‘Why, would you have me live upon a gridiron?’: Pain, Identity, and Emotional Communities in Nineteenth-Century English Convent Culture

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I
Introduction

Polemicist and social critic Ivan Illich has outlined the importance of culture in furnishing means of experiencing, expressing, and understanding pain: ‘Precisely because culture provides a mode of organizing this experience, it provides an important condition for health care: it allows individuals to deal with their own pain.’[1] The history of pain, approached through phenomenology (the lived experience of pain focused on subjectivity) and the various rhetorics of pain (narratives, rituals, symbols, etc.), can bring into sharp relief, as Illich has inferred, how pain is culturally derived and embedded in a society’s values and norms. Thus, the context of pain is critical as society and culture infuses it with a multiplicity of meanings. This essay explores nineteenth-century Catholic interpretations of pain, utilizing biography to examine how and why corporeal pain functioned as a means of both reinforcing Catholic beliefs in the utility of pain and of coping with pain. This does not necessarily imply that bodily pain was encouraged, enthusiastically welcomed, or self-inflicted. This article explores unwanted pain; not the self-inflicted pain of mortification or the violent pain of martyrdom that are often featured in medieval or early modern histories of pain. It will examine this unwanted pain in a defined space, the convent, and through a particular source, the biography of Margaret Hallahan (1803–1868), founder of the Dominican Sisters of St Catherine of Siena, written by the future prioress, convert Augusta Theodosia Drane (1823–1894; in religion, Mother Francis Raphael) in 1869.

In the context of Hallahan’s biography, this essay links pain to identity and the emotional community. Pain contributed to Hallahan’s identity: her corporeal suffering and its meanings, which were religious, cultural, and political, were embedded in her life story. Pain, as an ‘unpleasant sensory and emotional experience’, is treated in this essay as a subjective event given its meanings by both Hallahan and her biographer Mother Francis Raphael Drane.[2] If we look at the performance of pain through this lens of subjectivity, examining the tenor of the emotional experiences derived from Hallahan’s bodily pain,

relationships, especially those with her religious sisters, spectators of her pain-full illness, come into high relief pointing to the relevance of community and the place of the convent.[3] This cultural approach relies heavily on Barbara Rosenwein's thinking on emotional communities.[4] It sees the convent as an emotional space; its occupants, the Dominican sisters, an emotional community. As an emotional community, there were norms and a code of behaviour that led to expectations of a consistency in emotional expressions. The Dominicans shared a common discourse, a set of values and assumptions that, in this case-study of pain, indicated a controlling disciplining function. The publication of Hallahan's biography extended this emotional community outwards, modelling expressions of pain to other readers, those in other religious institutes, and the wider community of Catholics.

Importantly, this essay explores unwanted pain rather than the pain of martyrdom or the self-infliction of pain so redolent in the historiography of earlier periods. Late medieval and early modern Christians could be vocal about the positive effects of bodily pain, incorporating voluntary pain into their 'quest for spiritual perfection' and 'ecstatic union with God'.[5] Caroline Bynum Walker contends that ascetic practices which incurred corporeal pain were a means of *imitatio Christi* centred on the role of suffering.[6] Javier Moscoso vividly argues that the Christian martyr embodied the link between bodily pain and salvation.[7] A discourse of 'sweet pain' referring to corporeal pain can be found in the works of Teresa de Jesús (1515–1582).[8] Maureen Flynn's research on the Christian mystics asserts that bodily pain allowed the formation of a mystical understanding of God (pp. 257, 260). Along the same lines, Ariel Glucklich, who studies the psychology of religion, writes of the phenomenological psychology of 'sacred pain' where self-inflicted bodily pain can be given empowering meanings.[9] Attention to unwanted pain materializes in nineteenth-century historiography. Paula Kane's work on the 'victim soul', a term coined in the late 1800s, identifies a personal vocation to suffer where a victim soul embraces and receives pain, to make reparation for the suffering of others (this can be one individual or a group of individuals).[10] Much has been made of the French Carmelite nun Thérèse Martin of Lisieux (1873–1897) who suffered 'sweetly' from tuberculosis.[11]

This essay's approach adds another dimension to this historiography. The close analysis of Hallahan's biography lays out her life, as interpreted by Drane but refracted within the life of the religious community, to develop the interplay between these three actors: Hallahan, Drane, and the Dominican sisters. The rhetorics of pain in Hallahan's life

story will unfold through three themes: the hiddenness of pain, the relevance of '*imitatio Christi*', and the issue of consolation. But first, we need to understand more broadly shifting meanings of pain in Victorian Britain.

