

“In that Instant I Saw Myself”: Affective Response in the Writings of Hadewijch of Brabant

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
in the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences

Columbia University

2015

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ABSTRACT

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““In that Instant I recognized myself”: Affective Response in the Writings of Hadewijch of Brabant” analyzes the use of style and rhetoric in the writings of the eponymous thirteenth-century Dutch mystic, (c.1250). Specifically, it examines the way she uses a style of writing that relies on affect to produce meaning. She employs these techniques in her prose and verse as a means both of teaching non-rational knowledge about mystic union with God and of shaping the audience’s emotional response to this knowledge. I argue that the affective style she uses is epistemic in all three modes in which she wrote (letters, book of visions, and songs) and that it is central to her strategy of teaching by word and by example in that the audience is led to feel the content of her words. The reader is affectively engaged through this sensory experience of the text, and affective response acts to confirm the cognitive component of her teaching. Because the formal framework of each mode influences her use of stylistics differently, I develop an explanatory model for each mode in order to highlight distinctions before offering a synthesis.

This dissertation broadens the range of studies of affective style in medieval devotional literature, such as Sarah McNamer’s study Middle English and Latin texts, by including a substantial Middle Dutch corpus of spiritual writings that offers a point of comparison for the philological study of the language of feelings in emergent vernaculars. Moreover, by expanding the range of vernacular literary forms studied from the perspective of stylistics to include the writings of the most significant female writer in Middle Dutch, this study thereby furthers the understanding of the use of three characteristic modes of writing in vernacular theology. This was a theology that relied less on technical precision in its expression and more

on affective appeal. “In that Instant” also contributes to historical research on new forms of lay spiritual life in thirteenth-century Europe. It accomplishes this by demonstrating how trends in affective devotional writing among women are reflected those of a prolific lay writer. My analysis further reveals how Hadewijch’s varied texts are designed to themselves become sites in which affective desires are generated and directed.

The first chapter examines Hadewijch’s epistolarity i.e. how she uses the formal properties of the letter mode to produce and present meaning when giving spiritual direction to a small group of female followers. To contextualize my analysis of her epistolarity, I theorize the function of the sections of her letters using both medieval letter-writing manuals and her use of the apostolic letters of Saint Paul as models of epistolary practice. Hadewijch found in Paul’s letters a style of exhortative spiritual direction known as paraenesis; this allowed her to teach authoritatively on the basis of her personal experience while dissuading her readers from relying upon her instead of developing their own ability to discern God’s will. Paul’s letters also suited her belief that she was divinely chosen to teach others on the basis of her own salvation experience just as Paul believed of himself. I argue that Hadewijch’s use of an affective style in the form of rhetorical devices and rhythm is an innovative interpretation of the medieval conception of the letter as a means of simulating for the reader the presence of the writer. Following Anikó Daróczi, I argue that when Hadewijch’s letters are read aloud, the reader’s breathing rhythm matches the rhythm of the prose as well as the units of thought marked out in the clauses of Hadewijch’s periodic sentences. This bio-rhythm enables the reader to feel the text and be lead to certain identifications through rhetorical figures of repetition. Moreover, the use of a bio-rhythmic prose style enacts Hadewijch’s belief throughout her letters that the members of her community are of one body and heart and must be made to feel that way to become friends in Christ.

In the second chapter, I analyze how Hadewijch’s book of visions, which I believe were written for one of the women addressed in her letters, shapes its reader. Unlike the letters, which are based on second-person address, the book of visions is a first-person account of Hadewijch’s growth to spiritual

perfection, and it does not address the reader directly until the final chapter. This requires the reader to analogize between herself and Hadewijch. The book can be described as an exemplar based on Hadewijch's growth to spiritual perfection and her understanding of this process through experience and reflection. I argue that the synaesthetic language used in the vision narratives is intended to allow the reader to understand the type of sensory knowledge and understanding that Hadewijch describes during her moments of mystic union. The arrangement of the vision narratives in a series of chapters in a single book facilitates the reader's understanding of Hadewijch's growth by establishing a horizon of expectations that is modified as the reader progresses through the text. I maintain that Hadewijch chose to create the book as a series of chapters in order to demonstrate to her reader how she meditated on her own experience and came to understand her growth as a series of stages.

The third and final chapter is a study of Hadewijch's songs, which combine the courtly love lyric with a form of love mysticism derived from monastic commentaries on the Song of Songs. In addition to being musical texts, her songs differ from her prose works in that they were apparently composed for performance in her community of women. Thus, they have a ritual dimension that is not found in the letters or book of visions. Because her songs use the register of courtly love, passion and self-understanding are foregrounded in the form of the suffering singer who seeks to understand the reasons her love is unrequited. I argue that the singer's lamentations, caused by her perception of God's absence, is a pedagogical method intended to instruct the audience in compassion, charity and the salutary effects of suffering. They also provide the audience with an exemplar of the proper relationship between the soul seeking God, which is based partially on a rhetorical model that Hadewijch derives from the Book of Job. Appealing to their sense of compassion by using a series of rhetorical commonplaces, the singer draws the listeners into the performance, empathetically absorbing them into the text and into her cognitive processes as she comes to understand the causes of her feelings and the proper responses to them. Acknowledging the suffering of the singer and empathizing with her, the audience becomes more communally oriented and less self-centered.

