ABSTRACT

GENDER, SEX, AND EMOTION: THE MORAVIAN LITANY OF THE WOUNDS

by Jason Leto

The Moravians, a small Pietist sect led by the charismatic Count Nicholaus Ludwig von Zinzendorf, established a mission outpost in North America in the early 1740’s. Driven by a strange religious impulse, the Moravians were some of the most successful Protestant missionaries of the eighteenth century. One key part of their religious practice from the 1740’s to the 1760’s was the recitation, performance, and language of the Litany of the Wounds of Christ. In this graphic and bloody text, believers beg to lie in and taste the gruesome wounds of Christ. This thesis offers an interpretation of the Litany that understands it in the context of a uniquely Moravian sense of self, which hinges on Moravian emotional practice stimulated by the Litany. The Moravian European background, Zinzendorf’s biography, and Moravian missionary efforts, are all explored in the context of attempting to understand the context of the litany and its uses.
GENDER, SEX, AND EMOTION: THE MORAVIAN LITANY OF THE WOUNDS

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**Introduction**

This project was in many ways inspired by a line of thought first introduced to me in Gregg Roeber’s Spring 2003 class at Penn State on “The Book of Nature in the German-Speaking World.” I also read Gregg Roeber’s summary of “The Problem of the Eighteenth Century in Transatlantic Religious History,” which focuses on the problems related to scholarship on German groups in a transatlantic context. He urges scholars of the 18th century to focus on lived religion, transatlantic context, and “the probing of typical pieties.” One piece of scholarship that undertakes such a task is Craig Atwood’s paper titled “Deep In the Side of Jesus: Zinzendorfian Piety in Colonial America” presented at the “Germany Moravians in the Atlantic World” symposium held at Wake Forest University in early April 2002. The “typical piety” that paper probed was the Moravian *Litany of the Wounds of the Husband*, an important text for understanding 18th century Moravian community and piety. I found the text to be strangely compelling, as many others have.

Sung more than thirty times every year during some years of the 1740’s and 1750’s in Bethlehem, the *Litany* is a gruesome and gory cry to the saving wounds of Jesus. The song was performed antiphonally, according to a kind of call and response pattern. The singer begins by begging Christ to “help us circumcise our hearts” and “bring the shattered children of God into your ark of Christianity,” but she shortly moves on to more evocative language, addressing herself eventually to “[your] sweat-soaked hair” and “holy five wounds” before finally crying out to the wounds of Jesus directly. The wounds are described with a variety of adjectives, including “clear, glistening, dainty, soft, hot,” and “eternal.” The singer confirms that some lick and taste the wounds, enjoy resting quietly in the wounds, and finally begs that the wounds anoint the congregation.

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the sake of convenience, I will refer mostly to the Litany in this work, rather than the blood and wounds theology.

I agree with Craig Atwood and Katherine Faull that the Litany is not transparent and does not readily reveal its meaning to us, but that it requires interpretation and explanation.\(^4\) Faull has called this moment (the period when the Litany was in use) in Moravian history an “opaque” one that both demands interpretation and unlocks deeper meanings about the way Moravians understood themselves. Because of the opacity of the text—because of how difficult it is to explain and understand—it reveals the “vast difference in understanding between the observer and the observed” and allows a unique look at how Moravians understood their world.\(^5\) Densely packed into one text is an entire history of eighteenth century Moravian religion. In this work, I hope to clarify to some extent the puzzle of the Litany. My attempt will certainly not be the first one, and perhaps the most prominent contemporary interpreter of the Litany is Craig Atwood.\(^6\)

He argues that the Litany requires interpretation, and his final analysis is Freudian: Atwood claims that “the adoration of the wounds and corpse of Jesus served to sublimate a variety of personal needs and fears that would have otherwise destroyed the community” of Bethlehem, the center of blood and wounds theology in the New World.\(^7\) As compelling as this psychological reading of the wounds cult may be, Atwood’s Freudian understanding of the Litany is flawed for a number of reasons. His argument about the function of the Litany fails to explain the constitutive role that the text plays in constructing a Moravian notion of the self. According to Atwood’s theory, Moravian identity seems to have been stable, and he implies that the Litany did not contribute significantly to it; rather, the text served to rectify certain psychological problems that people suffer in a communal setting. According to Atwood, the Litany was merely a tool, and its deployment did not represent anything uniquely Moravian, therefore leaving us with the impression that the church could have used any technique for sublimating desires to keep the community on track. Atwood’s argument about the Litany (and the Blood and Wounds Theology it expresses) also falls short because of its scope. If the Litany

\(^5\) Ibid., 24.
\(^6\) Craig D. Atwood, "Blood, Sex, and Death: Life and Liturgy in Zinzendorf’s Bethlehem" (Princeton Theological Seminary, 1995); Atwood, Community of the Cross: Moravian Piety in Colonial Bethlehem; Atwood, "Deep in the Side of Jesus".
\(^7\) Atwood, "Deep in the Side of Jesus", 18.
is used as a tool for sublimating desires, why were those outside of the communal settlement at Bethlehem using its language so regularly? If the *Litany* was only a tool for maintaining social order in communal environments, there would surely be no need to tell Native Americans about the *Litany*, for example. Finally, I wonder how “typical” Atwood’s explanation of Moravian piety was. He focuses on Zinzendorf and other European male leader-theologians of the Moravian church, ignoring the significant and possibly different typical pieties of women and Native Americans. These narratives need to be integrated into the story, for women and Native Americans were (and are) Moravians also.

In order to do that, chapter one will provide a robust context for Zinzendorf and German Pietism. The Count Nicolaus Ludwig von Zinzendorf was born to a noble family in Saxony, Germany in 1700. He was raised by his grandmother who had personal contact with the famous Pietist reformers Phillip Jakob Spener, author of the *Pia Desideria*, and August Hermann Francke, Halle’s famous Pietist educational reformer. Zinzendorf attended school at Halle beginning at age 10, but he was initially unhappy, as he suffered from homesickness. He began to fare better when he established (in typical Pietist fashion) small orders devoted to spiritual care. At Halle, Zinzendorf would develop lifelong conviction that true religion was located in the heart, as opposed to the head. This heart-head dichotomy represents what Zinzendorf believed to be oppositional modes of human life: emotion and rationality. Right emotion rather than right doctrine was the sign of a true Christian. And which emotion was right emotion?

Chapter two will focus on the role that emotion plays in the *Litany*. The text was designed to elicit in practitioners a certain emotional response, and that emotion is the key to understanding 18th century Moravian religious practice. In order to analyze the text and explain the emotional lives that orbited around it, I will first look to various Moravian diaries, journals, and *Lebensläufe* (memoirs) to establish how practitioners related to and used the *Litany*. We will find that the language of the *Litany* penetrates much personal writing. Using the *Litany* as an interpretive lens to place over the personal writings of everyday practitioners will help to illuminate emotional lives of Moravians. For example, a large number of *Lebensläufe* written by women have been collected and translated by Katherine Faull, providing a helpful look into

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women’s religious experiences. The Bethlehem Digital History Project, run by Moravian College in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, also maintains an ever-expanding collection documents translated by experts on the internet. These documents, along with occasional discussion of the memoirs of Native and African-Americans, will help to supplement Zinzendorf’s orthodox perspective on the Litany.

The texts will show that the Litany is not only a tool designed to deal with the stress of communal life, but rather an expression of and stimulant for a unique Moravian emotional life. The Litany expresses Zinzendorf’s unique formulation of “heart religion,” emphasizing emotion and feeling over rationality. This heart religion can be read as a reaction to the early German Enlightenment, and such a reading is for the most part helpful and productive, assisting an explanation of the intellectual currents Zinzendorf was reacting against. However, such an anti-Enlightenment reading becomes more problematic when we realize that the Moravians were among the earliest, most successful, and most indefatigable Protestant missionaries in the eighteenth century. As Jon Sensbach has noted, missionary activity was one of the defining characteristics of the Enlightenment; the Moravian’s enthusiastic adoption of that aspect of Enlightenment thought complicates a straightforward anti-Enlightenment reading of their religious expression. Whereas the second chapter primarily deals with the theoretical problem of how to explain the Litany, the third chapter details how the text was used by both Moravians and Native Americans in the course of Moravian mission work in North America.

Chapter three will argue that, although Moravian theology expresses the radical equality of all people, actual Moravian interaction with Native Americans does not bear this out. In their perceptions of non-Western peoples, the Moravians were entirely modern, positioning themselves “firmly in the mainstream of a set of unquestioned European assumptions, drawn from a pastiche of premodern, modern, and religious sources, about the depravity of non-Westerners.” This modern sensibility mingled uneasily with Moravian notions of the equality of all human beings. Such a tension is not unique to the Moravian church: A. Gregg Roeber points out that a similar problem runs through the history of eighteenth century German Pietism.

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12 Ibid., 7.
The anxiety he identifies has to do with the coexistence of both premodern and modern science, represented best by the gallery of “curiosities” on display at Halle. Indeed, “eighteenth century believers still traveled a comparatively short distance on the road between the science of Paracelsus and that of Sir Isaac Newton.”¹⁴ I don’t mean to solve the problem here, but merely to point out that science isn’t the only place in which Germans in the Atlantic world navigated conflicting modern and premodern notions. Therefore, in chapter three, the Litany and its blood and wounds theology of equality and feeling will be opposed to actual Moravian treatment of Native Americans. Finally, Native American adoption of Moravian religion is worth a brief look. Jon Sensbach notes that “the Moravian Church… became the vehicle through which increasing numbers of indigenous and enslaved people negotiated the bewildering challenges of the modern world.”¹⁵ I have already mentioned that Natives found the Litany to be quite appealing, and, at least for some, their encounter with it would ironically be one of their first engagements with the modern world.

¹⁴ Roeber, ”The Problem of the Eighteenth Century in Transatlantic Religious History,” 130.
¹⁵ Sensbach, ”Globalization and Its Discontents”, 12.
Chapter One: Zinzendorf, Pietism, and Religion of the Heart

The Litany is first and foremost a product of its times. An adequate understanding of its personal, social, and historical context is required before continuing to an analysis. This chapter will detail the origins of the Moravian church, discuss the relevant personal details of Zinzendorf’s life, and argue that the primary intellectual influences on eighteenth century Moravians were German Pietism and Zinzendorf’s idiosyncratic religious innovations.

Zinzendorf’s Early Life

Born six weeks before his father’s death in 1700, Nicolaus Ludwig von Zinzendorf grew up in his grandmother’s exceptionally religious home. The Baroness Catherine von Gersdorf, like Zinzendorf’s late father, had considerable Pietist connections, undertaking extensive learning and even personal communication with Philip Jakob Spener, author of the Pia Desideria, and August Herman Francke, the famous Pietist educational reformer who established the school at Halle that Zinzendorf would later attend. So great were his family’s Pietist credentials that Francke was one of his godfathers. In 1710, Zinzendorf’s grandmother sent the Count to Francke’s newly-reformed Pietist school in Halle. There Zinzendorf established the “Order of the Grain of Mustard Seed,” a typically Pietist undertaking that was likely inspired by Spener’s encouragement to establish small religious organizations which he described as similar to “the ancient and apostolic church meetings.” According to Arthur Lewis, the emblem of the order was “a gold medallion: on one side was an ecce homo, with the inscription vulnera Christi, the wounds of Christ.” Since Lewis does not use the usual scholarly apparatus in his book, it is hard to attest to the veracity of such a medallion, but its possible existence is suggestive of how early Zinzendorf was interested in the wounds of Jesus. At any rate, it is clear that the Order was Zinzendorf’s first attempt to organize a religious society.

In 1716, Zinzendorf unhappily studied law in Wittenberg. In 1718, he finished his study and embarked on his Grand Tour of Europe. Not only did the tour put in him touch with Christians of all kinds, but during its course, he encountered an image that would prove formative. In Düsseldorf, Zinzendorf encountered Domenico Feti’s Ecce Homo. The graphic,

18 Lewis, Zinzendorf, the Ecumenical Pioneer, 26.
bloody painting moved Zinzendorf, and he would later resurrect that same imagery in the Litany. After studying law for two more years between 1719 and 1721 at Utrecht, he returned home, and soon encountered a group of refugees who claimed to be part of a pre-Reformation Protestant church known as the Unitas Fratrum.¹⁹

**From the Unitas Fratrum to the New World**

Members of the Moravian Church in the eighteenth century considered themselves members of the oldest Protestant church in the world, the ancient Unitas Fratrum (Unity of the Brethren), a church born out of the Hussite rebellion in 14th century Czechoslovakia. The Brethren established themselves in 1457 under the leadership of Michael Bradacius, who was himself ordained by a Waldensian bishop. For the Unitas Fratrum and Bradacius, the central issue of schism with the Catholic Church was a liturgical one: lay access to the cup containing the blood of Christ. “In the Roman Catholic Church, the cup had been denied to the laity; but the Brethren now asserted… that all men were equal before God.”²⁰ That is, that all should have access to the cup containing the blood of Christ.

By 1461, the Brethren were being persecuted by the Catholic Church and by state authorities for heresy and treason. King George Podiebrad saw the rapid multiplication of the “heterodox Brethren” and demanded that all subjects join either the Utraquist (another dissenting group born out of the Hussite rebellion) or Roman Catholic Churches.²¹ The Brethren were forced to flee persecution until in 1467 they held a meeting a Lhota where three men were selected to establish Churches. These missions saw such success that by the time of the Reformation, the Brethren had “four hundred places of worship” and “a membership of about two hundred thousand.”²² In 1548, persecution of the Brethren began once again, forcing them to flee to Prussia, where they faced further persecution by the Lutherans, and Poland. In late 1620, the Counter-Reformation apparently wiped out the Brethren at the Battle of White Mountain near Prague.