Literary critic Lucy Bending argues that by the end of the nineteenth century, physical pain on earth became difficult to justify using past arguments of some unknown divine meaning, and eternal damnation was linked more to the emotional pain of separation from God rather than the fires of hell.[12] In Victorian Britain, ideas of a loving God clashed with a punitive God; this undermined the moral basis of pain.[13] While these changing meanings may be less true of nineteenth-century English convent culture, there are suggestions that Catholic understandings of pain and suffering were changing. Catholic convert and author Elizabeth Herbert (1822–1911), Lady Herbert of Lea, commented in her preface to the newly translated *Apostleship of Suffering* published in English in 1870:

> There is something very sad, especially to the young, in the first thought of this view of [a] life [of suffering]. Human nature shrinks from pain in every shape. Sickness and trial, bereavement and death, are bitter and hard to bear; and flesh and blood will recoil from each and all of these, and seek, if possible, to escape the Cross.[14]

Herbert suggests that suffering was being rejected by young Catholics, implying that its religious meanings were not compelling.[15] If suffering was unwelcome among Catholics, Francis Raphael Drane's biography reflects, in part, her efforts at explicating and communicating more widely the religious meanings of corporeal pain and suffering.

II

Margaret Hallahan and the *Life*

Margaret Hallahan's life story unfolds in the *Life of Margaret Mary Hallahan: Foundress of the English Congregation of St Catherine of Sienna of the Third Order of St Dominic* (hereafter referred to as the *Life*) written by her successor Mother Francis Raphael Drane.[16] It was published in London and New York in 1869, a year after her death; republished in abridged version in New York in 1871; published in German in 1874; and French in 1875; and a shortened English version appeared in 1929. It was read by members of other religious institutes such as the Bermondsey Sisters of Mercy who in 1870 recorded in their annals that Hallahan's life story was recited at 'lecture' during

Lent.[17] It was thoughtfully reviewed in the Catholic and non-Catholic press.[18] Though print run figures are unavailable, the text was well distributed and had a prominent place in Catholic literature.

It was, first of all, a book formulated to promote Hallahan's sanctity. It was meant to elevate her as an exemplar of female religious life and encourage a certain model of behaviour and belief; in the language of the nineteenth-century women religious, it was meant to 'edify' those who read it. Drane's intent was for a wide audience, those inside and outside Catholic conventual life. It also, for the purposes of this essay, gives an indication of some Catholic attitudes towards physical bodily pain. Throughout the book, Drane quotes from documents and remembered conversations attributing to Hallahan heroic personal qualities. Though represented as 'truth', commemorative biographies such as the *Life* were influenced by contemporary beliefs and were biased towards a positive memorialization. Biographers of this genre often omit, consciously or unconsciously, representations that do not fit the 'truth' they wish to tell. Drane's *Life* was not meant to be a neutral life history as it mixes the politics and theology of nineteenth-century English Catholicism within the narrative of Hallahan's life story.

Mother Francis Raphael Drane's role in this narrative of pain is important. She was a well-educated and questioning Anglican, whose faith led her to Anglo-Catholicism, and then finally to Catholicism in 1850. She entered Margaret Hallahan's Dominicans two years later. Her first published works appeared after 1850 and over her long career she authored over forty texts: religious tracts and articles, school readers, memoirs and biographies, religious fiction, and even a *History of England* (1862).[19] Her prodigious writing slowed down when she became prioress of the growing community of Dominicans from 1872 to 1883.[20] By 1869, when she wrote Hallahan's biography, she was a well-established author. Her voice is central to the production of the narrative. Although she often quotes directly from Hallahan's letters and writings to assert Hallahan's voice, Drane carefully selects, shapes, and moulds these original documents. She recasts Hallahan in order to produce a model nun that fitted into the spiritual goals of the day.[21]

This latter point is important because Hallahan was a rather unlikely founder of an English religious congregation. Born in London in 1803, her parents were working-class Irish who struggled financially and were not likely to fit the 'respectable' model that Drane outlined.[22] She was educated briefly at Somers Town Catholic orphanage until aged eleven, when, both parents having died, she entered domestic service. Aged thirty-eight,

she became a servant in the household of the Benedictine William Bernard Ullathorne (1806–1889), the future Bishop of Birmingham. He encouraged her interest in religious life. She gathered around her a group of like-minded women and opened Catholic day schools for children, night schools for factory girls, and began caring for the chronically ill. In 1845, with Ullathorne's support, she founded the Dominicans of St Catherine of Siena, a religious congregation of women who took simple vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience and performed charitable works, primarily teaching and nursing, outside the cloister.[23]