Each of the modes Hadewijch uses presents her teaching in different ways, making it necessary to initially study her letters, book of visions, and songs apart from one another in order to see how they relate. Her letters address circumstantial topics specific to the spiritual life of an individual reader and seek to reorient the reader's affective disposition regarding that topic. The songs, by contrast, treat of subjects that are not circumstantially localized but applicable to the emotional disposition of her entire community. The book of visions is Hadewijch's introspective analysis of her spiritual growth to perfection and the process of self-understanding through which she went. This requires the reader to analogize in order to transpose herself into the narratives. Even though there are significant differences among them, Hadewijch's writings are unified by her use of affective stylistics to convey to an uninitiated community of readers the mystical knowledge learned through her personal experience of divine union.

Table of Contents

List of Footnote Abbreviations	iii
Acknowledgements	iv
Dedication	v
INTRODUCTION	1
CHAPTER ONE	28
To Lead the Unled: Persuasion and Authority in the Prose Letters.....	28
Section 1: Introduction.....	28
Section 2. Literary Models	41
Section 3. Learning in an Informal Beguine Community	46
Section 4: Conclusion.....	90
CHAPTER TWO	95
Mystagogy and Affective Response in the Book of Visions.....	95
Section 1: Introduction.....	95
Section 2: The Question of the Book of Vision’s Purpose	97
Section 3: The Experience of Liturgical Synesthesia.....	108
Section 4: Narrative Perspective and Reader Identification.....	114
Section 5: Wonder and the Perception of Community.....	123
Section 6: Conclusion.....	128
CHAPTER THREE	130
“Let all of you be to pity moved”: Lamentation as Pedagogy in the Songs.....	130

Section 1: Empathetic Identification in the Songs	130
Section 2: Hadewijch’s Understanding of Lamentation	142
Section 3: The Rhetoric of Lament.....	149
Section 4: Individual Lamentation and Communal Response	154
Section 5: Conclusion.....	175
CONCLUSION	180
BIBLIOGRAPHY	186

List of Footnote Abbreviations

CCCM	Corpus christianorum, continuatio mediaevalis
CCSL	Corpus christianorum, series latina
CSEL	Corpus scriptorium ecclesiasticorum latinorum
CSM	Corpus scriptorum de musica
<i>CW</i>	<i>Hadewijch: The Complete Works</i>
<i>DML</i>	<i>Dictionary of Medieval Latin from British Sources</i>
<i>DS</i>	<i>Dictionnaire de spiritualité</i>
<i>FLG</i>	<i>The Flowering Light of the Godhead</i>
<i>HB</i>	<i>Hadewijch Brieven</i>
<i>HM</i>	<i>Hadewijch Mengeldichten</i>
<i>HV</i>	<i>Hadewijch Visioenen</i>
LCL	Loeb Classical Library
Lewis & Short	C.T. Lewis and C. Short, <i>A Latin Dictionary</i>
<i>MNW</i>	<i>Middelnederlandsch Woordenboek</i>
Niermeyer	J.F. Niermeyer, <i>Mediae Latinitatis Lexicon Minus</i>
<i>PH</i>	<i>Poetry of Hadewijch</i>
<i>PL</i>	<i>Patrologia latina</i> , ed. J.P. Migne.
SC	Sources Chrétiennes

Acknowledgements

It is an understatement to say that this dissertation was made possible by the patient guidance of my advisers: Patricia Dailey, Susan Crane, Eleanor Johnson, Christopher Baswell, and Sara Poor. To them I express my deepest gratitude.

Thanks are also due to Susan Boynton and Walter Simons, who readily shared their knowledge.

Dedication

For Dickens Breyer

“In that Instant I Saw Myself”: Affective Response in the Writings of Hadewijch of Brabant

Introduction

Urging medieval literature specialists to contribute to scholarship on the “history of emotion,” Sarah McNamer argues that interdisciplinary scholarship has shown that “emotions have histories—varying in structure from one culture, community, or period to the next and serving diverse social functions.”¹ The way in which literature specialists can make an intervention, she believes, is through the study of performance as “the means through which the feelings embedded in literary texts became, *performative*, thus entering and altering history.”² According to McNamer, in the Middle Ages there was a “performative model of affect,” which was premised on the belief that emotions could be willed and performed through the “repetition of scripted words.”³ She further maintains that by the study of “affective stylistics,”⁴ which she

¹ Sarah McNamer, *Affective Meditation and the Invention of Medieval Compassion* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010), 13. See also Anne Clark Bartlett, *Male Authors, Female Readers: Representation and Subjectivity in Middle English Devotional Literature* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1995), 3. On the history of emotion from a theoretical and methodological perspective, see Jan Plamper, “The History of Emotions: An Interview with William Reddy, Barbara Rosenwein, and Peter Stearns,” *History and Theory*, 49 (2010): 237-265. Barbara Rosenwein, “Problems and Methods in the History of Emotions,” *International Journal for the History and Theory of Emotions*, 1 (2010): 1-32; and Barbara Rosenwein, “Thinking Historically about Medieval Emotions,” *History Compass* 8/8 (2010): 828- 842.

² Sarah McNamer, “Feeling,” in *Middle English (Oxford Twenty-first Century Approaches to Literature)*, ed. Paul Strohm (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 245.

³ Ibid, 17. Niklaus Largier addresses this subject at greater length in “Inner Senses--Outer Senses: The Practice of Emotions in Medieval Mysticism,” in *Codierung Von Emotionen Im Mittelalter / Emotions and Sensibilities in the Middle Ages*, eds. C. Stephen Jaeger and Ingrid Kasten (Berlin, Germany: de Gruyter, 2003), 3-15.

⁴ McNamer, “Feeling,” 247-248. She draws this term from Stanley Fish, “Literature in the Reader: Affective Stylistics,” *New Literary History* 2 (1970): 123-162. Fish argues for a form of literary criticism that considers the psychological effects on the intended reader caused by the experience of reading. The reader’s response to this experience is determined, to some extent, by stylistic strategies employed by the writer (Fish, “Literature in the Reader,” 124).

takes to refer to as the ways literary texts make meaning, we can understand how medieval writings were designed to produce emotions in their readers.

