also called into question. The early translators were not poets, and the Psalmody was designed as a utilitarian device to enable simple congregational singing by the people. In contrast to the Puritan desire for a more literal, less poetic text, the English literary culture critiqued the poor, prosaic quality of the translations of the standard version, a critique which spurred the production of a freer, more lyrical paraphrase of the Psalms in the 1696 “New Version” of the Psalmody.⁹⁴ The Bishop of London, “persuaded it may take off that unhappy Objection which has hitherto lain against the Singing Psalms,” “heartily recommended the Use of this Version to all his Brethren within his Diocess” (qtd. in Benson 48).

At the same time, questions about the suitability of the strictly Old Testament text on which the Psalters were based arose, and so Psalters in a purportedly more Christian language, i.e. more New Testament in inspiration, began to appear. Isaac Watts, concerned that the “Matter and Words to which we confine all our Songs” rendered some “opposite to the Spirit of the Gospel” (iv-vi) set about “Christianizing” the Psalms in his Hymns and Spiritual Songs (1707) and Psalms of David Imitated (1719).⁹⁵ His free translations of the Psalms, purportedly in the language of the New Testament, were considered a great innovation and so different that they helped break the English taboo against original hymn composition. Watts’s work was preceded by the earlier efforts of

⁹⁴ Nicholas Brady and Nahum Tate, A new Version of the Psalms of David, fitted to the tunes used in Churches (London: M. Clark, 1696). This version was written by Irishmen Dr. Nicholas Brady and Nahum Tate, Poet Laureate. It replaced the Old Version throughout London and in some country parishes and was known as the London Psalter (Benson 48).

⁹⁵ Isaac Watts, Psalms of David Imitated (London: printed for J. Clark, R. Ford, and R. Cruttenden, 1719).

John Patrick and John Mason, but Watts's greater appeal to Anglicans contributed to his success, and therefore, he is credited with this change to original hymn composition.⁹⁶

Without question, Isaac Watts played an important role in charting a new course for the English hymn, but it was the boldness of John and Charles Wesley's move beyond improving and modernizing scripture to create wholly original works that permanently freed English-speaking congregations at home and abroad from the strictures of the Psalter. That is, the Wesleys' reversion to a position more like Luther's, allowing for original texts that spoke to the people, would ultimately prevail.

Yet over the nearer term, Watts's translations in New Testament language found fertile ground in the Congregationalist (Puritan) churches in eighteenth-century America rather than at home among Anglicans.⁹⁷ Excepting the Dissenting congregations and limited private use, the hymn-books of Watts found no such reception among English congregations who remained loyal to the old Sternhold and Hopkins. Across the Atlantic, however, Watts's fresh scriptural paraphrases were embraced by worshippers, who remained loyal to Calvin's Psalms-only mandate for congregational song but had lost enthusiasm for the outdated Bay Psalm Book. It wasn't until the Methodist movement gained momentum in nineteenth-century America that the Wesleys's hymns enjoyed a circulation to rival that of Watts.

⁹⁶ John Patrick, A Century of select Psalms and portions of the Psalms of David, especially those of praise (London: J.M. for Richard Royston, 1679), and John Patrick, The Psalms of David in metre: fitted to the tunes used in parish-churches (London: printed for L. Meredith, 1701). Watts rather than Patrick remains associated with these efforts, because Patrick's work resonated more with Nonconformists than with the Church of England (Benson 53). Both Watts and Wesley were influenced by earlier works of Anglican clergyman John Mason who wrote "Songs of Praise," a book of hymn-like poetry published in 1683 (Gillman 171).

⁹⁷ For more information on Watts's reception in America, see Benson's The English Hymn Chapter IV "Dr. Watts' 'Renovation of Psalmody'" 161-204.

While recognizing the significance of Isaac Watts's innovations, modern historians and critics of the English hymnody laud the great leap made by Charles Wesley's original verse, even as they critique the emotional, sentimental language he used. Hymnologists agree that the language, setting, tone, and first person speaker featured in Wesley's hymns distinguishes his verse from the more objective and formal verse of Watts. Hymnologist Frederick John Gillman, for example, has praised Wesley's passionate verse as something that appeals to the masses and leaves the more reserved verse of Watts "far behind" (228). Conversely, contemporary critics of Charles Wesley denounced those same impassioned verses. Still, it seems that differences in diction and structure, concludes religious historian Bernard Lord Manning, rendered Wesley's hymns more palatable to an eighteenth-century worshiper.⁹⁸ Watts's hymns, the product of seventeenth-century English verse, had also abandoned the Latin phrases that enrich Wesley's verse (Manning 89).⁹⁹ In terms of setting, Watts followed seventeenth-century poets like Milton and set the drama of the human soul on a cosmic stage where God is sublime and time and space feel expansive (Manning 82-4). Conversely, the setting of Wesley's verses was as simple as his poetic style: a single believer and his/her emotional relationship with Jesus Christ. Wesley's shift from Watts's epic verse to the more personal, sentimental verse resonated with the eighteenth-century English worshiper familiar with the appeals of the culture of sensibility and receptive to its philosophical underpinnings.

Even as critics and historians of the English hymnody document the historic shift made by the Wesleys's hymnals as I have summarized it, few speculate about the source

⁹⁸ Bernard Lord Manning, *The Hymns of Wesley and Watts* (London: Epworth, 1954).

⁹⁹ This was probably an attempt to distance his verse from Catholic hymns.

of and model for the original, sentimental verse.¹⁰⁰ It is my contention that the source for Charles Wesley's novel verse was located in John Wesley's earliest hymnals—his translations of the fleshly-spiritual hymns of the Baroque Lutherans and German Pietists. The 32 German hymns John Wesley translated and published in his hymnals provided Charles Wesley with a model of original diction for spirituality that had not been available to other hymnals: the Germans who had been composing original hymns since the Reformation, providing a model of innovative diction and imagery to express religious experience. Let us now turn to this corpus of devotional imagery and diction to see what John Wesley brought to his congregations and to his brother's endeavors.

BRIDAL MYSTICISM

The fleshly spiritualism found in seventeenth and eighteenth-century German hymns and other devotional literature had no counterpart in the Church of England's worship when John and Charles Wesley first encountered its language and imagery in use among the Moravians in 1737. The "fleshly spiritualism" Wesley adopted from the Moravian hymnal privileges images of Jesus as man and of his physical, suffering body, moving beyond a more abstract image of God the Father. The portrayal of the suffering Jesus, in turn, suited a religion privileging individual spiritual experience: it stresses emotional sympathy of the believer with Jesus, often manifested in the body and expressed in the form of cries, groans, and sighs. Finally, in this "fleshly" representation of spirituality familiar from Pietism, the believer can address Jesus as a lover and even

¹⁰⁰ Hymnologists Louis Benson and Donald Davie, historian F. Ernest Stoeffler, and nineteenth-century Congregationalist clergyman/ hymn collection Lyman Beecher have all acknowledged the influence of Moravian hymnody on Charles Wesley's verse. To date there are only two comprehensive studies linking the rhetoric of Methodist hymns to that of their German predecessors.

embrace him in human form. As we shall see, this diction and imagery made most eighteenth-century English-speaking worshipers in the Anglican and Puritan traditions uncomfortable.

In taking up this body of song, John Wesley was responding to a real need of the age. When the Wesleys were first exposed to the fleshly spirituality of Moravian hymns *en route* to Georgia, Anglican congregational song was limited, as we saw, to the Sternhold and Hopkins's The Whole Book of Psalms, Collected into English Metre (1562), which portrays a remote Old Testament God and a believer who prayed to Him from a respectful distance. Any cries to God from the congregation were simply interpreted as pleas for help, not the result of sympathy or physical manifestations of any kind of spiritual visitation. The preferred Anglican physical depiction of God was limited to an "outstretched arm" to his chosen people or, conversely, to the wrath for Israel kindled in his "breast." The occasional personification of God in human form portrays a loving God with a *metaphorical* embrace of the Israelites with his "outstretched arm," not God in human form physically embracing the believer. The believer depicted in the Psalms, in turn, addresses God the Father with respect, humility, and even fear, not in the familiar terms one would use to address a lover.

But the Bible has many different images. For example, the "lover imagery" or bridal mysticism in the Old Testament practically overwhelms the metaphorical readings of Canticles, which was certainly familiar to English congregations but was probably rarely, if ever, sung in the Church of England. Far from taboo, bridal mysticism had appeared frequently in the sermons and devotional literature in early seventeenth-century

England to complement the Puritanical emphasis on personal devotion.¹⁰¹ Yet such lover imagery, emotionalism, and the use of metaphors common to Puritan worship became distrusted expressions of spirituality in the Church of England during the Civil Wars and Interregnum in the 1640s and 1650s. The fear of sectarian abuses drove the Anglican Church away from the highly personal Calvinistic doctrines of grace and conversion and their metaphorical and affective preaching styles, thus putting an end to the use of marital imagery in the Church of England by 1660 at the latest.¹⁰²

Dissenters continued to use marital imagery throughout the second half of the seventeenth-century and into the eighteenth-century, albeit with caution. Isaac Watts, for instance, published poetry with marital imagery in his 1706 collection Horae Lyricae. Poems Chiefly of the Lyric Kind. In the second edition dated 1709, he explains that he omitted some of these hymns, because upon review he “found some Expressions that were not suited to the plainest Capacity, and the metaphors are too bold to please the weaker Christian” (Preface xvi).¹⁰³ He goes on to defend his lyrics, which reveals the English public’s growing discomfort with such imagery:

Amongst the Songs that are dedicated to Divine Love, I think I may be
bold to assert that I never composed one Line of them with any other
Design than what they are applied to here; and I have endeavoured to

¹⁰¹ Stanley Stewart, The Enclosed Garden: The Tradition and the Image in Seventeenth-Century Poetry (Madison: U of Wisconsin P, 1966) and Barbara Kiefer Lewalski, Protestant Poetics and the Seventeenth-Century Religious Lyric (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1977).

¹⁰² Michael P. Winship, “Behold The Bridegroom Cometh! Marital Imagery in Massachusetts Preaching 1630-1730,” Early American Literature 27 (1992): 175. This can also be documented by the number of paraphrases and commentaries on the Song of Songs, which fell off dramatically after 1660. See also Julie Sievers, “Refiguring the Song of Songs: John Cotton’s 1655 Sermon and the Antinomian Controversy” New England Quarterly 76.1 (March 2003) 73-107. The fact that such imagery coincides with the Restoration may surprise scholars that align such imagery with Catholicism and Protestant mysticism. The imagery, however, had become politically charged and could no longer be used in church worship.

¹⁰³ Isaac Watts, Horae Lyricae. Poems Chiefly of the Lyric Kind. In three books (London: J Humfreys for N. Cliff, 1709).

secure them all from being perverted and defaced to wanton Passions, by several Lines in them that can never be applied to a meaner Love. Are not the noblest Instances of the Grace of Christ represented under the Figure of a conjugal State, and described in one of the sweetest Odes, and the softest Pastoral that ever was written? I appeal to Solomon, in his Song, and his Father David, in *Psal.* xlv . . . (xvii)

Watts's caution with such language only increases with time, as the footnote he added to the quote above in the seventh edition published in 1737 attests: "Solomon's Song was much more in use among Preachers and Writers of Divinity when these Poems were written than it is now. 1736."¹⁰⁴ By 1736, then, the year before John Wesley translated and published his first collection of hymns, bridal mysticism had become an obsolete, distrusted metaphor for divine love among Dissenters and Anglicans alike.

Yet innovations came from outside British cultural circles to revive such obsolescent imagery. On a missionary trip to Georgia in 1737, John and Charles Wesley lived, worshipped, and sang hymns with the Moravian Pietists. He learned German and translated 33 hymns from the 1735 Herrnhuter Gesangbuch, the hymnal created for Count Zinzendorf's *Brüdergemeine*, known in America as the Moravian Church.¹⁰⁵ The 1735 Herrnhuter Gesangbuch, Wesley's source for the German hymns, was largely based on the German Pietist hymnal from Halle, the Geistreicher Gesangbuch (1704), which included an inordinate number of "fleshly" hymns by the seventeenth-century poet

¹⁰⁴ Isaac Watts, Horae Lyricae. Poems, Chiefly of the Lyric Kind. In three books. (London: for Richard Hett, 1737) xxiii.

¹⁰⁵ For a detailed study with full texts of the German originals and Wesley's first publications of the translations, see John L. Nuelsen, John Wesley and the German Hymn: A Detailed Study of John Wesley's Translations of Thirty Three German Hymns (Calverley, Yorkshire: A. S. Holbrook, 1972).

Angelus Silesius (Johann Scheffler).¹⁰⁶ Following Silesius's lead, Zinzendorf developed his own fleshly style of hymn writing to express what scholars have termed his blood and wounds theology, which materialized any spiritual abstractions in the blood and wounds of Christ, claiming them as the physical conduits to salvation.¹⁰⁷ Overall, Zinzendorf believed that human beings could only grasp salvation in human terms, and as such, stressed the humanity of Christ and his physical sufferings.¹⁰⁸

When John Wesley first encountered the singing Moravians, he was on assignment in Georgia as an Anglican clergyman to bring as many natives and colonists as possible into the practices and traditions of the Church of England. His experiences among the Moravians, however, profoundly changed his own spiritual beliefs as well as his evangelical methods and it also compromised his strict adherence to Anglican practices. By way of the Moravians who had not yet rejected this tenet of Halle Pietism, Wesley became acquainted with a different set of expressions of spirituality and salvation, particularly the German Pietist *Bußkampf* conversion that required believers to pass through a state of grief and anguish (convincement of sin) before rejoicing in salvation.¹⁰⁹ This Pietist "method" of expressing spirituality would eventually become the theological cornerstone of the Methodist movement. Taking over parts of the

¹⁰⁶ Johannes Scheffler published several collections of poetry under the pseudonym Angelus Silesius, including: Angelus Silesius, Heilige Seelenlust oder Geistliche hirtelieder der in ihren Jesum verliebten psyche (Halle: M. Niemeyer 1901 [1657]) and Angelus Silesius, Cherubinischer Wandersmann oder, Geisterreiche Sinn- und Schluss-Reime zur göttlichen Beschauligkeit anleitende (Glatz: Ignatij Schubarthi, 1675). Many of his hymns still appear in German Protestant hymnals.

¹⁰⁷ Craig D. Atwood, Community of the Cross: Moravian Piety in Colonial Bethlehem (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State UP, 2004) 100; Erica Geiger, "Zinzendorfs Stellung zum halleschen Busskampf und zum Bekehrungserlebnis," Unitas Fratrum 49/50 (2002): 13-23.

¹⁰⁸ Atwood, 77-82.

¹⁰⁹ The Moravians later abandoned August Francke's "Busskampf" conversion. Zinzendorf never experienced the pain and anguish associated with German Pietist conversion, and the Moravians later replaced this type of conversion with the *Versöhnungslehre*, or the belief in a sudden joyous conversion with the knowledge of Christ's atonement for all sin. For more on this difference, see Frederick Dreyer, The Genesis of Methodism (Bethlehem: Lehigh UP, 1999), 40.

Moravian social organization, Wesley also created religious societies that met outside of the weekly service and encouraged the singing of hymns, two practices he adopted from the Moravians that became fundamental to the later Methodist movement.¹¹⁰

Tracking the correlations between what Wesley experienced among the Moravians and what he brought back to his own community is revealing. When Wesley translated a selection of German hymns during his stay in Georgia, he chose boldly in favor of the fleshly imagery featured in Baroque Lutheran and German Pietist hymns. Of the 33 hymns translated by Wesley during his stay in Georgia, eight are from the Baroque period—four by Paul Gerhardt and four by Angelus Silesius--and thirteen are by German Pietists. Eleven of the total hymns translated are by Moravians—to include eight by Zinzendorf himself—and one is by well-known radical Pietists Gottfried Arnold and one by Berthelsdorf pastor Johann Andreas Rothe, a Lutheran pastor with Moravian leanings.

Wesley's translations are admittedly loose and in some cases involve excising language and imagery like bridal mysticism that had become obsolete in England. However, in his excision of specific terms like “bride” and “bridegroom,” he keeps the carnal imagery, ecstatic sympathy, and amatory language of the originals even in his more “respectable” translations. He was clearly attracted to the German use of physical, even sensuous imagery in the depiction of spiritual experience. Significantly for his intentions, he published his first five translations of German hymns alongside the Dissenting texts of Watts and George Herbert in the so-called Charleston Collection of 1737, the first book of hymns published by John Wesley and the first hymnal published

¹¹⁰ Nuelson, 21-5; Clifford W. Towlson, Moravian and Methodist: Relationships and Influences in the Eighteenth Century (London: Epworth, 1957) 185-6.

on American soil.¹¹¹ Given the exclusive use of metrical Psalms in the Church of England when Wesley traveled to Georgia, his publication of a selection of original hymns for use in his newfound religious societies conflicted with traditional Anglican practices and demonstrated a new approach to expressing a congregation's spirituality. Moreover, his choice to print the fleshly imagery and amatory language of the German hymns violated the appropriate tenor of Anglican devotional materials. Each text, as we shall now see, reinforces his choice.

One of the very first German hymns Wesley translated and included in the first American hymnal is Zinzendorf's "Jesu, to Thee my heart I bow."¹¹² Throughout Wesley's translation of this hymn, the speaker tempers Zinzendorf's overt bridal mysticism while maintaining the amatory tone. For example, Wesley replaces the German word "Bräutigam" (bridegroom) in the first stanza with "my Love" in the final line. Even as he omits verses 2-9 that detail the "bride's" feelings for her "bridegroom," Wesley's speaker still "desire[s]" his Love's "sweetness." Following English taste, Wesley excises the bridal imagery that had fallen out of use in the Church of England since 1660, but retains the familiar address of the deity as "my Love" and the amatory language that had not been used in Anglican sermons since before the Restoration.

Well outside the proper diction and tenor of eighteenth-century Anglican devotional literature, Wesley's version of Zinzendorf's hymn flirts with the imagery of bridal mysticism. The hymn begins with a personal address to Jesus in an amatory tone:

¹¹¹ John Wesley, *Collection of Psalms and Hymns* (Charles-Town: Lewis Timothy, 1737).

¹¹² Throughout this chapter I use the appendix of Nuelson's *John Wesley and the German Hymn* for the texts of the German originals and Wesley's translations.

| | |
|---|--------------------------------|
| Jesu, to thee my Heart I bow, | Reiner bräutigam meiner seelen |
| Strange Flames far from my Soul remove: | tilge fremder liebe flamm |
| Fairest among Ten Thousand thou, | lasz mich deine lieb erwehlen |
| Be thou my Lord, my Life, my Love. | auserwehlter bräutigam |

As the speaker addresses Jesus as “my Love” and describes him as one may a lover, as “fairest among ten thousand,” a bridal situation is almost inevitably invoked. In the second stanza, the speaker seeks communion with Jesus in his/ her own body.

| | |
|---|----------------------------------|
| All Heaven thou fill’st with pure desire; | Liebe, deine glut entzünde |
| O, shine upon my frozen Breast; | meine kalt-gewordne brust, |
| With sacred Warmth my heart inspire; | dasz ich dich recht schmackhafft |
| | finde, |
| May I too thy hid Sweetness tast. [sic] | o du aller engel lust! |

The word “breast” and the sense of “tast[ing]” create the concrete image of the believer in his body rather than a disembodied spirit or heart receiving the spirit -- a doubling of the mind and body common in Pietist imagery, but not in Anglican at the time. The third stanza begins “I see thy Garments roll’d in Blood/ Thy streaming Head, thy Hands, thy Side,” phrasing that replaces any abstract image of the deity with the concrete suffering body of Jesus. Even without explicit bridal mysticism, then, Wesley’s translation retains the physical imagery of the union of Jesus and the believer in a corporal form and features the direct address of Jesus as “my Love,” elements that would make future editors of English and American hymnals (including the mature Wesley) uncomfortable.

Self-censorship soon set in, as Wesley himself moved away from Pietist circles and sought to secure his own church. For what he eventually deemed inappropriate expressions, Wesley excluded his own translation of Zinzendorf’s “Jesus, to thee my heart I bow,” as well as Charles Wesley’s “Jesus, lover of my soul” from A Collection of hymns for the use of the people called Methodists (1780), which formed the nucleus of all later Methodist hymnals. In his 1789 Sermon “On Knowing Christ After the

Flesh,”¹¹³ Wesley recalls his meeting with the Moravians in Georgia, his translations of the German hymns, and the editing of “improper” expressions:

I translated many of their hymns for the use of our own congregations. . . .
Yet I am not sure that I have taken sufficient care to pare off every improper word or expression, -- every one that may seem to border on a familiarity which does not so well suit the mouth of a worm of the earth when addressing himself to the God of heaven. I have indeed particularly endeavoured, in all the hymns which are addressed to our blessed Lord, to avoid every fondling expression, and to speak as to the most High God, to him that in glory equal with the Father, in majesty co-eternal. (119-20)

Those translations that did not receive careful enough editing, we may conclude, were those with “fondling” expressions he omitted from the standard Collection of 1780 like Scheffler’s “O God of good the unfathomed Sea,” which refers to Jesus as “Lover of mankind” and Gmelin’s “O thou, who all things canst control,” in which the speaker’s physical longing for Jesus resembles the physical desire of a lover—“panting,” “sighing,” and “fainting.”

Even the revised, more respectable translations Wesley included in the 1780 Collection pushed the limits of eighteenth-century English taste in their use of physical imagery to depict the union of believer and deity in human form. Wesley never opposed this kind of imagery, as long as it remained “untainted” by explicit lover imagery or implicit bridal mysticism. For example, Wesley prudently translates Deszler’s “Jesu, whose glory’s streaming rays” by changing the believer’s “kiss” (kusz) into an “embrace” of Jesus:

¹¹³ John Wesley, Sermons of Several Occasions (London: G. Story, 1800).