Hallahan's medical history began when aged seventeen. Apparently showing off her great strength, she lifted an iron stove and carried it to the top of the house. This, along with an accidental fall two years later, was said to be the cause of her lumbar abscesses (Drane, p.13). These were likely spinal tumours, abnormal cell growths which can be benign or cancerous.[24] These tumours could squeeze and press on the spine causing pain in or near the spine. Such pain can travel, beginning in one spot and radiating throughout the body. Other symptoms include sensations of paraesthesia, which includes numbness, the feeling of pins and needles, and sensitivity to touch and temperature. Even clothing on the skin could cause agonizing pain. Her biographer made pointed reference to the lumbar abscesses and other painful conditions throughout the biography noting, for example, 'excruciating pains in the head and spine' and that 'painful sores had opened on head, arms, sides and knees' (Drane, pp. xi, 229). Towards the end of her life, Hallahan's spinal pain left her unable to hold a book in her hands and she switched from reciting the longer and more complicated Divine Office to the shorter Little Office of Our Lady (p. 514). For Hallahan, who had pleaded with Bishop Ullathorne for permission for her congregation to recite the Divine Office rather than the Little Office of Our Lady, this must have been a devastating concession to her pain (pp. 141–42). The last six months of her life, documented in meticulous detail in the biography, tells the tale of unrelenting physical pain and agony.

This matter of unwanted pain versus self-induced pain was complicated by Hallahan's own history of mortification. She practised acts of penitence as a young woman, but her confessor, the Abbé Bruno Versavel (1795–1867), alarmed at the extent of her bodily inflictions, sent her to the Carmelite convent 'to prevent her doing herself any injury'.[25] We know from extant documents that her penitential instruments included a hair shirt, a discipline of knotted cords, an iron chain, an iron bracelet for the arm, a cross some

three inches long covered in spikes, and two balls with spikes for the palms of the hands.[26] Interior and exterior mortification were mentioned frequently throughout the biography, but Drane seems at pains to stress the value of 'mean and abject employments' as mortification to those who would 'prefer to wear a hair shirt or a chain, than to clean the kitchen, wash, iron, or cook'.[27] And Hallahan's own experiences of 'severe austerities' were located before her entry into religious life: 'she once admitted that she had done much more in the way of penance when living in the world, than she had been able to do after entering religion' (p. 26). Drane discouraged excessive fasting or abstinence as 'if they did not eat, they could not work, they could not teach, they could not sing the Divine praises' (p. 263). This suggests that the utility of the 'works of mercy' trumped the perceived value of self-inflicted external mortification. That said, evidence can be found in episcopal visitation reports and correspondence that physical acts of penance were practised into the twentieth century,[28] but its invisibility from published material reflects perhaps the diminishment of its acceptability by the broader Catholic community. Importantly, there is no indication that Hallahan struggled against self-inflicted pain in the same way she struggled with the unwanted pain of her lumbar abscesses. But, of course, there was a difference between the pain one can control, through self-infliction, and the pain that was not controllable. And, as the discourse of pain indicates, the focus of Drane's biography was very much on Hallahan's unwanted pain.

III
Hiddenness

The most prominent discourse in Drane's biography was that pain was meant to be 'hidden'. Hallahan considered this 'hiddenness' a 'branch of mortification', thus a disciplining of the body and an act of self-denial reflecting 'the courageous indifference to petty ailments, the cheerful endurance of weak health and bodily fatigue' (Drane, p. 264). Hallahan transformed unwanted pain through the discourse of hiddenness into a form of mortification, an act of penitence. The visible performance of pain, particularly pain-filled facial expressions, Hallahan considered a 'self-indulgence' and 'faddiness' towards which she claimed 'feminine natures are so habitually inclined'. Two points are germane here. First, that this so-called 'faddiness' infers that this was perhaps a recent social fashion, a shift from a more (perhaps imagined) stoic age; and this can be linked to the shrinking

from suffering Lady Herbert of Lea observed. Second, Hallahan's gendering of facial expression corroborates to an extent Lucy Bending's analysis of fictional texts, where she found female pain being represented as 'heroic' with a 'gentle, cheerful, and subdued passivity', while male pain was more active with men 'bravely' facing pain (Bending, p. 101).

Hallahan's discourse of hiddenness reflected a disciplining of the emotions (and the self) entrenched in nineteenth-century convent culture. Drane valorized Hallahan's tolerance of her 'torturing increase of pain', noting that her doctor had never encountered 'so terrible a course of suffering' but that the 'countenance of the sufferer gave no indication of this'. He mentioned with appreciation that

> it was wonderful to see its calm expression even in sleep, though her hands would be twitching all the time from the anguish she was enduring. There was no writhing or contortion of the features, only the eyes cast up towards heaven. (p. 515)

But here is the paradox that continues throughout the text: Hallahan's living body somatized pain, not in her face, but in her irrepressible bodily contortions. This demonstration of bodily suffering, the twitching hands, was meant as a physiological sign indicating that pain sensations existed. Without her twitching hands, the credibility of Hallahan's pain could be challenged by her impassive face.[29]

The evidence of pain was not only visualized through the twitching hands, but an auditory performance of pain was suggested though not enacted. Drane notes at one point that Hallahan's pain was so severe and 'all but unbearable' such that she felt 'ready to cry with it' (p. 472). But, in Drane's *Life*, Hallahan did not cry out. Drane presents this silencing of the raw emotiveness of pain as a laudable act of self-denial. Hallahan's suppressed emotions do not demonstrate an indifference towards her body-in-pain; her ability to bear pain served as an acknowledgment of its ferocity.