But Moravian historiography maintains that a “hidden seed” existed, led by remarkable educational reformer John Amos Comenius (Comenius was asked to be Harvard’s first president, but he declined the offer) who made his home in Amsterdam. In 1662, Comenius consecrated

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¹⁹ Ibid., 28.
²⁰ Ibid., 35.
²² Ibid.
Nicholas, chaplain of the Duke of Leignitz, and Peter Jablonsky, a minister in Danzig. These two ordained others, and so the hidden seed continued on despite persecution.\textsuperscript{23} Following the hidden seed period is the Renewed Church, which began in 1722 when a band led by Christian David, and claiming to be a part of the \textit{Unitas Fratrum}, were allowed refuge on Zinzendorf’s Saxon estate. Although it is not clear how many of the ancient Brethren remained, Jacob John Sessler points out that the “the hidden seed awaited fertile soil… until the days of Philip Jacob Spener,” Pietist innovator, “prepared the soil in Germany out of which grew the Renewed Church.”\textsuperscript{24}

Zinzendorf was indirectly a student of Spener. Zinzendorf attended the famous school at Halle run by August Hermann Francke, one of Spener’s students. The two central tenets of Spener’s Pietism were social activism and religion that appealed to lay people through emphasis on practice (as opposed to doctrine).\textsuperscript{25} Zinzendorf, through Francke, would be influenced by both of these ideas. Francke’s school at Halle had two purposes: first, to provide pupils with proper spiritual education and, second, to be an example of the kind of reformed institutions that are distinctive to German Pietism.\textsuperscript{26} Halle Pietism’s institutional focus would rub off on Zinzendorf, who would later maintain that only through communal living were people able to reach an understanding of God.\textsuperscript{27} To this end, Zinzendorf created a system of communal living and implemented it in the Moravian settlements of Herrnhag and Herrnhut in Germany, and Bethlehem in Pennsylvania in the mid eighteenth century.

But in 1722, when refugees claiming allegiance to the \textit{Unitas Fratrum} arrived on his estate and established Herrnhut, Zinzendorf largely ignored them. Internal conflict threatened to tear Herrnhut apart, and Zinzendorf was forced to intervene in 1726; by May 1727, Zinzendorf had penned the settlement’s governing document, the \textit{Herrschaftliche Gebote und Verbote} (Manorial Injunctions and Prohibitions). Now that life in Herrnhut was organized and dissent

\textsuperscript{23} Ibid., 5-7.
\textsuperscript{24} Ibid., 6.
was quelled, the community experienced a Pentecost initiated by eleven year old Susanne Kühnel. The child was deeply affected at her mother’s deathbed, and for a three day period, all of Herrnhut prayed for the girl. She awakened suddenly on the third day and told her father that she was “now a child of God,” and finally able to understand her mother’s death. Three other girls had experienced similar conversions during Kühnel’s struggle. Zinzendorf prayed before the girls, gave them first communion, and eventually the whole community was stimulated to religious ecstasy. 28 During the extended revival that followed, Zinzendorf fed the community a simple meal, which is today duplicated by the Moravian Church’s Lovefeast in order to commemorate the Moravian Pentecost. Zinzendorf now looked to expand his following.

In 1727, there were few members of the Moravian church (Herrnhut’s population was about 300). Zinzendorf thus “cast his net wide” in a politically unsettled Germany in order to recruit followers to his cause, and by 1734 Herrnhut had doubled in size. Zinzendorf’s enthusiasm for religious reform and his support for Pietist movements all over Germany landed him in political trouble, but it also served to expand his fledgling church. In 1727, Zinzendorf negotiated temporary asylum for Schwenckfelders in Herrnhut. As early as 1728, Moravian proto-missionaries were attempting to spread their religion in Germany. When Melchior Nitschmann and George Schmidt set out to “serve the awakened Salzburgers with Protestant encouragement,” they did not expect to end up in jail. 29 Zinzendorf’s protestations could not free the captives, and Nitschmann died in custody the next year. Christian David later had success among Protestants fleeing from Salzburg to Nuremberg by distributing to them copies of Zinzendorf’s edition of the Bible. The 1722 band was by 1730 joined by religious dissenters of all kinds who sought both religious freedom and Zinzendorf’s innovations. 30 Zinzendorf desired to turn Herrnhut into a kind of Philadelphia, a bastion of brotherly love and religious freedom.

And so the Moravian church was born. Members then and now often trace their heritage back to the Unitas Fratrum, but that church does not resemble in any significant way current or eighteenth century Moravian religion. Ward notes that the appearance of continuity was first established by eighteenth century Moravian historian David Cranz, who attempted to “obliterate the Hallensian [Pietist] background to their [Moravian] story.” 31 If the 1722 refugees were

29 Ibid., 116-24.
30 Ibid., 118.
31 Ibid., 120.
indeed members of the *Unitas Fratrum*—and that is fairly unlikely—all traces of that ancient pre-Reformation Protestant denomination disappeared when Zinzendorf assumed leadership and opened Herrnhut to other refugees in 1727.\(^{32}\) Whereas the *Unitas Fratrum* was primarily a lay Utraquist movement, the eighteenth century Moravian church was a decidedly Pietist enterprise held together by Zinzendorf’s heart religion.

Zinzendorf began to be concerned about the security of Herrnhut. Renewed persecution seemed to be a possibility, especially after the Saxon government “withdrew its protection from the Schwenkfelders,” a group of Silesian dissidents living on Zinzendorf’s estate, in 1732.\(^{33}\) In 1735, Moravian bishop August Gottlieb Spangenberg and a contingent of men, including a young David Zeisberger (who would later become a prolific Moravian missionary in Pennsylvania, New York, and Ohio), went to Georgia and briefly established a settlement there. In Georgia, the Moravians would encounter both George Whitefield and John Wesley, both men who impacted the Moravian church in important ways. Meanwhile, Zinzendorf had finally been expelled from Saxony in 1736, and although a commission later sent to investigate the Herrnhut community found them to be sufficiently orthodox, Zinzendorf remained banished from the province.\(^{34}\) The Georgia settlement was abandoned in 1739 because of political pressure and because of the disagreeable climate in Georgia. In 1739, George Whitefield wrote to Zinzendorf and invited him to send settlers to a tract of land Whitefield owned in Pennsylvania in order to open a school for Native Americans. The Moravians soon had a disagreement with Whitefield and bought his tract in order to establish their own settlement designed to be a headquarters for North American mission work. Zinzendorf dispatched Spangenberg and a contingent from Germany to what would become Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, and himself set sail for the New World in September 1741.\(^{35}\) The small band of immigrants to Pennsylvania proved extraordinarily hard-working, and the settlement’s first buildings were completed by the time

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\(^{32}\) Craig D. Atwood, ed., *A Collection of Sermons from Zinzendorf’s Pennsylvania Journey* (The Moravian Church in America, 2000), xii. Atwood suggests that the refugees wished to reestablish their ancestors’ ancient church in 1722.

\(^{33}\) Ward, *The Protestant Evangelical Awakening*, 129; Nicolaus Ludwig Zinzendorf, *Nine Public Lectures on Important Subjects in Religion, Preached in Fetter Lane Chapel in London in the Year 1746*, trans. George W. Forell (Iowa City, IA: University of Iowa Press, 1973), xix. Zinzendorf had previously been ordered to leave in 1732, but his crisis was avoided. The Schwenckfelders were not so lucky and were expelled from Herrnhut.

\(^{34}\) Zinzendorf, *Nine Lectures*, vii, xx.

\(^{35}\) Ibid., xx-xxi. Zinzendorf gave his so-called Pennsylvania sermons in Philadelphia, an appropriate locale, considering his (failed) attempt to implement Philadelphian ideals in Herrnhut.
Zinzendorf arrived in Pennsylvania. The unsettled political climate in early eighteenth century Germany is an important part of the Moravian story, for it not only motivated them to seek refuge in Pennsylvania, but it also birthed Pietism, the religious movement that would most strongly influence Zinzendorf.

**Pietism and Halle**

Scholars who write about Pietism agree that it is a hard nut to crack. Ward notes that “Pietism has constituted one of the most relentlessly contested battlefields of modern historiography,” the issue so confusing and convoluted that the Englishman warns, “inevitably a French critic has appeared to ask whether it ever existed at all.”

Although he does lay out the main points of Spener’s text, Atwood notes that “Pietism was inherently fluid and took many forms; therefore it is difficult to give the movement a precise definition,” finally concluding somewhat ambiguously that “Pietism refers to a lay-centered, experiential Christianity expressing itself through service to the world.”

Harry Yeide notes that “the interpretation of pietism here championed is… a sociological one. It is an institutional analysis, describing a cluster of ideas and actions expressed in a repeating organizational pattern; but it is clearly not a tight-knit analysis of social structure.” Roeber takes our definition of Pietism in a different direction: “moderate Pietism… sought renewal, not separation, a leavening in an accepted state church tradition, not radical political or social rebellion” while “education and practical application of Christian teachings and a broad renewal of society’s morals and mores as a consequence of deepened individualism and collective spiritual renewal,” were the goals of Halle Pietism.

Randall Balmer, an American historian, warns that the story of Pietism, a key to unlocking the history of Evangelicals in America, “remains rather… obscure.”

Taking Ward’s advice to remain as concrete as possible when discussing this complicated subject matter, it

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36 Beverly Prior Smaby, *The Transformation of Moravian Bethlehem: From Communal Mission to Family Economy* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1988), 90-91. Smaby lists the completion date of every building in Bethlehem build between 1741 and 1762 in this table. By the end of 1741, the log First House was completed, and by the end of 1742 the log Millwork and Men’s Infantry buildings, and a wooden barn were all built.


38 Atwood, "Blood, Sex, and Death: Life and Liturgy in Zinzendorf’s Bethlehem", 11.


seems that the best place to start is with Spener’s book *Pia Desideria*, universally acknowledged to be Pietism’s foundational text.\footnote{Ward, *The Protestant Evangelical Awakening*, 57.}

Written as a program for renewal for the Lutheran church in 1675, the *Pia Desideria* began as an introduction to Johann Arndt’s devotional text *True Christianity*, and was later published under the full title *The Pia Desideria, or Heartfelt Desires for an Improvement of the True Evangelical Church Pleasing to God, with Some Christian Proposals to That End*.\footnote{Jonathan Strom, “Problems and Promises of Pietism Research,” *Church History: Studies in Christianity and Culture* 71, no. 5 (2002): 536-37; Ward, *The Protestant Evangelical Awakening*. Strom points out that Pietism is generally understood to be a Lutheran renewal movement, but there is some disagreement.} Spener identifies polemicism, intellectualism, and immorality as problems in the Lutheran Church and details how to solve these problems. The first solution involves creating small groups to study the Bible and to implement the priesthood of all believers in the church. Next, believers are to undergo a change of mind and realize that Christianity is a matter of practice rather than knowledge. Christians are also to conduct themselves more carefully in controversies with “unbelievers and heretics.”\footnote{Spener, "Pia Desideria," 37.} The final two suggestions are related: ministerial training must be reformed in order to stimulate piety in the lay people, and sermons should be edifying and simple.\footnote{Ibid., 31f.} The most relevant points here are the first two. The Pietist drive to create small bands which would educate and nurture, and which would maintain a degree of separation from the world, was a key feature of the movement. In addition, the importance that Spener placed on practice (rather than theology) would go on to strongly influence Zinzendorf, as he occasionally called for correct practice and theological ignorance. The general thrust of Spener’s reforms revolve around opening the church to more lay participation, and centering religious life around the needs of lay people. Spener’s program was responding to a problem that had cropped up following the Reformation. Luther’s radical education reforms produced only “modest results among the population at large,” due to a number of factors including the persistence of traditional folk religions which were an amalgam of Catholicism and ancient rituals.\footnote{Gawthrop, *Pietism and the Making of Eighteenth-Century Prussia*, 90; Gerald Strauss, "The Reformation and Its Public in an Age of Orthodoxy," in *The German People and the Reformation*, ed. R. Po-chia Hsia (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1988), 211.} The orthodoxy and confessionalism that grew up out of the Reformation did not appeal to lay people, and Spener’s Pietism, by focusing on lay experience of religion rather than on doctrine, was an...
attempt to reach out to those not touched by the Reformation. Since Luther’s educational program failed in Germany, as did the 16th and 17th century institutions deigned to implement that program, it is no surprise that one of the most distinctive Pietist reform movements of the eighteenth century began with a revolutionary institutional and pedagogical program.47

August Hermann Francke’s school in Halle, Prussia, was the site of considerable Pietist ferment. Through a series of political machinations, Spener secured in 1691 a church appointment in Berlin, and Halle’s Ritterakademie was turned into a university which Francke and his Pietist friends were to direct. Much to the surprise of all, Francke turned out to be an educational reformer of the finest order, and his university (together with its foundations) has been credited with establishing the model for the modern German education system.48 Especially noteworthy was the relative democracy with which children were accepted to the schools at Halle. The school’s three orders represented the three social classes of Prussian society, but the poor children were placed in an order based on their ability rather than their social standing.49 His entire plan, though already partially implemented by 1698, was laid out in Francke’s famous “Great Project for a Universal Improvement for all Social Orders,” known simply as the Grosser Aufsatz (Great Essay).50 Religious education at Francke’s school was strongly tied to his own difficult conversion experience, which involved extreme sorrow and repentance (Busskampf), but the real Halle innovation was the size and scope of its charitable work, which was unprecedented in its day, and required Francke’s considerable institutional and organizational skills.51 The Halle building itself was an impressive testament to the size of Francke’s vision, a massive structure able to house over 3000 people. Francke’s philanthropic drive was funded by the sale and trade of medicine to Germans all over Europe and across the Atlantic.52 The impulse to improve society through good works and to form institutions to do

48 August Hermann Francke, "Outline of All the Institutes at Glauch near Halle Which Provide Special Blessings Partially for the Education of Youth and Partially for the Maintenance of the Poor, as the Institutes Exist in December 1698," in Pietists: Selected Writings, ed. Peter C. Erb, The Classics of Western Spirituality (New York: Paulist Press, 1675), 163-64; Gawthrop, Pietism and the Making of Eighteenth-Century Prussia. Francke’s foundations include a school for nobles, girls, a variety of Pedagogium with various prices and curriculums, fit for everyone from nobles to “Burger daughters,” an orphanage, and a few types of religious education.
50 Ibid.
that work deeply influenced Zinzendorf and the Moravians. Although it is not strictly Pietist, Zinzendorf’s theology shows the strong influence of Pietism, especially in its appeal to emotion over reason as a way to make religion accessible and effective for lay people. Despite Zinzendorf’s and Francke’s Pietist leanings, they had differing ideas about the respective roles of affect and reason in the teaching and practice of religion. By the 1720’s, Halle began to embrace Enlightenment ideas about reason and the danger of emotion, especially in its mission work. Zinzendorf consistently rejected the ability of reason to affect conversion—or any other aspect of Christian life, for that matter—leading to Zinzendorf’s eventual alienation from Francke. The immediate reason for their falling out, however, was not so abstract: Zinzendorf and Francke disagreed about how conversion should happen.