The performative model of affect described by McNamer is observable in Hugh of Saint Victor's widely circulated *On the Power of Prayer* (*De virtute orandi*), in which he claims that people are affected when they feel love, fear, wonder, or joy when they think of God while singing the Psalms and reciting the prayers during the liturgy.⁵ The underlying premise is that it is possible for texts to generate affections that have the potential to reform the reader. In several of the thirteenth-century Dutch mystic Hadewijch of Brabant's vision narratives, she describes how listening to the readings from Scripture and singing the Psalms during Matins affected her, and how the intense desire for God she felt from this liturgical experience was what enabled her to be taken up to heaven. This connection between her affective response to the liturgical readings and the visions that result is apparent in Vision 9 when she explains:

I was at Matins on the feast *In nativitate beatae Mariae*, and after the Third Lesson something wonderful was shown me in the spirit. My heart had been moved beforehand by the words of love that were read there from the Song of Songs, by which I was led to think of a perfect kiss. Shortly afterwards, in the Second Nocturn, I saw in the spirit a queen come in, clad in a gold dress.⁶

Hadewijch is referring in the second sentence to the first verse in the Song of Songs, which she would have heard read during the Second Lesson. Visualizing the words of the text, she imagines

⁵ See Hugh's analysis of the affective response to the Psalms in chapter 14 of *On the Power of Prayer* (*De virtute orandi*). *L'Oeuvre de Hugues de Saint-Victor 1: De institutione novitiorum; De virtute orandi; De laude caritatis; De arrha animae*, vol. 1, Latin text by H.B. Feiss and P. Sicard, trans. (French) D. Poirel, H. Rochais, and P. Sicard, introductions, notes, and appendices by D. Poirel (Turnhout, Belgium: Brepols, 1997), 117-171.

⁶ *CW*, Vision 9, 285. "Ic was in Nativitate Beate Marie te mettenen ende na die III lessen wart mi vertoent in ene geeste een lettel wonders. Mijn herte wart mi beroert tevoren van worden van minnen die men daer las in die Cantiken, daer mi bi ghedachte eens gheheels cussens. Corteleke daerna in dandere nocturne, soe sach ic in den geeste dat quam ene coninginne ghecleedt met enen guldenen clede," *HV*, Visioen 9.1-9, 92. Please note that, here and elsewhere in a footnote that contains two citations, *CW* refers to the English translation while *HB* or *HV* refer to the Middle Dutch original. *PH* refers to the page-facing edition of the *Songs*.

a sensory experience, and through this act of imagination her desire for God is stimulated and she feels wonder. In the preface to his commentary on the Song of Songs (*Expositio super Cantica canticorum*), William of Saint Thierry asks that the Holy Spirit infuse the readers of the the Song of Songs so that they “may become in some measure [a] participants in the holy conversation of Bridegroom and Bride.”⁷ Hadewijch knew William’s commentary well, and the imaginative process she describes in Vision 9 shows how the type of reading practice he urges, in which the reader imagines herself in the text, was actualized in her response to the reading of the Song of Songs during the liturgy. A pedagogic work, Hadewijch’s Book of Visions was written to provide her followers with an exemplar for the contemplative life. This example from Vision 9 evidences how she uses syntactical arrangement and emotive language to describe her process-oriented practice of the type of meditative technique urged by William so that her reader emulates this practice as she reads through a mimetic reproduction.

In pointing to the example of Hadewijch, I am responding to McNamer’s call for broader research on the use of affective stylistics in medieval literature. As the most significant example of a female writer in the substantial corpus of Middle Dutch spiritual writings, Hadewijch’s works offer both a point of comparison with Middle English and Latin writers as well as the opportunity to add to the knowledge of vernacular literary forms not previously studied from the perspective of affective stylistics. Specifically, in this dissertation I study Hadewijch’s use of an affective stylistics in her prose and verse as a means both of teaching non-rational knowledge that is based on her experience of mystic union with God and of shaping her readers’ emotional

⁷ William of Saint Thierry, *Exposition on the Song of Songs*, trans. Columba Hart (Spencer, MA: Cistercian Publications, 1970), 6. Also, William of Saint Thierry, *Exposé sur le Cantique des cantiques*, trans. M. Dumontier, introduction and notes by J. M. Déchanet, Sources Chrésiennes 82 (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1962), 76. “Canticum amoris tui sic a nobis legatur, ut amorem ipsum in nobis accendat.” Hereafter I will abbreviate the Sources Chrésiennes title using the abbreviation SC.

response to this knowledge. I argue that the affective style she uses is epistemic in all three modes in which she wrote (letters, book of visions, and songs). Further, I assert that central to her strategy of teaching by word and by example is that the audience be led to feel the content of words as the works are read aloud or sung, as Hadewijch intended for them to be performed. Through this sensory experience of the text, affective and cognitive understandings of the content merge.