IV

Imitatio Christi

Despite the emphasis on hidden pain, Margaret Hallahan revealed her pain through the use of metaphors, an important means of communicating pain and, as cultural historian Joanna Bourke has indicated, a useful means of articulating what cannot be said directly.[30]

Through these metaphors we can identify the next theme that Drane emphasizes, that of *imitatio Christi*.[31] In these metaphors, Hallahan linked her pain to fire and brokenness: 'She described herself as lying in "a pool of fire," or as if her back was being pulled to pieces on hot burning plates. Everything she swallowed seemed in like manner to turn to fire' (p. 522). This reference to fire appears to reflect her fears of the final judgement and a wrathful God who punished the sinner.[32] The Jesuit Hugo Hurter (1832–1914) writing on hell in 1887 noted that '*the fire with which the impious are punished is true and real, not metaphorical*'.[33] Later, after another 'paroxysm of pain exceeding anything she had yet endured', Hallahan exclaimed, 'my back is on fire. […] My back is *broken!*' (Drane, p. 531, emphasis in original). The trope of brokenness can also be associated with Jesus's own body on the cross. Catholic understandings of suffering were based on the belief that Jesus, as the incarnation of God, came to earth in human form. He suffered a painful death, dying on a cross, and was resurrected for the sins of humanity in order to permit the prospect of eternal salvation. Thus, in Catholic teaching, Jesus's pain and suffering gave human pain a specific meaning. Hallahan's reference to 'brokenness' can also be linked more directly to her corporeal body. It was made visible in descriptions of her physical body as she became, according to Drane, a 'living image of the crucifix'. During the last six months of her life, Hallahan

> was now entirely confined to one position, and could only relieve the pressure on the back by supporting herself by her arms. This she did by means of loops at either side of the bed. During the severe paroxysms of pain her hands were extended to grasp and hold by these loops, and by degrees this became her ordinary position, so that one beheld her day and night, lying thus on her back, with her arms extended in the form of a cross. Sometimes, when she was wearied out and stiffened with cold, she would try and bring her arms down; but she was soon obliged to raise them as before, and thus, as one of her attendants writes, she seemed day and night like a living image of the crucifix. Her face began to show signs of emaciation, but there was not a line of suffering. It constantly wore the same expression of tranquillity, except when moved to tears by the sight of the crucifix, or in what she called 'a frenzy of pain.' An ardent desire to go to God seemed to fill her soul, and even to the medical men who attended her she would address the plaintive words, 'Do let me go to God!'[34]

This narrative links Hallahan's experience to that of Jesus, and she becomes a visual metaphor which provides another means of communicating her pain to her Dominican sisters.

Drane points out that Hallahan's pain became more intense during Holy Week, the week prior to Jesus's Crucifixion, and his excruciating, painful death on the cross. Drane remarked that:

> The paroxysms of pain were at this time so acute that she feared, as she said, if the Sisters were not by, that she should throw herself out of bed in a kind of frenzy, forgetting, for the moment, her absolute powerlessness to move. No doubt, this lover of the Passion of our Lord was able to offer all things in union with His bitter sufferings; and how close she kept in spirit to the Cross of Christ was manifested by the words she was heard murmuring to herself when Holy Saturday came at last, '*How glad I am He cannot suffer any more*!' (p. 524, emphasis in original)

Drane portrays this episode as an empathetic rendering of the Crucifixion inferring a private, unmediated relationship between Hallahan and Jesus. David Morgan reflects this in his own work, *Visual Piety*, noting that pain was 'a basis of intimacy with Christ, particularly in connection with the Passion'.[35] Hallahan identifies with the pain-full death of Jesus and offers up her pain. This is represented as an encounter between the human and the divine.