**Zinzendorf’s Theology of the Heart**

While Zinzendorf would be influenced by Francke’s institutions, he was not in agreement with Francke’s plan for conversion. Francke characterized conversion to Christianity as an arduous process wherein the new believer would suffer extreme repentance and emotional turmoil. Having been raised as a devout Pietist, Zinzendorf never had occasion to go through the kind of suffering that Francke did. This disagreement eventually led to a falling out between Francke (and therefore Halle) and Zinzendorf, with the latter insisting that personal turmoil was not a necessary element of Christian conversion, although it could be a part of the process.\(^{53}\)

Conversion—and religion in fact—was a matter of the heart for Zinzendorf. His theology reflects what Katherine Faull has called an “anti-Enlightenment philosophy of self.”\(^{54}\) This anti-Enlightenment philosophy centers on knowing God in the heart rather than in the head. For Zinzendorf, the heart and head are not exactly opposed, but they clearly represent different human capabilities: the heart is the location of affect, while the head is the center of rationality. Most important, the place where religion is lodged is the heart, which means that the key to religious understanding is affect rather than reason. Zinzendorf and other Moravians consistently reject “head knowledge” of God. Zinzendorf

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\(^{54}\) Faull, "Faith and Imagination."
would like for God’s sake to beg all theologians, if they would only listen, not to take such pains constantly to represent our religion as agreeing with reason, as being common sense… But as soon as it is taken seriously, as soon as they want to demonstrate to atheists and common deists and people like that that our religion is wisdom rooted in their heads, a discernment which they can take in their own way, then they are obviously threshing an empty straw.\(^{55}\)

Here we see Zinzendorf’s strong rejection of reason and even common sense as a route to understanding religion. Zinzendorf stood strongly against the budding German Enlightenment, as his rejection of reason indicates. Even the Apostles might suffer from love for Christ which was “dry and intellectual.” Here Zinzendorf recounts the Gospel of John story about Peter’s encounter with Jesus resurrected. Peter’s problem quickly becomes clear:

> And at that time he really did love Him and honored Him out of esteem for Him had rashly claimed ready to suffer death for Him rather than forsake Him. He [Peter] did make a bold beginning, but he got stuck, because his love was dry and intellectual. But when his Saviour forgave him everything… then Peter could hold back no longer. If anyone said anything about his Lord to him, tears filled his eyes, and his body and soul were humbled.\(^{56}\)

Peter was so emotionally moved that he was brought to tears at the mere mention of the Lord’s name. A missionary to Native Americans makes it even clearer that head knowledge is the wrong kind of knowledge: the Moravian missionary laments that Natives living in a Presbyterian community will “be filled with head knowledge, and therefore the distrest [sic] call of these poor souls we have particularly on our hearts.”\(^{57}\) The alternative to head knowledge is heart knowledge.

The above passage about Peter gives us a hint about how heart knowledge is linked to emotion, and how intensely overwhelming those feelings are. In Peter’s case, tears of gratitude and humility flow freely. Zinzendorf continues to use the apostles as examples in this sermon. Here the Apostles are so overwhelmed with feeling about Jesus that they cry out but are unable to find “fitting expressions” to explain him.

\(^{55}\) Zinzendorf, *Nine Lectures*, 78.
\(^{56}\) Ibid., 38.
They know now that He was not a mere man; they knew that something more profound, indeed something inexpressible lay behind the man; but they lacked the words, the fitting expressions. They felt it sufficiently that the Creator was their Saviour. Thomas, when he had to do only with the eleven and the Saviour, could cry out without reflection “My Lord and my God!” But if they would have had to go tell the people that the Saviour was God… then they would not have had words for it.\textsuperscript{58}

Feeling and affection for Jesus erupt in Thomas, and his exclamation is clearly not an intellectual utterance—it is merely an exclamation. The Apostles are unable to explain intellectually to others the reality of their feelings for Jesus. Indeed, for Zinzendorf, the Apostles are (correctly) washed over in emotion and love.

Zinzendorf is not the first Christian to identify love for Jesus as a key component of faith. But for Zinzendorf, this love is strangely familial affair: the Holy Spirit is mother, God is father, and Jesus is their son, intended to be wed to his bride, the earthly church.\textsuperscript{59} The bride was born out of Christ’s side wound and betrothed on the cross.\textsuperscript{60} In fact, not only is the church communally Christ’s bride, but the soul of every individual believer is actually gendered female. Zinzendorf alludes to this by stating that “every soul who has the right to call herself by this name [Christian], ‘because she was taken out of Man’ belongs to Christ, is Christian,” and he drove the point home by affirming that “I am certain who my Husband is; I know Him.”\textsuperscript{61} Jesus was not the only child in the family. Members of the church were to be Christ’s brides, but they were also supposed to be childlike in disposition. The Holy Spirit, in her office as mother, cares for children by teaching, guiding and protecting them.\textsuperscript{62} Childlikeness was also deployed to indicate simplicity of spirit, language, and feeling. Children provided an image of ultimate dependence on others for physical, emotional, and psychological needs. For this reason, childlikeness was valued by Zinzendorf as a model for Christian dependence on Christ. Zinzendorf encourages Christians to say “I want to turn to the Lamb. I will change and become

\textsuperscript{58} Zinzendorf, \textit{Nine Lectures}, 39.


\textsuperscript{61} Zinzendorf, \textit{Nine Lectures}, 77-78.

a child. He [Christ]… may do what he pleases with me.”

Children are simply unquestioningly dependent, and through such dependence experience the joy of being cared for totally by others. Children are also theologically ignorant, relying instead on raw emotion and feeling in their religious lives. In this way, childlikeness is and affirmation of the Pietist idea that practice rather than theology is the key to Christian life. Another fascinating aspect of Zinzendorf’s heart religion has received rather extensive scholarly attention, and is his greatest sociological innovation: the Gemeine.

The Gemeine was the religious community where Christians would receive proper spiritual care and conversion. The Holy Spirit would take an active interest in the Gemeine and configure it in a certain way. According to Faull, Zinzendorf imagined that the Gemeine was the ideal place for all to come to love of Christ, not for religious reasons, but for anthropological ones. That is, human beings are intentionally designed to live in Gemeine where they will have the quickest and easiest access to the saving blood of Christ. Luckily, Zinzendorf knew how such a community should function. The Gemeine was intentionally designed to admit of the different inclinations and talents of its members, but was also, like Francke’s school, a remarkably egalitarian community. The purpose of the Gemeine was to provide an ideal environment for each person, with his or her own individual needs, to come to Christ. In order to achieve maximum effectiveness, Zinzendorf stratified his communities according to age, sex, and marital status, human characteristics that he believed influenced how every person would come to know Jesus.

Each group, called a Choir, lived in a separate house, separated from the other groups. It was especially important to keep the single brothers and single sisters separate, as “the Count was well aware of the danger that the emotionalism associated with a religious awakening could be directed toward sexual rather than religious objects.” Even those already presumably awakened were to be kept segregated. Gollin quotes from a 1765 synod at Litiz, Pennsylvania: “as far as the… segregation of the sexes are concerned, we must needs remain immutable on that

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64 Atwood, ”Blood, Sex, and Death: Life and Liturgy in Zinzendorf's Bethlehem”, 31-38.
65 Faull, ”Faith and Imagination,” 30-32.
point, if we are to remain a people of God… The most prudent segregation of both sexes from childhood to old age is a basic principle of our closed community.”

The Choirs in fact regulated every facet of daily life for members of Gemeine. By the time it was fully functioning in Herrnhut in the 1750’s, the Gemeine was quite elaborate, with a number of specialized Choirs that guaranteed the best access to Christ for all members of the community. The typical life cycle for a Moravian who participated in a Gemeine community in this period went something like this: infants would be raised by their parents until they were about eighteen months old, when they joined the Little Girls’ and Little Boys’ Choirs. At the age of twelve, children would join the Old Girls’ and Boys’ Choirs until at age nineteen they joined the Single Brothers or Sisters. Married members joined the Married People’s Choir, while widows and widowers had their own choirs. For Choir members, days were strictly regimented and quite full, with the entire day devoted to work, communal care for children, prayer and meals. This kind of total institution clearly recalls the spirit of Halle. Zinzendorf was deeply influenced by his experience there, and the Pietist emphasis on the formation of institutions which work to help people achieve religious improvement was perhaps nowhere more explicitly or succinctly expressed than in the Moravian communal Gemeine. The Gemeine has been studied rather extensively by scholars, but many other aspects of eighteenth century Moravian religious expression have been left for the church itself to describe. A note about Moravian historiography and the so-called “Sifting Time” is therefore in order.

The Sifting Time

From 1727 until the 1760’s, the Moravian church experienced an explosion of activity that corresponded with their deployment of the Litany. It is therefore somewhat odd that this same period has been singled out among Moravian historians as an aberration, and a pathological one at that. Historians have been horrified by the graphic language of the Litany, and since most historians of the Moravian church are themselves Moravians, they therefore wish to emphasize the more mainstream aspects of the Moravian church, particularly Zinzendorf’s ecumenism.

67 Ibid.
68 Smaby, Transformation, 14.
69 Gawthrop, Pietism and the Making of Eighteenth-Century Prussia, 150. Halle was designed to be a complete model society, complete with the necessary institutions for such a society.
70 Lewis, Zinzendorf, the Ecumenical Pioneer. Lewis’s is an excellent example of a book with a celebratory, rather than critical tone.
Moravian historiography has traditionally identified three main periods in the history of the Moravian Church: the Ancient Church period from about 1456-1621; the Hidden Seed, from 1622-1722, and the Renewed Unity, from 1722 to present. According to this model, there is an interruption in the Renewed Unity from about 1741-1753 called the Sifting Time. The Sifting Time is characterized by Zinzendorf’s supposed emotional excess and the Moravian’s “pathological” obsession with the adoration of the wounds of Christ. In 1753, Zinzendorf declared that the graphic language of the Litany, and its associated images, should be scaled back so that the church might more effectively pursue its ecumenical mission. The bloody theology of the wounds of Christ set off a pamphlet war, and the Moravian Church was in danger of being alienated from English society in particular.  

This reading of the history of the Moravians has been convenient for people like Gollin and Sessler who wish to write off the wounds cult as a pathological aberration of temporary insanity suffered by Zinzendorf. Gollin goes so far as to blame the decline of the communal “General Economy” to the “idleness” caused by excessive adoration of the wounds.

But, as Craig Atwood has pointed out, problems exist with the Sifting Time model. Not only was it the most active time in the history of the Moravian Church, but it was also Zinzendorf’s most fertile period. In addition, although the centers of Sifting are understood to be Bethlehem and Herrnhaag in the 1740’s, the bloody and evocative language of the Litany continues to carry currency into the early part of the 19th century, especially in memoirs. In 1772, David Zeisberger, a missionary in Ohio, recited the Litany to a group of Delaware people in the area who were so transfixed by its power that they were unable to go to sleep that night.

The Litany was in use far beyond the traditional temporal boundaries of the Sifting Time, and

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71 Faull, "Faith and Imagination." 25. The blood and wounds theology, and the worship of Christ’s Side-Hole set off a pamphlet war. For example, A true and authentic Account of Andrew Fey, Containing the Occasion of his coming among the Herrnhutters or Moravians, and his Observations on their Conferences, Casting Lots, Marriages, Festivals, Merriments, Celebrations of Birth-days, Impious Doctrines, and Fantastical Doctrines (London, 1753).
72 Gollin, Moravians in Two Worlds, 92-93; Sessler, Communal Pietism among Early American Moravians, 57.
73 Craig D. Atwood, "The Sifting Time as an Interpretive Fiction" (paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Society for Church History, 2000).
75 See for example the memoirs of Margaretha Edmonds, written in 1772; and Anna Boehler written in 1809, collected in Katherine M. Faull, Moravian Women's Memoirs: Their Related Lives, 1750-1820 (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1997), 35, 70.
76 David Zeisberger and Eugene F. Bliss, Diary of David Zeisberger, a Moravian Missionary among the Indians of Ohio (Cincinnati: R. Clarke & Co., 1885).
even remained in the Moravian hymnal until 1795. Clearly there is a problem with the traditional periodization of Moravian history. Sifting Time rhetoric used by past historians has helped to obscure, rather than to illuminate, the uses and meaning of the *Litany* by ignoring the most interesting and vital years of Moravian history. For this reason, I will not be using the Sifting Time as a helpful historical framework for understanding the *Litany* and Moravian blood and wounds theology. Talk of blood and wounds, and of emotion and the heart that occurs past 1753 will and should be considered in any analysis of this fascinating period.

The *Litany*, and Zinzendorf’s blood and wounds theology were heavily influenced by a Pietist sensibility about the character of Christian religion. Zinzendorf’s association with Pietist agitators was lifelong, but in early eighteenth century Germany’s volatile post-Westphalia religio-political environment, Zinzendorf’s involvement with increasingly radical religious sects, Pietist and otherwise, got him and his church into some trouble. That same association served to expand Zinzendorf’s reach and influence, which he used to spread his Pietist-informed message. Pietism’s emphasis on lay practice, a response to rigid Protestant confessionalism in central Europe, led naturally to Zinzendorf’s embrace of emotion and experience over theology. The extraordinary communities that Zinzendorf established were also modeled after his experience at Halle, and were designed to propagate his unique heart religion which embraced emotion and rejected Enlightenment rationality. I will now turn to the *Litany* and the blood and wounds theology themselves, and investigate how emotion played a role in the constitution of Moravian identities, and how the affective life of Moravians helped to build their transatlantic community.
Chapter 2: The Litany

In 1746, Zinzendorf had published in Büdingen, Germany a collection of sermons given on his trip to Pennsylvania from 1741-1743. In the introductory note, Zinzendorf remarks on the inadequacy of the sermons that “there is nothing more to bear in mind about their insufficiency than that we should sprinkle them ardently and reverently with the blood of the Lamb. Then they will not be raw and indigestible to any heart before whom they appear. Rather they will be covered in blood and blessed.” In this brief benediction we can see the most important aspects of Zinzendorf’s theology at work: the heart, rather than the head, receives religious instruction and is the seat of religious experience. The blood of Christ is effective in allowing hearts to “digest” true religion. Finally, as this chapter will discuss, Zinzendorf’s humility toward Christ, and his expression of dependence on the blood of Christ for the success of his sermons, is a characteristic of Moravian religion that is expressed in the Litany.