In addition to the diversity of her writings, Hadewijch's work presents a ripe opportunity to contribute to the study of the history of emotion because of their performativity. As texts that were intended to be read aloud and in the case of her songs sung in a community. Internal evidence from her writings suggests that Hadewijch was a beguine,⁸ a type of laywoman who sought to live a religious lifestyle that was similar to the discipline practiced by nuns -but outside the confinement of a monastery. Beguines appeared around 1200 in the southern Low Countries and were part of the lay interpretation of the *vita apostolica*, a movement modeled on the life of the apostles as described in the New Testament. Beguine mysticism, of which Hadewijch's writings are representative, is characterized by its fusion of the bridal mysticism found in monastic commentaries on the Song of Songs and *fine amour*, the form of love celebrated in the secular courtly love lyric. In their writings these mystics could assume the role of the bride of Christ (*sponsa Christi*) or that of the male lover in pursuit of his female object of desire in the courtly tradition. As Barbara Newman points out, these different perspectives enabled them to express a more complex range of emotions in describing their personal relationship with the

⁸ While it is generally accepted among scholars that Hadewijch was a beguine, a number of different hypotheses have been proposed in recent years. See Rob Faesen, "Was Hadewijch a Beguine or a Cistercian? An Annotated Hypothesis," in *Cîteaux: Commentarii Cistercienses* 55 (2004): 47-64; Daniel Devreese, "Hadewid Greca' te Merksem in 1212: Een historische reconstructie van de biografie van Hadewijch," *Ons Geestelijk Erf* 81 (2010): 151-193. Frank Willaert rebuts both these proposals in "Recente hypothesen over Hadewijchs biografie," *Ons Geestelijk Erf* 84 (2013): 153-194. While I feel that Faesen and Devreese base their arguments about her identity on questionable circumstantial evidence, I think it likely that Hadewijch did have a connection with a monastic community in some manner.

divine object of their desire and the ethic guiding their behavior than was possible in either the monastic or the courtly tradition alone.⁹

While not in the broader context of the history of emotion in the Middle Ages, Paul Mommaers has studied the representation of emotion in Hadewijch's writings from a religious studies perspective.¹⁰ Mommaers acknowledges the difficulty in applying the word "emotion" to medieval texts, because like McNamer he admits the possibility that Hadewijch's understanding of the concept may be different from the modern one.¹¹ He attempts to arrive at a historically situated understanding of what an emotion was for Hadewijch. Starting with the Latin *exmovere*, which is the etymological root of *emotion*, he argues that emotion can be understood as a movement brought about by a sudden surprise. This surprise brings about a change in the state of the soul that makes possible a particular form of knowledge.¹² Mommaers does not take into account Hadewijch's use of the words *rueren* and *berueren*, which refer to the arousal of affections leading to movement of the will and the body.¹³ His definition of emotion is unsatisfactory, given that *rueren* is not etymologically related to *exmovere*, nor is it limited to surprise reactions. Therefore, it is necessary to look elsewhere in order to understand how historically emotion was understood and described linguistically in Hadewijch's time.

⁹ Barbara Newman, *From Virile Woman to WomanChrist: Studies in Medieval Religion and Literature* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1995), 138.

¹⁰ Principally in his essays "Het VII^e en VIII^e visionen van Hadewych: Affectie in de mystieke beleving." *Ons Geestelijk Erf* 49 (1975): 105-132; and "Is Hadewijch Emotioneel?" In *Emoties in de Middeleeuwen*, Ed. R.E.V. Stuip and C. Vellekoop (Hilversum, Netherlands: Verloren, 1998), 135-156.

¹¹ Mommaers, "Is Hadewijch Emotioneel?," 136.

¹² *Ibid*, 136-138.

¹³ *MNW*, s.v. "rueren." These words occur in Song 39.9: "With nothing but love he would close with love," "Hi soude minne al met minnen berueren," *PH*, Song 39.9, 260, 261; in Letter 8: "It maintains them in humility when it is needful that they be awakened so they become fearful"; *CW*, Letter 8, "Si houtse in oetmoedicheiden, behoeuen sijs dat sise wect ende dates hen verueren," *HB*, Brief 8, 68; and in Letter 20: "That nature from which veritable love arises has twelve hours, which fling love forth from herself and carry her back again into herself" *CW*, Letter 20, 90 "Die nature daer gherechte minne vte comt die heuet .xij. vren die de Minne berueren vte hare seluen Ende bringhense weder in haer seluen," *HB*, Brief 20, 154.

Since Mommaers work was published, Thomas Dixon has shown how words like *exmovere* or even *motus* (movement) are imprecise when describing Christian psychological theory.¹⁴ Dixon acknowledges that while Augustine of Hippo uses the term *motus animae* to refer to movements of the soul in Book 9 of *City of God*,¹⁵ he points out that more frequently, Augustine refers to these movements as *passiones animae* (passions of the soul) or simply as *passiones*. For Augustine, there are four types of *passiones*: desire (*cupiditas*), fear (*timor*), joy (*laetitia*), and sorrow (*tristitia*), all of which he groups under love (*amor*).¹⁶ Augustine puts forth a theory of proper affect (*affectus*) in which “affections” (*affectiones*) refer to voluntary movements of the will and “passions” (*passiones*) as ungoverned, negative movements.¹⁷ Augustine’s list of four *passiones* was influential and retained by medieval theologians, such as Bernard of Clairvaux, and are the principal emotions referred to in Hadewijch’s writings.¹⁸

Bernard uses *affectus* and *affectio* to indicate affect when he writes of affective intention in *On Grace and Free Choice* (*De gratia et libero arbitrio*),¹⁹ a treatise that Hadewijch was familiar with. The Middle Dutch *affectie*, which she uses frequently in her letters, is derived from the Latin *affectus*.²⁰ Her use of *affectie* does not allow for distinction between *passiones* and *affectiones*, however, because *affectie* can be good or bad, depending on one’s intention. This is made explicit in Letter 12 when Hadewijch contrasts the affections of “low-minded

¹⁴ Thomas Dixon, *From Passions to Emotions: The Creation of a Secular Psychological Category* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 39.

¹⁵ Augustine of Hippo, *City of God*, bk. 9, chap 4.

¹⁶ Ibid, bk. 9, para. 3.

¹⁷ Ibid, bk. 9, para 6.