The other less physiological link to Jesus's Passion was the suggestion that Hallahan's bodily suffering, like that of Jesus, could be redemptive. Drane recounted that some of Hallahan's friends requested that she pray for them, now and in the afterlife. There were those who considered her 'sufferings as signs of God's special favour; or as something which might be offered for the good of the church'. Hallahan's response to these assertions was reported as a forceful denial of such a role: 'what are the people thinking of? […] It goes through me [sic] to hear such things. To think of my doing penance for the Church!' (p. 514). Drane suggests that unasked for pain could be redemptive, offering opportunities for penance that were not self-induced; unasked for pain could be a 'sacred pain' that transformed suffering 'in the service of higher ends' (Glucklich, *Sacred Pain*, p. 7). Hallahan intimated that pain endured on earth could compensate for sinful behaviour. She acknowledged the potentially personal redemptive nature of pain, writing to a Protestant relative mourning the death of a female family member: 'Have comfort; the pains she endured may have expiated all wilful sin, and *God will not judge her for what she did not know*.'[36]

When Drane linked Hallahan's physical suffering to Jesus's Passion she wrote that Hallahan 'was heard murmuring to herself when Holy Saturday came at last, "*How glad I am He cannot suffer any more*!"' (p. 524, emphasis in original). Hallahan's relief at the

end of Jesus's suffering has significance too. Her story, like that of Jesus, was not a story of divine intervention; there was no miracle or otherworldly alleviation of her corporeal suffering; she felt her pain. Drane framed Hallahan's pain as an acceptance of God's divine will explicitly announcing that Hallahan did not pray for the alleviation of her bodily pain;[37] she did not ask to be cured of her illness though she quite earnestly asked others to pray for her release through death:

> Having asked some of the Religious who visited her to pray that she might soon go to God, she added, in reply to their words of distress, 'Why, would you have me live upon a gridiron?' But after giving utterance to words like these, she always added, 'Never mind, don't let us moan and groan about it; it is the will of God, it is all right.'[38]

Hallahan remarked that God had been preparing her soul for the past two years: 'I felt something was coming, and I had such a reluctance to suffer! And yet all the books I read were about suffering, and all my prayers were for generosity to suffer' (p. 515). Drane noted that 'at the beginning of her illness, the shrinking of nature from its terrible cross was often apparent, but as the suffering intensified, the spirit was more and more fortified to endure' (p. 520). Though Drane throughout the biography suggests a teleology where Hallahan succumbed to an unambiguous acceptance of her pain, Hallahan's prayers to 'go to God' suggest there was no deliberate desire to suffer (p. 522). This was unequivocally unwanted suffering, and is what was so distinctive about Hallahan's pain narrative. Though her pain was unwanted, it was still linked to *imitatio Christi* thus associating it to the sorts of 'sacred pain', often self-inflicted, that early saints and confraternity members found so useful.[39]

V
Consolation

There is a third theme, that of consolation, that is resonant in the *Life*. As noted above, Hallahan did not ask to be cured, but rather desired to 'go to God'. Drane focuses on Hallahan's spiritual consolation in the midst of 'enduring unusual bodily suffering', pointing to her link with the divine (p. 472). Unequivocally, Hallahan was portrayed as vigorously rejecting acts of sympathy. She repelled 'expressions of sympathy or fond regret, to which suffering nature ordinarily clings', and was not consoled by her sisters' displays of grief (p. 512). Hallahan expected sisters to be stoic when attending to her in

her illness. When they cried, she told them 'that does not make me happier' and Drane noted that 'all endeavoured to put a strong constraint on their feelings, and to appear firm and cheerful in her presence' (p. 512). Unsurprisingly, given the ideal of hiddenness, 'moan[s] and groan[s]' were pushed to the side. Hallahan discouraged outward displays of emotion, her own and those of others. After communicating her great distress and asking for prayers to 'go to God', she quickly, according to Drane, consoles those with her, reminding them of her ready compliance to the 'will of God'. This points again to the disciplining of emotions. Her behaviour stresses the social and relational nature of emotions. She was not acting or feeling in isolation. Her behaviour was embedded in her relationships with her religious community. What becomes relevant is that the person-in-pain is portrayed as rejecting those offering comfort, and then was expected to become the dispenser of consolation.

Consolation can also be linked to the alleviation of pain. Lucy Bending has argued that the study of physiology and anatomy and new techniques of anaesthesiology and vaccination caused Christians to question the direct link between God and pain.[40] Human intervention could alleviate or remove pain more effectively than in the past. Some saw this as interference with God's plan. If suffering the pain of a physical illness was indeed redemptive or a necessary part of suffering, then would morphia or other means be problematic for Catholics?[41] Hallahan in the 1860s was attended to by at least five medical practitioners, though medical science could do little to alter the fatal progress of her illness (Champ, p. 349). The sisters initially opted for traditional homeopathic remedies as means of pain relief. This included a special bed obtained to reduce Hallahan's discomfort, though it is portrayed as being more useful to her carers than to herself. Drane noted:

> The pain increased to an agonising degree, so as to render it impossible any longer to remove her from the bed to the sofa, a relief which she had hitherto been able to procure for some hours in every day. The arrival of an invalid bed, with every contrivance for giving rest and change of position, was hailed with gratitude by the Community […]. But in spite of the great assistance thus afforded to those whose painful duty it was to move the sufferer, her agonies daily increased, often lasting day and night without a moment's cessation. She became unable to lie in a position except on the back, and repeated again and again that she was lying on a bed of fire. (p. 517)