Into Thy gracious hands I fall, Ich fal in deine gnaden-hande,
 And with the arms of faith *embrace* und bitte dem glaubens-*kusz*:

Even without the believer's kiss, the believer's embrace of Jesus marked a new and controversial image in England.

We can see Wesley's own discomfort with this image in another translation dated from roughly the same period. Wesley begins his translation of "Now I have found the ground, wherein" with a faithful rendering of the initial image: the wounds of Jesus as an anchor for the speaker's soul. To avoid the speaker's physical embrace with Jesus as it is depicted in the original, Wesley inserts the word "Father" to create the more innocuous image of a distanced, abstract deity with open "arms of love," an Old Testament image common in the Sternhold and Hopkins Metrical Psalms:

| | |
|--|--|
| <p>Now I have found the ground, wherein Sure my soul's anchor may remain,-- The <i>wounds of Jesus</i>, for my sin Before the world's foundation slain: Whose mercy shall unshaken stay, When heaven and earth are fled away.</p> | <p>Ich habe nun den grund, gefunden, der meinen ancker ewig hält: wo anders, als in Jesu wunden? Da lag er vor der zeit der welt: Den grund der unbeweglich steht, Wenn erd und himmel untergeht.</p> |
| <p><i>Father</i>, Thy everlasting grace Our scanty thought surpasses far: Thy heart still melts with tenderness, <i>Thy arms of love still open are</i> Returning sinners to receive, That mercy they may taste, and live.</p> | <p>Es ist das ewige erbarmen, das alles dencken übersteigt: Es sind die offnen liebes-armen, desz, der sich zu dem sünder neigt; dem allemahl das hertze bricht, wir kommen oder kommen nicht.</p> |

Wesley's insertion of the word "Father" successfully evades the physical embrace, an obvious image that may have offended English audiences. However, he retains the potentially more disturbing image of the soul dropping anchor in the wounds of Jesus, a significant reversal of communion imagery to be discussed later in this chapter.

Despite his apparent hesitation, John Wesley translated the image of the believer and Jesus in a physical embrace in several instances and included those and the similar images written by Charles Wesley in his conservative 1780 Collection. These images captured in the Wesleyan hymnals marked a challenge to acceptable religious imagery in eighteenth-century England. Divorced from the Canticles or the bridal mysticism common in the preceding century, this image reflects an important aspect of Wesleyan theology: the spirit in the flesh. The image of Jesus and the believer in an embrace outside an amatory context presents the human body as a channel for spiritual experience. To be held in Jesus's arms served merely as a visual representation of the internal sensations of faith and salvation experienced by the Wesleys and their followers.

“PERCEPTIBLE INSPIRATION”

Whether it be a physical embrace or the “fondling” expressions of bridal mysticism, such imagery and language are stylistic devices that, in or out of fashion, merely reflect a foundational aspect of Wesley's theology: the belief in a physical and emotional experience of the Holy Spirit.¹¹⁴ In correspondence with an Anglican cleric, Wesley conceded that the difference between Anglicans and Methodists could be summed up in a single phrase that constituted “the main doctrine of the Methodists:” “perceptible inspiration.” He defines “perceptible inspiration” as the

¹¹⁴ Wesley first used the term “experience” to signify “the experience of real Christians” and “what the Children of God experience” in a 1746 sermon entitled “The Witness of the Spirit, I” based on Romans 8:16 (“The Spirit itself bears witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God”) “The witness of the spirit” recalled Wesley's encounter with Moravian minister August Spangenberg in Georgia, whose simple question about whether John Wesley had the “witness of the Spirit within himself” that made him question his faith and led him experience his conversion at Aldersgate (Journal of John Wesley February 7, 1736).

inspiration of God's Holy Spirit whereby he fills us with righteousness, peace, and joy with love to him and all mankind. And we believe it cannot be, in the nature of things, that a man should be filled with this peace and joy and love by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost without perceiving it, as clearly as he does the light of the sun. This is (so far as I understand them) the main doctrine of the Methodists. This is the substance of what we all preach. And I will still believe, none is a true Christian till he experiences it.¹¹⁵

This main doctrine of the Methodist movement found its fullest expression in the Wesleyan hymnals. The physical and emotional experience of the Spirit as portrayed in so many of John Wesley's German translations captures this cornerstone of Methodist doctrine and explains Wesley's decision to include half of the 32 published German translations in the standard Collection of 1780. Wesley may have outgrown the "fondling," amatory expressions of his German translations, but he remained committed to the underlying premise of German fleshly spiritualism: the expression of physical and emotional sensations of the spirit, what he termed "perceptible inspiration."

For Wesley, the German Pietists, and even the Baroque Lutherans that preceded them, depictions of religious experience were both emotional and physical. The German hymns that record sensible religious experience do so through the excitation of sympathy with the suffering Jesus, and, to that end, bring forth graphic images of Christ's sufferings on the cross. This section traces in more detail Wesley's adoption of the suffering/ sympathy imagery from the seventeenth-century Baroque Lutheran hymns and the eighteenth-century Pietist hymns translated by the young John Wesley and selected

¹¹⁵ Quoted in Ann Taves, Fits, Trances, and Visions: Experiencing Religion and Explaining Experience from Wesley to James (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1999) 51.

for inclusion in the 1780 Collection by the mature Wesley. The section concludes with a discussion of the significance of John Wesley's appropriation of this fleshly-spiritual imagery as it contributes to the scholarly debate on Wesley's stance vis-à-vis physical marks of the spirit.

Vivid crucifixion imagery coupled with the sympathetic emotions of the believer appeared in seventeenth-century Lutheran hymns by Paul Gerhardt (1607-1676) translated by John Wesley. Paul Gerhardt's hymns belong to the transitional period of German hymnody between the churchly and confessional hymn (*Bekenntnislied*) and the pietistic and devotional hymn (*Erbauungslied*), which focused on the personal experience of faith often depicted by "fleshly" imagery.¹¹⁶ The Pietist enclave at Halle and Zinzendorf's *Brüdergemeine* played an important role in transmitting the fleshly spiritualism of Baroque Lutheran hymns to eighteenth and nineteenth-century believers. The 1704 Geistreicher Gesangbuch includes both contemporary Pietist hymns and earlier Baroque Lutheran hymns with more by Gerhardt than by any other single author.¹¹⁷ The Halle collection, in turn, served as a significant source for Zinzendorf's 1735 Herrnhuter Gesangbuch, the source for Wesley's early translations of Gerhardt's "Extended on a cursed tree" and "Jesu, thy boundless love to me," two hymns laden with graphic crucifixion imagery and ecstatic sympathy.¹¹⁸

¹¹⁶ Theodore Brown Hewitt, Paul Gerhardt as a Hymn Writer and his Influence on English Hymnody (New Haven: Yale UP, 1918), 13. Gerhardt is not considered a Pietist, because he predates the movement and his hymns were later used by Pietists and non-Pietists alike. However, an inordinate number of Gerhardt's hymns appear in the Geistlicher Gesangbuch of 1704 from the Pietist enclave at Halle, which indicates a Pietist enthusiasm for his hymns. The Pietist hymnal from Halle served as a significant source for Zinzendorf's Herrnhuter Gesangbuch of 1735, the source for Wesley's early translations from the German.

¹¹⁷ Johann Anastasius Freylinghausen, ed., Geistreiches Gesangbuch (Halle: Verlegung des Wäysenhauses, [1704] 1734).

¹¹⁸ Count Ludwig von Zinzendorf, ed., Sammlung geist- und lieblicher Lieder: eine grosse Anzahl der kern-vollesten alten und erwecklichsten neuen Gesänge (Herrnhuth: M. Christian Gottfr., 1735).

“Extended on a cursed tree” begins with a vivid depiction of the crucifixion scene in verse one and the speaker’s confession of the crime in verse three:

| | |
|---|--|
| Extended on a cursed tree, Besmer’d with dust, and sweat, and blood, See there, the King of Glory see! Sinks and expires the Son of God! . . . | O welt sieh hier dein Leben am stamm des creutzes schweben: dein heil sinckt in den tod: der grosse Fürst der ehren lässt willig sich beschweren mit schlägen, hohn und grossem spott. |
|---|--|

| | |
|---|---|
| I, I alone have done the deed! ‘Tis I thy sacred flesh have torn: My sins have caused Thee, Lord, to bleed; Pointed the nail, and fixed the thorn. | Ich, ich und meine sünden, die sich wie körnlein finden des sandes an dem meer, die haben dir erreget das elend, das dich schläget und das betrübte marter-heer. |
|---|---|

Jesus’s suffering body at the hands of his crucifier, the hymn’s speaker, culminates in the speaker’s sympathy with the suffering Christ in the closing verse:

| | |
|--|--|
| Still let Thy tears, Thy groans, Thy sighs O’erflow my eyes, and heave my breast, Till loose from flesh and earth I rise, And ever in Thy bosom rest. | Dein seuffzen und dein stöhnen, und die viel tausend thränen, die dir geflossen zu, die sollen mich am ende in deinem schoosz und hände begleiten zu der ewgen ruh. |
|--|--|

The speaker’s sympathy with Jesus is so acute, he/ she actually manifests Christ’s physical pain and suffering in his/her own body. The closest union the speaker can achieve with Jesus before death is through physical empathy; the “tears,” “groans,” and “sighs” of the crucified Christ cause the speaker’s eyes to cry and the speaker’s breast to “heave” in tandem.

The “tears,” “sighs,” and believer’s heaving “breast” can be observed in another Gerhardt hymn translated by John Wesley, “Jesu, thy boundless love to me:”

| | |
|--|---|
| O that my heart, which open stands, May catch each drop, that torturing pain, | O dasz mein hertze offen stünd, und fleiszig möcht auffangen |
|--|---|

| | |
|--|---|
| <p>Arm'd by my sins, wrung from Thy hands, Thy feet, Thy head, Thy every vein: That still my breast may heave with sighs, Still tears of love o'erflow my eyes.</p> | <p>die tröpflein bluts die meine sünd im Garten dir abdrangen, ach! Dasz sich meiner augen brunn, aufthät und mit viel stöhnen heisze thränen vergösse, wie die thun, die sich in liebe sehnen.</p> |
|--|---|

The imagery differs from the first example, which described a kind of physical empathy-- that is, physical manifestations resulting from the feeling of sympathy. The believer in this hymn still sympathizes with Christ's "torturing pain," but the physical reaction of the speaker comes directly from the reception of Christ's blood in an unusual communion image, rendering the believer's tears and sighs the result of direct spiritual visitation. This potentially more dangerous image left open the possibility for corporeal prophesy, something transatlantic theologians and critics of the eighteenth and nineteenth-century revivals feared.

The Pietists at Halle clearly averred such imagery and included Gerhardt's hymns in the 1707 Geistreicher Gesangbuch alongside numerous Baroque Lutheran hymns and contemporary Pietist hymns that featured emotional and physical reactions to the Spirit. Freylinghausen, the editor of the Halle hymnal, included five hymns in the second part of his collection from Ernest Lange, a magistrate from Dresden, who published a collection of hymns in 1711. "O God, Thou bottomless abyss" was selected for Zinzendorf's Herrnhuter Gesangbuch of 1735 and chosen by John Wesley for his 1737 Charlestown Collection. Lange's speaker begins the hymn with a description of the awe he feels in contemplation of God the Father:

While Thee, all-infinite I set
By faith before me ravish'd eye,
My weakness bends beneath the weight;
O'erpower'd I sink, I faint, I die.

Ich stellte dich zwar mir
und andern gerne für;
doch werd ich meiner schwachheit innen:
Weil alles, was du bist,
Nur end und anfang ist,
Verlier ich drüber alle sinnen.

Fainting, or losing one's senses ("sinnen") in religious contemplation was a kind of physical proof of religious experience, whether it be sudden convincement of sin, or sudden conversion. Fainting was commonplace in sentimental literature of the time and, like crying, proved that emotion could overtake the body.

Pietist hymnists also embraced physical and emotional sensations of faith and empathetic sufferings with the crucified Christ in their own original compositions. John Wesley translated "My soul before Thee prostrate lies" by C. F. Richter, physician of the orphanage at Halle, and published it in the 1737 Charlestown Collection. Similar to the Baroque Lutheran hymns of Gerhardt, Richter's speaker desires to suffer in empathy:

Lost and undone, for aid I cry;
In Thy death, Saviour, let me die!
Grieved with Thy grief, pain'd with Thy pain,
Ne'er may I feel self-love again.

Schau her, ich fühle mein verderben,
lass mich in deinem tode sterben;
o könnte doch in deiner pein
die eigenheit ertödtet seyn.

Empathy unites the soul with Jesus, culminating in the speaker's sensible inspiration:

"And *feel* (what endless age shall prove)/ That Thou, my Lord, my God, art Love!" ["und fühle, daß es wahrheit ist,/ daß du mein Gott! Die liebe bist."]

Eighteenth-century Moravians adopted this Baroque Lutheran and Pietist imagery of suffering and sensation and made it the cornerstone of their practical piety. According to Count Zinzendorf, it was not the resurrection, but the death of Christ on the cross that

brought human salvation.¹¹⁹ Therefore, the intense fixation on Christ's physical suffering, on his blood and wounds (not the resurrection) was the key to faith and the only path to salvation.¹²⁰ Moravian hymns, visual arts, and the daily liturgy brought forth graphic descriptions of the bleeding body of Christ to accomplish two important tasks for the believer. First, the blood and wounds of Jesus created a concrete, palpable image of salvation which served as the literal "doorway to heaven." (ref.) Second, bringing forth the image of the suffering Christ was meant to create a subjective experience for the worshipper, who should not simply understand the Atonement conceptually, but who should see, feel, and experience the crucifixion in his/ her own heart.¹²¹

Essential to Zinzendorf's so-called *Herzenstheologie* (Heart Religion) was the emotional sympathy elicited by the crucifixion. He believed that a fixation on the sufferings of Jesus on the cross opened the believer's heart and culminated in an emotional, physical feeling of the Spirit as described in the sixth verse of Zinzendorf's "I thirst, Thou wounded Lamb of God:"¹²²

Hence our hearts melt, our eyes o'erflow,
Our words are lost: nor will we know,
Nor will we think of aught, beside
My Lord, my Love is crucified.

Das macht uns liebesschmerzen
wie wachs sind unsre herzen,
ja wie die stäublein gar:
wir lassen thränen fließen,
und wollen sonst nichts wissen,
als dasz ein lamm geschlachtet war.

¹¹⁹ Atwood, *Community* 99.

¹²⁰ *ibid*, 100.

¹²¹ Atwood, 100; Moravian communities used vivid visual arts as well as imaginative language to bring the image of the crucified Christ before the eyes of their believers. Graphic, affective language was the tool used by preachers and hymn writers to make worshippers aware of Christ's presence and his sufferings for them. See Atwood, 86.

¹²² Atwood, 207.

The emotional reaction is captured by the melting heart and crying eyes, but the tears also register a physical reaction to--or manifestation of-- the spirit that is reinforced by a loss of speech.

The physical manifestations of the spirit as depicted in the Zinzendorf and Gerhardt hymns above reflected the physical element common to sudden crisis conversions at gatherings of religious societies in the earliest days of the Methodist movement in England. It is no surprise that Wesley translated the two Gerhardt hymns and included their description of sympathetic, physical excitement in his 1780 standard Methodist Collection,¹²³ since he never excluded the validity of physical manifestations of the spirit during conversion or “sanctification,” the second experience of direct revelation that led to “Christian perfection” (that is, “entire sanctification”).¹²⁴ In fact, the belief in “sanctification” occasioned even more ecstatic, corporeal experiences at revivals for those who had already undergone enthusiastic conversions.

Wesley’s ongoing affirmation of these hymns and their imagery supports recent attempts by religious scholars to bring the corporal dimension of early Methodist spirituality to light. Methodist historian Stephen Gunter declared that “for two centuries students of Methodist revival have tended to ‘play down’ Wesley’s emphasis on converting miraculous intervention and the subsequent display of emotion.”¹²⁵ For example, Methodist historian Umphrey Lee writing in 1931 and Nehemiah Curnock, editor of John Wesley’s Journal published in 1951, both discount the enthusiastic tendencies of John Wesley and the depictions of enthusiastic experience at early

¹²³ These hymns also appeared in all standard hymnals of the Methodist Episcopal Church in nineteenth-century America.

¹²⁴ Taves, 86.

¹²⁵ W. Stephen Gunter, The Limits of ‘Love Divine’: John Wesley’s Response to Antinomianism and Enthusiasm (Nashville: Kingswood, 1989) 149.

Methodist revivals.¹²⁶ Arguing against such twentieth-century Methodist historians, Ann Taves asserts that Wesley alone moved against the tide of major transatlantic theologians like Charles Chauncy and Jonathan Edwards when it came to embodied spirituality. Even though Chauncy and Edwards represented opposite sides of the awakenings debates, Wesley alone viewed physical manifestations of the spirit as valid signs of spiritual visitation.¹²⁷

FLESHLY SPIRITUALITY IN CHARLES WESLEY

The ongoing presence of “fleshly spiritualism” in the Methodist hymn-books naturally takes us to the hymns of Charles Wesley, the author of approximately six thousand hymns and the main source of early Methodist hymnody. Charles Wesley’s use of sympathy/ suffering imagery and wound imagery from the German hymns carries this rhetoric and imagery beyond the limited number of German translations into the main eighteenth-century Methodist hymn corpus, the nucleus of all subsequent Methodist hymnody in England and abroad. Foregrounding the body as a testing ground for abstract truth, Charles Wesley reconstituted the language and imagery of religious and secular expression among English-speaking Protestants. The German imagery, meter, and expression featured in Charles Wesley’s earliest hymns suggest that the Moravian

¹²⁶ Lee Umphrey, *The Historical Backgrounds of Early Methodist Enthusiasm* (New York: Columbia UP, 1931); John Wesley, *John Wesley’s Journal*, ed. Nehemiah Curnock (New York: Philosophical Library, 1951).

¹²⁷ Taves, 3-75. Taves cites two exceptions to conservative Methodist scholarship, but does not believe that their portrait of Wesley as a “reasonable enthusiast” goes far enough in Henry D. Rack, *Reasonable Enthusiast: John Wesley and the Rise of Methodism* (London: Epworth, 1989) and W. Stephen Gunter’s work cited in note # 118.

hymnal served as a model for his early work and may even point to an intimacy with the hymns in the original German.

The traditional method among hymnologists and Methodist historians has been to assign all translations from the German and other languages to John Wesley's pen and to credit Charles Wesley with all of the original compositions appearing in the early Methodist hymnals. In the 1980s, John R. Tyson's archival work cast reasonable doubt upon this assumption, revealing strong evidence that Charles Wesley translated a minimum of three German hymns traditionally ascribed to John Wesley.¹²⁸ Among the manuscript collections comprised wholly of original Charles Wesley hymns, Tyson found a translation from the 1737 Herrnhuter Gesangbuch entitled "O How Happy Am I Here" that had been extensively edited by Charles Wesley's own hand.¹²⁹ Two other hymns, entitled "Melt Happy Soul in Jesus' Blood" and "A Morning Hymn," with the first line "Jesus, Thy Light Again We View," were found with Charles Wesley's manuscripts of otherwise original compositions.¹³⁰ Tyson's findings suggest the possibility that Charles translated at least three hymns from the German, which, consequently, places the authorship of the remaining translations in question.¹³¹

It is certainly unnecessary to prove that Charles was a co-translator of the German hymns to observe the impact of German fleshly spiritualism on his original compositions.

¹²⁸ John R. Tyson, "Charles Wesley and the German Hymns." The Hymn 35.3 (July 1984), 153-8.

¹²⁹ The translation is a free paraphrase of Wolfgang Christoph Dessler's "Wie Wohl is mir, O Freund der seelen!" #762 in the 1737 Herrnhuter Gesangbuch. The manuscript is #70 in the Methodist Archives, John Rylands Library, Manchester, England. For more information see Frank Baker, Representative Verse of Charles Wesley (London: Epworth, 1962).

¹³⁰ "Jesus, Thy Light Again We View" is a translation of Joachim Lange's "O Jesu, süßes licht" which first appeared in the Wesleys' 1739 Hymns and Sacred Poems and later appeared in the 1780 Methodist Collection and all subsequent standard hymnals of the Methodist Church in America beginning with the second verse "O God what offering shall I give."

¹³¹ The translations of four German hymns appear in John Wesley's pocket diary and were certainly translated by him.

Over the centuries scholars and hymn collectors have noted the influence of the German hymns on Charles Wesley.¹³² Introducing his 1856 Plymouth Collection of Hymns, Congregationalist minister Henry Ward Beecher praises the Moravian hymnody as the “fountain in which the incomparable Charles Wesley was baptized,” rendering Charles Wesley’s hymns as “only Moravian hymns re-sung.” Perhaps a bit overstated, Beecher’s observation is nonetheless grounded in internal and external evidence. Charles Wesley certainly knew the German translations published in the earliest Wesleyan hymn-books. Hymnologist Donald Davie traces the mixed meter of Charles Wesley’s early compositions and what he terms his “carnality” to his Moravian heritage.¹³³ Charles Wesley also quotes from one of the German translations published in the 1740 Hymns and Sacred Poems,¹³⁴ the Moravian collaboration “I thirst, Thou wounded Lamb of God:”

| | |
|---|--|
| Hence our hearts melt, our eyes o’erflow, Our words are lost: nor will we know, <i>Nor will we think of ought beside My Lord, my Love is crucified.</i> | Das macht uns liebesschmerzen wie wachs sind unsre herzen, ja wie die stäublein gar: wir lassen thränen fliessen, und wollen sonst nichts wissen, als dasz ein lamm geschlachtet war. |
|---|--|

Published two years later in the 1742 Hymns and Sacred Poems,¹³⁵ Charles Wesley’s “O Love divine! What hast thou done!” features the quotation “My Lord, my Love is crucified!” as the closing line of each verse. The final stanza ends with an almost direct quotation from the Moravian hymn:

¹³² See F. Ernest Stoeffler, “Pietism, The Wesleys, and Methodist Beginnings in America” Continental Pietism and Early American Christianity, ed F. Earnest Stoeffler. (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1976) 184-221.