¹⁸ Rob Faesen has studied the use of *begherte* (desire) at length in Hadewijch’s writings. See Rob Faesen, *Begeerte in het werk van Hadewijch* (Leuven, Belgium: Peeters, 2000).

¹⁹ “Our intention, bent down under the weight of earthly cares, rises again slowly from depths to heights; the affection, languishing in fleshly desires, gradually gains strength for spiritual love.” Bernard of Clairvaux, *On Grace and Free Choice*, trans. Thomas X. Davis (Washington, D.C.: Cistercian Publications, 1981), chap 14, para. 49, 109. “[D]um et intentio terrenis incurvata curis, de imis paulatim ad superna resurgit; et affectio circa carnis desideria languens, sensim in amorem spiritus convalescit” *De gratia et libero arbitrio* in *Sancti Bernardi Opera*, vol. 3, ed. Jean Leclercq and Henri W. Rochais (Rome, Italy: Editiones Cistercienses, 1963), chap. 14, para 49, 202.

²⁰ *WNT*, s.v. “affectie.”

men...[who] are not continually watchful in their hearts to content love” with those souls “[who] will nothing else –either to content God or to die in the attempt –nothing else matters.”²¹ What follows this distinction is an insightful list of affections that are not morally good or bad, but become one or the other dependent on a person’s intention. The narrator contrasts “alien anger” (*vreemden torne*) with “holy anger” (*heilich toren*), “worldly joy” (*bliscapen verghet*) with “joy” (*bliscap*), “easy love” (*lichter Minnen*) with “eternal love” (*eweleker Minnen*).²² *Affectie* should be understood in Hadewijch’s writings as one’s affective regard for something which moves one towards or away from it. This, I maintain, is a more historically accurate, source-based interpretation of what an affection is in her writings than Mommaers’ definition, and one which keeps in perspective the philological influence of Latin on the language of emotion in Middle Dutch. More specific to Hadewijch, it draws attention to the influence of concepts found in Latin monastic treatises on devotional and pastoral psychology.

It is not coincidental that affections figure so prominently in Hadewijch’s teachings about the individual soul’s ascent and conduct in interpersonal relationships. The beguines’ lifestyle was characterized by voluntary poverty; material asceticism; and retreat into seclusion for the purposes of prayer, contemplation, and study.²³ This was intended to affect a separation from aspects of secular social values, while at the same time emphasizing the importance of charity for those in need and a greater attention to pastoral care. These particular emphases provide an explanation of why understanding the affections and their causes is a recurrent concern

²¹ *CW*, Letter 12, 70. “Corteleke gheseghet, dat sijn alle de ghene die niet met eweleker Minnen ghebonden en sijn, ende altoes van herten niet en waken, om der Minnen ghenoech te doene...Mer die daer na staen der Minnen...al niet en willen: Ochte inden weghe steruen, ochte hem ghenoech doen, ocht el niet,” *HB*, vol.1, Brief 12.40-43, 51-52, 103.

²² *CW*, Letter 12, 71-72. “[D]ie doghet worter bi achter ghelaten...Ende affectie van hatene ende van vreemden torne, dat gheen heilich toren en es, die benemt Minne Ende fiere begherte,” *HB*, vol.1, Brief 12, 92-93, 95-97, 105.

²³ Walter Simons, *Cities of Ladies: Beguine Communities in the Medieval Low Countries, 1200-1565* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001), 61.

throughout Hadewijch's writings. Proper understanding and control of a person's affections is necessary to affect separation from earthly attachments and to be able to understand the spiritual needs of others.

While the papacy encouraged a form of the *vita apostolica* among the laity, such as that led by the beguines, it was wary of lay people claiming the right to preach on the basis of divine grace.²⁴ To delimit the laity's teaching capacity, Innocent III distinguished between publically preaching doctrine (*articuli fidei et sacramenta*) and publically providing witness to faith and morals (*verbum exhortationis*), which lay groups were allowed to do with Church approval.²⁵ Publically reading the Word aloud and interpreting it according to the four-fold method of exegesis was appropriate only for clerical teachers.²⁶ Among lay people in the thirteenth century, the *vita apostolica* meant "witness to the faith, fraternal love, poverty, and the beatitudes."²⁷ For beguines, this could also include living in common (*vita communis*) after James of Vitry gained the Pope's sanction in 1216 for "religious women, not only in the diocese of Liège, but in the kingdom [of France] and the [German] empire, to live in the same house together and to encourage one another by mutual exhortation."²⁸ James intended the beguines to urge one another to greater faith and to correct moral errors in the behavior of their fellow beguines in

²⁴ Ibid., 130-31.

²⁵ M.D. Chenu, *Nature, Man and Society in the Twelfth Century*, trans. Jerome Taylor and Lester K. Little (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1968), 260. Nicole Bériou, "The Right of Women to Give Religious Instruction in the Thirteenth Century," in *Women Preachers through Two Millennia of Christianity*, ed. Beverly Mayne Kienzle and Pamela J. Walker (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 137.

²⁶ Nicole Bériou, "The Right of Women to Give Religious Instruction in the Thirteenth Century," in *Women Preachers and Prophets Through Two Millennia of Christianity*, ed. Beverly Mayne Kienzle and Pamela J. Walker (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998)138.

²⁷ Chenu, *Nature, Man and Society*, 219.