What was mentioned in the *Life*, in terms of pain relief, were non-pharmacological therapeutics. We know, however, from a letter written by Bishop Ullathorne that he insisted on Hallahan being given the analgesic relief suggested by her clinicians.[42] The

Life suggests that she was not consoled by temporal means, whether it be through modern medicine or human sympathy. The focus on suffering was essential to the life story of Hallahan and provides an illustration of her exemplary life, and thus perhaps the necessity of relying on her spirituality as a source of comfort and consolation as opposed to the consolation of those around her or the fruits of medical science.

VI
Conclusion

One priest noted that Hallahan not only taught her sisters how to die, but '*how to suffer*' (Drane, p. 264). Her painful illness was used to affirm her sanctity but also to remind Catholics of the responsibilities and utility of bodily pain. Her pain was made sacred by bringing her closer to God. The pain-filled person was expected to suffer in a 'hidden' way, quietly and bravely pointing to the importance of emotional restraint. Despite its so-called hiddenness, Hallahan's pain was visible in her twitching hands, in her anguished desire to 'go to God' and, most visibly, in her physical body, as it became a 'living image of the crucifix'. The text also suggests that suffering excruciating pain was not welcomed or sought after; it was a vivid sensory experience as reflected in Hallahan's references to fire and brokenness. Her pain was linked to Jesus's passion and reinforced the utility of pain, though interestingly Drane comments less on Hallahan's personal salvation than about the salvation of others who were offered consolation. Her consolation was meant to be spiritual, not temporal. These meanings were meant to offer comfort to those in pain; but it is difficult to gauge Hallahan's solace at all. Instead, it appears that the person-in-pain was expected to offer comfort to those witnessing the pain.

Hallahan's *Life* instructed the Dominicans of St Catherine of Siena, an 'emotional community', and through this text we can identify a system of feelings with reference to bodily pain that identifies which emotional expressions were encouraged and discouraged. Hallahan was an important figure in her community. As founder, the congregation's identity centred on her memory and the *Life* reinforced her significance through an elaboration of her life experiences. How her pain was interpreted and lived was linked to her productive suffering. But Drane's biography also served to create a new life, one used as an instructional tool and to promote her sainthood. Despite the so-called hiddenness of pain, there was a visibility of Hallahan's pain; there was contact with others, a

communication of pain that emerged out of social interaction. The reader of the *Life* was also meant to be included in this emotional community. Pain, though represented as private and hidden, became public property with the publication of the *Life* and became an epistemological tool used to define, reproduce, and reify Catholic ideals of living with pain-filled unwanted somatic suffering.

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[1] Ivan Illich, *Medical Nemesis: The Expropriation of Health* (London: Calder & Boyars, 1975), p. 101.

[2] The working definition of pain according to the International Association for the Study of Pain is 'an unpleasant sensory and emotional experience associated with actual or potential tissue damage, or described in terms of such damage'. See <http://www.iasp-pain.org/Content/NavigationMenu/GeneralResourceLinks/PainDefinitions/default.htm> [accessed 8 November 2012].

[3] Michael Roper, 'Slipping Out of View: Subjectivity and Emotion in Gender History', *History Workshop Journal*, 59 (2005), 57–72 (p. 57).

[4] For more on emotional communities see Barbara H. Rosenwein, *Emotional Communities in the Early Middle Ages* (London: Cornell University Press, 2006), pp. 1–23; Barbara H. Rosenwein, 'Worrying About Emotions in History', *American Historical Review*, 107 (2002), 821–45; Susan J. Matt, 'Current Emotion Research in History: Or, Doing History from the Inside Out', *Emotion Review*, 3 (2011), 117–24.

[5] Maureen Flynn, 'The Spiritual Uses of Pain in Spanish Mysticism', *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*, 64 (1996), 257–78 (p. 257).

[6] Caroline Bynum Walker, *Holy Feast and Holy Fast: The Religious Significance of Food to Medieval Women* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987), pp. 183, 207, 211–12, 399 n. 54.

[7] Javier Moscoso, *Pain: A Cultural History* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), p. 24.

[8] 'The pain was so great that it made me moan, and the sweetness this greatest pain caused me was so superabundant that there is no desire capable of taking it away; nor is the soul content with less than God.' See *The Collected Works of St Teresa of Avila*, ed. by Kieran Kavanaugh and Otilio Rodriguez (Washington, DC: Institute of Carmelite Studies, 1987), p. 200.