The Litany was designed to penetrate people’s rational facilities and evoke an emotional response to the wounds of Christ. Christ’s wounds, and the emotion that they stirred up, were the most important aspects of Zinzendorf’s theology. Although the Litany has been the subject of considerable scholarly debate, none of this discussion has focused on the emotion that the Litany is designed to activate, and how that emotion expresses and constructs a uniquely Moravian idea of the self. I will argue that the Litany is not only an expression of a Moravian understanding of the self, but also that it reveals the specifically emotional way that Moravian selfhood was constructed. Before proposing an alternative model for understanding the Litany, some methodological considerations are in order.

Methodology

Although the Litany was sung many times daily for many years in Moravian communities, few writers refer to it explicitly. It will therefore be necessary throughout this chapter to use the Litany as heuristic device to help read memoirs, letters, diaries, and other personal papers that Moravians composed. Moments where the language and imagery of the

Litany appear in other texts are the important ones for this study. How the language and imagery are used, the contexts in which they appear, and what Moravians are saying about it, are all important to understanding the Litany and the Moravian blood and wounds theology. Interestingly, it does not matter if the memoirs and diaries are composed before or after the introduction of the Litany, as accounts composed before its appearance still give us important information about how the imagery of the Litany was used. For this reason, I argue that the Litany not only constructs Moravian notions of self, but also expresses a unique vision of Moravian personhood.

Moravian blood and wounds theology has been a problem for scholars almost since its inception. This blood and wounds theology is given its most vivid expression in the Litany, where Moravians express their desire to lie “calm, gently, and quiet and warm” in the “soft wounds of Jesus,” to have the sweat from Jesus’ brow “pour over us,” and to “lick, taste” the “succulent, glistening, warm wounds of Jesus.”79 Bloody imagery appears not only in the Litany, but also in Moravian personal writings of all kinds. Although some references to the blood of Christ are fairly standard recollections of first communions, many others represent quite distinctive Moravian notions about religion and identity. Katherine Faull has called this moment—when the Litany and the blood and wounds theology was in extensive use—in Moravian history an “opaque” one that both demands interpretation and unlocks deeper meanings about the way Moravians understood themselves.80

Since the text is an opaque one, a methodology for dealing with its meanings and metaphors in context is required. Here Caroline Walker Bynum’s histories of the body in the medieval period prove helpful.81 Bynum does not shy away from hermeneutical questions, but starts by reading texts “on their own terms,” by which she means that texts must first be understood using the metaphors and language of their own time.82 Although Bynum does not use precisely this language, she argues that the more opaque a text or moment is, the richer its need for interpretation, as these texts and moments “convey the needs, the anxieties, and the

82 Bynum, The Resurrection of the Body in Western Christianity, 200-1336, xv.
sources of repose in the hearts of men and women." Indeed, for Bynum, these opaque moments are precisely the ones that can bridge the gap between what she calls “a history of mystical theology” and “a history of religious attitudes” by reflecting “the ways larger groups of people” lived. Studying this opaque moment in Moravian history can help us bridge the gap between a history of Moravian theology and a history of the everyday religious experience of Moravian individuals, including not just European men, but European women who played a large role in Moravian religious life, and Native American women and men who joined Moravian communities all across the American frontier in Pennsylvania and Ohio during the eighteenth century. Zinzendorf’s learned theological formulations, the daily lived experiences of practitioners, and the history and background of the Moravian moment collide in the Litany, allowing us a glimpse at how people lived, understood their religiosity, and imagined themselves.

Bynum provides a way to select evidence and allow the material at hand, rather than some ideological consideration, guide the investigation of context. Since Moravians use the language of the Litany in their memoirs and letters, these memoirs and letters are of most interest. Most importantly, since the language of Litany is used to penetrate the rational facilities of human minds and touch people’s emotions, an investigation into the discourse surrounding emotion is in order. Bynum’s methodology is useful in two directions then: she provides a reasonable but not restrictive way to read texts, and she provides a way to examine opaque moments in those texts. Once the problem of how to read the text itself is conquered, a hermeneutical task remains. Just what does the text mean, and what kind of information about Moravians does it provide? For Zinzendorf, religion is “a matter of the heart,” and attaining God requires not the deployment of intellect, but “the exercise of… feeling and the will.” Zinzendorf says that “our savior has declared that the little ones, the children believe in Him: from which we can well observe that faith has its seat not in speculation, not in thought, but in the heart.” Zinzendorf hints that a theory of emotion and thought is required to understand his religious system, and therefore the Litany also.

83 Bynum, Jesus as Mother: Studies in the Spirituality of the High Middle Ages, 7.
84 Bynum, The Resurrection of the Body in Western Christianity, 200-1336, 7-8.
85 Faull, "Faith and Imagination," 43.
86 Ibid., 29.
In Michelle Z. Rosaldo’s book *Knowledge and Passion: Ilongot Notions of Self and Social Life*, she argues that emotion is part of a culturally constructed set of discourses about the self. Rather than understanding emotion as a psychological state or an essence to be distilled, Rosaldo argues that emotion is an ideological practice that participates in an elaborate discourse about selves and others. Rosaldo says that “we can learn about the meaning of Ilongot headhunting… by [studying] the emotional language Ilongots use in explaining how and why such violent deeds engage their interest.”

Further, Rosaldo argues, descriptions of certain emotions are part of a discourse that constructs both everyday life and Ilongot notions of the self. Finally, descriptions of emotions are useful as a way of understanding the structures of daily life not in the sense that those who experience these emotions “feel” them per se (for how can we know about inner subjective states of human beings?), but in the sense that these constructed notions of emotion provide a way for individuals to understand the world. Emotions are therefore not eruptions from an unconscious or feeling part of the human psyche, but ordered and constructed responses that both reflect and build the self. For Rosaldo, emotions are “cognitions – or more aptly, perhaps, interpretations – always culturally informed, in which the actor finds that body, self, and identity are immediately involved. It thus becomes… no more difficult to say of people that they ‘feel’ than that they ‘think.’”

The topic of my investigation, eighteenth century Moravians in America and Germany is certainly far from the Philippines in the late 20th century, but Rosaldo’s insights into how we might interpret emotion are helpful here. Instead of imagining that the emotions that the Litany stimulates spring up unexplained from the human soul or psyche, we can locate these emotions in a conversation that Moravians have about themselves within their communities and with others. In other words, the Moravian emphasis on emotion, expressed by the Litany, is an ideological response to a social, religious, and political situation, which helps Moravians make sense of and build up a distinctive notion of who they are. The Litany works, through its emotional language, to tell Moravians who they are, and it is able to work this way because the character of emotion is relational. Emotion is socially constructed and participates in the social

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89 Ibid., 29.
world of meanings in which all individuals take part. If Zinzendorf helps lead us to studying the emotional impact of the *Litany*, he is not as helpful when it comes to puzzling out the imagery used in the text. Throughout the remainder of this chapter, while analyzing the emotional life that centered on the *Litany*, I will also discuss the vivid imagery of the text, which is not only bloody, but also remarkable for its unconventional depictions of gender, and its emphasis on children.

Finally, a note about sources is in order. In Bethlehem, the Moravian Archives maintains an extraordinary number of German manuscripts created during the life of that community. Among these manuscripts are the *Lebensläufe*, memoirs that Moravians wrote before their death in order to recount the important events of their lives. The largest printed collection of English translations of these *Lebensläufe* is contained in Katherine Faull’s volume *Moravian Women’s Memoir: Their Related Lives, 1750-1820*. These memoirs are ideal for this project, as women who died from 1750 to 1820 were for the most part alive when the *Litany* was in most frequent use, and when Bethlehem was organized communally. Faull also notes that memoirs from this period are valuable because they allow insight into the everyday lives of Moravian women. Although the memoirs follow a pattern, they also contain personal and particular information that is not available in the later more formalized Moravian memoirs, or in memoirs from some other colonial American groups, such as Quakers and Puritans. *Lebensläufe* were usually composed near the end of life, and since they were sung or read at funerals, writers were aware of writing for an audience. The use of language and imagery similar to that in the *Litany* therefore reveals not only the personal feelings of the author, but also indicates that she had an expectation that such language would be understood and appreciated by the wider audience of the entire community. The fact that not all the *Lebensläufe* contain bloody descriptions of the wounds only affirms the fact that when such descriptions did appear, they were not part of a formalized language to which all *Lebensläufe* were supposed to conform. Moravian memoirs allow us to peer into the lives of not only a series of individuals, but also into the community expectations, norms, and shared understandings about religion, self, life, and most importantly, emotion. But

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91 The Bethlehem Digital History Project also maintains a large and growing collection of translated memoirs. Cf. http://bdhp.moravian.edu/personal_papers/memoirs/memoirs.html
before examining emotion and its link to Moravian identity, we need to examine the bloody imagery of the *Litany*.

**Imagining the *Litany*: Blood, Women, and Sacrifice**

In the *Litany*, the wounds of Jesus are celebrated, and practitioners beg to lie in, taste, and lick the exceptionally bloody wounds of Christ. A long section of the text is devoted to describing the wounds of Jesus with a series of adjectives, including “clear, purple, juicy, warm, dainty,” and “soft.” A 1758 Valentin Haidt painting depicts a follower of Christ so devoted to the wounds of Jesus that her face is buried in one of his foot wounds, and she is presumably kissing, licking, or tasting the blood of Christ. Moravians also approvingly celebrated the wounds in their memoirs. In a section of his memoir that was recorded by someone else due to his illness, James Burnside’s (1708-1755) dying moments and final words were remembered:

> Last Tuesday August the 5th, he said to his spouse; "My dear, our Saviour will do something particular for me shortly," and upon her asking, what? he replied "you will see." The day next day he desired her several times with a particular emphasis to sing praises to the Lord of Hosts and to the Holy Ghost. And upon her asking him, for what? he replied, "Because our Saviour is a coming to take me to himself. Farewell!" And he thus taking leave of her she desired him to give her a verso for a remembrance of him, which he also gave did, and said very distinctly; "They five dear wounds torn wide for me, my rockholes and my refuge be etc.”

The side wound, called both “side hole” and “side chasm” in the *Litany*, was particularly important. The side hole was the point through which the heart of Jesus might be accessed, and it was depicted in Moravian art on the left side of the body rather than the right, possibly to indicate its closeness to Christ’s heart. Moravians are not the first to associate the heart of Jesus with his side wound. In late 17th century France, St. Margaret Mary Alacoque had a series of visions of Christ’s heart surrounded by flames and flanked by the side wound. Later visions encouraged the nun to promote devotion to Sacred Heart, which eventually became so popular that the resulting cult was supposedly effective in warding off outbreaks of plague. Catholic

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93 The painting is owned by the Moravian Historical Society in Nazareth, PA. Available online at [http://bdhp.moravian.edu/art/paintings/lament.html](http://bdhp.moravian.edu/art/paintings/lament.html).
devotion to the Sacred Heart continues to this day. Connolly points out that the Sacred Heart was both “internal and external,” something that was apparently not the case with the side wound of Jesus, as it was an external orifice through which one might access Christ’s decided internal heart. But things other than the heart were contained in the side wound of Christ, a fact that the Litany makes clear.

Indeed, “roomily sit many thousands kind of sinner” in the wounds of Jesus, as do children who lie in the wounds. Aaron Spencer Fogleman makes clear that the “wounds” in the Litany are referring to the side wound of Jesus. Moravians in Herrnhut drew images of the side wound on small cards, and these depictions contain not only words of praise for the side wound, but also show the wound playing host to a number of events. The artists apparently took walks, ate, and slept in the “warm little side hole.” The Litany describes the “wounds” using the same language and imagery that was used by Moravians to depict the side wound of Jesus, and it is safe to assume that during the recitation of the Litany, participants begged to lie in the very same wound they depicted on the note cards. The note card wounds have one other striking feature: the side wound appears to take the shape of a vagina. Two cards show a bed and a chair, “suggesting the two methods of intercourse preferred by the Moravians,” and also contain instructions regarding which bible verses should be repeated at the moment of ejaculation. It seems clear that the side wound of Christ was not only the most important devotional site on his body, but was also identified as a vagina. Such imagery rightly calls into question the unambiguously male gender of Jesus, as do other aspects of the Litany’s imagery. In particular, the bleeding wound is suggestive of a lactating female breast, and the Moravians were not the first to identify Christ’s blood with mother’s milk. Nor was the identification of Jesus as female unique to the Moravians, particularly in the Christian mystical tradition which identified God with Sophia.

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96 Carroll, Catholic Cults and Devotion: A Psychological Inquiry, 139.
97 Aaron Spencer Fogleman, “Jesus Is Female: The Moravian Challenge in the German Communities of North America,” William and Mary Quarterly, no. 60.2 (2003): 22.
98 Ibid.: 23.
100 Fogleman, ”Jesus Is Female: The Moravian Challenge in the German Communities of North America,” 27.
The feminization and sexualization of Jesus led contemporaries to conclude that Zinzendorf and the Moravians were mad, and has led scholars to suggest that Freud’s theory of repression can best explain Moravian devotion to the wound-vagina of Christ. Although his work is subtle and careful, it is strange that Craig Atwood suggests that “residents of Bethlehem repressed their own erotic drives in favor of the community… the wounds cult provided an outlet for sexual energy,” as Moravians were neither prohibited nor discouraged from marrying and having sex, which Zinzendorf believed was healthy, normal, and useful.\(^{101}\) We do not need to revert to Freudian repression to explain devotion to the side wound. In *Jesus as Mother: Studies in the Spirituality of the High Middle Ages*, Caroline Walker Bynum argues feminine imagery used in describing male figures (including God) may be used to express concern with dependence and incorporation.\(^{102}\) I have already discussed briefly the issue of dependence on Christ, and it will be discussed further later in this chapter. For now I will suggest that the overriding concern in Moravian religious life and theology was with dependence on Christ, and that the sexual imagery of the wounds might be better explained in that context. Devotion to the wound also reminded Moravians of Jesus’ sacrifice for them.