²⁸ Jacques de Vitry, "Briefe des Jacobus de Vitriaco (1216-1221)," ed. Reinhold Röhrich, *Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte* 14 (1894):103. "Inpetravi, ut licerat mulieribus religiosis non solum in episcopatu leodiensi, sed tam in regno quam in imperio in eadam domo simul manere et sese invicem mutuis exhortationibus ad bonum invitare." Translation mine.

private.²⁹ Hadewijch is an advocate of the *vita communis* in her writings and approvingly describes a “holy devout order” (*heileghe ordene*) in which the hearts of the members are “united and elevated to God.”³⁰

On the basis of the dialect used in the three main manuscripts, Hadewijch can be situated in the broader vernacular devotional movement in the Brabant-Liège region during the thirteenth century. This was an area that, by the end of the century, had several dozen beguinages, housing over a thousand beguines.³¹ The Cistercian abbeys of Villers-en-Brabant and Sint-Bernardus opt Schelt near Antwerp exerted a strong influence on the Cistercian nunneries and beguinages in the region. They are known to have collected some of the few Middle Dutch works written by beguines.³² The *vitae* of beguines and Cistercian nuns from the Brabant-Liège region offer descriptions of beguine communities during their pre-institutional phase that are helpful for understanding the small group dynamic observable in Hadewijch’s relationship with her readers, particularly in her Letters and Book of Visions.³³ A number of *vitae* describe how the holy women (*mulieres sanctae*) attracted followers or companions who either lived with her in a community or visited regularly. Yvette of Huy’s biographer, Hugh of Florette, describes her companions as *familiares*, a word that conveys the close, familial bond between the women.³⁴ The descriptions in the *vitae* and other sources help in imagining the audience whom Hadewijch addressed and to some extent her own social-religious position.

²⁹ On the distinction between preaching and exhortation in the thought of Innocent III and James of Vitry, see Michel Lauwers, “*Praedicatio-Exhortatio*: L’Église, la réforme et les laïcs (XIe-XIIIe siècles),” in *La parole du prédicateur, Ve-XVe siècle* (Nice, France: Centre d’études médiévales, Université de Nice Sophia-Antipolis 1997), 216-219, 223-226.

³⁰ *CW*, Letter 15, 78. “gheenicht es ende op gheheuen wert te gode,” *HB*, Brief 15, 114.

³¹ Simons, *Cities of Ladies*, 59.

³² Wybren Scheepsma, *The Limburg Sermons* (Leiden, Netherlands: Brill, 2008), 84.

³³ I am aware that the *vitae* were written for a monastic audience and that the descriptions of beguines are from a monastic perspective. Even so, I see no reason why the descriptions of small beguine groups and their leadership dynamic in the *vitae* should be regarded suspiciously as historical evidence.

³⁴ Hugh of Florette, *De B. Jetta sive Jutta, vidua reclusa, Hui in Belgio* printed in *Acta sanctorum* (January 13) Ianuarius 2 (1643), chap. 37, para. 103, p. 882.

From internal evidence, it appears that Hadewijch was the leader at one time of a small, informal community of beguines. She is addressed as “mistress” (*meestersse*) in the first vision in her Book of Visions, a term used among beguines to refer to the leader of a community who was also a teacher and educator.³⁵ The type of instruction provided by this leader in early beguine communities is attested to in a sermon by James of Vitry:

[L]ed by one of them who surpasses the others in virtue and prudence, they receive instruction in good morals and in letters, and are trained in vigils, prayer, fasting and other ascetic exercises, in manual labor and poverty, in denial of the self and humility.³⁶

Hadewijch’s teaching may have taken place in a house which she shared with women whom she was mentoring and which she was later forced to leave.³⁷ Such living arrangements between beguine leaders and the women who sought to learn from them is well attested to in the *vitae* of the holy women. Simons observes that, for those followers who lived with the mistress, “[t]heir stay...took the form of an apprenticeship based on personal example,” resulting in “an intense, close relationship between teacher and student.”³⁸ Of Yvette of Huy’s relationship with her students, her biographer, Hugh, claims that her concern for them was as “a mother with her daughters, a teacher with her pupils.”³⁹ Hadewijch’s characterization of herself as a mother and sister in her Letters and Book of Visions indicates that she drew upon the same secular models of social relationships described by Hugh. These characterizations in the interpersonal address in her letters provide evidence of the interactive dynamic between Hadewijch and her followers,

³⁵ Simons, *Cities of Ladies*, 84-85.

³⁶ Quoted in Joseph Greven, “Der Ursprung des Beginenwesens,” *Historisches Jahrbuch* 35 (1914): 47. Also, quoted and translated in Simons, *Cities of Ladies*, 82.

³⁷ Specifically, Letter 5, Letter 26, and Letter 29. Cf. Letter 26, 208, “[H]ebbe ghedaen ye sider dat ic te uwent woende,” *HB*, Brief 26, 208.

³⁸ Simons, *Cities of Ladies*, 83.

³⁹ “Sic se habente cum filiabus matre, magistra cum discipulis.” Hugh of Florette, *De B. Jetta sive Jutta, vidua reclusa, Hui in Belgio*, Chap. 155, para. 115, page 885. Translation mine.

and they indicate that social relationships in her community were based on models closely associated with affect, such as a mother's emotional regard for her child.

The form of the community in Hadewijch's writings is what Barbara Rosenwein describes as an "emotional community" in which "people adhere to the same norms of emotional expression and value."⁴⁰ Rosenwein argues these social groups exist within an "overarching" emotional community that shares the same principal beliefs and rules for feeling affection, and accepted modes of their expression as the "subordinate" emotional community, although in the subordinate communities these shared characteristics may be contested and modified.⁴¹ Rosenwein's *overarching* emotional community is recognizable in the writings of theologians like Augustine in the way that he connects affections with the tenets of Christian faith.⁴² When Hadewijch encourages her readers to fear that God does not love them enough or that they have not served him sufficiently she is appealing to the emotional norms of the overarching community. This is also true when she argues that people rejoice when they are expressing that they feel God's presence and that when they grieve they are grieving over his absence. Because Hadewijch connects these affections to doctrinal tenets concerning knowledge of God's love, affections in her writings can be said to have a cognitive component, also similar to that found in Augustine's writings.