¹³³ Donald Davie, The Eighteenth-Century Hymn in England. (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1993).

¹³⁴ John Wesley, ed., Hymns and Sacred Poems. Published by John Wesley, ... and Charles Wesley, ... (London: W. Strahan and James Hutton, 1740) 75.

¹³⁵ John Wesley, ed., Hymns and Sacred Poems. Published by John Wesley, ... and Charles Wesley, ... (London: Thomas Harris, 1742) 27.

Then let us sit beneath his cross,
And gladly catch the healing stream,
All things for him account but loss,
And give up all our hearts to him:
*Of nothing think or speak beside,
My Lord, my Love is crucified.*¹³⁶

Charles Wesley's allusion demonstrates not only his familiarity with the Moravian hymn, but perhaps more significantly his appropriation of Moravian piety.

Such imagery common to the Baroque Lutheran and German Pietist hymns translated by the Wesleys also appeared in many of Charles Wesley's original hymns. He privileges this combination of suffering and sympathy throughout the hymn "Ye that pass by, behold the man!," which first appeared in the 1742 collection Hymns and Sacred Poems and was included in the 1780 standard Collection, indicating the mature John Wesley's approbation of the material. In verses two, five, and six, Charles Wesley describes the crucifixion scene with vivid, graphic imagery that rivals the early hymns of Gerhardt:

See how his back the scourges tear,
While to the bloody pillar bound!
The ploughers make long furrows there,
Till all his body is one wound . . .

His sacred limbs they stretch, they tear,
With nails they fasten to the wood
His sacred limbs—exposed, and bare,
Or only covered with his blood.

See there! His temples crowned with thorns!
His bleeding hands extended wide,
His streaming feet, transfixt and torn!
The fountain gushing from his side!

¹³⁶ "My Lord, my Love is crucified" is also the first line of a hymn from an earlier English hymnal; John Mason Spiritual Songs, or Songs of Praise (Cambridge: Chadwyck-Healey, 1992 [1683]).

As in Gerhardt's "Extended on a cursed tree," the speaker then takes responsibility for the crucifixion in verse eight:

Beneath my load, he faints, and dies:
I filled his soul with pangs unknown;
I caused those mortal groans, and cries,
I killed the Father's only Son.

This verse illustrates the "conviction of sin," the first step to salvation that the Methodists adopted from the German Pietists. To pass from the conviction of sin to salvation, the sinner must feel or physically sense the presence of the Spirit. Vivid depictions of the crucifixion scene brought before the mind's eye encouraged the second step toward salvation: an opening of the heart to feel the sufferings of Jesus through sympathy. The hymn's graphic crucifixion scene culminates in a heartfelt response in the speaker and "passers-by" in verses nine and ten:

Oh! Thou dear suffering Son of God,
How doth thy heart to sinners move!
Help me to catch thy precious blood,
Help me to taste thy dying love!

Give me to feel thy agonies,
One drop of thy sad cup afford!
I fain with Thee would sympathize,
And share the sufferings of my Lord.

Vivid crucifixion scenes paired with ecstatic sympathy abound in a section of the 1780 standard Methodist Collection entitled "Describing the goodness of God." The initial hymn in this section, "Behold the Saviour of mankind/ Nailed to the shameful tree;/ How vast the love that him inclined,/ To bleed and die for thee!" is followed by Gerhardt's "Extended on a cursed tree," Charles Wesley's "Ye that pass by, behold the man," and Zinzendorf's "I thirst, thou wounded Lamb of God" all discussed above.

Following Zinzendorf's hymn, Charles Wesley's "Saviour, the world's and mine" highlights the speaker's emotional sympathy with the sufferings of Jesus:

Saviour, the world's and mine,
Was ever grief like thine!
Thou my pain, my curse hast took,
All my sins were laid on Thee:
Help me Lord; to Thee I look,
Draw me Saviour, after Thee.

'Tis done! My God hath died,
My love is crucified!
Break this stony heart of mine,
Pour, my eyes, a ceaseless flood;
Feel, my soul, the pangs divine,
Catch, my heart the issuing blood!

This early hymn, originating in the 1739 collection Hymns and Sacred Poems, captures the "sensible inspiration," that is, faith felt or physically sensed by the believer, which became so important to the Methodist movement.¹³⁷

To love is all my wish,
I only live for this:
Grant me, Lord, my heart's desire,
There by faith for ever dwell:
This I always will require,
Thee, and only Thee to feel.

The speaker longs to empathize (not merely sympathize) with Jesus and feel the suffering pains of the crucifixion, in order to feel the power of faith within. This internal sensation was, of course, prone to manifest itself on the exterior, visible body of the believer, in this case, in the eyes that pour a "ceaseless flood."

To depict the heartfelt suffering of the believer in this hymn, Wesley uses the image of a heart catching the blood of Christ, an image found in Baroque Lutheran hymns translated by John Wesley. Wesley wrote:

¹³⁷ John Wesley, ed., Hymns and Sacred Poems. Published by John Wesley, ... and Charles Wesley, ... (London: W. Strahan and James Hutton, 1739) 168-9.

Feel my soul, the pangs divine,
Catch, my heart, the issuing blood!

This revisits an image Gerhardt used in “Jesu, thy boundless love to me:”

O that my heart, which open stands,
May catch each drop, that torturing pain

Blood entering the body of the believer as communion is commonplace in Christian devotional literature, but in this case the heart catches the blood to help the believer empathize with Christ’s sufferings. The heart, the seat of emotion and feeling, receives the blood like a transfusion that carries with it the pains of the crucifixion. The pain felt by the believer should, in turn, open the heart to accept faith and salvation in Jesus.

The image of the open heart catching the “torturing pain” of Jesus in the image above and the suffering/ sympathy pairing discussed above both work to break down the distinction between the believer and the deity. The ultimate empathy is union between Jesus and the hymn’s speaker, which Charles Wesley renders in familiar Lutheran and Moravian imagery as well as through a grammatical aberration. To break down the distinction between believer and deity, Wesley often conflates the first and second person pronouns in his earlier hymns.

Conflating “I” and “Thee” accomplishes the same goal as the suffering/ sympathy trope and the bridal mysticism discussed earlier in the chapter: unity of the deity and the believer. The section that follows traces Charles Wesley’s use of a particular image used by German Pietists to capture this deity/ believer union in a physical, “fleshly” image. The image of the believer living in the side wound of Jesus was sanctioned by John Wesley but more often used by his brother Charles. As we shall see, the side wound imagery depicting the union of the believer and the deity in physical form—outside an

amatory context—did not deter John Wesley as a young translator or as a mature collector and editor of standard Methodist Collection.

BLOOD AND WOUNDS

One of the most striking examples of “fleshly spiritualism” adopted from the German Pietist hymnody is the blood and wounds imagery—that is, the image of Christ’s wounds as a shelter and his blood as a purifying fountain. Pietists at Halle and Herrnhut featured blood and wounds imagery to create concrete images of salvation, and many of their hymns depict the believer drinking from and living in the side wound of Christ. John Wesley embraced the wounds imagery in his youthful translations of Berthelsdorf pastor Johann Andreas Rothe, especially his “Now I have found the ground, wherein” and the Moravian collaboration “I thirst, thou wounded lamb of God,” and continued to approve of such imagery later in life, as his inclusion of these hymns in the standard 1780 Collection attests.¹³⁸ New research suggests that a hymn steeped in wound imagery attributed to Charles Wesley, “I Melt . . .,” was probably his translation of a Pietist hymn from the Moravian hymn book. In any case, Charles Wesley’s adoption of the side wound imagery in his original compositions secured this imagery a prominent place in the Methodist hymnody for centuries to come.

Rothe was the pastor at Berthelsdorf, the Lutheran church attended by Zinzendorf’s Moravian community at Herrnhut, and his hymn “Now I have found the ground, wherein” features Moravian wounds imagery. The first verse depicts the

¹³⁸ Zinzendorf placed like-minded Pietist pastor Rothe at the parish at Berthelsdorf, the location of Zinzendorf’s estate.

speaker's soul dropping anchor in the wounds of Jesus, which provides solid ground even when heaven and earth "are fled away" ("untergeht"). The abstract quality of the word "soul" is concretized by the image of the anchor and its ground, the wounds of Jesus:

| | |
|--|---|
| Now I have found the ground, wherein Sure my soul's anchor may remain,-- The wounds of Jesus, for my sin Before the world's foundation slain: Whose mercy shall unshaken stay, When heaven and earth are fled away. | Ich habe nun den grund, gefunden, der meinen ancker ewig hält: wo anders, als in Jesu wunden? da lag er vor der zeit der welt: den grund der unbeweglich steht, wenn erd und himmel untergeht. |
|--|---|

Dropping anchor in the wounds of Jesus denotes an unusual physical image of faith. The soul entering the body of Jesus through the wounds reverses common Christian mysticism. Jesus is often depicted as entering and "warming" the heart and soul of the believers, but the believer's soul penetrating the body of Jesus marks a new image of faith and the knowledge of salvation in English-language depictions of religious experience.

"I thirst, Thou wounded Lamb of God," attributed to Zinzendorf, J. Nitschmann and Anna Nitschman, provides the most vivid example of wound imagery adopted from the Moravian hymnal.¹³⁹ The third verse features the side wound as a fountain from which the children of God can drink:

| | |
|---|--|
| Wir sind ja kleine kinder Erlöste arme sündler, die deinen lebens-saft, der aus der seiten höle geflossen auf die seele, in sich gesaugt zur Gottes-kraft. | We are but small children, Redeemed poor sinners who suck your life-giving juice that flows from the side hole onto the soul to receive God's power. |
|---|--|

¹³⁹ The hymn became a part of the American Methodist repertoire throughout the nineteenth century and into the twentieth, appearing unrevised in all MEC hymnals from 1836 through 1905.

This image resurfaces in one of Charles Wesley's hymns included in the 1780 standard Collection, "Jesus, thou all redeeming Lord:"

*Thy side an open fountain is,
Where all may freely go,
And drink the living streams of bliss,
And wash them white as snow.*

This image of the wounds as a cleansing fountain appears regularly in Charles Wesley's hymns in the standard Methodist hymnals of England and America.

Significantly, John Wesley's translation of this third verse of the Moravian hymn deviates from the image of the wounds as a fountain featured in the Moravian original:

How blest are they who still abide
Close shelter'd in Thy bleeding side;
Who life and strength from thence derive,
And by Thee move, and in Thee live!

The wounds are not only a fountain to visit and cleanse the soul, but also the side wound is presented as a place or shelter the "blest" can enter into and reside.

In the first verse of the same Moravian hymn, John Wesley again renders the wounds as a dwelling place, in a passage where such imagery is absent from the original German:

| | |
|--|--|
| I thirst, Thou wounded Lamb of God, To wash me in Thy cleansing blood, To dwell within Thy wounds; then pain Is sweet, and life or death is gain. | Ach! Mein verwundter fürste! nach dessen blut ich dürste, in dem mein sehnen ruht, an dessen liebes herze mir wohl ist, und der schmerz selbst heilsam gut und sanfte thut. |
|--|--|

The believer dwelling within Christ's side wound was a common image in Moravian hymns, sermons, and other devotional materials that Wesley encountered during his stay with the Moravian missionaries in Georgia and his visit to Herrnhut.

Wesley's commitment to and approbation of this image is obvious enough—he added it to the translation where it was lacking in the original.

Just as overtly, Charles Wesley eagerly adopted this imagery which, consequently, now appears as a common trope in Methodist hymnals. As already noted, new research suggests that he didn't encounter this imagery second-hand from John Wesley's translations alone. A hymn found among Charles Wesley's manuscripts in a collection of wholly original works entitled "Melt Happy Soul in Jesus' Blood" was headed "Another From the German." The translation was published in Moral and Sacred Poems (1744) as Part II of the other German hymn "O Happy Am I Here" without a note regarding the source.¹⁴⁰ Scholars now identify this hymn as a translation of C.F. Richter's "Zeuch hin mein Geist in Jesu blut und wunden," #753 in the Herrnhuter Gesangbuch (Baker 170).¹⁴¹ C.F. Richter was the physician at the orphanage at Halle, and his blood and wounds hymn quoted below provides a non-Moravian example of Pietist wound imagery. The hymn's speaker portrays the wounds of Jesus as a dwelling place and a purifying fountain throughout the hymn's twelve verses. The first two verses can serve as an example of the hymn's theme:

Melt happy Soul in Jesu's Blood,
Sink down into the Wounds of God,
And there forever dwell:
I now have found my Rest again,
The Spring of Life, the Balm of Pain
In Jesu's Wounds I feel.

Thirsty so long, and weak and faint,
I here enjoy whate'er I want,
The sweet refreshing Tide

Zeuch hin mein Geist in Jesu blut
und wunden, und trink
nach langem durst dich satt:
ich habe jezt die quelle wieder
funden, die seelen labt so müd und
matt.

Eil, wie ein hirsch zu dieser quell,
die kräftig, lieblich, süß und hell
aus Jesu Herz und Seite fließet, und

¹⁴⁰ John Wesley, ed., A collection of moral and sacred poems from the most celebrated English authors, (Bristol: F. Farley, 1744). In the early Methodist hymnals, German translations always appear with the heading "From the German."

¹⁴¹ C. F. Richter was the physician at the orphanage at Halle.

Brings Life and Peace to dying Souls; unser herz und seel duchsüset.
And still the gushing Comfort rolls (689-90)
From Jesu's wounded Side.

As early as 1739, Charles Wesley featured the blood and wounds imagery in his original compositions. The opening verses of the now well-known conversion hymn, “Where shall my wondering soul begin?” depict the side wound as a refuge and a fountain:

Come, O my guilty brethren come,
Groaning beneath your load of sin!
His bleeding heart shall make you room,
His open side shall take you in.
He calls you now, invites you home:
Come, O my guilty brethren, come!

*For you the purple current flow'd
In pardons from His wounded side:
Languish'd for you th' eternal God,
For you the Prince of Glory died.
Believe, and all your guilt's forgiven;
Only believe—and yours is heaven.*

This hymn was first published in the 1739 Hymns and Sacred Poems and approved by John Wesley for the standard Collection of 1780. Charles Wesley continued to use this image throughout his prolific years of hymn composition, usually foregrounding it in the opening or closing verses. His “Weary souls that wander wide,” first published in the 1747 collection Hymns for those that Seek, and those that Have, Redemption in the Blood of Jesus Christ and included in the standard 1780 Collection, begins with wounds imagery:¹⁴²

Weary souls that wander wide
From the central point of bliss,
Turn to Jesus crucified,

¹⁴² Wesley, John, ed., Hymns for Those that Seek, and Those that have Redemption in the Blood of Jesus Christ (Bristol: Felix Farley, 1747) 7.

Fly to those dear wounds of his;
Sink into the purple flood;
Rise into the life of God

Similarly, the imagery of the sinner entering into the wound of Christ concludes Charles Wesley's "Let the redeemed give thanks and praise," a hymn first published in the 1767 collection Hymns for the Use of Families, and on Various Occasions and later included in the standard 1780 Collection:¹⁴³

My God in Jesus pacified,
My God thyself declared,
And draw me to his open side,
And plunge the sinner there?

The blood and wounds imagery adopted into the standard Wesleyan hymnody portrays the union of the believer and Jesus inside the body of Christ, a potentially disturbing image for the eighteenth-century English churchgoer. The act of taking communion has made the image of Jesus entering the body of the believer a commonplace in Christian texts. Conversely, the reversal of this image, i.e. the believer penetrating the body of Christ through his wounds, emerged in English-speaking congregations out of the "blood and wounds" imagery specific to German Pietist hymns. As we have seen, John Wesley never opposed the depiction of spiritual experience in the human body. He did, however, resist imagery that intimated Christ and the believer in conjugal union and excised bridal mysticism from his Moravian translations accordingly. Perhaps John Wesley embraced the intimacy between Jesus and the believer in the side wound, because the image of the believer entering the body of Christ required no gender reversal for male believers.

¹⁴³ Wesley, Charles, Hymns for the Use of Families, and on Various Occasions (Bristol: William Pine, 1767) 96.

GOING PUBLIC

The imagery inherited from Baroque Lutheran and German Pietist hymns proliferated in the hands of Charles Wesley and became an easy point of critique against the rising tide of Methodism over the course of the eighteenth century. Given the continental clamp down on pietism after Zinzendorf's death, it is no accident that such imagery raised a very prompt red flag that the Methodist services themselves might not have done. Even though Methodists' hymn singing and the spiritualized body made them an objects of fear, loathing, and comical critique in the early stages of the movement, the ubiquity of Methodist meeting houses as well as their practices and beliefs overtook much of English Protestantism by the end of the century.

As the eighteenth-century progressed, so many people were affected by hymns that general acceptance of hymn singing can be observed in the conduct books and educational tracts published closer to the century's end. Within Methodism, the new religious rhetoric featured in the Wesleyan hymnals helped bring into being a new space of devotion, as it broke down distinctions between Jesus and the believer, the spirit and body, the natural and the supernatural, and even between the public and the private. The new Methodist community style marked a profound political shift to a kind of primitive Christianity around the community of believers and community of priests as Luther had first defined Protestantism.

The Methodist societies created a new semi-public space in which divine visitation was experienced and authenticated by laymen. The physical, observable spiritual experience at the heart of Methodist conversion brought many aspects of private worship into the semi-public sphere. The Religious Societies of the early Methodist

movement brought small groups together to pray, discuss spiritual progress, and sing about spiritual experience in a quasi-public surrounding. Outside the anonymity of congregational worship and the private devotionals in the home, the societies made the intimate, personal details of one's spiritual journey part of a shared, communal experience of the spirit.¹⁴⁴ John Wesley describes such an experience in his Journal entry dated January 1, 1739:¹⁴⁵

About three in the morning, as we were continuing instant in prayer, the power of God came mightily upon us, insomuch that many cried out for exceeding joy, and many fell to the ground. As soon as we were recovered from shock and amazement at the presence of his majesty, we broke out with one voice, 'We praise thee, O God; we acknowledge thee to be the Lord.' (qtd. in Taves 72)

The language Wesley uses to narrate the experience suggests several things about the early Methodist meetings that differed from other gatherings outside of regular Anglican (and even Congregationalist) services. Most noteworthy, God's presence graces the *love feast* (not a communion service) at the Fetter Lane meeting house. Without clergymen to declare the presence of God, the lay persons provide physical evidence of the Spirit manifested in their bodies. Physical changes felt by those present—crying out and falling to the ground—serve as proof of God's presence. Finally, the spiritual visitation is a collective experience that culminates in a prayer in "one voice." This description helps to understand the challenge of Methodism as a challenge not only to church authority as the

¹⁴⁴ Puritans recorded the personal details of their spiritual journey in spiritual diaries.

¹⁴⁵ John Wesley reports that George Whitefield and his brother Charles were present at this love-feast in Fetter Lane chapel with sixty of their brethren (Taves 72). Fetter Lane was a gathering place in London for Moravians and their friends, many of whom became Methodists.

Anglicans defined it, but also to the very essence of community – a community defined not in terms of rational belief but sentimental experience.

The Methodist representation of spiritual experience created a new site for spiritual visitation: the semi-public Methodist meeting house where spiritual visitation was expected to be corroborated by physical signs in the bodies of the congregants, visible proof of God's providence, without mediation of priests. These signs, interpreted by Methodists as spiritual intervention, were derided and doubted by the English public. John Wesley's journal entry dated May 20, 1739 records some common oppositions to this new phenomenon. Some, he writes, dismissed the physical signs as "purely natural effects: the people fainted away only because of the heat and closeness of the rooms." Others were sure "it was all a cheat. Else why were these things only in their private Societies? Why were they not done in the face of the sun?" John Wesley interpreted the events at an open-air revival on the following day as God's answer to such inquiries. As Wesley preached "Be still, and know that I am God,"

he began to make bare his arm, not in a close room, neither in private, but in the open air, and before more than two thousand witnesses. One, and another, and another was struck to the earth; exceedingly trembling at the presence of his power. Others cried, with a loud and bitter cry, "What must we do to be saved?" And in less than an hour seven persons, wholly unknown to me till that time were rejoicing and singing, and, with all their might, giving thanks to the God of their salvation. (Journal May 21, 1739)

Revivals and field preaching in the early Methodist movement brought thousands together in public, open sites to listen to highly emotional preaching about individual

conversion, to sing about religious experience in a new, provocative language, and to channel the Spirit of God in their bodies. Religious societies, revivals, and field preaching and singing created new public sites for sudden conversion and brought the spiritualized body—the visible proof of conversion—into full view. Finally, the lay-led religious societies took the rite of authentication from the clergy, thereby creating more democratic public spaces in which Methodists of all classes and education could experience the power of God and express it in their own lives. This foundation created the possibility for an elaboration of spiritual experience and the expansion of that experience into new public spaces in the decades to come.

In these new found public spaces, Methodists cried out, fell to the ground together in the presence of God, and formed societies devoted to public “good works.” For Wesley, physical manifestations of the spirit alone were not sufficient proof of conversion. The “fruits of faith,” Wesley’s term for the good works performed by those touched by the Spirit, were the marks of the spirit that remained long after the sudden, fleeting conversion experience-- a set of proofs to be judged by the community.¹⁴⁶ Just as Sentimentalists cried together over Clarissa’s fate and bound together to reform society, the Methodists looked inward together and formed societies of soul-searching individuals dedicated to socially reforming their communities.¹⁴⁷ The combination of suffering bodies, sympathetic tears, and social reform reached its zenith in nineteenth-century America. As the Methodist movement gained its greatest momentum, mid-nineteenth-

¹⁴⁶ John Wesley records his response to the numerous inquiries concerning the outward manifestations of the spirit in his Journal. For example, an entry dated May 20, 1739, reads “This is the fact; let any judge of it as they please. And that such a change was then wrought, appears (not from their shedding tears only, or falling into fits, or crying out; these are not the fruits, as you seem to suppose, whereby I judge, but) from the whole tenor of their life, till then, many ways wicked; from that time, holy, just, and good.”