[9] Ariel Glucklich, 'Self and Sacrifice: A Phenomenological Psychology of Sacred Pain', *Harvard Theological Review*, 92 (1999), 479–506 (p. 485); Ariel Glucklich, *Sacred Pain: Hurting the Body for the Sake of the Soul* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), p. 6.

[10] Paula Kane, '"She offered herself up": The Victim Soul and Victim Spirituality in Catholicism', *Church History*, 71 (2002), 80–119 (p. 83).

[11] Harvey D. Egan in his *An Anthology of Christian Mysticism* (Collegeville: Liturgical, 1996) lists Teresa de Lisieux as a victim soul (pp. 527–38).

[12] Lucy Bending, *The Representation of Bodily Pain in Late Nineteenth-Century English Culture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), p. 5.

[13] Bending, p. 28. Ralph Gibson argues that this shift occurred in France in the nineteenth century. See Ralph Gibson, 'Hellfire and Damnation in Nineteenth-Century France', *Catholic Historical Review*, 74 (1988), 383–402.

[14] J. Lyonnard, *The Apostleship of Suffering*, trans. by Lady Herbert (London: Philp, 1870), pp. xiv–xv. Many thanks to Claude Auger for bringing this text to my attention. Pere Jean Lyonnard SJ (1819–1887) published this book as *Apostolat de la Souffrance* in 1866.

[15] In this excerpt, the nature of suffering was not reduced to either corporeal or emotional pain, suggesting such designations were unnecessary. Physiological pain could generate emotional turmoil that added to suffering. Emotional anguish could be experienced somatically. Though this essay addressed bodily pain, there is no strict dichotomy or hierarchy between bodily and emotional pain and suffering.

[16] Augusta Theodosia Drane, *Life of Margaret Mary Hallahan: Foundress of the English Congregation of St Catherine of Sienna of the Third Order of St Dominic* (London: Longmans, Green, Reader, and Dyer, 1869). All page references are to this edition unless otherwise stated.

[17] RSM Bermondsey: Bermondsey Annals, 1870, p. 174. The Sisters of Mercy, like other women religious, would have heard regular expositions on spiritual matters from edifying texts.

[18] 'Life of Mother Margaret Mary Hallahan', *Tablet*, (1869), p. 275; 'Life of Mother Margaret Mary Hallahan', *Month: a Magazine and Review*, 59 (1869), p. 949; 'Mother Margaret Hallahan (1803–1868)', *Irish Monthly*, 5 (1877), p. 233; 'A Life of Mother Margaret M. Hallahan', *Catholic World*, 9 (1869), p. 714; 'The Life of Mother Margaret Hallahan', *Dublin Review*, July 1869, pp. 198–202. The non-Catholic press were much less favourably impressed with Margaret Hallahan. See 'Life of Mother Margaret Hallahan' *Saturday Review*, 10 July 1869, pp. 58–59; 'Life of Mother Margaret Mary Hallahan, Foundress of the English Congregation of St Catherine of Sienna, of the Third Order of St Dominic', *Athenaeum*, 29 May 1869, pp. 724–25. Book reviews came after subsequent editions also: see 'Mother Margaret Hallahan (1803–1868)', *Irish Monthly*, 25 (1897), p. 52; S. M. C., 'Steward of Souls: A Portrait of Mother Margaret Hallahan (Book Review)', *Revue d'Histoire Ecclésiastique*, 48 (1953), 495–97.

[19] For a list, see Bertrand Wilberforce, *A Memoir of Mother Francis Raphael, O. S. D. (Augusta Theodosia Drane)* (London: Longmans, 1895), pp. 337–40. Some of her work, like *A History of England*, went into multiple editions and others were translated into French, Italian, and German.

[20] Anselm Nye, 'Drane, Augusta Theodosia (1823–1894)', *ODNB* <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/8033> [accessed 5 March 2012].

[21] Judith Lancaster SHCJ, *Cornelia Connelly and her Interpreters* (Oxford: Way Books, 2004), p. 20. Lancaster's work examines a series of biographies of Cornelia Connelly in order to develop how assumptions of women's holiness were shaped over time by biographers and the needs of the time in which they wrote.

[22] Stephen H. Hancock, 'From Hagiography to History: A Critical Re-examination of the First Forty Years of "The Life" of Mother Margaret Hallahan and of Its Manuscript Sources', *Recusant History*, 23 (1997), 341–71 (p. 342). Hancock's evidence points to Hallahan's father Edmund having 'sunk in life', possibly because of alcoholism.

[23] Anselm Nye, *A Peculiar Kind of Mission: The English Dominican Sisters, 1845–2010* (Leominster: Gracewing, 2011), pp. 19–26.

[24] Judith Champ, *William Bernard Ullathorne (1806–1889): A Different Kind of Monk* (Leominster: Gracewing, 2006), p. 349.