In her fascinating study of sacrifice, *Throughout Your Generations Forever: Sacrifice, Religion, and Paternity*, Nancy Jay notes that sacrifice is both disjunctive and conjunctive, both uniting groups in community and serving to separate groups and individuals. Disjunctive, or expiatory sacrifice, serves to appease, wipe out guilt, turn away anger, and generally separate in a variety of ways. Conjunctive sacrifice unites groups in community, but it also establishes difference between a community and its outsiders and in this way, disjunction is also at the heart of conjunctive sacrifice.\(^{103}\) Even more provocative than uncovering the logical structure of sacrifice is Jay’s attempt to link patriarchy with sacrifice. She summarizes, “sacrifice can… get rid of the consequences of having been born a woman (along with countless other dangers), and at the same time integrate the pure and eternal patrilineage,” and sacrifice can also “identify, and maintain through time, not only social structures whose continuity flows through fathers and sons but also other forms of male to male succession that transcend dependence on childbearing

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women.”\(^{104}\) Was the Moravian Church such a social structure that depended on male authority? At first, it doesn’t seem likely. Women were granted exceptional freedom in Moravian communities, and the elimination of the nuclear family in communal towns tended to free some women from the restrictive expectations of traditional marriage. Women were also granted leadership roles in the church. In 1746, Zinzendorf’s daughter was ordained, and in 1758, two years before the Count died, four more women were ordained, a practice that was not repeated after his death.\(^{105}\) Both single and married women were allowed to travel alone, and many lived long, cosmopolitan lives in service of the church in the eighteenth century, moving easily between the Moravian congregations spread throughout the western hemisphere. In addition, Moravian ideas about equality led many enslaved people to join the church as a more amenable alternative to other Protestant denominations and the Catholic Church. Perhaps the most compelling evidence that Zinzendorf was not interested in perpetuating patriarchy was that he attempted to destroy it in the places where people lived communally. The choir system destroyed nuclear male-headed households, and instituted a more egalitarian model of familial relations.

For Moravians, the sacrifice of Jesus clearly served the dual role of joining and separating. Craig Atwood has done a good job of demonstrating how the *Litany* was a key part of Moravian life in Bethlehem in the eighteenth century, and even seems to suggest that the community could not have succeeded without the *Litany*.\(^{106}\) The gruesome sacrifice of Jesus allowed the community to come together. But the blood of Jesus was also, as we have seen, purifying and life-giving, separating followers from sin and guilt. The wounds of Christ also separate the Moravian community from outsiders, creating an in-group dynamic that is key to holding communities together. The *Litany* is designed to attract those who know its true value, while repulsing those who are unaware of the power of Christ, the *Litany*, and the correctness of the Moravian mode of religiousity.

Although the crucifixion is not explicitly the subject of the text, it is always lurking in the background. The use of these images needs also to be explained: why so much blood, and what is the significance of the graphic and immediate sacrifice of Jesus? The European administration of the church, and the extensive communication network which extended across the Atlantic

\(^{104}\) Ibid., 40, 37.
Ocean, meant that members of the various local Moravian communities had a sense that they were part of a larger international community. There was significant movement between Germany, London, Bethlehem, and the various Moravian missions around the world (including the missions in North America). Such a widespread community must have some institutional basis in order for it to cohere, and this is where the Litany and the blood and wounds theology is expresses become relevant. Mary Douglas, in How Institutions Think, states that “institutions are founded on analogy,” specifically an analogy “founded in nature and therefore, in reason.”

Douglas is not here suggesting that analogies founded in nature are rational in the Enlightenment sense of the word, but rather that nature (however imagined) is the basis of discursive thought. She continues, “being naturalized, they [institutions] are part of the order of the universe.” In order for institutions to be institutions, they must fit into the worldview of those who participate in them. The Litany is an important text because it is the basis for and an expression of the institutional form that the Moravian church took. Reading the Litany and its blood and wounds theology this way also helps us understand why its decline corresponded with the radical transformation of Herrnhag and Bethlehem when the imagery and theology of the Litany began to be less emphasized. As the analogy that had made these communities, as well as the Moravian church in general, so successful, began to break down, the entire church underwent a transformation. At the heart of that analogy system was the blood, wounds, and sacrifice of Jesus.

On the one hand, the bloody imagery of the Litany may be designed to respond to a problem that the Litany, in its English version, calls “dryness by way of chastisement.” The blood of Christ provides the necessary salve to eliminate the problem of spiritual dryness. Blood is an overdetermined symbol, but it is clear that in the Litany, and to Moravian practitioners in general, blood is life-giving and redemptive. Moravians repeat again and again their desire to be saved by the blood of Jesus. Mary Douglas, in an essay about food collected in Implicit Meanings, suggests that the Levitical rules forbidding the consumption of blood are in place

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107 Faull, Moravian Women's Memoirs: Their Related Lives, 1750-1820. The memoirs that Faull translates here are a testament to the international character of the church in this period. Most of the women’s memoirs indicate a very large degree of geographic mobility; it is not unusual for memoirs to trace a path from Germany to London to Bethlehem, and beyond.

108 Mary Douglas, How Institutions Think (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1986), 52. Chapter four is titled “Institutions are Founded on Anlogy.”

109 Ibid.

110 Faull, "Faith and Imagination," 40.
because “blood belongs to God alone, for life is in the blood.”\textsuperscript{111} Although much anthropological literature suggests that blood is defiling, in the case of the \textit{Litany} the blood of Christ seems to be interpreted either as redemptive, or as powerful—in any case, the blood is good, and Moravians certainly do not want to avoid it. John Brownfield, for example, begs to string himself upon a cross until Christ “overstreams my heart & soul with his Blood & Mercies,” thus purifying his heart and soul, and washing his sins away. The juiciness of Christ’s gushing blood unites the Moravians in community by reminding them of, and reenacting, the sacrifice of Jesus, the leader of their community, and their savior.\textsuperscript{112}

\textbf{Lying Calm, Gently, and Quiet}

Perhaps the feature of the \textit{Litany} that stands out most clearly is its expression of total dependence on Christ. Singers of the hymn express total reliance on Christ, begging him for every kind of grace, from circumcised hearts to tolerance, easy labor, and a warm place to lie.\textsuperscript{113} It is no surprise that George Forell cites Karl Barth’s approving evaluation of Zinzendorf as “perhaps the only genuine Christocentric of the modern age.”\textsuperscript{114} A brief exchange with John Wesley helps to demonstrate why Barth evaluated Zinzendorf that way. Wesley was so impressed with the Moravians in Georgia that, when he later returned to England, he preached for a time to the Fetter Lane Society in London, a small religious organization populated by Moravians. Despite their early respect for each other, Wesley and Zinzendorf eventually had a falling out over the issue of the respective roles of humans and Christ in sanctification. Though both men held that sanctification was possible, Zinzendorf insisted that “all our perfection is in Christ. All Christian perfection is faith in the blood of Christ. We are perfect in Christ; — in ourselves, never.”\textsuperscript{115} Wesley disagreed, and the argument points to Zinzendorf’s profound devotion to Christ, which was eventually given expression in the \textit{Litany}. Zinzendorf’s elevation of Jesus also came at the expense of God the Father: in 1741, shortly before his trip to America,

\textsuperscript{113} Atwood, \textit{Community of the Cross: Moravian Piety in Colonial Bethlehem}, 234-35.
\textsuperscript{115} Ibid., xvii.
Zinzendorf preached that Jesus, not the Father, was the creator. The *Litany* makes a similar move, requesting that God and the Holy Spirit merely “preach daily the wounds of the Lamb.” That the *Litany* expresses such profound reliance on Christ is a result of Zinzendorf’s Christocentrism. As Zinzendorf went, so did other Moravians, who themselves also expressed a similarly deep reliance on Jesus.

Marie Elizabeth Kunz (1732-1769) was one of the women who depended so deeply on Jesus. Although Kunz did not write most of her memoir, its author tells us that “in her own hand” Kunz wrote about “her heart’s intercourse with Him who loves her soul,” an experience she had in 1754, five years after joining the Single Sister’s Choir in 1749. Notice not only the dependence on Jesus, but also the vivid imagery of Christ’s bloody body, and of marriage:

> In 1754, on November 2, the good Saviour began a special work of grace with my heart. With body and soul I could give myself up just as I was and want nothing else in this world than to depend on Him: for this grace could not be felt so strongly in my heart that I thought “there is nothing more for me here”; and it was just as though the tormented body of the Bloody Saviour were hanging here before my eyes. Now, because it was Communion day, I could hardly wait to until I got to enjoy His Body and Blood in the Sacrament, and as I was actually enjoying it, I could hardly remember whether I was still here or already in the marriage hall… My heart swam in tears, and it was amazing to me that the good Saviour had shown so much grace to such a poor maid as I am. For my poverty and many sins became clear to me in my heart, and it saddened me greatly that I was not yet completely as my true friend wanted… I begged the Saviour with tears to give me the grace to keep my soul and body chaste until I reached His arms and embrace.

Anna Marie Worbass (1722-1795) expressed similar reliance on Christ when she joined the church in 1752:

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116 Fogleman, “Jesus Is Female: The Moravian Challene in the German Communities of North America.”
There was many a sad and distressed hour before I could lay myself down before Him at His feet as a poor sinner and ask for His blood and forgiveness to wash over my whole heart. He comforted me in his bloody deathly form. Soon thereafter he gave me the blessed enjoyment of His body and blood in Holy Communion, to be desired in His arms and at His breast. My eyes could not remain dry at this enjoyment, in shame, thanks, and humility at the love, patience, and forbearance with which He had carried me until this hour…. From that time on I walked the path of a blessed sinner through His grace and support.  

Nor could men’s eyes remain dry. Johann Böhner (1710-1785) wept in Herrnhut:

So it happened when I knelt on my knees with another, that it was to me as if the Savior hung before me and I were one of his crucifiers. My heart broke and I had to weep, yet he did not let me rise unconsolcd, and gave me a glimpse of his mercy; my heart became glad and it was so well with me, that I thought: “if only I no longer had to sleep, but rather could spend all my time in communion with Him.”

Böhner next traveled to Georgia and Pennsylvania. During his first winter on the site that would become Bethlehem, he had another experience, which included weeping and recognition of his “submission” to Jesus:

That same winter [1740] the Holy Ghost placed my ugliness directly before my eyes; I spoke to the blessed Br. Peter Böhler on the subject; he knelt down with me and prayed, and I wept. I saw myself as a stain before God and the Gemeine. I threw myself with my ruin and sins before the Savior, who undeniably reassured me the next morning of his mercy and his peace; it was none other than as if He stood before me, and my heart melted in love and submission.

These accounts all suggest that, for many Moravians, dependence on and submission to Jesus were key to their religious worldview. Weeping is a performative display of emotion, designed to communicate in terms that others in the community would understand. The authors of the memoirs also give us a hint as to what emotions weeping is designed to display. Kunz clearly

121 Ibid.
expresses dependence, and Worbass describes a process by which she comes to be peace that was previously unattainable without “support” from Christ. Both express sadness and torment (expressed by weeping) followed by peace in reliance on Christ. Böhner’s reliance on Christ is expressed somewhat differently than the women’s, but we can see a similar pattern at work. He wishes to spend all his time with Christ in the early passage, but, by 1740, Böhner speaks of a melting submission to Christ. Sadness, expressed through tears, precedes dependence in these examples, and that dependence implies a humility and abandonment of self to Christ.

But the Litany did not introduce those emotions. Rather, the Moravians claimed to be depending entirely on Christ even before its composition. Böhner, for example, could not have been familiar with the Litany in 1731, when he first records his weeping and desire to be in communion with Christ, since the text was not circulated until 1744. The Litany was composed in response to the deathbed utterances of Johann Nitsche in 1744, in which Nitsche warned

O you Brethren, I tell you, turn to the wounds of Jesus, seek the wounds of Jesus, whoever does not know the wounds of Jesus, he has no God, he will want to hide himself in the mountains and the fissures, but it will be of no use. Whoever does not know the wounds, he has no basis in his heart. I have experienced grace through the wounds of Christ. The Lamb’s apostles have testified to the wounds of Christ, the congregation testifies of the wounds of Christ. I will also be a witness to the bloody wounds of Christ until my very end.122

Nitsche’s sentiments clearly found a sympathetic place in Zinzendorf’s imagination. Faull notes that “in Nitsche’s words we find a paradigm for the personal feeling of religion,” and also points out that “Moravians were already ‘witness’ to the wounds” before Nitsche’s outburst.123 That paradigm of emotive, feeling religion, and the imagery of the bloody wounds of Christ, informed the language and imagery of the Litany. In compressed form, the Litany expresses this emotional life. In addition to expressing an emotive life, the Litany also details several of Zinzendorf’s most important theological notions (childlikeness, and religion of the heart). Because its language was in use before the text was constructed, and because it expresses theological ideas that also predated it, it seems clear that the Litany is expression of a distinctive Moravian religiosity.

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122 Faull, “Faith and Imagination,” 35.
123 Ibid.
But the song, sung so many times per year, surely had an impact beyond merely expression, for two reasons. The first reason has to do with the formal characteristics of the text, which does not exactly praise Christ as much as it petitions him with a series of pious requests. Those singing the Litany are literally and individually asking to lie in the wounds of Jesus, to take in his life-giving and redemptive blood, and so on, due to the format of the song. This formal characteristic indicates that the Litany is not merely a song of affirmation, and its ritual recitation is therefore not merely an occasion for remembrance or celebration, but that that the recitation of this text involves the singer in a kind of self-transformation and self-humiliation. The singer even expresses a child-like reliance on Christ, proclaiming at one point that “we want to be the child,” and at another his or her desire to lie like a child in the wounds.\(^{124}\) The Litany was first and foremost a performance. It was designed as ritual display, as a way to solidify group cohesion through its call and response format. The call and response format would have emphasized the Moravians’ feeling that their community stood in contrast to the rest of the world. The second reason that the Litany has implications for Moravian identity has to do with the relational and transformative power of emotion and thinking.

Rosaldo argues that emotion is cognitive in the same way that thought is, and that therefore the traditional opposition between them is wrong-headed. Thought and emotion are always integrated together, happening at the same time, and building upon and shaping each other. The difference between thought imbued with emotion and thought without emotion is the impact and engagement of such thoughts with the actor’s self. Rosaldo’s distinction between thought with and without emotion is probably overstated, but the insight that emotion tends to touch the self is important here. Emotion is relational, and therefore it engages the actor’s sense of self with the social world.\(^{125}\) Since emotion and thinking are linked, it is also valuable to understand how thought impacts the creation and maintenance of identity. In his provocative book, *Neuropolitics: Thinking, Culture, Speed*, William Connolly, suggests that “thinking participates in that uncertain process by which new possibilities are ushered into being. One invention may be a new identity.” Like Rosaldo, Connolly argues that thought and emotion (which he calls “affect”) are linked, but he goes further, stating that “culture is constituted in part by the perceptions, beliefs, and concepts in it. Thought enters into… the subjective and

\(^{124}\) Atwood, *Community of the Cross: Moravian Piety in Colonial Bethlehem*, 236-37.