¹⁴⁷ Only later would introspective nineteenth-century Romantics conceive of the self-searching individual as one at odds with society.

century reformers utilized the rhetoric of second-wave Sentimentalism and added the culturally-available Methodist imagery of physical suffering and sacrifice to launch large scale reform efforts--most notably, the abolition of slavery.

Chapter Three: The Second Great Awakening and Pious Antislavery Sentiments

This chapter will trace the use of a particular religious, sentimental diction from its early appearance in American Protestant hymnals to its function as a rhetorical tool in antebellum abolitionist debates. Just as the abolition movement itself emerged out of religiously-based objections to slavery, abolitionist literature borrowed religious language and imagery common to early American Protestantism. Moreover, the early abolitionists used the genre of the hymn to make their arguments in a socio-political context, expanding the use of hymns from one of personal devotion to one of public social critique. The adoption of German Pietist imagery from Methodist revival hymns by abolitionist hymnists makes a broader case for this imagery's impact in nineteenth-century American public discourse.

To make this case, this chapter begins with late-eighteenth-century North American Methodism and the reception of the Wesleys' hymns as discussed in the preceding chapter, which suggests many American Protestants' ongoing preference for "fleshly-spiritual" language and imagery long after the early nineteenth-century revivals of the Second Great Awakening.¹⁴⁸ Focusing on the recurrent use of suffering and sympathy in American Methodist hymns, I then examine how sentimental-abolitionists adopted and altered these tropes in their own hymns to focus sympathetic suffering on the slaves. I then read Harriet Beecher Stowe's best-selling anti-slavery novel, Uncle Tom's

¹⁴⁸ The "Second Great Awakening" is a collective term that refers to the period of great religious revivalism from roughly the 1790s to the 1840s. The revivals brought great numbers to the Methodists and the Baptists and even led to new denominations like Mormonism and the Holiness movement. I choose to use this term instead of the more specific reference to Methodist revivals, because so many of the revivals were interdenominational and the hymns moved fluidly from one revivalist group to another.

Cabin (1850) as a case study of the ways in which fleshly-spiritual rhetoric began to permeate sentimental fiction. Stowe's work provides a particularly important case, because the overwhelming popular response to her novel makes this work an ideal proving ground for the ubiquity of a particular set of tropes. To locate "fleshly-spiritual" imagery at the center of Uncle Tom's Cabin proves, in essence, the presence of that rhetorical mode not only in sentimental fiction, but also in mainstream public discourse. Overall, making this connection between the very public diction of Methodist fleshly spirituality and sentimental, anti-slavery works in the context of evangelical Protestantism also allows me to provide a more complex genealogy of the sentimental novel, one that acknowledges the Pietist-influenced rhetoric of revival hymns as a domestic source with origins in English Methodism and continental Pietism.

METHODIST HYMNS TAKE AMERICA

Between the Revolution and the Civil War, Methodism became the largest popular religious movement in America. It was no accident that the ascendancy of Methodism coincided with this period of great socio-political, economic, and geographic change. The political break with Great Britain necessitated, for many, a break from the social trappings of aristocratic hierarchies as well as from church authorities.¹⁴⁹ The early Methodist movement's reliance on lay preachers and exhorters, its virtual

¹⁴⁹ Methodist circuit rider James Quinn explained the unique situation confronting American religion in the wake of the Revolution: "the anti-Christian union between the Church and the state had been broken up, tithes and glebes could no longer be relied upon for Church revenue, and the religious orders of America were left free to choose their own course, and worship God, with or without name, in temple, synagogue, church, or meeting-house, standing, sitting, or kneeling, in silence or with a loud voice, with or without book." Quoted in John H. Wigger, Taking Heaven By Storm: Methodism and the Rise of Popular Christianity in America (New York: Oxford UP, 1998) 9.

independence from John Wesley, and its decentralized organization appealed to Americans less inclined to trust their salvation to clerics, especially those overseas.

At the same time, the era's great economic mobility and uncertainty led many to the Methodist meetings, where the Methodist focus on self-improvement determined not only spiritual but also socio-economic success. As Methodist historian John Wigger explains, "Methodism encouraged the new values necessary for 'improvement' in a market-driven society, imbuing ordinary people with the belief that they as individuals and as communities could overcome folly and vice and improve their lot" (102). In pursuit of financial and social "improvement," many from the middling and lower classes sought opportunities by moving westward to the frontiers. Methodism's adaptability to frontier living through the use of itinerant preachers and preaching circuits accounted in no small part for its enormous success during this period. For Americans living in lightly populated areas, preaching by the Methodist circuit rider once or twice a month in a private home, barn, or open field represented the only available religious experience.¹⁵⁰

The ascendance of Methodism between the wars of liberation and that between the states can be measured, in part, by documented church membership. At the close of the Revolution, Methodists accounted for only 2 percent of total church membership in America. By 1850, that percentage grew to more than 34, ten times the size of the Congregationalists, the largest denomination in 1776 (Wigger 3). Said another way, the Methodist Episcopal Church grew from fourteen thousand members and forty-two circuits in 1784 to over a million members with 3,988 itinerants and 7,730 local preachers by 1844 (Hatch 220). By this time, Methodism had become the single largest Protestant

¹⁵⁰ In 1775, 95 percent of Americans lived in communities of fewer than 2,500 residents that had trouble attracting and paying permanent ministers. In 1830, 91 percent of Americans still lived in small communities (Wigger 33).

denomination in the country, almost one half larger than any other Protestant group (Hatch 220).

Hence, the far-reaching message of Methodist itinerants and their hymns can not be overstated, especially if one takes into consideration that official Methodist church membership represented only a fraction of people who might be described as congregants or part of Methodism's audience, and hence as an extended public for Methodist rhetoric. In 1811 Methodist preacher William Capers reported that in Charleston, South Carolina Methodist

preaching might be attended with great propriety, for almost everyone did so, but who might join them? No it was vastly more respectable to join some other Church, and still attend the preaching of the Methodists, which was thought to answer all purposes. (qtd. in Wigger 4)

Outside questions of respectability, demands of Methodist membership kept many would-be converts at bay; official members were expected to attend class meetings regularly, where their spiritual lives would be interrogated and they might be required to pray in public. Methodist preachers frequently noted that the number of hearers vastly exceeded the local membership, which suggests the Methodist message reached far beyond documented church members.¹⁵¹ Certainly, field preaching and camp meetings provided an open-air sacred space in which members and non-members alike could listen, sing, exhort, and experience the Spirit in exuberant, enthusiastic Methodist

¹⁵¹ For example, in a journal entry from January 1781, Bishop Asbury reports 120 "serious people" in attendance on a rainy Sunday in Delaware, where the local church membership numbered only 20 (Wigger 4). When members numbered about 100,000 in 1805, Asbury estimated that up to 1 million "regularly attend our ministry" (qtd. in Wigger 4).

fashion. In areas of small population and little culture, very public Methodist meetings provided opportunities for a communal audience experience.

The full impact of Methodist hymns on the American landscape was increased further by the numerous American hymnals of other Protestant denominations that included copious selections of fleshly Methodist hymns. The Lutherans, German Reformed, and the Reformed Dutch struggled with the translation of their denominational hymnodies and were, consequently, eager and able to adopt English-language hymns from the Wesleys, Watts, and other hymnists popular with evangelicals. Even some of the Baptist hymnals included weighty selections of Methodist hymns. Eventually, the revivalist fervor among Episcopalians, Congregationalists, and Presbyterians led to the gradual inclusion and prudent selection of evangelical hymnists including the Wesleys.¹⁵² A particularly telling example of the interdenominational usage of Methodist hymns is the history of American Lutheran hymnals, which deserve special consideration in asserting these connections among various protestant denominations, since German immigration far exceeded that of any other ethnic group in nineteenth-century America.

American Lutheran hymnals feature the most striking use of Pietist fleshly-spiritual rhetoric from unlikely sources: English Moravian collections and Wesleyan hymns. Most English-speaking services in the second half of the eighteenth-century probably used the Psalmodia Germanica, a collection of poorly-translated hymns by Luther and Gerhardt that left English-speaking congregations looking for a better

¹⁵² For example, in 1856 Congregationalist minister Henry Ward Beecher featured the emotional, sensational hymns of the Wesleys and the Moravians; Henry Ward Beecher, Plymouth Collection of Hymns: For the Use of Christian Congregations (New York: A. S. Barnes, 1856).

alternative.¹⁵³ The most popular German-language hymnal among early American Lutherans was the Geistreiches Gesangbuch from Halle.¹⁵⁴ While translations from this hymnal would have provided American Lutherans with hymns to match their particular Pietist spirit, they had trouble translating the meter of German hymns into English with any lasting success. Consequently, Lutherans turned to the English-language hymns with a Pietist spirit: the English Moravian collections and the hymns of John and Charles Wesley.

John Christopher Kunze of New York compiled the first English-speaking hymnal for American Lutherans in 1795.¹⁵⁵ One third of the hymns came from English Moravian Collection of 1789, considered “an excellent collection,” by the compiler.¹⁵⁶ One third stemmed from English evangelical hymns of Watts, Wesley, Newton and others, and the final third taken from the Psalmodia Germanica, the “unsuccessful” German translations that failed to form the nucleus of later English Lutheran hymnody. In this first American Lutheran hymnal, the Moravian hymnal served as the primary source of fleshly-spiritual rhetoric. The sensuous imagery of bridal mysticism and the graphic suffering imagery of the blood and wounds theology were much more pronounced in the English Moravian hymnal than they were in John Wesley’s more polite translations. Numerous hymns

¹⁵³ Psalmodia Germanica, or a Specimen of Divine Hymns, trans. Johann Christian Jacobi (London: J. Young, 1722).

¹⁵⁴ The authorities in Halle sent Henry Melchior Muhlenberg with their hymnal in hand to organize the Lutherans in America. Among 18th century Lutheran immigrants, the Halle hymnal was undoubtedly the most widely used and dictated the tone of the first Lutheran hymnal made in America. See Carl Shalk, God’s Song in a New Land: Lutheran Hymnals in America (St. Louis: Concordia, 1995) 42. The Pietist spirit was alive in these early American communities, even though the German Pietist hymnals were never successfully translated.

¹⁵⁵ Kunze, John C. ed., A Hymn and Prayer Book: for the use of such Lutheran Churches as use the English Language (New York: Hurtin and Commardinger, 1795).

¹⁵⁶ The English Moravian Collection included the most sensual, erotic, carnal imagery used by the Moravians excised by John Wesley. John Kunze’s estimation of its quality indicates his acceptance of such unusual imagery.

taken from the English Moravian hymnal originated from Baroque Lutheran sources, particularly Paul Gerhardt's crucifixion hymns with their distinctively graphic imagery (Shalk 58). Furthermore, the English Moravian hymnal featured translations from the Herrnhuter Gesangbuch with much more exuberant wound imagery and bridal mysticism than appeared in Wesley's translations. As a result, the fleshly-spiritual Pietist rhetoric featured in certain hymns in the American Lutheran hymnal was much bawdier and graphic than its Methodist counterpart.

The predominance of Moravian excess in American Lutheranism was replaced by the Wesleys' more refined version of Pietist spirituality in A Choice Selection of Evangelical Hymns, from Various Authors: for the Use of the English Evangelical Lutheran Church in New York.¹⁵⁷ Published in 1806 by Methodist convert Ralph Williston, 75 percent of hymns are the Wesleys and Watts, in effect replacing Moravian excess with the Wesleys's more tempered fervor. Whereas the Pietist flavor of the Wesleys' translations and adaptations betrayed orthodox Lutheran theology, the influx of Wesleyan hymns accurately reflected the subjective, sentimental revivalism they shared with their Pietist brothers and sisters back in Germany (Schalk 62). The Anglicizing of Lutheran hymnody continued unabated until the middle of the nineteenth century, rendering Lutheranism a significant medium of Methodist hymnody (Schalk 62).

If we take into account the substantial numbers of Wesleyan hymns sung in other Protestant denominations, the far-reaching echoes of Methodist hymn singing at meetings attended by numerous non-church members, and the vast membership of the Methodist church, we can conclude that the language of Methodist religious expression pervaded

¹⁵⁷ Ralph Williston, A Choice Selection of Evangelical Hymns, from Various Authors: for the Use of the English Evangelical Lutheran Church in New York (New York: J.C. Totten, 1806).

nineteenth-century American religious discourse, and hence a significant section of public discourse. Geographically, Methodist historians document a strong Methodist presence throughout the western frontier, well into the South, and in the mid-Atlantic urban centers, and even its movement into New England, which demonstrates that Methodist religious expression reached vast numbers of nineteenth-century Americans living in diverse geographic locations as well as those practicing different versions of American Protestantism.¹⁵⁸

To get an idea of the content of the hymns favored by American evangelical Protestants, I will now turn to the reception of the Wesleys's hymns among early revivalists, the Methodist Episcopal Church (MEC), and other Protestant denominations. As we shall see, the American evangelicals adopted even rogue hymns and unsanctioned versions of Wesleyan hymns that John Wesley condemned as "fondling expressions" offensive to the devout English Methodists and their worship of Jesus Christ.¹⁵⁹

THE CONTENTS: AMERICAN METHODIST HYMNS

In many ways, American Methodism and its hymnals proved more exuberant and enthusiastic than their English predecessors.¹⁶⁰ Although John Wesley never repudiated the spiritual validity of visions, dreams, or bodily fits, his position on religious enthusiasm ultimately proved more conservative than both the early American Methodist

¹⁵⁸ See Nathan O. Hatch and John H. Wigger, eds., Methodism and the Shaping of American Culture (Nashville: Kingswood, 2001); John H. Wigger, Taking Heaven by Storm: Methodism and the Rise of Popular Christianity in America (New York: Oxford UP, 1998).

¹⁵⁹ The quotation comes from John Wesley's 1789 sermon "On Knowing Christ After the Flesh" in which he discusses his translations of Moravian hymns of questionable content. The complete passage is quoted in the preceding chapter.

¹⁶⁰ The findings in this section appeared in the following article: Ingrid Lelos, "The Spirit in the Flesh: John Wesley and the German Hymn" Covenant Quarterly 65 (4) 3-18.

revivalists and the mid-nineteenth-century Methodist Episcopal Church, even as the latter became a beacon of middle-class respectability. The public display of the spiritualized body and the believer's sympathetic emotions proved to be the centerpiece of American Methodism, a much more public stance which was reflected in and carried forth by the hymns selected for American Methodist hymnals. Progressive revivalists and middle-class Methodists alike chose boldly in favor of hymns with fleshly-spiritual language and imagery, even those deemed inappropriate by John Wesley.

Several fleshly-spiritual hymns discussed in detail in the preceding chapter were canonized in Wesley's standard Methodist Collection (1780) and appeared in official American hymn books of the Methodist Episcopal Church (MEC). John Wesley translated and included in the 1780 standard Methodist Collection the Moravian hymn, "I thirst, Thou wounded Lamb of God," attributed to Zinzendorf, J. Nitschmann, and Anna Nitschman, which features the union of Jesus and the believer in the side wound of Christ. This hymn remained part of the American Methodist repertoire throughout the nineteenth century and into the twentieth, appearing unrevised in all MEC hymnals from 1836 through 1905. Paul Gerhardt's "Extended on a cursed tree" and "Jesu, thy boundless love to me," translated by Wesley and included in the 1780 Collection, pair graphic suffering imagery and emotional sympathy and appear in all nineteenth-century MEC hymnals. By including these fleshly-spiritual hymns, nineteenth-century American Methodists endorsed Wesley's belief in the spirit in the flesh as inherited from German Lutheran and Pietist imagery revised and approved by John Wesley.

But John Wesley's approbation figured little in the fledgling Methodist movement of early America. Many hymns excised from Wesley's standard Collection (1780) like

Charles Wesley's "Jesus, Lover of My Soul" were quickly reinstated by Robert Spence, who first pirated Wesley's collection in 1781 under the title, Collection of Hymns from Various Authors, known widely as A Pocket Hymnbook. This hymnal, censored by John Wesley for containing hymns he deemed objectionable, functioned as the primary hymnal among Methodists in early America.¹⁶¹ Wesley attempted to reign in the rogue American hymnody by sending what he intended to be the standard liturgy and collection of hymns for the American church, A Collection of Psalms and Hymns for the Lord's Day (Attached to the Sunday Service of the Methodists in North America).¹⁶² This hymn book was so thoroughly rejected that Methodist bishops Asbury and Coke were compelled to adopt Spence's rogue hymnal and reissue it as the sanctioned hymnal of American Methodists, The Pocket Hymnbook (1790).¹⁶³

From the beginning, hymns deemed too amatory or "fleshly" by John Wesley were nonetheless considered standard repertoire among American Methodists. In addition to the hymns rejected by Wesley that appeared in the Spence/ Asbury and Coke Pocket Hymnbook, some of Wesley's German translations reappeared on American soil in official Methodist supplements. For example, Zinzendorf's sensual hymn, "Jesu, to Thee my heart I bow," resurfaced during the Second Great Awakening and appeared in the American 1819 official Supplement to the Methodist Pocket Hymnal compiled under

¹⁶¹ See John R. Tyson, "The Methodist National Anthem: 'O for a Thousand Tongues to Sing' and the Development of American Methodism," Sing Them Over Again to Me: Hymns and Hymnbooks in America, ed. Mark A. Noll and Edith L. Blumhofer (Tuscaloosa: U of Alabama P, 2006), 23.

¹⁶² John Wesley, ed., A Collection of Psalms and Hymns for the Lord's Day (Attached to the Sunday Service of the Methodists in North America) (London: 1786).

¹⁶³ Robert Spence, Francis Asbury, and Thomas Coke, A Pocket Hymn-Book: Designed as a Constant Companion for the Pious (Philadelphia: Prichard and Hall, 1790).

the direction of Bishop Asbury.¹⁶⁴ The amorous language in this hymn in which the speaker addresses Jesus as “my Love” and “Fairest among Ten Thousand” ultimately endured beyond the sensuous conversions of the revivals to become part of the standard repertoire of the MEC hymnbooks of 1836 and 1849. Other German translations excised by the mature Wesley on presumably similar grounds, but reinstated by nineteenth-century American Methodist bishops, include Scheffler’s “O God of good the unfathomed Sea,” which refers to Jesus as “Lover of mankind” and Gmelin’s “O thou, who all things canst control,” in which the speaker’s physical longing for Jesus resembles the physical desire of a lover—“panting,” “sighing,” and “fainting.”

The historical context of the revivalist fervor of early Methodism in America offers a convincing explanation for the reappearance of these sensual hymns. The tenor of sudden, crisis conversions common at early camp meetings allowed for fleshy, affective rhetoric that included lover imagery. Wesley’s own youthful conversion, as well as early Methodism as a revival movement, had allowed for this use of amatory language, something he outgrew and eventually deemed offensive to taste. The premise upon which this physical imagery was based nonetheless remained essential to Methodist faith. Even as the MEC in America grew more conservative, the hymns excised by Wesley were canonized in the standard hymnals of 1836, 1849, and 1878.

As the Methodist Episcopal Church became more conservative and the African Methodists officially seceded to form the African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church, founding pastor Richard Allen published the first hymnal for a black congregation in America, A Collection of Spiritual Songs and Hymns Selected From Various Authors

¹⁶⁴ Methodist Episcopal Church, A Selection of Hymns from Various Authors: Designed as a Supplement to the Methodist Pocket Hymn-Book (New York: J. Soule and T. Mason, 1818).

(1801), a compilation of fifty-four classic English evangelistic and popular folk hymns.¹⁶⁵ This first African Methodist hymnal captures the fleshly-spiritual rhetoric of the sensuous, revivalist, camp-meeting spirituals, providing written documentation of the African Methodist interest in and contribution to the popularity of this language and imagery. Allen's hymnal is notable in many respects. It is the first to publish the "wandering chorus," choruses often used at camp meetings that can be attached at will to numerous hymns. This first AME hymnal is also the first to include songs from the oral tradition probably experienced by Allen as an itinerant preacher. The hymnal also stands a testament to the musical taste of nineteenth-century black Protestants.¹⁶⁶ Allen's well-received hymnal went into a second edition later the same year (1801) and included thirty standard English hymns by Wesley and Watts and thirty-four by evangelistic native authors.¹⁶⁷

This first AME hymnal features fleshly-spiritual imagery from both English and American sources disproportionate to its size. At least half of the hymns in Allen's hymnal include this imagery, a greater fraction than appears in the standard MEC hymnal. Just as American Methodists showed a greater propensity for fleshly-imagery than their English counterparts did, the disproportionate number of fleshly hymns in the first AME hymnal suggests an even greater proclivity for this imagery among African American Methodists. One probable reason for this is that the imagery lends itself to multiple interpretations. The graphic suffering imagery used to depict the crucifixion in

¹⁶⁵ Richard Allen, A Collection of Spiritual Songs and Hymns Selected From Various Authors (Nashville: A.M.E.C. Sunday School Union, 1987 [1801]).

¹⁶⁶ Jon Michael Spencer, Protest and Praise: Sacred Music of Black Religion (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1977) 4.

¹⁶⁷ J. Roland Braithwaite, introduction, A Collection of Spiritual Songs and Hymns Selected From Various Authors by Richard Allen (Nashville: A.M.E.C. Sunday School Union, 1987) xi.

these hymns could be read for a second meaning in African communities—the sufferings of slavery’s victims. For example, the victim depicted in Henry Alline’s “As near to Calvary I pass’d” remains anonymous at first, allowing for the possibility of multiple sufferers or victims:¹⁶⁸

As near to Calvary I pass’d,
Methought I saw an extended cross,
Where a poor victim hangs;
His flesh the rugged iron tore,
His limbs all stain’d with purple gore,
Gasping with dying pangs.