[25] Hancock, p. 361; Drane, p. 26.

[26] Ullathorne, *On the Interior Life Of Our Beloved Mother. A Contribution By The Right Rev. Bishop Ullathorne Written in 1868 and 1869: Part First*, in Hancock, p. 369 n. 91.

[27] Drane, p. 127. For other examples, see pp. 105, 177, 178, 265.

[28] Author's discussion with Anselm Nye, historian of the English Dominicans.

[29] Moscoso addresses the impassive face of the medieval and early modern virgin martyrs in *Pain: A Cultural History*, p. 10.

[30] Joanna Bourke, *Pain and the Politics of Sympathy, Historical Reflections, 1760s to 1960s* (Utrecht: Universiteit Utrecht, 2011), p. 10.

[31] Though Hallahan's pain was unwanted (so she was not consciously reproducing the Passion of Jesus), Drane positioned her pain, literally as well as figuratively, as *imitatio Christi*.

[32] Geoffrey Rowell, *Hell and the Victorians* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1974). Protestants began to readjust their ideas of hell in the course of the nineteenth century from a wrathful God to the loving God. Ralph Gibson also argues persuasively that there was a shift in the nineteenth century, from a Catholicism that was a religion of fear to a Catholicism that began considering a theology of love. He reads this from a variety of sources in nineteenth-century France and focuses to a great extent on hell. He charts a diminution of the brimstone and hellfire preaching that begins after 1830 and by the early twentieth century he says is almost replaced by this theology of love. See Gibson, 'Hellfire and Damnation', pp. 385–87.

[33] H. Hurter SJ, *The Catholic Doctrine about Hell: From the Compendium of Dogmatic Theology*, trans. by Kenelm Digby Best (London: Burns and Oates, 1887), p. 6, emphasis in original. A 'real' and 'true' fire is a 'pre-eminent' physical characteristic of hell.

[34] Drane, p. 521. Hallahan may have had pressure sores on those areas of the body that were numb. Typically, patients would be turned frequently in bed to prevent pressure sores.

[35] David Morgan, *Visual Piety* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), p. 67.

[36] Augusta Theodosia Drane, *Life of Margaret Mary Hallahan: Foundress of the English Congregation of St Catherine of Sienna of the Third Order of St Dominic* (New York: Catholic Publication House, 1869), p. 319, emphasis in original. This excerpt appears in the US publication, but not the UK version. Hallahan believed, as most Catholics did until Vatican II, that salvation could only occur through the Roman Catholic Church. She wrote after the death of Protestant relative: 'My heart aches for you […]. What can we say, but God's will be done! They are His, and He will act with mercy and love: be sure that God loves every soul with a mother's love, and will cast no child from Him that has done all it knew to the best of its power' (ibid.).

[37] Drane, p. 521; although Hallahan noted 'a little ease, dear Lord, if it be They will; but I really have no wish about it'.

[38] Drane, pp. 522–23. Hallahan could be referring to the story of St Laurence of Rome grilled on a gridiron.

[39] Glucklich, *Sacred Pain*. On confraternities and mortification, see Lisa Silverman, *Tortured Subjects: Pain, Truth, and the Body in Early Modern France* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001), pp. 111–32; and John Henderson, 'The Flagellant Movement and Flagellant Confraternities in Central Italy, 1260–1400', in *Religious Motivation: Biographical and Sociological Problems for the Church Historian*, ed. by Derek Baker (Oxford: Blackwell, 1978), pp. 147–60.

[40] Physiologists, in their attempts to understand pain, linked pain with the body and this was felt to challenge the belief that God alone was responsible for pain.

[41] The biography of Cardinal Herbert Vaughan offers an indication of the differing attitudes towards pain relief. The future Cardinal of Westminster, Herbert Vaughan (1832–1903), and his brother Jesuit Bernard Vaughan (1847–1922) disagreed over whether or not to alleviate their father's last days of his painful illness with morphia. See J. G. Snead-Cox, *The Life of Cardinal Vaughan*, 2 vols (London: Herbert and Daniel, 1910), I, 370. Thanks to Sister Christina Kenworthy-Browne CJ for alerting me to this example. Pain relief appears to have remained problematic in the twentieth century. The publication in 1957 of *The Relief of Pain. An Allocution of His Holiness Pius XII […] to the questions proposed by the Italian Society of Anæsthesia concerning the relation of Catholic doctrine to anæsthesia […] twenty-fourth day of February […] nineteen hundred and fifty-seven* (London: Catholic Truth Society, 1957) encouraged analgesics for the suppression of pain (pp. 20–21).

[42] Ullathorne to Manning, 20 March 1868, Archives of the Archdiocese of Westminster, quoted in Champ, p. 349. Unfortunately, there are no details of the analgesics given.