⁴⁰ Barbara K. Rosenwein, *Emotional Communities in the Early Middle Ages* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2006), 2. Even though we have only Hadewijch's writings, it is still possible to interpret them as evidence of an emotional community because, as Rosenwein argues, if a writer's works were intended for a use by a group, it is safe to assume the presence of a community. Barbara Rosenwein, "Problems and Methods in the History of Emotions," 12. Hadewijch's songs were intended for public performance, and the letters were written for a number of recipients.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 24.

⁴² See Simo Knuuttila, *Emotions in Ancient and Medieval Philosophy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 160-161.

In Rosenwein's hypothesis, the basis of emotional communities is located in the teachings of faith found in texts recognized by members of the community as authoritative.⁴³ These texts lend constellations of emotional terms and exemplars, such as hagiography, demonstrating the proper experience of emotion, which is exhibited in Hadewijch's use of the epistles of Saint Paul, the Song of Songs, the Book of Job, and of course, the courtly lyric. What distinguishes Hadewijch's community as a *subordinate* emotional community is the members' devotion to *minne* (love), a word that can function as noun or verb and also signifies love as an affection. *Minne*, as Patricia Dailey explains, is "a multivalent vehicle for expressing the ways in which human beings experience God according to a Trinitarian theology" by "combining an ethos of how one is to approach the divine, how the divine eludes the human, and how the divine is read and perceived by humans in the promise of an encounter."⁴⁴ Regarding Hadewijch's beguine group as an emotional community devoted to *minne* makes it possible to better understand the social function of affectivity in her writings.

A second point of distinction between Hadewijch's emotional community and the overarching community is that the affections that result from her mystic experiences are different from the standard affections theologians like Augustine believed all faithful Christians felt. The affections brought about by devotion to God such as fear of sin and joy elicited by the belief of his presense are different than those resulting from mystic experiences that are felt in the *spiritual senses*, which were separate from the exterior senses of the body. The concept of the spiritual senses was articulated by Origen in the third century as an attempt to distinguish

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Patricia Dailey, *Promised Bodies: Time, Language, and Corporeality in Medieval Women's Mystical Texts* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2013), 39.

between mystic consciousness of God's actions and standard affective intentionality.⁴⁵

Hadewijch, like other medieval female mystics, does not distinguish between the inner senses and the outer senses of the body. Instead, she describes her consciousness of God in an embodied manner using words that describe the sensation of tasting and touching. As Gordon Rudy points out, the language of sensation enables Hadewijch to write about union with God because taste and touch convey a relationship between woman and the deity that is "immediate, reciprocal and dynamic."⁴⁶

Although Hadewijch does not employ in her writings the terminology used by Patristic and mediaval theologians to describe the inner senses, she does practice devotional techniques that were based on the concept of the spiritual senses. Niklaus Largier argues that in medieval Christianity, this concept of the inner spiritual senses "constituted and constructed a specific reality of the mind" and "a new and previously unknown life of the soul [that was] intrinsically linked to the experience and the exploration of emotional arousal."⁴⁷ According to Largier, the techniques of prayer used in the Middle Ages were an "art of sensory and emotional excitement and stimulation"⁴⁸ that could lead the practioner to experience the "desolate state of exile and the joy of fulfillment desire."⁴⁹ Hadewijch's intended readers appear to have desired these experiences, and were unified as a community through this shared desire, but at the time of her writing had not reached the stage of emotional control where such experiences were possible. Her use of affective stylistics to represent her own mystical experiences is influenced by the techniques Largier refers to, and should be regarded as an attempt to mimetically lead her readers

⁴⁵ For more on Origen's motive for defining this concept, see Bernard McGinn "The Language of Inner Experience in Christian Mysticism," *Spiritus* 1 (2001): 156-171.

⁴⁶ Gordon Rudy, *The Mystical Language of Sensation in the Later Middle Ages* (New York: Routledge, 2002), 69.

⁴⁷ Niklaus Largier, "Inner Senses-Outer Senses," 5.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 15.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 12.

through them in order to simulate the feeling of God's love during moments of mystic union and the knowledge that results from it.

To help her readers identify with this mystical *vita communis*, she describes her community in somewhat monastic terms, advocating a form of discipleship whereby followers accepted the guidance of more experienced members of the community.⁵⁰ Hadewijch's skeptical regard for external rules, such as those used to regulate life in a monastery, was characteristic of lay followers of the *vita apostolica* and even of its clerical proponents who believed it was possible to live a holy life outside the walls of a monastery.⁵¹ In his critical edition of the book of visions, Jozef van Mierlo argues that Hadewijch believed that she held an apostolate within her spiritual community, which required her to teach others how to love God.⁵² As proof of her self-identification, van Mierlo points to Vision 1.390-393, where God tells her "you shall wisely carry out my will, in all those who need to know, through you, my will, which is still unknown to them."⁵³ Since van Mierlo accurately characterized Hadewijch's mission as an apostolate, Norbert de Paepe⁵⁴, H.W.J. Vekeman⁵⁵, Frank Willaert,⁵⁶ and Kurt Ruh⁵⁷ have shown that she

⁵⁰ Simons maintains that Hadewijch's skeptical regard for rules and the interpersonal conflicts to which she refers in her writings indicate that she struggled in formally structured environments. He suggests that she may have spent a significant part of her life as a beguine living alone (*Cities of Ladies*, 135-6). If so, it makes her description of the mystic community in monastic terms surprising, although not unusual in the context of lay movements of the period. Juliana of Cornillon organized and led her beguine community according to a monastic model.