Wondring the spectacle to see,
Who can this bleeding victim be,
In such exquisite pain?
Who thus consign’d to woes I cry’d?
‘Tis I, the bleeding Lamb reply’d,
To save a world from sin. (107)

The anonymity of the suffering victim allows for a more strategic reading by African Methodists, one that juxtaposes the physical sufferings of Christ with those of African slaves. The trope of suffering, then, was not only indispensable to African Methodist communities in their religious devotion, but also to their concomitant political agenda.¹⁶⁹

Although graphic suffering imagery had retained a steady place in Methodist hymnody over the years, the trope of bridal mysticism, as I argue elsewhere, was early abandoned by John Wesley and conservative English Methodism. Yet Allen’s hymnal, like those of other American Methodist bishops that came before him, restored it and thus ensured that AME singing would contain a second key figure of Pietist rhetoric. The intensity of the suffering scene quoted above converts the believer/ speaker of Alline’s

¹⁶⁸ Henry Alline (1748-1784) was a fiery Nova Scotia evangelist and itinerant preacher.

¹⁶⁹ For another example of graphic suffering imagery by a native hymnist, see John Leland’s “Now the Saviour stands a pleading” in Allen’s collection.

hymn, who thereafter refers to Jesus as “my dying lover” and “heavenly lover” and asks Jesus, “O take me in thy arms” (107), thereby revealing the signature combination of Moravian/ Pietist tropes: blood and wounds suffering, coupled with lover imagery or bridal mysticism.¹⁷⁰ This and numerous other examples from Richard Allen’s hymnal demonstrate the enthusiastic appropriation of bridal/ lover imagery and the new, nuanced reading of suffering imagery by African Methodists. Allen’s hymnal ensured the use of such tropes by the AME for years to come, expanding the audience for this specific blood and wounds and bridegroom imagery.

In the wake of African Methodist secession and the ongoing popularity of camp meetings, in 1810 Nathan Bangs sought to stem the revivalist tide and bring the Methodist Episcopal Church into the fold of middle-class American respectability.¹⁷¹ Under his direction, the 1836 standard MEC hymnal publication was meant to represent a conservative standard for the faith by staying true to what he designated as the “original” Wesleyan hymnody in the face of numerous rogue publications of camp meeting spirituals. Ironically, however, trying to remain “respectable” and true to John Wesley’s original hymnody meant publishing what were, probably unbeknownst to the bishops, translations of graphic, sensual Lutheran and German Pietist hymns and the even bawdier

¹⁷⁰ Other examples of lover and bridal imagery from native authors include Sarah Jones. “I love thee, I love Thee, I love thee my Love! / I love thee my Saviour, I love thee my Dove!,” and a hymn of unknown authorship, “Come ye that know the Lord indeed” that quotes Christ addressing his believers as “my bride” (49). Another hymn of unknown authorship, “Brethren farewell, I do you tell,” refers to “Christ’s encircling arms” (34). All of these native examples of lover/ bridal imagery stand next to Charles Wesley’s popular hymn “Ye virgin souls arise” which describes the final resurrection of converted souls thus: “Upstarting at the midnight cry,/ Behold the heavenly bridegroom nigh” (87), and Charles Wesley’s “O blessed estate of the dead—“ who “With Jesus in glory they rest,/ They rest in the arms of his love,” and concludes with the speaker’s request: “Come quickly, and bear me away/ The bride and the spirit say “come” (40).

¹⁷¹ Nathan Bangs began as a Methodist itinerant preacher and became Senior Book Agent of the Methodist Book Concern. He was the first editor of the Methodist Magazine and also edited the Christian Advocate. He also served as founder and secretary of the Methodist missionary society in 1836 and president of Wesleyan University in 1841.

renditions by his brother Charles, the very ones an older and more conservative Wesley had since deemed undesirable. Some of these hymns had been considered standard repertoire since the printing of Spence's Pocket Hymnbook in 1781, others resurfaced in appendices to officially sanctioned MEC hymnals during the early nineteenth-century revivals, and others surfaced later in the course of the nineteenth-century. Regardless of how these hymns found their way into the official hymnals of 1836, 1849, and 1878, though, their continued presence indicates a significant shift in the language deemed appropriate for worship within Protestantism, a shift away from Anglican norms to a fleshy spiritualism that outlived the fervor of revival.

This shift in appropriate devotional language, adopted in the late eighteenth-century by early American Methodists, extended to other Protestant denominations by the middle of the nineteenth-century. After American Methodists embraced Charles Wesley's "Jesus, lover of my soul," a hymn left out of John Wesley's standard Collection, the MEC officially sanctioned it in the 1836 standard hymnal and in every successive MEC hymnal in the twentieth century. This hymn features lover imagery much like Zinzendorf's "Jesus, to Thee my heart I bow:"

Jesus, lover of my soul, let me to Thy bosom fly,
While the nearer waters roll, while the tempest still is high.
Hide me, O my Savior, hide, till the storm of life is past;
Safe into the haven guide; O receive my soul at last.

The lingering popularity of this hymn among Methodists as well as other Protestant denominations long after the revivals indicates a linguistic shift in devotional language within North American Protestantism more generally, particularly in light of antebellum

era objections to the hymn's opening line among Congregationalists less inclined to follow the new linguistic trend.

Congregationalists expressed their discomfort with bridal mysticism by editing their version of the song. Yet notably, they didn't excise the hymn altogether—a fact that indicates the foothold Pietist-influenced hymns had taken in America. The editors of the 1831 Church Psalmody,¹⁷² used widely by New England Congregationalists and New School Presbyterians in New York State, changed the first line of Charles Wesley's "Jesus, Lover of my soul" to read "Jesus, Saviour of my soul."¹⁷³ The preface to this edition registers the compilers' discomfort with amorous lyrics: "All familiar and fondling epithets, or forms of expression, applied to either person of the Godhead, should be avoided, as bringing with them associations highly unfavorable to pure devotional feeling." Moreover, the editors lamented hymns that might distract from a sinner's guilt by eliciting "a high state of agreeable sympathetic excitement" which leads one away from repentance; most revival hymns, they felt, suffered from this problem. The compilers' lamentations indicate the prominence of such hymns and suggest their inability to stem such discourse in spite of minor textual revisions.

As the nineteenth century progressed, the ascendance of Methodism and the growing acceptance of revivalism made Charles Wesley's "Jesus, lover of my soul" a classic. The breadth of this hymn's acceptance in American churches can be demonstrated by its early appearance in an 1807 Roman Catholic hymnal and its later

¹⁷² David Greene and Lowell Mason, eds. Church Psalmody (Boston: T. R. Marvin, 1831). This edition sold 150,000 copies and was printed as late as 1866. See Mary De Jong, "Textual Editing and the "Making" of Hymns in Nineteenth-Century America," Sing Them Over Again to Me: Hymns and Hymnbooks in America ed. Mark A. Noll and Edith L. Blumhofer (Tuscaloosa: U of Alabama P, 2006) 87.

¹⁷³ Another revision of Charles Wesley's first line of "Jesus, lover of my soul" rendered the hymn less amorous and fleshy: "Jesus, refuge of my soul/ Let me to thy mercy fly" (De Jong, 87).

inclusion in the 1870 hymnal of the Reorganized Church of Latter-Day Saints. By mid-nineteenth century, Charles Wesley's hymn began to appear in an unedited form in Congregationalist churches. In contrast to the revised version, "Jesus, Saviour of my soul," that appeared in the Congregationalist Church Psalmody in 1831, Congregationalist clergyman Henry Ward Beecher's 1856 Plymouth Collection included numerous Methodist hymns, including "Jesus, Lover of my soul" in its original form.¹⁷⁴ Beecher introduced this collection as a corrective to hymnals that "have been so fastidiously made as to exclude many hymns, as extravagant, that were not half so extravagant as are the Psalms of David" (iii). In other words, Beecher reinstates the fleshly hymns of the Moravians and Methodists in their original form, hymns that had made previous hymn collectors nervous.¹⁷⁵ Not only did he publish many hymns not included in other American hymnals since before the revivals of the Second Great Awakening, he found that the hymns edited to suit middle-class respectability had quelled the invocation of deep religious feeling: "those retained have been abused by

¹⁷⁴ Henry Ward Beecher, ed. Plymouth Collection of Hymns, For the Use of Christian Congregations (New York: Barnes, 1856).

¹⁷⁵ "We have gathered many exquisite hymns from the Moravian Collections, developing the most tender and loving views of Christ, of his personal presence, and gentle companionship. We know of no hymn writers that equal their faith and fervor for Christ, as present with his people. Nor can any one conversant with these fail to recognize the fountain in which the incomparable Charles Wesley was baptized. His hymns are only Moravian hymns re-sung. Not alone are the favorite expressions used and the epithets which they love, but, like them, he beholds all Christian truths through the medium of confiding love. The love-element of this school has never been surpassed.

To say that we have sought for hymns expressing the deepest religious feeling, and particularly the sentiments of love, and trust, and divine courage, and hopefulness, is only to say that we have drawn largely from the best Methodist hymns. The contributions of the Wesleys to Hymnology have been so rich as to leave the Christian world under an obligation which can not be paid so long as there is a struggling Christian brotherhood to sing and be comforted amid the trials of this world.

Charles Wesley was peculiarly happy in making the Scripture illustrate Christian experience, and personal experience throw light upon the deep places of the Bible. Some of his effusions have never been surpassed. Nor are there any hymns that could more nobly express the whole ecstasy of the Apostolic writings in view of death and heaven." Beecher, v.

corrections, so called, and tamed down from their noble fervor and careless freedom, into flat and profitless propriety.”¹⁷⁶

The “Introduction” to Beecher’s non-denominational Plymouth Collection captures a shift in religious language acceptable to Congregationalists, the most conservative of whom represented the last bastions against revivalism and religious sympathetic excitement. Even if Beecher did not represent the most conservative of the Congregationalists, he was widely influential and his views held weight in the Congregationalist communities. In 1856 Beecher wrote, “A hymn is a lyrical discourse to the feelings. It should either excite or express feeling”(iii). Contrasted with the lamented “sympathetic excitement” extracted from hymns in the 1831 Church Psalmody collection, Beecher’s hymnal reflects the late stages of a paradigm shift in Protestant religious expression that followed cultural expressions of sentiment exemplified by Harriet Beecher Stowe’s bestseller, Uncle Tom’s Cabin (1850). Echoing Stowe’s intersection of religious and sentimental rhetoric, Henry Ward Beecher’s Plymouth Collection explicitly connected religious experience to sentimental or sympathetic excitement, thereby reinforcing the ability of such language and imagery to function in both evangelical Protestant hymnody as well as genres such as the novel.

Before Stowe tapped into the culturally-available expressions of piety and sentiment to promote anti-slavery, religious-minded reformers borrowed the language of sympathetic suffering from their church hymnals. But at this point, what had been the property of congregations began to have secular weight. Abolitionists became the first reformers to break away from their churches, form independent societies, and create a literature rich in religious sentiment in service to their cause. The abolitionist movement

¹⁷⁶ Beecher, iv.

proved to be a model, both in organization and in literary style, to subsequent, burgeoning benevolence societies which were blurring the boundaries between church space and public spaces.

SENTIMENTAL ABOLITIONISTS AND THEIR HYMNALS

Numerous historians of religion and abolition have portrayed the antislavery movement as a virtual byproduct of nineteenth-century evangelical revivalism.¹⁷⁷ In the familiar account, evangelical abolitionists regarded slavery as a sin that required immediate abolition, thus casting the incipient abolitionist cause in religious and moral terms.¹⁷⁸ In 1833 the founders of the American Anti-Slavery Society declared slaveholding or “man-stealing” a sin in the eyes of God and pledged to be martyrs to the cause if necessary. In 1856, the Society continued to elide the boundaries between the missions of abolition and religion:

The Anti-Slavery movement (as conducted, for 23 years past, by the American Anti-Slavery Society) was at its commencement, and has ever since been, thoroughly and emphatically a religious enterprise. The earliest official documents of that Society (its Constitution and its Declaration of Sentiments, both adopted at Philadelphia in 1833) show

¹⁷⁷ An early, influential study linking evangelical Protestantism and abolitionism is Gilbert Barnes, The Antislavery Impulse, 1830-1844 (New York: D. Appleton-Century, 1933). Other early, significant works include David Brion Davis, The Problem of Slavery in Western Culture (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1966) and David Brion Davis, The Problem of Slavery in the Age of Revolution (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1975); and a somewhat later work, Robert Fogel, The Quest for the Moral Problem of Slavery (Gettysburg, Pa: Gettysburg College, 1994). Religion looms large in even the most recent studies of American antebellum reform: T. Gregory Garvey, Creating the Culture of Reform in Antebellum America, (Athens: U of Georgia P, 2006).

¹⁷⁸ John R. McKivigan and Mitchell Snay, eds. Religion and the Antebellum Debate Over Slavery (Athens, Ga: U of Georgia P, 1998) 6.

that its prominent and preponderating appeal was to religious considerations; that Slavery, whatever else it might be, was first, “a heinous crime in the sight of God;” that immediate emancipation was the divinely imposed “duty” of the slaveholder.¹⁷⁹

The American Anti-Slavery Society did what churches in both the north and the south were unwilling to do: denounce slavery as morally reprehensible in the eyes of God, thus taking an explicitly political position on moral grounds. Radical abolitionists like William Lloyd Garrison, Maria Weston Chapman, and Angelina Grimke, who failed to find churches to actively support their civic spirituality, thus straightforwardly saw the possibility of abandoning their spiritual homes to join the American Anti-Slavery Society.

This shift to a public space of religious and political morality proved critical as an alternative to church morality. In fact, no single Protestant denomination in nineteenth-century America actively supported the cause of immediate emancipation. With the exception of some pietistic sects and the Society of Friends (Quakers), all churches in the north and the south remained tolerant of slavery in varying degrees until the outbreak of the Civil War.¹⁸⁰ Insisting that churches classify slaveholding as a sin akin to intemperance, theft, and adultery, for which congregants could be disciplined and even ejected from the community, abolitionists ran into a myriad of institutional as well as socio-cultural barriers that precluded the full participation of churches in their cause

¹⁷⁹ Quoted in Spencer (41-2) from: Charles K. Whipple, “Relations of Anti-Slavery to Religion” (Anti-Slavery Tracts, no. 19). New York: American Anti-Slavery Society, 1856. See also facsimile reprint (Westport, Conn: Negro Universities Press, 1970).

¹⁸⁰ In the wake of the Revolution, the calls for civil liberties and human rights prompted some churches to denounce slavery, but few, if any, actually disciplined slaveholders. Ecclesiastical support for antislavery waned by the close of the century.

(McKivigan and Snay 7-10). Foremost among these barriers were financial considerations, which kept many northern churches and benevolent organizations from supporting abolition. Established churches like the New England Congregationalists, Unitarians, and Episcopalians were in consequence unwilling to take sides on such a controversial issue that might sever their ties to social and economic elites (McKivigan and Snay 10). Churches, as well as missionary and Bible societies across the North, also avoided the slavery question, because their organizations were backed by Southern patrons and by influential northern merchants, bankers, and cotton-mill investors with considerable financial investments in slavery (McKivigan and Snay 11-12).

To overcome church institutional barriers, then, abolitionists realized that they had an alternative: they could at least infiltrate the grassroots ranks of churches with non-traditional ecclesiastical structures (McKivigan and Snay 11). For Episcopalians, or Roman Catholics, where the clergy possessed all the authority, abolitionists had no parallel way to intervene and change church practices. In contrast, decentralized denominations such as Baptists, Congregationalists, and Unitarians organized churches at the local level, which allowed abolitionists to gain support locally. Overall, denominations with a federated structure like the Methodists and the Presbyterians ultimately proved most fruitful for the abolitionist cause. Once local members “converted” to abolitionism, they could petition the higher authorities to enact strict antislavery policies. Abolitionist Methodists and Presbyterians did just that; they petitioned to have slaveholders expelled from their denominations, exacerbating tensions that led to the Methodist and Baptist schisms in the mid-1840s and the New School Presbyterians in 1857 (McKivigan and Snay 12). Yet even as the antebellum secession

of southern New School Presbyterians and southern members of the Methodist Episcopal Church officially ended fellowship between slaveholders and abolitionists, the churches withheld any official sanction against slavery or endorsement of abolition (McKivigan and Snay 13). Despite great strides made within many denominations, then, abolition remained a marginal voice in northern churches until the secession of the South and the imminence of civil war.

Repudiating what they saw as the seeming weak moral stance of the churches, William Lloyd Garrison and Arthur Tappan founded the Anti-Slavery Society in 1833, a staunch abolitionist organization founded on the belief in the immorality of slaveholding and the ideal of pacifist resistance. With the formation of the Anti-Slavery Society, Garrison finally constructed an outsider position, a third voice in the sphere of public debate constituted as a free association of members, not beholden to their members as were the churches. In essence, he created the reform institution as an entity with a moral force set apart from both religion and the state.¹⁸¹ At the same time, he secularized evangelical morality and created a model for benevolence societies to address moral causes outside of the institutional clutches of the churches, mobilizing their affective force (Garvey 124). For religious-minded political activists like Garrison, in consequence, reform organizations replaced the churches as vehicles of social change. Angelina Grimke's search for uncompromising civic spirituality can serve as an example of this process. It led her from the Episcopal church to the Presbyterians to Quakerism to her spiritual home, the Anti-Slavery Society (Garvey 81).

¹⁸¹ T. Gregory Garvey, Creating the Culture of Reform in Antebellum America (Athens, Ga: U of Georgia P, 2006) 123.

For Garrison's reform institution—the third voice in public debate—he even created a seemingly new literary genre or at least a new incarnation of an old one functioning in a new social space, the anti-slavery hymnal. Garrison's collection, A Selection of Anti-Slavery Hymns, for the Use of Friends of Emancipation (1834), addressed the immorality of slavery using the religious language and imagery of evangelical Protestant hymnals.¹⁸² Garrison's hymnal had a specific social function outside the church or group prayer meetings, although isomorphic with their fervor: his hymns were for use at anti-slavery society meetings and before public anti-slavery addresses.

Garrison's wish that his "experiment" "may lead to something better and more voluminous" became realized in subsequent antislavery hymnals like Maria Weston Chapman's two-volume collection, Songs of the Free and Hymns of Christian Freedom (1836) and Edwin F. Hatfield's Freedom's Lyre: Or, Psalms, Hymns, and Sacred Songs for the Slave and His Friends (1840) (Garrison 3).¹⁸³ In the preface to his collection, Garrison concedes the various uses to which the hymns may be subject:

Some of the pieces are too long, but I have not felt authorised to mutilate them, as a few verses may easily be selected and sung; others are intended specially for the use of our colored brethren; others, perhaps, are not adapted to music, but may be read profitably. (3)

Even as he collected the hymns for a specific social function, Garrison also acknowledged that some may be read as poetry rather than sung, which suggests the fluid

¹⁸² William Lloyd Garrison, ed. A Selection of Anti-Slavery Hymns, for the Use of the Friends of Emancipation (Boston: Garrison and Knapp, 1834).

¹⁸³ Maria Weston Chapman, Songs of the Free and Hymns of Christian Freedom 2 vols. (Boston: I Knapp, 1836); Edwin F. Hatfield, Freedom's Lyre: Or, Psalms, Hymns, and Sacred Songs for the Slave and His Friends (New York: S. W. Benedict, 1840).

boundaries of the genre itself. He was more concerned with the social gesture they represented -- public testimony to a moral issue -- than with niceties of form or orthodoxies of ritual. Nevertheless, his choice to issue a hymn book rather than a book of essays or poems indicates his awareness of the power and cultural standing that hymns held in the lives of ordinary Americans.

Garrison's collection of socio-political hymns marks an important innovation in the history of the hymn as I have been tracing it. Up until this point, hymns had been the exclusive property of churches and revivalist groups enacting significant changes in religious subjectivity-- the position of the individual vis-à-vis the Divine. At this point, hymns enter into the public sphere as part of the third voice in public discourse, the benevolent societies that existed as a distinct entity from the religious or purely political sphere. The success of Garrison's innovative collection of anti-slavery hymns inspired a series of abolitionist hymnals, in which the newfound social and political potential of communal singing and hymn recitation expanded the significance of hymns from religious to public uses.

Even as Garrison and his anti-slavery contemporaries valued hymns as a socio-political medium, modern abolitionist scholars continue to overlook this genre. Most look to the autobiography or *Life* narrative as the signature genre of abolition, while others extend their scope to include novels, poetry, short stories and prose.¹⁸⁴ The few studies that include anti-slavery songs neglect to trace their origins back to the early abolitionist hymnals, the earliest sources of abolitionist song.¹⁸⁵ Garrison's anti-slavery

¹⁸⁴ Michael Bennett, Democratic Discourses: The Radical Abolition Movement and Antebellum American Literature (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers UP, 2005).

¹⁸⁵ For example, see Scott Gac, Singing for Freedom: The Hutchinson Family Singers and the Nineteenth-Century Culture of Reform (New Haven: Yale UP, 2007).

hymnal not only rescues this genre for abolitionist scholars, but also demonstrates the all-important shift of hymns and their German Pietist tropes as they crossed over from the religious to the secular realm of public speech. This permeation of religious-inspired rhetoric into the public sphere makes the lineage traced in this study significant to American literary scholars and historians.

The abolitionist hymns adapt the German Pietist tropes of suffering imagery and sympathy in a myriad of ways to further the cause of anti-slavery. Abolitionists borrowed the experiential element of religious conversion to garner adherents to their cause. In essence, the graphic crucifixion imagery used by German and Anglo-American revivalists drew participants into a meditative suffering with Jesus Christ that entailed an emotional and physical sympathetic identification on the part of the participant/ convert. Abolitionists use the same strategy of experiential sympathetic identification to convert people to the anti-slavery cause. In the abolitionist hymnals discussed below, some appropriate the Pietist imagery in tact, in that they portray the physiological sufferings of the slaves with appeals to sympathetic identification in the singer/ reader. Others transfer graphic physical suffering to the emotional sufferings brought about by the slave trade, i.e. familial separation. Finally, one hymnal transfers the suffering imagery of Christ to the abolitionists as martyrs for the cause. Even as the approaches used by abolitionist hymnists to portray the ills of slavery vary, they each utilize the trope of graphic suffering and experiential sympathy in various ways. In addition to the great effects elicited by this imagery in the revivalist camps, the flexibility of this combination of tropes made it a lasting choice for sentimental-abolitionist hymnists and novelists.