\(^{125}\) Rosaldo, "Toward an Anthropology of Self and Feeling," 143.
intersubjective dimensions of culture.” As for the role emotion plays in thinking, Connolly draws on the neurobiological research of V.S Ramachandran to argue that the activity of the mind is “layered,” and that thought is therefore multidimensional, with some “levels” existing and operating below conscious reflection and awareness. The very process of thinking involves moving between the conscious and unconscious levels of thought, a movement made possible by the introduction of affect. Such movement, driven forward by affect, is implicated in the creation of identity, as it “opens up a new round of intrasubjective communication” where encounters may shape identities. The Litany and its blood and wounds theology is the site of such an encounter.

Margaretha Edmonds memoir provides a good example of that dynamic. This excerpt, which she dictated to her husband in 1755, was written shortly before the birth of her first child. In it, Edmonds describes her religious awakening which began when she heard George Whitefield in New York:

> When I was older, I was awakened by Mr. Whitefield’s sermons, and on a pleasure trip to Albany… the dear Saviour led me to understand that the amusements that occurred were nothing but vain things that brought the heart no true pleasure. The Saviour then also gave me the grace to begin to feel for myself the hardness of my heart and my own inability to believe in Him; for I then applied all my strength in order to receive a believer’s heart for my Saviour until I became convinced in another way in the Brethren’s sermons. After some time, Br. and Sr. Gambold came to New York, and the words that he once said to me, that the Saviour was to be found neither in heaven above nor here below in some place or other but rather in the heart, pierced me to such an extent that I cried many tears for grace… At last, through the sermons of Br. Rice, I began to understand better the Brethren’s teachings about the Saviour’s free grace towards poor sinners, and I was able to give myself up to the Saviour, just the way I was, and He allowed me to find grace in His blood.128

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126 William E. Connolly, Neuropolitics: Thinking, Culture, Speed (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2002), 1, 18.
127 Ibid., 63-66, 67.
In 1753, Edmonds joined the Moravian congregation in New York, and in 1754 received her first communion, experiencing “the great grace of enjoying the Holy Sacrament of his Body and Blood for the first time” in New York, and in 1755 moving to Bethlehem to marry William Edmonds. It is interesting to note here that Edmonds was affected by the bloody language of the Litany even before she moved the Bethlehem. In her account, Margaretha moves from being awakened by Whitefield to settling on an identity as a Moravian. The real transformation occurs when Edmonds begins weeping, finally able to “understand” Christ’s grace. It should be no surprise that Edmonds emphasizes that only when she felt complete dependence on Christ is she able to be transformed. Signaling that transformation, Edmonds joined the Moravian church in New York. Edmonds’ account fits nicely into Connolly’s model of the role that emotion plays in the formation of identity. Edmonds recounts a leap of understanding that is accompanied by a powerful emotional experience. According to Connolly’s theory, that new understanding (and identity as a Moravian) was made possible by the emotion Edmonds experienced, emotion that was given voice and stimulated using the distinctive language of both the Litany and Zinzendorf’s theology of the heart.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this chapter has argued that the Litany is designed to stimulate what the Moravians consider to be a unique emotional life that allows for the proper kind of relationship to God. That emotional life is the basis for a distinct Moravian identity. As was mentioned above, the Moravians were likely witness to the bloody wounds of Jesus even before the composition of the Litany. Once the Litany was composed, giving expression to an identity that was already in the works, Moravians were able to identify the emotional life they were already cultivating with a powerful set of symbols and metaphors. As evidenced by “Zinzendorf’s 1749 Reprimand to the Brudergemeine,” adoration of the wounds soon reached fever pitch as members of the community, especially single men, realized the potency of the imagery.

The enthusiasm with which men adopted the imagery of the Litany has a few possible explanations. Perhaps the most suggestive one is that the female imagery of the Litany allowed men to gain access to, and a language to talk about, emotions that they would not otherwise been available to them. In fact, while the communal Moravian settlements offered unusual freedom

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129 Ibid., 34.
for women, such settings would also have allowed men to, at least to some extent, relieve the burden of providing alone for a single-family home. The Litany was the key to all of these sociological and interpersonal innovations, offering the language, structure, imagery, and model for remaking human society and relations.

The imagery was potent for a few reasons. Mary Douglas suggests that bodily openings, and the rituals that surround them, are sites where communities work out problems.\(^{131}\) For the Moravians, some of those problems had to do with their marginal identity in Europe. The Litany makes sense of their marginalized status by positing a bodily metaphor that parallels is. The goriness, gruesomeness, and unattractiveness of the wound of Christ mirrors the identity of the Moravians themselves, who were often rejected by others in Germany and America because of their distasteful devotion to the side wound. In fact, thorough their ecumenical mission, the Moravians seek contact with groups who will inevitably reject their advances. By seeking rejection, the Moravians bring their community into the same tension as exists within the wound: at once the Moravians (and the wound) welcome and invite all people into salvific relationship, while knowing that some will be unable to see past the outward repugnance of both the community and the wound. This dynamic, rather than sublimation alone, explains why Moravian communities cohere around Christ’s bleeding wound. In other words, the community itself takes on, and creates in the external world the very characteristics that the wound is said for have to the Moravians themselves. Finally, the performative nature of the Litany emphasizes the feeling that already existed in Moravian communities of separatism and special identity. The call and response pattern places community and individual existence in stark contrast, reminding Moravians of both the danger and power of the outside world and their community, respectively. In chapter three, I will explore some of the ways that Moravians use Christ’s wound as the basis for interacting with others.

Chapter Three: Moravians and Indians

Scholarship on Moravian encounters with Indians has often been apologetic and uncritical, emphasizing the friendliness of Moravian missionaries toward the Indians. Maria Conrad Turner’s dissertation regarding Zeisberg’s mission in Ohio, for example, argues that so-called Moravian Indians, despite claiming to be Christian, actually retained their Delaware identity and, to a certain extent, lifestyle.\(^{132}\) Another strand of scholarship about Moravian missions comes from missiologists who wish to look to Zeisberger and Zinzendorf for instruction about how to conduct missions today. These works are also generally uncritical, emphasizing especially Zinzendorf’s ecumenicism and the happy relationship between Moravian missionaries and their converts.\(^{133}\) Finally, very recent scholarship from Jane Merritt, Jon Sensbach, and Rachel Wheeler, has offered a worthwhile alternative to these two models: Moravians and Native American contact resulted in various kinds of exchange and combination. This scholarship is a welcome move away from work that understands Moravians and their converts as adversaries; indeed, Moravians and Native Americans often worked together toward common goals. This chapter, however, will focus primarily on the ways that Moravians may have been a more invasive force than has traditionally been recognized. Jon Sensbach has pointed out that there are some problems with understanding Moravian missionary work as somehow less problematic than other kind of missionary activity. Sensbach may be alone is noting the contradiction between Moravian theology, which teaches about the equality of all people, and actual Moravian practice which participated in the “conservative social order that witnessed some of the most horrific abuses of the age, most notably the African slave trade.”\(^{134}\)

While Sensbach notes these problems, he does not puzzle them out. I contend that although Moravians espoused an “anti-Enlightenment philosophy of the self,” that seemed to emphasize equality, their view of the other was firmly entrenched in Enlightenment thinking about race and the savage nature of non-western peoples, and did not allow the other—their converts—the same full humanity that Moravians granted themselves. This chapter therefore


\(^{134}\) Jon Sensbach, "Globalization and Its Discontents: Religious Radicals Confront the Modern Age" (paper presented at the German Moravians in the Atlantic World symposium, Winston-Salem, North Carolina, April 2-4 2002).
explores the extent to which the language, imagery, and theology of the \textit{Litany} was used in Indian communities (and, to a smaller extent, by other non-European Moravians). This information is often difficult to excavate, as most of the information about Indians practicing Moravian religion is written by whites with an interest in fitting Indians into their schemes for ordering the world, and in not recording Indian practices that might not correspond with expectations. Nonetheless, it is important to highlight the differences between the use of the \textit{Litany} in mission communities and its deployment elsewhere, for non-white converts are certainly part of the story of the eighteenth Moravian Church.

\textbf{The Moravian Missionary Impulse}

Before moving on to the Moravian technique and theory of mission, it is important to understand why Moravians began mission work at all. Jon Sensbach says that “historians have not adequately explained the source” of the exceptional eighteenth century Moravian missionary impulse.\footnote{Ibid., 3. Sensbach notes the high mortality rates in climates “both tropical and frozen.”} We can locate much of that impulse in Zinzendorf’s ecumenicism, the influence of Halle Pietism, and in the very early history of the \textit{Unitas Fratrum} on Zinzendorf’s estate. Zinzendorf’s ecumenical spirit has often been praised and celebrated, and his desire to reject the growing denominationalism of the eighteenth century is well-documented.\footnote{For example, see Lewis, \textit{Zinzendorf, the Ecumenical Pioneer}; Schattschneider, "Moravians Approach the Indians: Theories and Realities."} Ironically, Zinzendorf had something of a domineering personality and was not particularly understanding of theological differences, which led to a series of disputes during his lifetime with a number of English, American, and German authorities and notables. Zinzendorf alienated the Saxon Court, which banned him from Saxony in 1736; John Wesley, who had minor theological disagreements with Zinzendorf that neither man could overcome; George Whitefield, who objected to how the Moravians wished to run his Indian school near Bethlehem; and Gilbert Tennent, who wrote a bitter polemic denouncing the Moravians after meeting Zinzendorf in 1741.\footnote{For more about Tennent and Zinzendorf, see Milton J. Coalter, "The Radical Pietism of Count Nicholas Zinzendorf as a Conservative Influence on the Awakener, Gilbert Tennent," \textit{Church History: Studies in Christianity and Culture} 49 (1980); James Hutton, \textit{History of the Moravian Church}, 2 ed. (London: Moravian Publication Office, 1909). Tennent’s work, "Some Account of the Principles of the Moravians," was published in Boston in 1743, and a later English edition caused uproar in London.} At any rate, even if Zinzendorf’s constitution wasn’t cut out for bridging schisms, that was certainly his goal, and the main subject of his 1741-1742 Pennsylvania sermons. Zinzendorf invites “people from all kinds of denominations and sects into our \textit{Gemeine} without requiring them to change their
denominational form,” so long as they, apparently, agree totally with the Moravians: “people’s hearts tell them it is impossible to have reasonable opposition [to the Moravians].”

Zinzendorf wished to unite the entire world under banner for Christ. His ecumenicism illustrates that desire, and that wish to see the entire world converted to Christ was part of what motivated the Moravian mission.

The second important factor in understanding the Moravian mission drive was the influence of Halle Pietism. Halle, in a joint venture with the Danish court, sent missionaries to southern India in 1707. That action was merely the first step in Francke’s plan for world reform, a drive that seems to have been motivated by a combination of Francke’s difficult conversion and his emphasis on taking practical action that could effect change in the world. Spener’s plan for reform was institutionalized in Halle, which was to be a “total institution” and a model for a properly functioning and sufficiently pious community. Halle missionaries wished to export the institution and put into place a worldwide reform of religious and social life. This emphasis clearly had an impact on Zinzendorf, and in his missionary plan we can see the skeleton of Francke’s. Though the men had different techniques and theories about missionizing and conversion, it is clear that the basic desire to reform the world through institutions was a driving force for both Moravians and Hallensers. The final source of motivation for the Moravians to missionize has to do with their early history. Early Moravians understood themselves as a persecuted religious group due to their identification with the Unitas Fratrum. Moravians saw other German religious dissenters being persecuted, and worried that they were next. Therefore, the effort to span the globe was in part motivated by the practical concern of finding safe havens for Moravians to practice their religion. These three concerns combined to create one of the most dynamic and impressive Protestant missionary networks of the eighteenth century.

It is the case that Moravian missionaries were among the most successful Protestant missionaries of the eighteenth century. The scope of their mission was unprecedented in the Protestant world, and their success was remarkable. By 1743, Moravian missionaries were not only spread all over the central Europe and in London, but they had reached out to Sri Lanka.

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South Africa, the Caribbean, Greenland, and North America. But even before Moravian missionaries were to explode onto the world stage, Zinzendorf was thinking about the proper mission technique. His grandmother read to the young Count the mission accounts of two German missionaries who he would later meet in Halle. In 1732, Zinzendorf wrote a letter to Johann Ernst Geister, a missionary in India, to advise him on the proper technique: “show a happy and lively spirit and in external matters do not rule over the heathen… gain respect among them through the strength of your spirit.” Missionaries were also to live at the same economic level as the “heathen.” The admonitions to “not rule over the heathen” and to live at the same economic level as them were motivated by the Moravian desire to modify only the religious lives of Indians. Moravians believed that the best way to maintain good relations with non-Christians in the mission field was to emphasis religious rather than cultural conversion. As Zinzendorf’s theological system suggests, cultural conversion would come after religious change. Finally, due to Moravian rejection of rationalism in the realm of religion, the usual missionary discourse could not be used by Moravian missionaries, for it attempted to explain rationally the necessity of Christian religion. Moravians would not have been surprised that rational discourse on the nature of God and religion might be ineffective tools for conversion. Instead, missionaries sung and preached sermons using the evocative language of the Litany. Zinzendorf wanted to “paint for the eyes” a vivid picture of Christ’s suffering into the hearts of potential converts in order to bring about conversion.

How does such religious conversion happen in the mission field? In time, Zinzendorf began to articulate a theory of mission that was distinctively Moravian. For Zinzendorf, the Holy Spirit is the key to conversion, as it is she who is the real missionary. She converts all

143 Zinzendorf quoted in Ibid., 37-38.
144 For more about the matter of conversion, see Carola Wessel, "We Do Not Want to Introduce Anything New: Transplanting the Communal Life from Herrnhut to the Upper Ohio Valley," in In Search of Peace and Prosperity: New German Settlements in Eighteenth-Century Europe and America, ed. Hartmut Lehmann, Herman Wellenreuther, and Reneate Wilson (University Park, PA: Penn State Press, 2000).
145 Zinzendorf in Zeisberger, Diaries, 1772-1781, 56.
people through the activity of their hearts, Indian and European, to the true religion. Here, sounding almost Neo-Platonic, he describes the roles of the Holy Spirit and missionaries:

the Spirit stirs within people… religious questions. The people wrestle with them and may even suddenly find peace and joy and answers to their questions though they do not know why they feel that way. At the same time, the Spirit is stirring up the Christian missionaries and sending them out everywhere. The crucial juncture is when the seekers and the missionaries meet and the missionaries speak of Jesus as the one who has brought peace and joy. If the seekers accept what the missionary says about Jesus, baptism follows.