Garrison's small collection of 37 hymns features not only the images of physical suffering privileged by evangelical hymnists, but also the psychological sufferings of the slaves to elicit sympathy. In hymn # 17, Garrison focuses on the immediate physical sufferings of the slave detained by iron bands.

Look! 'tis woman's streaming eye,
These are woman's fetter'd hands,
That to you, so mournfully,
Lift sad glance, and iron bands.

The significance of seeing and being seen in this hymn is reminiscent of many Pietist/Methodist Passion hymns and the theology of firsthand experience of the sufferings of Christ inherent in such portrayals. The lack of graphic suffering imagery, however, distinguishes this scene from crucifixion imagery as well as the call for sympathy that inevitably falls short of experiential suffering in the second stanza:

Mute, yet strong appeal of wo!
Wakes it not your starting tears?
Though your hearts may never know
Half the bitter doom of hers.

Even as the speaker's direct appeal for heartfelt sympathy recalls the introductions to Pietist hymnals, revival hymns usually depict the ability of the singer to experience the physical and emotional sufferings portrayed, or at least a sincere longing to experience the sufferings along with Christ.

Some of the hymns in Garrison's collection feature the immediate physical sufferings of the slaves as well as the psychological sufferings brought about by the slave trade. Hymn 12 in Garrison's collection simply marked "Missionary Hymn" is a poem by Margaret Chandler that focuses on the separation of mother and child:

Think of our country's glory,
dim'd with Afric's tears—

Her broad flag stain'd and gory
With the hoarded guilt of years!

Think of the frantic mother,
Lamenting for her child,
Till falling lashes smother
Her cries of anguish wild!

Think of the prayers ascending,
Yet shriek'd, alas! in vain,
When heart from heart is rending
Ne'er to be join'd again.

Shall we behold, unheeding,
Life's holiest feelings crush'd?—
When woman's heart is bleeding,
Shall woman's voice be hush'd?

Oh, no! by every blessing
Heaven to thee may lend—
Remember their oppression,
Forget not, sister, friend.

The lashes that stamp out the mother's cries evoke sympathy for the physical sufferings of slaves like the scenes common in revivalist hymns. But the focus on the psychological sufferings from maternal separation demonstrate a new variation on suffering imagery. Chandler portrays the separation of the slave mother and child in general terms to emphasize the similarities between the emotional sufferings of slave and free mothers alike. The hymn's speaker reinforces this shared psychological suffering through direct address. Chandler asks the reader / singer to "Think" and implicitly feel the mother's anguish to render one woman's suffering that of every "woman's heart" in the fourth stanza. The sufferings of a single mother become that of every woman, the "sister" and "friend" instructed to "Remember" and "Forget not." Although emotional despair finds equivalents in evangelical depictions of the tears and sighs of Christ on the cross, the

emphasis on psychological suffering brought about by consequences other than bodily suffering marks an abolitionist innovation of an older evangelical trope.

The trope of suffering finds yet another innovation in the abolitionist hymnal compiled by Maria Weston Chapman Songs of the Free and Hymns of Christian Freedom (1836). Returning to an emphasis on physical sufferings more congruous with revivalist hymnody, the abolitionists in these hymns take Christ's place as the martyrs in the fight against slavery. On the heels of Garrison's innovative hymnal, fellow abolitionist activist Chandler expanded Garrison's effort and published a large, influential volume of abolitionist hymns. Even though she included half of the hymns from Garrison's collection including the ones cited above, the few hymns that focus on the suffering slaves remain occluded by the 118 hymns composed primarily of Christian martyrdom hymns. In her collection, slaves and slavery are tangential to the primary story of Christian-abolitionist martyrdom, which is clearly demonstrated in a hymn she wrote and included in the collection under the heading "Devotion to the Cause of Christ:"

Their suffering though your souls must share—
Though pride oppress and hate condemn,
Stand up! And breathe your fearless prayer
For those in bonds as bound with them.

Unheeded fall the fierce command
Than bids the struggling soul be dumb!
Shout with a voice to rouse a land!
Bid the free martyr spirit come!

Chapman understood abolition as a Christian mission tantamount to a Holy War in which abolitionists fashioned themselves as Christian martyrs.¹⁸⁶ To tell this tale, Chapman enlists British Nonconformist hymns including the masochistic physicality of Wesley's

¹⁸⁶ Marcus Wood, ed., The Poetry of Slavery: An Anglo-American Anthology 1764-1865 (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2003) xxx.

Passion hymns and Watts's militant hymns of triumph (Wood xxx).¹⁸⁷ This transference of suffering from the slaves to the abolitionists themselves, however, was a short-lived phenomenon.

This series of anti-slavery hymnals culminated in, Freedom's Lyre: Or, Psalms, Hymns, and Sacred Songs for the Slave and His Friends (1840), which turns back to the physical suffering of the slaves using imagery that most directly links the abolitionist and Methodist/ Pietist use of graphic suffering imagery and the soteriological value of sympathy. Commissioned by the American Anti-Slavery Society, Presbyterian clergyman Edwin F. Hatfield compiled 273 hymns and psalms "for those who have been accustomed to meet and pray for the Emancipation of the Slave" (iii). The only abolitionist hymnal compiled by an actual hymnist represents the most reverent and well-wrought collection of religious abolitionist songs to appear before the Civil War. Hatfield's slave-centered collection begins with sections entitled "The Cries of the Slave," "The Slave Comforted," "The Slave Exhorted to Patience and Hope," and "The Rights of the Slave." Like Garrison's collection, Hatfield's explicitly connects Christ's suffering to slaves' suffering and employs a Pietist/ Methodist rhetoric of graphic suffering imagery and sympathy as part of a morphology of conversion to convey both.

The combination of graphic crucifixion imagery and the appeal for sympathy appears lifted directly from the rhetoric of revival hymns, but is put to a unique use. In a

¹⁸⁷ Along the same lines, the preface to the anonymous abolition epic Slavery Rhymes, Addressed to the Friends of Liberty (1837) fashions the abolitionist cause as a spiritual battle of suffering, persecution, and darkness into the light of apotheosis (reword) similar to conversion narratives: "Clothed in the 'armour of righteousness,' and wielding the 'sword of the spirit', [abolitionists] throw themselves into the breach, wherein they mean to conquer or die. When they bring the subject to the test of Scripture, they feel a 'necessity laid upon them' 'to adopt the faith of abolitionism—and, like the apostle Paul, usually become the most strenuous defenders of the faith they once sought to destroy" (qtd. in Wood xxxi).

“Prayer for divine Sympathy” the suffering imagery of the slaves and of Christ are used to evoke an empathetic sympathy directly from Jesus.

Prayer for divine Sympathy (attributed to “The Liberator”)

Savior! I bring to thee my chain,
For heavier bonds on thee were flung;
I bare to thee my bosom’s pain,
For bitt’rer pangs from thee were wrung.

I think upon that awful hour,
When thee, the Shepherd of the flock,
The Prince of Peace, the Lord of pow’r,
The priest did scorn, the soldier mock.

And bleeding from the Roman rod,
And scoff’d at by the heartless Jew,
I hear thee plead for them to God—
“Father! They know not what they do.” (15)

The more graphic depiction of Jesus’s suffering on the cross also recalls the imagery used in Pietist and Methodist hymns to elicit sympathy in the heart of the believer, a necessary step (“feeling”) for salvation. In this case, the singer elides the images of Christ’s suffering and those of the slave to evoke God’s “divine sympathy” on behalf of the slave. The elision of sufferings enables a simple transference of the method of conversion:

sympathy for suffering Christ—>
divine feeling in the heart—>
culminates in salvation

sympathy for suffering slaves—>
feeling, prayer, and action—>
culminates in salvation

As we saw above, abolitionists viewed their cause in terms of a spiritual battle to end in the Promised Land. By applying the logic of conversion via sympathy to the issue of slavery, abolitionists like Hatfield, Garrison, and Chapman not only identified slaves with Jesus, but also connected abolition to salvation for both the slaves and the free. In both

equations, feelings became a key mechanism for personal transformation and salvation, an idea first developed in Halle a century earlier.

For sentimental-abolitionists, the evocation of sympathy repeatedly proved to be the greatest weapon in their arsenal. Just as Pietist literature was judged solely on its ability to make the reader / singer feel, abolitionist literature was judged most effective when the reader/ singer cries for the sufferings of the slave in divine sympathy.

Freedom's Lyre devotes an entire section explicitly to the cause of sympathy entitled "Appeals in Behalf of the Slave" with sub-sections addressed "To their Masters," "To Rulers," "To Freemen," "To Woman," and "To Christians." In the section addressed "To their Masters," Lydia Sigourney compares slaveholders to Pontius Pilate, a complement to the elision of Christ and the slave: "But if with Pilate's stoic eye, You calmly wash when blood is spilt;/ Or deem a cold un pitying sigh, Absolves you from the stain of guilt;" (80-Sigourney). The root of the slaveholder's crime is the withholding of pity and sympathy, a problem she seeks to mend in a subsequent hymn. Thus "Feel as you ought for the Slave" functions as a prayer to God to "Touch deep for them the pitying breast" and convert the heart of the slave master. For sentimental-abolitionists, it is a foregone conclusion that sympathy will break the bondman's chain; therefore abolitionists pray to God to soften the heart of the slaveholder and let pity and sympathy take its place.

By far the most emotional, evocative appeals for sympathy are found in the section "Appeals in Behalf of the Slave to Woman," that recalls the turn from physiological suffering to psychological suffering in Garrison's hymnal. Hatfield includes several of the hymns from Garrison's collection including "Think of our

country's glory" and "Daughter of the Pilgrim-Sires" (quoted above). A terse hymn emblematic of this section entitled "Weep with those that weep" reads:

Lo! woman calls, in accents wild,
On thee to save her famish'd child;
Herself the image of despair,
Consum'd with grief, and wan with care.

Oh! Listen to her mournful cry,
Nor turn away the pitying eye;
The orphan rescue from the grave,
The mother and her offspring save.

Fair daughters of our happy soil!
Not doom'd to unrequited toil,
Your ready alms and pray'rs bestow,
In pity of your sister's woe. (94)

The call for female solidarity across racial lines—"your sister's woe"-- and in many antebellum works depicts the suffering of a helpless mother who cannot care for her child or is forcibly separated from her infant. Slavery becomes a site of sympathy for women when a hymn, poem, or narrative portrays the breaking of the sacred mother-infant bond as an individual incident. Appealing to all the familial ties enjoyed by white women, the hymn that follows, "Do as ye would have it done to you," calls on women as sisters to help their bleeding brothers, daughters to help their weeping parents, and finally as mothers to protect the sacred bond of mother and nursling "taken from thee by a ruffian hand"(95).

The modification of the revivalist trope of suffering and sympathy to include (and even privilege) psychological suffering continues in the work of sentimental-abolitionists, especially in works that focus on the mental anguish of female slaves like Harriet Beecher Stowe's Uncle Tom's Cabin. Her focus on the emotional ramifications of the

slave trade reflects Stowe's own emphasis on feelings as part of gendered spheres—women, she felt, were responsible for cultivating the feelings of their children and husbands, not for entering into public debates. However, her primary focus on the psychological anguish does not eclipse the numerous instances of the actual physical sufferings of slavery. The fatal scene of Uncle Tom's torturous beating, a vision that caused Stowe to weep in church one Sunday morning, formed the nucleus of her narrative, one that inscribes suffering on slave bodies, prescribes sympathetic meditations for her readers, and possibly converts ambivalent northerners and southern slave-holders to right feeling and social action, linking this work to Methodist rhetoric. Uncle Tom's Cabin provides a particularly good opportunity to investigate the cultural influence of Pietist rhetoric in America, not only because the novel had an unusually large number of readers, but also because the rhetoric used by Stowe is so explicit.

UNCLE TOM'S CABIN: A CASE STUDY

In the course of this study, I have traced the progression of Pietist rhetoric in hymns from eighteenth-century German hymnals to mid-nineteenth-century America revivals. As I have shown, the more provocative elements of Moravian hymnody revised by John Wesley were enthusiastically reclaimed by American Methodists, who spread these tropes far and wide through the nineteenth-century American revivals. In the previous section, I traced a significant turn in the usage of these tropes beyond personal devotion in religious circles to the space of political and social debate about abolition. In particular, I showed how the Pietist tropes of suffering and sympathy provided a particularly powerful set of tools for abolitionists.

This significant shift in the social function of hymns from religious use to social and political purposes suggests the concurrent movement of German Pietist rhetoric into the sphere of American public discourse. To test this hypothesis and to demonstrate the full extent to which Pietist imagery became rhetorical tropes used far beyond those of hymn singing and religious culture, I wish to examine a particularly telling and influential case outside the religious sphere and its hymnals: Harriet Beecher Stowe's Uncle Tom's Cabin. By demonstrating the ways in which Stowe uses Pietist tropes to convert her readers to the cause of anti-slavery, I prove the far-reaching influences of these tropes as they influenced mainstream American secular culture. As one of the best-selling books of nineteenth-century America, Uncle Tom's Cabin ensured that the segments of American culture untouched by revivalist rhetoric became acquainted with Pietist imagery and its significance as a cultural force.

Although my dissertation has been primarily focused on tracing the lineage of German Pietist imagery through transnational Protestant hymns, the final case study of Uncle Tom's Cabin suggests this work's appropriation of a revivalist hymn rhetoric that may have implications for other American sentimental novels. Elements commonly considered to descend from English sentimental literature should perhaps be properly attributed to Pietist religious hymnody, complicating commonly-held genealogies of American Sentimentalism.

We now turn to Stowe's best-selling novel for evidence of fleshly-spiritual images and language as it moved from revivalist circles into popular discourse. Stowe foregrounds the link between Methodist hymns and abolitionist discourse in her novel in ways that abolitionist hymns did not, painting a fuller picture of this inheritance and its

adaptation by sentimental-abolitionists. Not only do the texts of Methodist hymns abound in the novel, but each of the good, Christian characters are either members of the Methodist church or believe in a distinctly Methodist way, that is, they *feel* the presence of the spirit in their physical bodies. Like good Methodists, Uncle Tom and little Eva repeatedly demonstrate their communion with the divine on their physical bodies, a visible proving ground for spiritual visitation that can be both witnessed and verified.

Stowe's use of the trope of suffering and sympathy, so abundant in the abolitionist hymns quoted above, is more explicit. In the chapter "Concluding Remarks," Stowe guides her readers much like the collectors of Pietist hymnals did; she prescribes the appropriate emotional response to the material:¹⁸⁸

There is one thing that every individual can do, --they can see to it that *they feel right*. An atmosphere of sympathetic influence encircles every human being; and the man or woman who feels strongly, healthily and justly, on the great interests of humanity, is a constant benefactor to the human race. See, then, to your sympathies in this matter! Are they in harmony with the sympathies of Christ? Or are they swayed and perverted by the sophistries of worldly policy? (624)

On one level, Stowe's novel reads like a patchwork quilt of interweaving stories of emotional and physical woe, yet its focus on impact is clear. Each chapter reveals another story of emotional sufferings one cannot soon forget, like a mother's suicide upon separation from her infant or a mother killing her infant to spare it the indignities of a life of slavery. Stowe then juxtaposes such stories of extreme emotional sufferings with

¹⁸⁸ Harriet Beecher Stowe, *Uncle Tom's Cabin, or Life Among the Lowly* (London: Penguin, 1981). Page numbers throughout this section refer to this edition, a re-printing of the first edition in novel form from 1852.

those of the everyday physical sufferings that accompany slavery-- overwork, malnourishment, isolation, and abusive whippings, beatings, and even burnings. Intermittently, Stowe interrupts these stories with direct appeals to the reader to sympathize with these characters, reminding them of a necessary strategy of reading.

In essence, the novel functions in much the same way as the daily liturgy in the community of the Moravian Brethren. Fixating on the sufferings of Christ was intended to open the hearts of the Moravians and, through sympathy with Christ's sufferings, convert them into sympathetic, feeling Christians concerned with the welfare of their fellow congregants. Descriptions of atrocities suffered by slaves were likewise intended to open the hearts of Stowe's readers and convert them-- through sympathy-- to abolitionists concerned for the welfare of their fellow human beings.

Little Eva models Stowe's ideal reader *par excellence*. Like a good Methodist, Eva reacts to slave sufferings with profound sympathy registered on her body. She doesn't witness the atrocities first hand, but simply hearing the stories of unfortunate slaves retold is enough to physically alter her:

“ . . . Prue, she got drunk agin,--and they had her down cellar,--and thar they left her all day, --and I hearn ‘em saying that the *flies had got to her*, -and *she's dead!*”

Dinah held up her hands, and turning, saw close by her side the spirit-like form of Evangeline, her large mystic eyes dilated with horror, and every drop of blood driven from her lips and cheeks. (327)

When her father recounts the story of his former slave's sudden death, Eva “burst into tears, and sobbed convulsively, and her “small frame trembled and shook with the

violence of her feelings” (347). Countering St. Clare’s diagnosis, Eva claims, “I’m not nervous, but these things *sink into my heart*,” a refrain that runs throughout the novel when she hears of slave suffering (347).

Just as the Moravian Brethren daily relived the intense sufferings of Jesus in order to open their hearts, and the Methodist camp meetings participants displayed this internal change on their physical bodies, Eva’s emotional and physical reaction to the slave narratives models a paradigm for abolitionist conversion transferred into the political realm. Little Eva demonstrates the sympathy one should feel for the suffering slaves according to the abolitionist method of conversion in which the Christian abolitionists transfer sympathy from the sufferings of Christ to those of the slaves as a step toward conversion. To be converted to anti-slavery Christianity in Stowe’s framework, readers should react to the oft-repeated scenes of horror depicted in the novel by feeling as Eva does. The novel, then, is figured as the conversion for little Eva, a model for that of others.

Little Eva, who feels the presence of the Spirit and displays it on her physical body, is the only character described in terms of the fleshly-spiritual metaphor of bridal mysticism. On Eva’s deathbed her father, St. Clare, asks her how she can love Christ without ever having seen him.

“That makes no difference,” said Eva. “I believe him, and in a few days I shall see him;” and the young face grew fervent, radiant with joy.

St. Clare said no more. It was a feeling which he had seen before in his mother . . . (442)

The physical change in Eva's appearance is reinforced by St. Clare's visual confirmation of this feeling in both Eva and his mother.

When Tom witnesses the presence of the Spirit in Eva's dying body, he uses bridal mysticism to allude to Eva's immanent union with the Divine. Bridal mysticism was, as already noted, over-used by Zinzendorf and tamed into lover imagery by John Wesley to describe the mystical union of Christ and the believer. By this time in antebellum America, it had re-emerged as an acceptable Protestant image in the revivalist Methodist hymnody. As Eva's death becomes immanent, Tom sleeps on the balcony, as "there must be somebody watchin' for the bridegroom" (425). Tom then quotes from the Bible:

"You know it says in Scripture, 'At midnight there was a great cry made. Behold, the bridegroom cometh.' That's what I'm spectin now, every night . . ."

Right at midnight, as Eva passes on into the arms of the Bridegroom, "a bright, a glorious smile passed over her face, and she said, brokenly, --'O! love,--joy,--peace!' gave one sigh and passed from death unto life" (428)! Even though Tom merely quotes scripture here, this scriptural reference had fallen out of favor with seventeenth-century Puritans and only reemerged in the fleshly-spiritual context of American frontier evangelism.

Tom, the spiritually astute Methodist minister to slaves, also uses his body as a proving ground for faith. As St. Clare wrestles with despair following the death of his daughter Eva, he asks Tom,

"How do you know there's any Christ, Tom! You never saw the Lord."
"Felt Him in my soul, Mas'r,--feel Him now! . . ." (436)

Just as John Wesley “felt [his] heart strangely warmed” at his conversion, Tom’s own feelings suffice as proof of Christ’s existence. Tom’s divine feeling also privileges him to knowledge of spiritual matters. He tells his master, St. Clare,

“O Mas’r, dere’s more than me loves you,—the blessed Lord Jesus loves you.”

“How do you know that Tom?” said St. Clare.

“Feels it in my soul. O, Mas’r! ‘the love of Christ, that passeth knowledge.’” (436)

At this point and throughout the novel, Tom functions as a paradigm for the converted, believing Methodist assured of his faith by sensations in his physical frame, sensations witnessed by others later in the novel. Tom and Eva serve as physical witnesses to the spirit, converting other characters to Christianity and abolition, which Stowe presents as a prerequisite for salvation.

Although critics often note Stowe’s emphasis on right feelings, few have recognized that feeling as part of the abolitionist morphology of conversion (sympathy for suffering slaves—>feeling, prayer, and action—>culminates in salvation) that almost exactly replicates the Pietist/ Methodist morphology of spiritual conversion (sympathy for suffering Christ—> divine feeling in the heart—> culminates in salvation). St. Clare’s concomitant conversion to Christianity and abolition is emblematic of this parallel. St. Clare’s instincts and the “sense to feel” pre-qualify him for salvation according to Methodist Christianity, which is based on feeling and sensation rather than doctrines or theologies:

He had one of those natures which could better and more clearly conceive of religious things from its own perceptions and instincts, than many a matter-of-fact and practical Christian. The gift to appreciate *the sense to feel* the finer shades and relations of moral things . . .

St. Clare fulfills the first step in the abolitionist conversion in his acknowledgement of the impossibility of Christian slave-holding, which implies his sympathy with the sufferings of (his) slaves. He feels no man can be a Christian “without throwing the whole weight of his being against this monstrous system of injustice that lies at the foundation of all our society; and, if need be, sacrificing himself in the battle” (451). St. Clare’s resolve to free his slaves and try to reform his society marks the action that confirms his conversion in the eyes of both abolitionists and Methodists, what John Wesley called the “fruits of conversion” in reference to right social action by those truly converted.

The author is sure of how this "proof" would be enacted and perceived. The chapter on St. Clare’s death is sprinkled with scripture, comments by Tom, and St. Clare’s realization that people “are condemned for not doing positive good, as if that included every possible harm” (450).¹⁸⁹ St. Clare’s moment of enlightenment follows Tom’s simple, but enduring words:

¹⁸⁹ Earlier in the same chapter, St. Clare reads to Tom from the book of Matthew: “Then shall the king say unto him on his left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire: for I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: I was sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not. Then shall they answer unto Him, Lord when saw we thee an hungred, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee? Then shall he say unto them, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these my brethren, ye did it not to me” (448).

“We does for the Lord when we does for his critters,” said Tom.

“Good theology, Tom; better than Dr. B. preaches, I dare swear,” said St.

Clare. (442)

To St. Clare and to fellow slaves, Tom thus acts as a lay preacher in accordance with frontier Methodist practices. Tom holds prayer meetings among fellow slaves in his first home in Kentucky, on St. Clare’s estate, and in a more limited capacity on Legree’s plantation, where fellow slave Cassie calls him “Father Tom.” With Tom’s help as a minister, even the non-committal St. Clare converts to Christianity in the last days before his death. Tom interprets scripture with feeling and prays so fervently that “St. Clare felt himself borne, on the tide of his [Uncle Tom’s] faith and feeling, almost to the gates of that heaven he seemed so vividly to conceive” (438). St. Clare proves his belief in Tom as a minister and true spiritual intercessor in his dying moments, as we. Kneeling by his side, St. Clare lays his hand on Tom’s and says,

“Tom, poor fellow!”

“What, Mas’r?” said Tom earnestly.

“I am dying!” said St. Clare, pressing his hand; “pray!”

“If you would like a clergyman—“said the physician.”

St. Clare hastily shook his head, and said again to Tom, more earnestly,

“Pray!” (455-6)

After St. Clare’s death, Tom rests assured of the knowledge of his master’s salvation: “. . . he felt able to perceive something of the fullness of Divine love; for an old oracle hath thus written, --“He that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him” (458)—an

expression encapsulating Stowe's (and the Methodists') emphasis on the relations between feelings, godliness, and salvation.

SAINTS AND THE SPIRITUALIZED BODY

Tales of suffering women, children, and families and the narrator's insistence that readers sympathize with these suffering slaves form much of Stowe's novel. The illness and death of little Eva and the torture and death of Uncle Tom, however, may fulfill a different purpose. In fact, it is crucial to note that suffering figures little into little Eva's death, and the physical sufferings Tom has endured subside at the close of the novel. I contend that the bodies of these saints become spiritualized on the threshold between life and death, another expression of physical manifestations of the spirit so central to Methodist beliefs. It is no coincidence that the holy bodies of saints Tom and Eva feel no suffering in their final moments.

Before Tom embodies the Spirit on the brink of death, however, depictions of Tom's physical sufferings elicit sympathy from the readers reminiscent of the blood and wounds suffering imagery of Pietist and abolitionist hymns. Tom's refusal to beat another slave results in his first session of torture on Legree's plantation, during which he suffers the "depth of physical suffering, bowed by brutal oppression" (508) and afterward "lay groaning and bleeding alone" with the "restless torture of his wounds" (510). Tom suffers in place of the intended slave, but his fight is primarily for his religious beliefs. Like a good Methodist, Tom actively lives a Christian life that requires love of God and man and precludes he strike down one of God's creatures at Legree's command. It is for Tom's soul that Legree wrestles and Tom refuses to give up. Soon thereafter Uncle Tom is tortured and killed for refusing to sell his soul and tell Legree where Cassie and

Emmaline are hiding. Tom concedes his body, but claims that another possesses his soul and sacrifices himself for the “escaped” slave women (508). In the final scene preceding Uncle Tom’s death, Stowe denies the reader a descriptive scene of torture and violence. She simply writes of “blood and cruelty” and what brother-Christians must suffer as too terrible to be told, “torture, degradation and shame” that symbolized the “glory, honor and immortal life” (583).

Scholars generally read this scene of suffering and sacrifice for Tom’s likeness to Christ and as proof of the body/soul divide. Tom suffers a brutal, physical torture, forgives his ignorant tormenters, sacrifices himself for others, thereby converting the souls of the wicked and bringing them everlasting life. Read in the Methodist context, in the final moments of Tom’s life, his body becomes filled with the spirit and functions in the same way as the public, spiritualized body in the midst of a sudden, crisis conversion. The presence of God at Methodist meetings of all sorts is manifested on the bodies of the believers, which creates a kind of contagion in which others feel the presence of the Spirit and believe.

To his witnesses, Quimbo and Sambo, Tom proves the power and presence of Jesus through his broken and battered body, bearing witness that one can withstand suffering with continued hope and faith. Legree’s two brutal slave drivers, Quimbo and Sambo, witness the supernatural power Tom has to react to his beating with nothing but holy prayers and forgiveness for his torturers. Not suffering and despair, but rather Tom’s hope and faith, convert his tormenters:

“O, Tom! Do tell us who is Jesus, anyhow? said Sambo;--“Jesus that’s been standin’ by you so, all this night!—Who is he?” (585)

Tom tells them of Jesus's life, death, resurrection, and power to save, and the two "savage men" wept.

"Poor critters! said Tom, "I'd be willing to bar' all I have, if it'll only bring ye to Christ! O, Lord! Give me these two more souls, I pray!"

That prayer was answered! (585)

In essence, the witnessing of Tom's spiritualized body—one that can withstand suffering—brings two more souls to Christ, as did the bodily fits at camp meetings across the American frontier. Instead of a healthy body displaying the presence of the Spirit with physical agitation, the presence of the Spirit allows Tom to keep his suffering body calm and without reaction to his physical surroundings.

Thus ends the chapter entitled "The Martyr," which certainly refers to Tom's self-sacrifice for his religious beliefs and for the escaped slaves, but also suggests his transition from a good Christian into a saint. Not coincidentally, the old Roman Catholic term for one class of saint is martyr, which suggests the transformation of Tom's body from a physical and earthly entity to a holy and unearthly one. In the aftermath of the scene of torture, Tom lay for two days barely alive, but again not suffering, because his otherwise broken body was graced with spiritual presence—the spirit in the flesh in Methodist terms. In this final chapter, his body passes from death into eternal life, rendering his body that of a holy saint.

As Tom becomes a saint on the threshold between life and death, he converts one more soul to both Christianity and anti-slavery, which in Stowe's schema are one and the same. Tom's first young master George, from the beginning of the novel, comes to buy Uncle Tom, but sees it is too late when he finds him dying in the shed on Legree's

plantation. After Tom takes his last breath, “George sat fixed with solemn awe. It seemed to him that the place was holy” (591). The passing of Tom immediately takes the hatred from George’s heart, and instead of damning Legree to hell for what he has done, George simply asks him if he may take Uncle Tom’s body. Standing over Tom’s grave, George’s moment of conversion takes place: “Witness, eternal God! . . . oh, witness, that from this hour, I will do what one man can to drive out this curse of slavery from my land!” (593). Interceding on behalf of young master George’s soul after his death proves Uncle Tom’s status as a saint in Stowe’s secular refiguration of a conversion narrative.

Little Eva’s similar status as a saint stems, in part, from several instances of intercession after her death -- she is another kind of saint, intervening for those who follow here. Most significantly, Eva’s death results in the conversion of St. Clare, not only to Christianity, but also to abolitionism. The loss of Eva also converts Miss Ophelia from a practicing Christian, with all outward the trappings of belief, into a sensitive, feeling Christian, a “real” Christian, according to the novel’s schema. Miss Ophelia would no longer shrink in disgust from Topsy’s touch, because her heart had been opened to the slave girl and made to feel real Christian love for her. Topsy had also been changed by the life and death of Eva: “The callous indifference was gone; there was now sensibility, hope, desire, and the striving for good—,” both changes in her heart and in her actions consistent with conversion to a Methodist brand of Christianity (443). That is, both of these converts have turned from the trappings of outward religion -- such as going to church - and toward a more authentic sense of religiosity

Interpreting Eva as a saint suggests a novel reading of Eva’s death, a scene made famous by critics and commentators, but not necessarily understood from the perspective

just introduced. A lasting interpretation by Jane Tompkins, for instance, reads Eva as a Christ-figure, who enacts the Last Supper as she gives out her curls to each of the slaves on her deathbed. Ann Douglas begins The Feminization of American Christianity with Eva's deathbed scene to demonstrate the senselessness and disempowerment of females in over-sentimentalized fiction in nineteenth-century America.¹⁹⁰ Reading Eva as a saint as I do here reconfigures the deathbed scene from one of mere melodrama or from a reenactment of the Last Supper, to one of a saint handing out holy relics that retain the Holy Spirit with power to enact miracles. That is, what has been read as a process of martyrdom, emerges as a representation of the child as a particular kind of saint, with an agency attested to in the hearts of those who know her.

The novel points to an interpretation of Eva as an active religious principle, albeit not one in concrete form. Both Tom and Topsy, for instance, carry their relics of saint Eva for the spiritual power they believe them to yield. When Tom takes Eva's curl with him to Legree's plantation, his master gets takes it from him and is spooked by its likeness to his own departed mother's hair and his memory of his own callousness toward his sensitive, forgiving mother (527-9). Eva's saintly relic, indeed "charmed," but interpreted by Legree as a "devilish" omen, saves Tom temporarily from more beatings. The dreams and visions of his mother brought about by the presence of Eva's curl later make possible the successful the escape of Emmeline and Cassy, who actually hide in the garret and convince Legree his plantation is haunted. Therefore, Eva's curl has an unearthly significance and actually changes the course of events in the novel, saving the two slave women. She is no Victorian Angel of the house, but an avatar of religious power.

¹⁹⁰ Ann Douglas, The Feminization of American Christianity (New York: Knopf, 1977).

All of the novel's descriptions of Eva suggest her divine, spiritual, other-worldly nature; but as Eva fades from life into death, her body becomes that of a holy saint or martyr and thus attains the power of spiritual presence. Wishing to be a martyr to the cause of anti-slavery, Eva tells Tom that she understands Jesus wanting to die for them, because she has felt that way about the suffering slaves who have lost their mothers, husbands, and little children and have suffered brutal deaths at the hands of their owners: "I've felt that I would be glad to die, if my dying could stop all this misery. I would die for them, Tom, if I could . . ." (401).

Yet as Eva fast approaches death, she, like Tom, experiences no physical suffering: "The child felt no pain,--only a tranquil soft weakness, daily and almost insensibly increasing" (424). As the hour neared, her physical appearance showed no signs of anguish or earthly suffering, just the signs of the Spirit attending her as she transitions from life into death. Many moments before she finally passes, she is described thus: "On the face of the child, however, there was no ghastly imprint,--only a high and almost sublime expression,--the overshadowing presence of spiritual natures, the dawning of immortal life in that childish soul" (426). In Methodist terms, Eva's body and the Spirit become one, bearing witness to embodied spiritualism as a kind of physical proof for spiritual presence. Although the serenity of Eva's dying body contrasts with the kind of physical manifestations of the Spirit at revivalist camp meetings, her lack of physical suffering provides the same kind of visible proof of divine presence.

CONCLUSIONS

By tracing the development of Pietist rhetoric in American hymns, and then following that rhetoric into a particularly powerful example of secular fiction, I have shown how the tropes of physical suffering and sympathy, the spiritualized body, and bridal mysticism so popular in American evangelical texts became absorbed by mainstream public discourse as part of an abolitionist conversion narrative. Exploring this rhetoric's role in Stowe raises two additional conclusions worth noting. First, my study highlights a gap in the scholarship on Uncle Tom's Cabin, by showing how Stowe's use of Methodist tropes shaped her text.

This thumbnail sketch of a reading of Uncle Tom's Cabin commensurate with a Methodist conversion lies very far from what today's critics have tended to see in the novel. Despite the predominance of Christian language and imagery in Harriet Beecher Stowe's Uncle Tom's Cabin, literary critics have tended to gloss over religious questions in favor of issues of race, gender, and class.¹⁹¹ Of the few scholars interested in religious aspects of Stowe's work, most examine its relationship to Puritanism.¹⁹²

¹⁹¹ What critic Laura-Wexler calls the Douglas-Tompkins debate, known alternatively as the containment-subversion paradigm, frames ongoing literary discussions of American Sentimentalism. Ann Douglas's 1977 The Feminization of American Culture laments the disempowerment of women and ministers in the creation of a separate, sentimental sphere, whereas Jane Tompkins's Sensational Designs: The Cultural Work of American Fiction 1790-1860, a reworking of literary history that values sentimental literature for the important "cultural work" it performed in its own historical setting. Despite the increasingly nuanced studies of Sentimentalism in the last decade, scholars continue to align themselves in the Douglas or Tompkins camp. The collection of essays in Shirley Samuels's well-known anthology The Culture of Sentiment seeks to explore "whether the sentimental gaze acts to conservative ends (what can even appear as a form of social control) or seeks to produce radical reform" (5). With the exception of Lauren Berlant's recent, extensive critiques of Sentimentalism as apolitical and disempowering, most scholars disagree with Douglas's limiting, conservative reading of Sentimentalism as a literary genre of social containment unable to challenge the status quo (footnote). The majority of critics have taken Tompkins's assertions as a springboard for various studies that examine how (not if) these texts perform significant "cultural work." For example, Kristin Boudreau, Elizabeth Barnes, Michelle Burnham, and Marie Louise Kete have focused on the collaborative element of sentimental language; that is, its ability to forge bonds, form communities, and xxx national consensus. Marianne Noble defines sentimentalism as "a tool of political agency" and locates the possibility of that agency in the masochistic pleasures of sentimental literature, a site that

Even as most scholars concede Stowe's departure from the Calvinistic doctrine of election and the New England minister's cold adherence to the system of theology, none have attributed her turn to universal salvation, the belief that human will must accept God's grace, and the primacy of emotion and feeling in religious love as depicted in Uncle Tom's Cabin as representative of commonplace Methodist beliefs and practices sweeping much of antebellum America. This revivalism and the particular Methodist rhetoric functioned as a tool to influence the mass of readers who would have been familiar with that rhetoric, even if this did not represent her own spiritual beliefs. From this perspective, how I document Stowe's borrowings from the language and imagery of Methodist (or German Pietist) hymns offers a corrective to this gap in Stowe scholarship that promises much for future research.

A second implication of my analysis speaks to the literary genealogy of the sentimental rhetoric Stowe uses in her novel. To date, the relationship between religion and nineteenth-century American Sentimentalism remains dominated by Ann

superficially appears to oppress rather than liberate women. Even Elizabeth Maddock Dillon's seemingly apolitical study of "Sentimental Aesthetics" closes with the assertion of political possibilities within sentimental discourse. Dillon reconnects aesthetics to sentiment in the works of Friedrich Schiller and Immanuel Kant to close the gap between culture and aesthetics initiated by Tompkins's groundbreaking work.

¹⁹² The earliest book-length study of Stowe's religious leanings, Gayle Kimball's The Religious Ideas of Harriet Beecher Stowe: Her Gospel of Womanhood (1982), devotes a chapter to her rejection of New England theology. Conversely, the only other book devoted to religious aspects of Uncle Tom's Cabin, Gladys Sherman Lewis's Message, Messenger, and Response: Puritan Forms and Cultural Reformation in Harriet Beecher Stowe's Uncle Tom's Cabin (1994), credits Stowe's overwhelming popular success to her use of Puritan genres and forms that effectively tapped into popular culture. Most articles on the subject of religion and Uncle Tom's Cabin from 1994 to the present continue to address Stowe's relationship to Puritanism or her use of Biblical typology or rhetoric. For a discussion of Stowe's appropriation of Jonathan Edwards's millennialism see Helen Petter Westra's "Religious Rhetoric and Biblical Influences" in Lowance, Mason I., et. al. The Stowe Debate: Rhetorical Strategies in Uncle Tom's Cabin (Amherst: U of Mass P, 1994) 141-58. In the same collection, see Mason I. Lowance, Jr.'s "Biblical Typology and the Allegorical Mode: The Prophetic Strain" 159-84. For Stowe's engagement with Puritanism see Stephen R. Yarbrough and Sylvan Allen "Radical or Reactionary? Religion and Rhetorical Conflict in Uncle Tom's Cabin" Approaches to Teaching Stowe's Uncle Tom's Cabin (New York: MLA, 2000) 57-67. For the most recent scholarship on religion and Stowe, see Michael T. Gilmore "Uncle Tom's Cabin and the American Renaissance: the sacramental aesthetic of Harriet Beecher Stowe" The Cambridge Companion to Harriet Beecher Stowe ed. Cindy Weinstein (Cambridge, Cambridge UP, 2004) 58-76.

Douglas's The Feminization of American Culture.¹⁹³ Even as she indicts Stowe's attack on the Congregationalist-Presbyterian clergy, Douglas nonetheless fails to recognize the revivalist Christianity that at this historical moment acts as a substitution for Calvinism: revivalist, emotional, embodied Methodism.¹⁹⁴ Her monumental study of the relationship between the fall of New England Calvinism and rise of sentimental fiction thus continues to impede discussions of connections between emotional, revivalistic camp meeting religion of the Second Great Awakening and contemporary nineteenth-century American Sentimentalism.

In contrast, my study suggests that, for Stowe at least, sentimentalist literary modes could be seamlessly combined with Pietist rhetorical models, and in fact, could draw heavily on Pietist rhetoric. The role played by Methodism, or revivalism more generally, in the development of American sentimentalism has not been discussed, which distinguishes this second wave of sentimental fiction from that of the early American republic. Yet scholars tend to emphasize that American sentimentalism depended primarily on literary traditions inherited from England. Standard histories and anthologies of American literature that discuss the origins of Sentimentalism at all simply stress the American reader's familiarity with British sentimental novels, particularly Richardson's Clarissa, presenting America's adoption of the British phenomenon as a

¹⁹³ She laments feminized sentimentalism's substitution of piety for rigorous Biblical study and the coincident disenfranchisement of the New England clergy. Texts used in her study include those by Herman Melville, Margaret Fuller, and those published in periodicals, including the work of Harriet Beecher Stowe. For Douglas, Uncle Tom's Cabin exemplifies the self-indulgent disempowerment of women and the clergy epitomized by scenes like the death of Little Eva, with which she introduces her study. Douglas contends that Eva's death converts no one and demands only "self-indulgence" on the part of the readers, resulting in "Christianity beginning to function as camp" (4). Douglas thus reads Uncle Tom's Cabin as Stowe's attempt to "show up the faint-hearted American clergy of which Lyman Beecher was in this case a conspicuous example," which succeeds so well due to its form as a "great revival sermon, aimed directly at the conversion of its hearers" (245).

¹⁹⁴ Douglas laments Stowe's "demolishing" of Calvinism and opines her failure to adequately replace it (248). In Stowe's subsequent novels, Douglas asserts her inadequate turn to Episcopalianism (248).

foregone conclusion.¹⁹⁵ The portrayal of female virtue and morality in most general terms is the closest one comes to acknowledging religion's role in conventional English Sentimentalism and in the American adaptations of its stock characters and familiar plots that served the ends of eighteenth-century American Republicanism and the cult of domesticity so well.

In contrast, this study shows how the injection of Christian piety and images of suffering and spiritualized bodies framed in the language of conversion and salvation marks a turn unique to nineteenth-century American sentimentalism with origins in the Methodist hymnody. The intersection of Methodism and nineteenth-century sentimental-abolitionism that functions to clarify the representations in Uncle Tom's Cabin significantly augments the standard history of nineteenth-century Sentimentalism. Thus this reading of sentimental-abolitionist hymns and Stowe's sentimental novel, Uncle Tom's Cabin, in the context of the American Methodist hymnody offers a genealogy of the religious language and imagery in the broader cultural imagination dating back to seventeenth-century German Pietism.

While scholars of American literature have tended to overlook the interweaving of religion and sentimentalism that developed in nineteenth-century America, this interplay will not surprise scholars of early modern German culture. This very combination defined the eighteenth-century German literary period known as *Emfindsamkeit* (Sensitivity), the semi-secular manifestation of German Pietism. In

¹⁹⁵ Some scholars have begun to complicate the simplistic east to west transmission of sentimental novels, albeit not in light of Protestantism *per se*. Studies that challenge this genealogy trace the origins of the Sentimental novel to American captivity narratives. See, for example, Nancy Armstrong and Leonard Tennenhouse, The Imaginary Puritan: Literature, Intellectual Labor, and the Origins of Personal Life (Berkeley: U of California P, 1992); see also Gary Ebersole, Captured By Texts (Charlottesville: U of Virginia P, 1995); and Michelle Burnham, Captivity and Sentiment: Cultural Exchange in American Literature, 1682-1861 (Hanover, NH: New England UP, 1997).

Sophie von la Roche's paradigmatic sentimental novel Sophie von Sternheim, for example, the author addresses the female reader directly, guides her reader's response and interpretation of the material, and attempts to forge a community of female sentimental souls, all in ways Harriet Beecher Stowe would a century later. Sternheim's novel emanates from the particularly German Pietist concerns with reading practices and (anti-) aesthetics as addressed in Chapter One-- immediate, spontaneous, from the heart, emotional, and imitative of oral utterance. What is not present in Puritan rhetoric is well-articulated in German sentimentalism, another Protestant rhetoric that functions within a social-political space rather than one of church morality.