This passage suggests that Zinzendorf believes that all people have knowledge of God due to the Holy Spirit “stirring” them. It should be no surprise that such a stirring happens in the heart, and not in the head. Since God is already known to all people everywhere, the job of the Christian missionary is only to awaken the unconverted with the wounds of Christ. The errors that missionaries make point to their lack of understanding of Zinzendorf’s unique mission theory. Those two main errors include “1) that one tells them too much about God and too little about the lamb and its redemption, and that most often comes from the heart,” and “2) that in propagating the gospel one first tells them of the Father and then the Son,” which means that the potential converts would have to understand the trinity before apprehending the wounds.

Moravians had been carrying out Zinzendorf’s mission technique and applying his theory in the New World since 1734, when the Moravian mission to St. Thomas was established. During his visit to Pennsylvania, Zinzendorf ventured into the wilderness three times to speak with the Indians about the Gospel. One of these events is memorialized in an unusual 1747 Valentin Haidt painting called “Zinzendorf als Lehrer der Völker.” The painting depicts Zinzendorf preaching to a group that includes both Indian and European men, women and children. In the image, Zinzendorf’s heart, head and mouth are pierced by rays of light emanating from a disembodied side wound and torso of Jesus which takes the place of the sun.

Moravian missionaries would meet with considerable success in Pennsylvania, Ohio, and New

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147 Ibid.
148 Zeisberger, Diaries, 1772-1781, 52.
149 Zinzendorf in Ibid., 51.
York until in 1782, 100 so-called “Moravian Indians” were massacred at Gnadenhütten, a small village on the banks of the Muskingum River in Ohio.\(^{151}\) The Gnadenhütten massacre was, in many ways, the culmination of two related problems that plagued Moravian mission work on the frontier. White encroachment on Indian land meant that the villages Moravians established, and the people who lived in them, were repeatedly displaced. The ongoing tension, which often exploded into armed conflict, between Indians and whites on the Pennsylvania frontier, created numerous political problems for the Moravians (both white and Indian), as they attempted to navigate the rough seas of the French and Indian, Seven Years, and American Revolutionary wars.

**Moravians, Indians, and Africans**

The earliest Moravian mission in the New World was located in St. Thomas, where Moravians missionized to the enslaved African population. The first Moravian mission on the North American mainland was established at Checomeco, a Mahican village in New York, in 1740. By 1744, Moravian missionaries ran into trouble with New York authorities. The local government demanded to know if they were “Roman Catholicks,” and wondered if the Moravians accompanied their converts on raids of white villages. The Moravians could not resolve the dispute in a satisfactory manner, and eventually the governor passed a law stating that “no Vagrant Preacher Moravian or Disguised Papist” would be allowed to preach to the Indians without swearing an oath to the governor and obtaining a license, under penalty of treason.\(^{152}\) Checomeco was left in the hands of a baptized Indian, and disbanded in 1746, when most of its remaining Moravian resident migrated to Gnadenhütten, Pennsylvania. Also in 1746, the Six Indian Nations attempted to entangle Moravians in a dispute with the Catawba nation at Shamokin by inviting them to send a missionary and a smith to the town. After sorting out a difficult political situation between the Delaware, Six Nations, and Catawba, the Moravians decided to focus their work on the Delaware. Through a series of conflicts and rivalries between Europeans and Indians that was caused by the Seven Years War and its fallout, the Delaware

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\(^{152}\) Zeisberger, *Diaries, 1772-1781*, 44.
were forced to move west, and eventually asked Moravians to establish mission towns in eastern Ohio, along the Muskingum River.  

One other Moravian settlement bears mentioning in the context of studying Moravian relations with non-whites. In 1753, a group of Moravians looked to establish their second major outpost in America in North Carolina piedmont. They called the expansive town Salem, and quickly the European settlers were joined by enslaved Africans who helped to make Salem a vibrant and prosperous community where free whites and enslaved blacks worked beside each other in shops, attended church meetings together, and lived in close quarters.  

Clearly, Moravians did not only encounter “others” in the context of mission work. 

Moravian communities in eighteenth century America were remarkably open and diverse, containing free whites, and both free and enslaved Africans and Indians. Non-whites were accorded a substantial measure of equality in Moravian communities, many were eventually baptized in the church, and some of them wrote rather unconventional Lebensläufe. In addition, non-white men and women living in Moravian mission settlements occasionally wrote memoirs. The Lebensläufe of African and Indian men and women living in both kinds of communities, combined with the missionary diaries of some prominent Moravian missionaries provide a sideways glance into the history of the exchange between Moravians and “others” in the New World during the eighteenth century.

Moravian missionaries kept detailed records regarding the progress and disposition of these communities. Among the most helpful are the mission diaries of David Zeisberger. Zeisberger, born in 1721, moved to Georgia in the 1730’s, and then on to Bethlehem in the 1740’s. From 1744-1756, Zeisberger worked as a missionary among the Mohawk and Onondoga, where he learned both languages and was adopted into an Onondoga tribe with the name Ganousserchi. In 1746, Zeisberger founded the community of Gnadenhutten, Pennsylvania. In 1767, Zeisberger set out on his life’s work, missionizing among the Delaware in Ohio. Ohio missionary work would consume Zeisberger’s life until he died in 1808. Many of Zeisberger’s extensive diaries have been translated into English, most recently by Julie Tomberlin Weber, in a volume called The Moravian Missionary Diaries of David Zeisberger,
which cover the period from 1772 to 1781. These diaries are invaluable, as they provide important information about missionary work on the frontier.

“We will not Introduce Anything New:” Life in Mission Communities

The Moravian desire to “not introduce anything new” to mission towns was affirmed during a conference at Schönbrunn in 1773, but did not refer to a desire to leave Indian culture as it was. Rather, the missionaries had agreed to introduce nothing to the mission towns that that differed from the “customs and usages of” Bethlehem. At the same time, the missionaries confirm that they wish to shield themselves from “suspicion or be viewed by the Indians as if we wanted to rule over the people.” Other regulations were put into place in order to bring life in the mission communities closer to life in Bethlehem. These regulations included the conditions under which people could be ejected from the community (the harshest penalty that Moravians leveled against members of their community), affirmations of the importance of Moravian ritual occasions, guidelines for baptism, and rather extensive regulations and commentary about marriage, gender, and Indian sexual practices. Moravians accepted the invitation to go to Gekelemukpechink, the center of Delaware life on the Muskingum River, in 1772, and began immediately to missionize. Eventually, four mission towns would be established: Schönbrunn in 1772 and Gnadenhütten in 1772, Lichtenau in 1776 (abandoned in 1780), and Salem in 1780. The Delaware encounter with Moravians was not their first encounter with Europeans.

By 1767, the Delaware had been in contact with Europeans for more than a century. When Zeisberger decided to focus on the Delaware in 1767, the use of guns, trade with Europeans, consumption of alcohol, and the use of European goods had been long established in Delaware communities. Delaware familial structures were not greatly altered by this contact because they continued to migrate westward as Europeans encroached upon their lands. These confrontations created crisis situations which Delaware religion addressed. One key religious practice, and “the primary focus of Delaware religion,” was an individual’s relationship with his or her guardian spirit, through which people access sacred power. Such guardians were everywhere in the world, and it was possible to communication with them through visions. Although Edmund De Schweinitz, in his 1870 biography of Zeisberger, claims that “each [Delaware] family has a house of its own,” each home “contained more than a single nuclear

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157 Ibid., 559-52.
family.”[^159] Even the family unit had religious significance: “every two years, usually in the autumn, each family offered a sacrifice which all relatives were invited to attend.”[^160] Reciprocity in economic arrangements prevailed, and “goods were shared by those who had plenty with those who had little or none. The Delaware believed that nature’s bounty had been created for the ‘common good,’ not to benefit the few.”[^161] It seems that the Delaware and the Moravians had some common ideas about social and religious organization. Moravians also lived in non-nuclear households (or at least they remember when their communities were arranged that way), shared the fruits of their labors with each other, and had a fairly egalitarian political structure, at least at the local level.

What was most important to the Moravians—Jesus’ suffering—was surprisingly translatable into Indian religious ideas. Delaware religion required sacrifices to guardian spirits, and Moravians emphasized Jesus’ sacrifice for the benefit of all humans. Jesus was literally the source of spiritual strength and sustenance for Moravians who cried out to “lick and taste” the “juicy wounds of Jesus” in the *Litany*. When Zeisberger talked about God, he used the Delaware term for “the great Spirit” or “the Creator,” drawing identity between Delaware and Moravian religiosity. Zeisberger termed Jesus “Creator of the world,” and the “Divine Being on whom all things depend and to whom all things tend.”[^162] The blood of Jesus was also compelling to some Indians where Moravians established settlements. Indeed, for some Indians, the imagery of the *Litany* proved an important part of their conversion, and their use of the *Litany’s* language was ingeniously designed to help cope with the changing world.

Upon his or her arrival at a new mission settlement, one of the first things a missionary had to do was establish persons from the mission community to be religious leaders. The Indians, according to Zeisberger, must be ministered to by their own people. The appointment of Indian “Elders” also assured that the mission settlements would continue to receive spiritual care while the white missionaries were traveling.[^163] For example, before Zeisberger departed from a site near Gekelemukpechünk that would later become Schönbrunn, where a number of Moravian Indians were apparently living, he and his colleagues announced that two Indians, Johannes, and

[^161]: Ibid., 59.
[^162]: Ibid., 72.
[^163]: Ibid., 42-43.
Nathanael-Davis, would be Elders.  

Maria Conrad Turner argues that the reason for this emphasis on Indian ministry was Zinzendorf’s concern with allowing the Indians to maintain their political autonomy. Zinzendorf was worried that “the heathen would remain forever subject to the Europeans,” and the appointment of Indian Elders would at least help to avoid conveying the message that Moravian Indians were subject to whites, and also allow Indians to gain experience in how to administer a Christian life. Moravians also had well-established belief that people should be ministered to by those who shared their condition in life, a belief institutionalized in the Choir system. Moravians therefore drew the natural conclusion that Indians should be served by other Indians who could understand and nurture their spiritual condition.

But the Choir system had been eliminated ten years earlier in Bethlehem, due to a financial crisis in Germany in 1762. In Bethlehem and Herrnhut, the Choir system was exchanged for single family homes. Moravians in Bethlehem were not pleased with the elimination of the Choir system, and the move to single-family households was especially difficult for women who had been used to an unusual amount of freedom, and now found their lives more strictly circumscribed. Anna Seidel, a married woman who lived in the Single Sisters’ Choir until the mid 1760’s, when she was required to take up residence with her “dear husband,” lamented with sadness the end of Bethlehem’s communal economy. However, even after the Choir system was eliminated in Bethlehem, missionaries seem to have made some attempts to implement it in the mission field, even if those attempts only came to creating imaginary Choirs of which all single men, women, and so on, would be members.

It doesn’t seem that actual Choir houses were built, which meant that Delaware people were generally permitted to live in their traditional homes, although the practice of polygamy was disallowed, “for there is none among us who has two wives.” Delaware gender roles were also not smiled upon by missionaries. Among the rules established at Schönbrunn is a critique of gender roles in Indian communities:

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164 Zeisberger, *Diaries, 1772-1781*, 102. See the entry from August 29, 1772.
165 Turner, "Struck in Their Hearts".
Why is it that once couples are married, the wives start to criticize their husbands and demand things from them they before would never have dreamed of, as for example that they demand that they work on their plantations and elsewhere, work that originally was the wives’ concern. And if the men do not live up to their wives’ expectations, quarrel and disunity between the partners result. This is continued right down to the Holy Communion, by which they want to turn their husbands into servants… The sisters… should not push things too far and we therefore will have to let them know that they have no right to demand it [field work] from their husbands.\textsuperscript{169}

Moravians also made comments about hunting, a job traditionally done by men. The Schönbrunn regulations grudgingly allow Indians to hunt, but reminds Indians that “their heart suffers” during extended hunting trips, and says that it is especially harmful for the newly baptized to go on these trips. Finally, the Schönbrunn regulations repeatedly warn missionaries to “not become other men’s servants.”\textsuperscript{170} Overall, the mission regulations show that those Indians who joined Moravian mission towns had their lives severely changed. Towns were designed to run in a manner similar to how Bethlehem was run, and the regulations codified the Moravian mission program.

It would be a mistake to claim, as some have, that Moravian missions were somehow not disruptive. Because of the lack of emphasis on doctrinal matters, Moravian missionaries were not as concerned with the “correctness” of a convert’s beliefs as some other Protestant missionaries were—it is the condition of his or her soul that matters.\textsuperscript{171} This emphasis does, however, make Moravian missions rather invasive: missionaries are to learn as much as possible about the culture of the people they are living with, and then to look for signs of heterodoxy within their soul of the other. How are souls judged? Indian motives, not actions, revealed the movement of their souls. Good actions motivated by evil ends were immoral; the missionary must be careful to penetrate past the external actions of the Indians and not let seemingly good Indian customs speak for the state of a convert’s soul.\textsuperscript{172} Additionally, as the regulations suggest, there was a kind of doctrinal orthodoxy that missionaries attempted to enforce; that

\textsuperscript{169} Ibid., 562.
\textsuperscript{170} Ibid., 561, 60.
\textsuperscript{171} Turner, "Struck in Their Hearts", 44-45.
\textsuperscript{172} Ibid., 42.
orthodoxy has to do with Moravian perceptions about the superiority of the Euro-Moravian lifestyle to the traditionally “savage” lifestyle.

But mission regulations might also give us a glimpse into how Delaware in the mission settlements lived. The very fact that some regulations were established, while others were not, gives us an indication of what activities Indians were doing that Moravians wished to stop. Moravian regulations cannot help us totally reconstruct Indian perspectives and activities in Moravian mission towns, but reading against the regulations in this way can help us glimpse at Delaware lives in Moravian towns. The regulations point to the fact that converts were still practicing their old ways of life in the mission settlements. For example, “it is possible that our Indian brothers and sisters out of good intentions will want to please the chiefs. This happened at Gnadenhütten.” Apparently, at least some converts still recognized the authority of local chiefs. The admonition against hunting is odd, but it clearly points out that converts continued to hunt after their conversions, and suggests that hunting is a religious danger. Some Delaware obviously wanted to continue to take multiple wives, and apparently some wives of converted Delaware were not happy about the conversion. The regulations state that “when a woman leaves her husband and goes out into the world, the reason… is that she wants to be a whore and becomes a whore… Such a thing happened this summer at Gnadenhütten, when Anna Johanna left her husband and has now taken a savage.” It also seems that Delaware women may have attempted to use Moravian ideas about the equality of women to gain some leverage over their husbands (who, if we are to believe the Schönbrunn regulations, were wont to take long hunting trips) and attempt to compel them to work in the fields. Moravians were not successful in eliminating all aspects of Delaware life, and clearly some Delaware were attempting to negotiate the advantages and disadvantages of adopting the Moravian missionary plan for their lives.

Equality, Blood, and Wounds

Moravian teaching about religious life was fairly egalitarian, as was Moravian social and religious practice. Women were ordained in the church as early as 1746, and though Zinzendorf’s theology recognized difference in people (thus the Choirs), these differences did not matter when it came to matters of essential humanity. Moravians were thus to be joined together in the spirit of fraternity and equality. But Zinzendorf’s concept of different-but-equal apparently did not extend to certain physical differences. Zinzendorf subscribed to the theory

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173 Zeisberger, Diaries, 1772-1781, 560, 63.
that dark skin was a punishment for the sins of Ham, but, in typical fashion, he was not terribly interested in an abstract theory of race, and never wrote much on the subject. What did matter to Zinzendorf was the spiritual disposition of all people, and therefore he wished to convert all to Christ. Moravians had established a mission outpost in St. Thomas in the early 1730’s, and when an uprising broke out there, they were suspected of encouraging slaves with ideas about equality and freedom. Moravians protested that accusation, and Zinzendorf drove the point home in 1739 during his visit to St. Thomas, during which he stated that all people—including enslaved Africans—had reached their condition due to the will of God. He was merely punishing blacks in the Caribbean because of the sins of the “first Negroes.” Given that attitude, one wonders why Moravians had such success converting Native Americans.

Indians might have been attracted to Moravian religious life for a number of reasons. David Schattschneider makes an incisive observation about the similarity between Delaware and Moravian culture: both people were “strangers in a strange land,” the Delaware removed from their sacred landscapes by a century of European encroachment, and the Moravians attempting to find their place in America, a land by this point populated with not only Indians, but also French, English, Scotch-Irish, and other German people. In the changing world of colonial Pennsylvania, the Delaware were of course not the only Indians whose lives were impacted by the European appetite for land. The meeting between Moravians and Indians was a meeting between cultures in transition. In a sense, both were responding to similar forces, and their encounter helped both navigate the transition between their respective worlds and their integration into Anglo-American culture. Moravian communities may have provided a more palatable alternative to other options provided by Europeans for Indians. In addition, joining a Moravian community may have provided a modicum of political protection, as Christian Indians were more easily tolerated than so-called savages. Moravians wished to remain neutral eighteenth century upheavals, and were committed to non-violence. This policy was able to steer European Moravians through the eighteenth century, and may have seemed a good idea to some Indians too, but in polarized times, neutrality did not serve them as well, as the massacre at

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175 Sensbach, A Seperate Canaan, 34.
Gnadenhütten illustrates. Another reason that Moravians were attractive to Indians has to do with Moravian religious practice, and especially the adoration of the wounds depicted in the *Litany*.

Early Moravian missionaries claimed that the *Litany* was more effective than any other song in converting the Indians.\(^{177}\) In August Spangenberg’s report about the visit of some Shawnee and Nanticoke to Bethlehem, he records that when they saw a painting of Jesus in the Single Brothers’ house, one exclaimed, “look at how many wounds He has and how much blood flows out.”\(^{178}\) Sarah, a convert in Checomeco, said that “my whole body and heart felt a power from his wounds and blood.”\(^{179}\) Blood was clearly a powerful symbol. Visions were an important part of Indian and Moravian religious life. The similarities between Moravian experience and the experience of Native Americans allowed the wounds of Christ to make sense of the suffering and alterity that Moravians and Indians had in common. As was argued at the end of chapter two, the gore of the *Litany* was used as a way to come to terms with the wider reaction of Christian groups against the Moravians, setting up the Moravian community as a place ugly to the external world in the same way that bleeding wound was unpleasant, distasteful, and powerful. Moravians and Indians shared this experience of alterity, although for the Moravians it was contrived. Regardless, both groups had experienced what they perceived to be suffering: the Moravians peripatetic journey across the Continent, England, and North America; the Delaware’s continued forced movement west according to European settler’s desire for land. Christ’s wound was a powerful symbol for people who thought they were oppressed or actually were because it made sense of their suffering.

**Conclusions**

The Moravian encounter with the Delaware raises some important issues. Clearly, with their lack of emphasis on doctrinal issues and their anti-Enlightenment philosophy of the self, the Moravians would seem to have an ambivalent relationship to modernity in general, and the colonial enterprise in particular. In Moravian communities all over the world, the Brethren wished to live according to God’s word and follow their hearts. Zinzendorf specifically rejected rationalism, or “head knowledge” as he called it, in favor of unconventional communal practices,

\(^{177}\) Faull, “Faith and Imagination,” 51, n.2  
an evocative theology of blood and wounds, and an emotional religion of the heart.\textsuperscript{180} The Moravians were a persecuted group in Europe, and yet their missionary activity in the New World was successful to a remarkable degree.\textsuperscript{181} Although the Moravians “saw themselves in strong reaction against modernity, in many ways they promoted it.”\textsuperscript{182}

The encounter with the Delaware offers some ways for us to puzzle this out. Perhaps the most striking example of how the modernist program of missionizing impacted the Moravians is in relation to their dealings with Indian “motives.” Like so many other colonizers and missionaries, the Moravians seem to believe that the motives and identities of the converts are transparent. In fact, the Moravians seem to have had so much trust in the Indians transparency that they are unconcerned with literal translations of Moravian sermons, hymns, and litanies. Moravian ideas about conversion tell them not only about themselves, but about all inhabitants of all lands everywhere. Sensitivity is required in order to understand the distinctive features of Indian culture, but this sensitivity is necessary only insofar as it allows one to penetrate more deeply into Indian motives, which Moravians presume are transparent.

While many scholars emphasize the fullness of the Moravian anthropology, the fact remains that Moravians no good way to deal with a radically different other.\textsuperscript{183} This the Moravians had in common with much of the rest of the colonial enterprise. The unique Moravian religious modality gives this problem of transparency and opacity a distinctive character, but the operative assumption is always that the indigenous or enslaved peoples are transparent to the Moravian gaze (or, perhaps more appropriately, to the Moravian heart). Maria Conrad Turner assumes that because of the similarity between Delaware practices and certain Moravian practices, the Delaware easily converted to Moravian lifestyle. But one could easily draw an alternate conclusion with the same data: that Moravian Indians adopted as much rhetoric as was necessary to please Moravian missionaries while continuing to practice their traditional

\textsuperscript{180} Faull, "Faith and Imagination," 31.
\textsuperscript{181} Sensbach, "Globalization and Its Discontents", 8. According to Sensbach, at the end of the eighteenth century, most black Protestants in the world were Moravians.
\textsuperscript{182} Ibid., 2.
religion. The Delaware were certainly a nation in transition, and it is possible that living in Moravian communities offered them a chance at stability in their chaotic world. Finally, Conrad’s conclusion flies in the face of evidence that says that Moravians did in fact require a large change in convert lifestyles. Mark Turdo’s translation of financial records of an Indian at Gnadenhutten, Pennsylvania, reveal a different picture of life in a Moravian mission settlement.184

Turdo notes that conversion “was not simply a matter of spiritual conversion” and that “the convert must also change his or her daily life.”185 These accommodations had to be made in order to eliminate sin and vice among the Indians. Body adornment, clothing, and the drinking of rum all had to be modified or eliminated. In fact, “the Christian Indians dressed in European clothing,” as their original clothing was thought to be offensive.186 This early case presents a problem for Turner’s interpretation of the Moravian missionary relationship to the Indians: here we have an account of Moravian mission that Zeisberger helped establish that clearly did require substantial change in Indian lifestyles. This is another example of the Moravian’s ambivalent relationship to modernity. While their preaching and doctrines didn’t seem to require that the Indians change their lifestyles, Moravians were requiring this, at least in some places.

In other words, the ambivalence in the scholarship reflects ambivalence in Moravian culture itself. While Moravian philosophy and doctrine say one thing, Zinzendorf and the Moravians operate “in the mainstream of a set of unquestioned European assumptions… about the depravity of non-Westerners.”187 These two apparently mutually exclusive ideologies are left unexplained. It is indeed strange to hear a Moravian missionary talk about the unreasonableness of African slaves in the Caribbean, complaining that whatever virtues they have stem from “instinct and have no relation to religion or reason.”188 While this combination of condescension and respect seems puzzling at first, it is clearly grounded in the modern idea that western Christianity will save the world by converting it.189 Ethnographies like the ones produced by

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185 Ibid., 144.
186 Ibid., 148.
188 Ibid., 6.
189 Ibid.
Zeisberger and other Moravian missionaries, for example, illustrate that the Moravians are still engaged in the modern project of taxonomy and categorization.¹⁰⁰

Studying Moravian encounters with the other casts doubt on claims that Moravians really were rejecting Enlightenment rationalism and the project of modernism. Indeed, they still used rationalist critiques to understand enslaved and indigenous peoples, and engaged quite successfully in missionizing, one of the characteristic features of the European colonizing enterprise. As their complex and ambiguous relationships to others illustrate, Moravian rejection of rationalism exists side-by-side with an embrace of the modern enterprise of colonizing and missionizing. The missionary efforts of the Moravians allowed them to spread Litany, which was adopted by other groups who also grasped the possibility that is graphic imagery could make sense of their suffering and marginality.

Conclusion

Reaching the end of a project like this is rewarding. It has been a curious pleasure to, in my own way, immerse myself in the wounds of Christ, and attempt to see things the way that Zinzendorf and his followers might have in the middle years of the eighteenth century. I end this project fully convinced that I have only scratched the surface of the possibilities for study of the Moravians in the eighteenth century. Therefore, this final section of the thesis has two related tasks. First, it will look back at what has been proven in the course of the document. Second, it will look forward at what remains to be done.

Zinzendorf’s personal background was examined against the backdrop of eighteenth century German Pietism in chapter one. This examination set Zinzendorf’s unique theological innovations in stark relief against the “mainstream” of German Pietism, allowing us to see the places where Zinzendorf was influenced by Pietism, and the way that different aspects of his theology were played out in relation to the broader historical and theological trends of his day. The second chapter, which is heart of the thesis, developed the argument that the Litany expresses a uniquely Moravian notion of the self. Using the work of Mary Doulgas, William Connolly, and Michelle Rosaldo, an interpretation of the Litany that emphasized its expressive function was presented. Finally, in the third chapter, we were able to see how the Litany, and the larger theological system it was a part of, played out in various communities. The experiences of Native Americans were emphasized, and the way that the Litany informed the entire Moravian theological system was explored. Finally, this project has accomplished the goal it set out the start: to offer a unique interpretation of the Moravian Litany of the Wounds of Man that emphasized, through historical analysis, the way that emotion was central to that text and the communal life it was attached to.

Beyond the immediate modest contribution this document hopes to make to the study of the Moravians, it has some importance to the study of religion in general as well. First, it advances a novel way of examining emotion. The suggestion that emotion is cognitive and social rather than irrational and personal opens up the realm of “feeling” to scholarly analysis. It also traces a middle ground between intellectualist understandings of religion, such as those advanced by Jonathan Z. Smith and Claude Levi-Strauss, and anti-intellectualists such as Freud and William James. The theory of emotion here further opens up what is sometimes thought to be the subjective nature of that human experience to scholarly analysis and interpretation.
Second, although it is by no means novel, the suggestion that a world of religious practice can be accessed through the careful analysis and exposition of a single text is highlighted through the course of this work. In this way, the thesis attempts to navigate between the extremes of intellectual history and lived religion by focusing on the impact that one text can have on the practice of so many individuals.

That one text opens up onto numerous other subjects not suggested so far in this thesis. Although W.R. Ward has done a very nice job of connecting the Moravians to early eighteenth century revivals in Germany and central Europe, no similar work has been done to locate the Moravians in the context of the Great Awakening. Connecting those threads might lead to a fuller understanding of the transatlantic nature of the eighteenth century revivals that swept England, the Continent, and colonial America. More generally, the Moravians and other German groups in Pennsylvania and Georgia, such as the Lutherans, could be better integrated into narratives about religion in America. One way to approach this problem is to attempt to use the categories that organize religious history and apply them to the Moravians. The most obvious place to begin is with the category of religious community, especially with studies of communitarian movements, which almost always ignore the Moravians and the eighteenth century. In addition to the telescopic view, some work could be done on the microscopic level. Moravian community and theology begs for a more careful analysis of gender, and the homosocial aspects of Moravian communal life, only hinted at here and there in scholarly literature, could provide a provocative study of sexuality in the eighteenth century. Finally, though speculation abounds, our understanding of how and why the Litany and the Choir system fell out of favor is still hazy at best. A more careful study of how the Moravians moved from the eighteenth to nineteenth centuries could prove to be a model for examining and understanding the unique pressures placed upon religions in America.

Some of this work is already being done by young scholars such as Craig Atwood, Julie Tomberlin Weber, Katherine Faull, Aaron Spencer Fogelman, and Rachel Wheeler. It may be too early to say that these scholars constitute a renaissance of interest in the Moravians, but their work will surely head in some of the directions I’ve suggested above, as well as some others. As for my own work, I believe that one of the most promising directions for future Moravian scholarship lies in integrating the Moravians into larger histories of German Pietism and eighteenth century colonial America. Comparisons between the Moravians and other groups can
help bring out themes and influences that were previously unappreciated. Understanding the
dynamic of the *Litany* can also ultimately help illuminate other similar social situations, as well
as other places where strange or unusual religiosity emerges.


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