As I have traced it, Pietist reading practices of scriptures or devotional works like hymns involved meditative practice of empathy with Christ's sufferings, entering into the emotional state of the author and inscribing them in the soul of the reader, with an end to inspire conversion and continued piety in daily life. In Stowe's novel, therefore, Eva also demonstrates the ideal Pietist reader, not just a Methodist convert: she meditates on the sufferings of slaves until her body feels their physical torments, she converts to abolition, and inspires others to a life of pious action. Stowe models the ideal reader of her novel in the character of Eva and intermittently tells the reader how to respond to these stories of woe, a technique that recalls the direct address to the reader in Sternheim's Pietist novel and the prescriptive reading practices provided by Pietist hymnal collectors. As German Pietism traveled to nineteenth-century America in the form of Methodist revival hymns, it is thus probably no accident that the Pietist suffering imagery that lent itself to meditative empathetic readings be used as a catalyst for crisis conversion at revivals and

by abolitionist poets and novelists to encourage similar empathetic meditations and conversions.

Conclusion

I ended this study almost where it began, with a challenge to the dichotomy between religious and secular realms in the era of German Pietism. In chapter one, I drew parallels between eighteenth-century social projects by Pietists and the Enlightenment establishment to undermine the traditional segregation of German Pietism from the socio-political sphere in German historiography.¹⁹⁶ I concluded chapter three with a discussion of the intersection of German Pietism and the German literary equivalent of Sentimentalism, *Empfindsamkeit*, which functions as a model for a more nuanced approach to American Sentimentalism that considers the impact of religious discourse. This study of hymns provides an example of this method; it examines a particular religious discourse as it inflects secular literary texts. Moreover, the discursive as well as socio-cultural ramifications of this religious discourse in Germany, England, and America demonstrate the far-reaching implications of the study of religious rhetoric as it impacted literary texts and more broadly-defined cultural changes.

In each of the chapters, I have shown the possible cultural impacts of a shift in religious expression, one that transcended the religious sphere to potentially disrupt the social and political spheres as well. With no separation of church and state in eighteenth-century England, disruptions or changes to religious practices and religious diction could not be separated from the political. Hymns and their fleshly-spiritual imagery were still clearly linked in the popular mind, and straightforwardly seen as threatening social and political disorder in eighteenth-century England, where the Methodist movement initiated

¹⁹⁶ For a study that challenges this segregation, see Lucinda Martin, "Women's Religious Speech and Activism in German Pietism," diss., U of Texas, 2002.

the acceptance of hymn singing and corporeal prophesy that was widely seen as a threat destabilizing the Church of England. In nineteenth-century America, the fleshly-spiritual imagery and the hymn as a genre transcended religious uses and entered into the realm of public, political discourse more directly, given that it did not as overtly threaten a central church-state debate. Nonetheless, the link between the imagery's religious roots and its role in social reform was evident, as I have traced it: abolitionists not only adapted German Pietist imagery, but also wrote in the religious genre of the hymn to further their socio-political causes.

This project thus avers literary scholars' study of devotional texts as part of a shared cultural norm and discourse that may have originated in sectarian religion but which spread far beyond the walls of churches and revival tents. By reframing the texts and addressing their historical development, I have shown how a specific group of devotional texts carried socio-cultural embeddings that inflected religious, political, and social structures of various cultures. Rather than framing this work as a study of specific authors or literary movements, I have traced the historical trajectory of a set of discursive practices as they were used by hymn authors, re-written by hymn editors, and often spontaneously re-edited by participants. This discursive approach without regard to authorship and often in absence of standard texts more clearly illuminates the convergence of religious and public rhetoric, an intersection that remains occluded by traditional studies of a single author, genre, literary period, or national literature. The results of this project suggest that literary scholars would benefit from reframing studies to account for discursive practices that converge in religious and secular texts and in works from various periods and genres.

Although religious texts and contexts figure regularly in the study of seventeenth-century literatures, research on the eighteenth and nineteenth-centuries in Germany, England, and America has tended to contextualize literary works with little regard for religion. Thus German literary scholars of the eighteenth-century often choose the works of secular Enlightenment writers like Gotthold Ephraim Lessing, Christoph Martin Wieland, and Immanuel Kant to capture the creation of the public sphere and middle class. Yet my results suggest how literatures of the German Enlightenment have been colored by Protestant thought. Thus, for example, even though Germanists have yet to assess Pietist hymnals and spiritual autobiographies from a literary standpoint, scholars of eighteenth-century German literature encounter and perhaps need to reevaluate the Pietist influence in the literary period labeled *Empfindsamkeit* (Sentimentalism, but literally "sensitivity") in the works of Klopstock and Sophie von la Roche, and in their predecessors like Pietist poet Barthold Heinrich Brockes. Similarly, English scholars focused on the literature contemporary with the Methodist movement read the works of Alexander Pope, Jonathan Swift, and Samuel Johnson rather than the hymns of the Wesleys. Finally, Americanists focused on the mid-nineteenth-century have historically turned to the works of Ralph Waldo Emerson, David Henry Thoreau, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Herman Melville, and Walt Whitman. Even as American literary scholars have more recently broadened their studies to include popular literature, periodical literature, multiple genres of social reform literature, and literatures by women, working-class authors, and people of color, the revivalist hymns of the Methodists and abolitionists have fallen outside their realm of interest.

A significant implication of this study is, then, the reassessment of hymns as objects for literary study. Even as literary scholars have begun to read more popular texts from the periods addressed in this study, they often undervalue or even fail to acknowledge the significance of texts developed for religious use by ordinary people as prevalent forces in cultural literacy. Such devotional texts also interact in a cultural milieu, especially in a context such as antebellum American culture, and thus should be read as agents of social and political change as well as rhetorical change. Of primary importance to literary scholars then, is the way that this study demonstrates how the shift in religious expression captured in hymns made a discursive impact on other literary genres in the periods in question, proving the value of hymns as objects for literary study.

Studying hymns as literary and cultural agents in this way expands the definition of literary texts to include understudied devotional texts, which, in turn, also enriches the historical contextualization of other texts so important to literary scholars. Historically, in most eighteenth- and nineteenth-century communities, religion was not walled off as a separate sphere, and devotional texts were informed by and informed the literary texts of the “secular” sphere. Placing any literary text in its historical and/or cultural context thus requires attention to the broad-scale socio-cultural aspects of history which necessarily includes religion and its texts. Yet that reclamation is in its early phases: even as New Historicist scholars have been eager to reclaim the socio-political context of literary works, for instance, they have proven slow to engage the religious element of historical cultures in their contextualizations.

Even as some literary scholars have begun to examine certain religious texts like conversion narratives and spiritual autobiographies, which were also used as devotional

texts by ordinary people, hymns have remained excluded from such studies. Religious poetry, intended for an elite audience, has also captured attention by literary scholars. Perhaps the combination of uses to which hymn texts have been put explains this lacuna in literary studies. In religious contexts, hymn texts were used as devotional texts at home, as part of private prayer meetings, and as part of official church services. The role hymns played as part of church services provides a potential explanation for its exclusion from literary studies. The broad discursive impact of religious expressions found in hymn texts outlined in this study as well as the use of the hymn genre at abolitionist meetings and other benevolence societies calls for a reassessment of hymns seen heretofore as the exclusive property of church services.

As I have shown in this diachronic, transnational study of a specific genre of religious texts, hymns of original composition have indeed functioned as agents of cultural change across centuries and diverse geographies. At particular historical moments, hymns traversed boundaries of class, race, and gender, ecclesiastical boundaries between churches and various revivalist groups, the fluid boundaries between the public and private spheres, and between the literatures of religious and secular spheres. In Germany, singing hymns of original composition was nothing new, at least since Luther, but the individual spirituality and affective reading practices of Pietists authorized the individual reading self in a way traditional Lutheranism had failed to do since the Reformation. The Pietist “aesthetic” reflected and enacted a change in religious subjectivity that had real social ramifications; direct revelation legitimized splinter groups and social experimentation, which in turn undermined civic laws and social hierarchies.

At the same time, the language and imagery of German Pietist hymns captured a rhetorical shift that impacted both religious and secular literatures.

In England, hymns of original composition inspired by Pietism provided a new medium for the Wesleys' message of embodied, unmediated contact with the divine achieved at meetings outside of church services, challenging the Church of England as the singular spiritual authority and creating an alternative method of social organization through small prayer groups. Social hierarchies were potentially further undermined by the memorization of hymns by the illiterate and semiliterate, which ensured hymns' transcendence of socio-economic barriers. Finally, geographic barriers were also overcome as itinerant preachers brought hymns to those living in remote locations. In England, hymns, then, proved themselves to be an important mass medium bridging many regions and levels of society.

At the same time in North America, popular participation in the singing and writing of hymns had other significant social ramifications, once hymns were seen as more than simple resistance to a central church. Popular participation in religious practices at the boundary of traditional church attendance extended a new opportunity to those previously disenfranchised by organized religion. For example, hymns functioned as a medium of empowerment for Mohegan Samson Occum, who published a collection of original hymns that included many of his own compositions.¹⁹⁷ Joanna Brooks, one of the few scholars of American literature interested in hymns, examines Occum's collection and illuminates the role played by religious communities in fostering leadership and publication by Native Americans and other people of color in American

¹⁹⁷ Samson Occum, A Choice Collection of Hymns and Spiritual Songs: Intended for the Edification of Sincere Christians, of All Denominations. (New London, Conn: Timothy Green, 1774).

Lazarus.¹⁹⁸ Brooks's claim, though differing from my own, supports my assertion of the social agency of hymns in early America, best exemplified here by my reading of abolitionist hymnals.

Other material evidence for these claims exists and deserves further attention. William Lloyd Garrison's experimental hymnal for use at anti-slavery meetings and on occasions of public speeches breaks down the commonly-held assumption that hymns operate solely within a separate, religious sphere. Garrison's model and the collections of abolitionist hymns that followed created a new socio-political use for an old religious genre. Yet these and other abolitionist hymns expanded the use of the hymn from personal devotion and communal religious testament to one that declared support for the socio-political cause of abolition in a public, secular space -- a tradition that arguably recurs in the Suffrage movement, as well. As I have traced it, Garrison's choice to compile abolitionist hymns testifies to his belief in the social power of hymns to spread his anti-slavery message. Simply put, Garrison identified the hymn as I do: as a populist medium, one with unlimited potential to disseminate his message of social change. Garrison's own confidence in the hymn should inspire abolitionist scholars to examine this overlooked genre in future studies.

As I have shown, abolitionists not only expanded the use of the hymn as a genre into the socio-political sphere, but they also put a key component of that genre – the fleshly-spiritual imagery of the evangelical hymns--to their own use. The potential social, political, and religious power of this imagery authorized individual spiritual experience outside of ecclesiastic rituals and provided an individual's own ability to

¹⁹⁸ Joanna Brooks, American Lazarus: Religion and the Rise of African-American and Native American Literatures (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2003).

authenticate that experience without clerical adjudication, religious principles that would have social and political ramifications. Abolitionists adapted the trope of suffering and sympathy with the crucified Christ, a Christian meditative reading method, for secular, social purposes.

The more overtly religious imagery, such as bridal mysticism and wounds imagery, were more difficult to adapt to the abolitionist cause and thus impacted the secular world more indirectly. These images portrayed individual union with the divine in physical form, which reflected and encouraged a new religious subjectivity in times of revival. Furthermore, images of spiritualized bodies privileged the physical body of individuals over and above clerical judgments, further empowering individuals to assess the validity of their own spiritual experiences and judge the state of their own souls. Behind the enthusiasm and theatrics of revivalism lay a new system of religious authentication centered in the bodies of individuals. These self-authorizing individuals carried with them a new perspective on social and political issues of the day -- and they reveled in their use of this medium, freeing the state from the church, but not society from moral reflection.

Further breaking down distinctions between the sacred and the secular in such climates, then, this project raises two issues that I believe should continue to inform the study of texts assumed to belong to either religious or socio-political spheres: the reading methods and value judgments employed by those who originally sang evangelical hymns and read sentimental novels. When eighteenth-century German Pietists revived the medieval practice of reading, singing, and praying as a form of religious meditation, they did so to facilitate individual, unmediated access to God through the human element of

emotion. Emotion, not just cognition, thus functioned as the cornerstone of Pietist reading practices --an alternate tool for enlightenment. To paraphrase Francke, to fully understand Scripture, one must enter into the emotional state of the Inspired Penmen. Likewise, to sing a hymn required a spiritual communion between the souls of singer and author, so that singing or reading became an act of (re)composition in one's heart. Reading, therefore, was not a form of entertainment, distraction, or even education; it was an active skill that brought the reader into a state in which spiritual experience became possible. Reading was itself a method of devotion.

The Pietist call for emotional identification between author and reader resurfaces in secular literary works of *Empfindsamkeit* (German Sentimentalism) and Anglo-American Sentimentalism. The preface to the most famous work of the period, Goethe's Die Leiden des jungen Werthers (The Sorrows of Young Werther) (1774), reads like the preface to Reitz's collection of Pietist autobiographies: "And thou, good soul, who suffereth the same distress as he endured once, draw comfort from his sorrows . . ." ¹⁹⁹ The case can be made that Goethe's famous work parodies the over-emotionalism of Pietist autobiographies and the emotional demands placed on the reader: "to his fate you [the reader] will not deny your tears." The dearth of studies that consider works of this period in the context of religious movements offers an explanation of how such a reading, potentially striking to scholars of Pietism, may have been missed by literary critics.

As part of the so-called English culture of sensibility born out of Lockean empiricism and contemporary with the emotional sensuality of Methodist hymn singing, English sentimental novelists sought to move their readers by depicting scenes from

¹⁹⁹ Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, The Sorrows of Young Werther: A New Translation, with an Introduction by Burton Pike (New York: Modern Library, 2004) preface.

secular life in moving, engaging ways to affect the reader. The preface to Samuel Richardson's Clarissa (1748) describes the letters of the epistolary novel as "lively and affecting . . . [written] in the height of a present distress" rather than in a "dry, narrative, unanimated style . . . not likely greatly to affect the reader."²⁰⁰ The Anglo-American sentimental novel first published in England in 1791 and reprinted in America (1794) with great success in the early Republic, Susanna Rowson's Charlotte Temple implied a greater emotional sympathy between the reader and the characters. Thus the narrator often interjects the text with direct addresses to the reader for tears, suffering, and sympathy and even concludes the book with a designation for readers similar to the headings of specific hymns in Pietist hymnals: "Which People Void of Feeling Need Not Read."²⁰¹ Harriet Beecher Stowe's later demands upon the reader for tears and empathy with her characters were not without precedent.

This method of reading marks an intersection between the strategies of Pietist literature and secular sentimentalism that has other precedents needing future attention by scholars. In chapter one, for example, I discussed the wide popularity of meditative tracts on Christ's suffering in the Middle Ages, but later examples better demonstrate this reading technique as it became applied to secular texts, as well. New England Puritans read spiritual autobiographies in such a way to further their own spiritual states through a kind of experiential, meditative reading practice, which, according to literary critic Gary Ebersole, they also applied to more secular captivity narratives.²⁰² Like the physio-emotional response to Pietist literature, Ebersole believes captivity narratives evoked a

²⁰⁰ Samuel Richardson, Clarissa. Or the History of a Young Lady: Comprehending the most Important Concerns of Private Life (New York: AMS, 1990) viii.

²⁰¹ Susanna Rowson, Charlotte Temple (New York: Oxford UP, 1986) 112.

²⁰² Gary Ebersole, Captured by Texts: Puritan to Postmodern Images of Indian Captivity (Charlottesville: UP of Virginia, 1995) 9-23.

somatic experience that assured readers of their own moral virtue, bringing religious reading practices of self-examination and moral improvement to bear on secular texts. This second example suggests a more general hypothesis, based on work like Ebersole's and my own: sentimentalists called for reading practices that can be described as broadly religious, Christian anamnesis that had been practiced for centuries by medieval mystics, Puritans, and Pietists alike.

In addition to common reading practices, German Pietists, Anglo-American evangelicals, and sentimentalists also based their judgment of a text's value on a single, shared criterion: its ability to affect the reader. Just as Pietists judged devotional works in many forms solely on the basis of their ability to move the reader to an emotional state in which spiritual experience became possible, sentimentalists judged literary works solely on its ability to move readers emotionally from complacency to social action. The criteria used to judge a text thus need to be seen as moving from the work's formal attributes to the individual response in the reading self. Readers and writers of these religious and secular texts turned away from formal aesthetic criteria used by belles-lettres scholars (then and now), or to those many Enlightenment writers interested in the problem of literature after the classics, to judge a work's intrinsic value that transcends historical circumstance.

Today, the term aesthetic has come to refer to the formal attributes of a literary text or work of art divorced from individual emotional response and socio-historical circumstance. In several places in this study, I have cast doubt on my own use of the term "aesthetic" to describe the Pietist reading and writing practices. I have placed the term in quotation marks to acknowledge the contradiction inherent in the terms

“sentimentalism” and “aesthetics.” Indeed, many scholars of American sentimentalism attest to working on the literature of this period for its cultural rather than aesthetic significance, sometimes even apologizing for their corpus as not sufficiently literary in the modern sense. Following the revival of formalist considerations by American New Critics, “aesthetic” implies a judgment of formal attributes that transcends socio-historical settings. However, to revisit Kant, Schiller, and Goethe’s definitions of aesthetics and value judgments of art closer to the period in question, we find that their definition of aesthetics includes the feeling aroused by a work of art in an individual, the all important value for Pietists and Sentimentalists alike -- aesthetics returned to its original meaning as sensuous cognition.²⁰³ In other words, the Pietist system of valuation may have been new to the late seventeenth-century, but the Sentimentalists that followed in Germany, England, and America were adopting what had become a mainstream or secular way to judge art in the wake of German Idealism.

As scholars began to look beyond the formal attributes of a literary text to examine it in relation to a particular historical setting, they have reclaimed cultural value for texts like Uncle Tom’s Cabin, denigrated by American New Critics. In the more recent effort to reclaim works by women, people of color, and the working class, scholars have rescued numerous culturally-significant texts from oblivion. For the intensely secular academy, the last order of business for literary scholars of eighteenth- and nineteenth century Europe and America is the reclamation of understudied devotional texts such as hymns, in ways such as I have done here. Not only did religious communities provide participation, leadership, and publication opportunities for

²⁰³ For a discussion of the role of feeling in sentimentalism and aesthetics, see Elizabeth Maddock Dillon, “Sentimental Aesthetics” American Literature: A Journal of Literary History, Criticism, and Bibliography 76.3 (2004) 495-523.

historically marginalized groups, but, as I hope to have shown in this study, hymns (often without regard to authorship) impacted every aspect of both public and private life.

Appendix of Hymnals

German

Freylinghausen, Johann Anastasius, ed. Geistreiches Gesangbuch. 2 Vols. Halle: Verlegung des Wäysenhauses, [1704 and 1714] 1734.

Zinzendorf, Count Ludwig von, ed. Sammlung geist- und lieblicher Lieder: eine grosse Anzahl der kern-vollesten alten und erwecklichsten neuen Gesänge. Herrnuth: M. Christian Gottfr., 1735.

English

Wesley, John, ed. Hymns and Sacred Poems. Published by John Wesley, ... and Charles Wesley, London: W. Strahan and James Hutton, 1739.

---. Hymns and Sacred Poems. Published by John Wesley, ... and Charles Wesley, London: W. Strahan and James Hutton, 1740.

---. Hymns and Sacred Poems. Published by John Wesley, ... and Charles Wesley, London: Thomas Harris, 1742.

---. A Collection of Moral and Sacred Poems from the Most Celebrated English Authors. Bristol: F. Farley, 1744.

---. Hymns for Those that Seek, and Those that have Redemption in the Blood of Jesus Christ. Bristol: Felix Farley, 1747.

Wesley, Charles. Hymns for the Use of Families, and on Various Occasions. Bristol: William Pine, 1767.

Wesley, John, ed. A Collection of Hymns, for the use of the People Called Methodists. London: J. Paramore, 1780.

American

Wesley, John, ed. Collection of Psalms and Hymns. Charles-Town: Lewis Timothy, 1737.

- Spence, Robert. Pocket Hymn-Book: Designed as a Contant Companion for the Pious. New York: W. Ross, 1786 [1781].
- , Francis Asbury, and Thomas Coke. A Pocket Hymn-Book: Designed as a Constant Companion for the Pious. Eleventh Edition. Philadelphia: Prichard and Hall, 1790.
- Allen, Richard Allen. A Collection of Spiritual Songs and Hymns Selected From Various Authors. Nashville: A.M.E.C. Sunday School Union, 1987 [1801].
- Methodist Episcopal Church. The Methodist Pocket Hymn-Book. New York: Soule & Mason, 1818.
- . A Selection of Hymns from Various Authors: Designed as a Supplement to the Methodist Pocket Hymn-Book. New York: J. Soule and T. Mason, 1818.
- . A Collection of Hymns for the use of the Methodist Episcopal church: Principally from the Collection of the Rev. John Wesley. New York: B. Waugh and T. Mason, 1833.
- Garrison, William Lloyd, ed. A Selection of Anti-Slavery Hymns, for the Use of the Friends of Emancipation. Boston: Garrison and Knapp, 1834.
- Chapman, Maria Weston. Songs of the Free and Hymns of Christian Freedom. 2 vols. Boston: I Knapp, 1836.
- Methodist Episcopal Church. A Collection of Hymns for the use of the Methodist Episcopal church: Principally from the Collection of the Rev. John Wesley. New York: Lane & Scott, 1848 (1836).
- Hatfield, Edwin F. Freedom's Lyre: Or, Psalms, Hymns, and Sacred Songs for the Slave and His Friends. New York: S. W. Benedict, 1840.
- Methodist Episcopal Church. Hymns for the Use of the Methodist Episcopal Church. Revised Edition. Cincinnati: Hitchcock & Walden, 1849.
- . Hymns for the Use of the Methodist Episcopal Church. Revised Edition. New York: Lane & Scott, 1851.
- Methodist Episcopal Church, South. The Wesleyan Hymn and Tune Book: Comprising the Entire Collection of Hymns in the Hymn Book of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South Nashville: Southern Methodist, 1859.

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