⁵¹ Beguine ally James of Vitry, asserts "In my judgment, it is not only those who renounce the world and go into religion who are *regulares*, but all the faithful of Christ, who serve the Lord under the Gospel's rule and live by the orders of the single greatest Abbot or Father of all." Quoted and trans. in Chenu, *Nature, Man and Society*, 221-22 "Non solum eos qui seculo renunciant et transeunt ad religionem, regulares judicamus, sed et omnes Christi fideles sub evangelica regula Domino famulantes et ordinate sub uno summo Abbate viventes, possumus dicere regulares."

⁵² Josef van Mierlo, *De visioenen van Hadewych*, 2 vols. (Leuven, Belgium: S.V. De Vlaamsche Boekenhalle, 1924-25). See vol.1, Vision 1, note for line 393, page 33.

⁵³ *CW*, Vision 1, 270. "Met verstenesse saltu wise minen wille werken in alle dien die behoeven van di te wetene minen wille die hem oncont noch es;" *HV*, Visionen 1, 390-393, 52.

⁵⁴ *Hadewijch. Strofische Gedichten. Een studie van de minne in het kader der 12e and 13e eeuwse mystiek en profane* (Ghent, Belgium: Koninklijke Vlaamse Academie voor Taalen Letterkunde, 1967), 193; Norbert de Paepe, "Hadewijchs vijfde Visioen en de Apokalyps. Dood is niet dood," in *Uit goeder jonsten. Studies aangeboden*

produced her writings primarily for a small circle of laywomen who sought spiritual guidance from her. During the last twenty years, researchers have taken up the subject of the original reception of Hadewijch's writings amongst these followers. Summarizing the questions motivating this line of research, Veerle Fraeters asked: "How did Emma, Sara, and Marguerite, whom we know from the *Letters*, 'read' the texts their spiritual leader wrote to them? Silently, or aloud? Spoken or sung? Alone, or collectively?"⁵⁸ This approach has generated new insights into the oral and performative nature of Hadewijch's texts as a result of studies by Louis Peter Grijp⁵⁹ and Anikó Daróczi,⁶⁰ and it is now accepted that some of Hadewijch's works were sung and others composed with the intent of being read aloud.

The findings of Grijp and Daróczi are corroborated by medieval sources describing beguine literacy and modern scholarship on reading in the Middle Ages. Joyce Coleman has shown that, even after the practice of silent reading developed, hearing texts read aloud was the primary way people experienced them.⁶¹ Gilbert of Tournai's oft-quoted condemnation of

aan prof. dr. L. Roose naar aanleiding van zijn emeritaat, ed. K. Porteman (Louvain, Belgium: Amersfoort, 1984), 13-21.

⁵⁵ H.W.J. Vekeman, *Het Visioenenboek van Hadewijch, uitgegeven naar handschrift 941 van de Bibliotheek der Rijksuniversiteit te Gent* (Nijmegen, The Netherlands: Dekker & Van de Vegt, 1980).

⁵⁶ Frank Willaert, "Hadewijch und ihr Kreis in den Visioenen," in *Abendlandische Mystik im Mittelalter: Symposium Kloster Engelberg 1984*, ed. Kurt Ruh (Stuttgart: J.B. Metzler, 1986), 368-387.

⁵⁷ Kurt Ruh, *Geschichte der abendländischen Mystik*, vol. 2, *Frauenmystik und Franziskanische Mystik der Fruhzeit* (Munich: Beck, 1993), 209-225.

⁵⁸ In Paul Mommaers, *Hadewijch: Writer, Beguine, Love Mystic*, trans. Elisabeth Dutton (Leuven, Belgium: Peeters, 2004), x.

⁵⁹ "De zingende Hadewijch. Op zoek naar de melodieën van haar Strofische Gedichten," *Een zoet akkoord. Middeleeuwse lyriek in de Lage Landen*, ed. Frank Willaert et al. (Amsterdam, 1992), 72-92, 340-343. See also Grijp's reconstruction of the melodies used in the strophic poems in *Hadewijch Liederen*, ed. and trans. Frank Willaert and Veerle Fraeters (Groningen, Netherlands: Historische Uitgeverij, 2009), 325-418.

⁶⁰ Anikó Daróczi, *Groet gheruchte van dien wondere. Spreken, zwijgen en zingen bij Hadewijch* (Leuven, Belgium: Peeters, 2007); and "Hadewijch: mystiek tussen oraliteit en schriftelijkheid. Over de verbinding van inhoud en vorm," in *De fiere nachtegaal. Het Nederlandse Song in de middeleeuwen*, ed. Louis Peter Grijp and Frank Willaert (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2008), 33-53.

⁶¹ Joyce Coleman, "Interactive Parchment: The Theory and Practice of Medieval English Auralty," *The Yearbook of English Studies* 25 (1995): 63-79.

beguines in 1274 makes it clear that they read and discussed texts in their conventicles,⁶² and this was also true during the early decades of the thirteenth century, when beguines lived in less formal communities.⁶³ Hadewijch's use of the second-person plural (*u, ghi, uwes*) in some of her letters suggests that these were addressed to multiple people and that they may have been read and experienced communally. Yet, as I argue in my first chapter, there is evidence that suggests different levels of audience expectations within some of the letters, which requires a consideration of the experience of reading beyond the performative to address the strategies which Hadewijch employs to produce and present meaning and the way readers are led through the texts.

Willaert's monograph on Hadewijch's Songs focused attention on her use of rhetoric to express her experience of divine Love and the strategies she used to appeal to her audience in the context of the courtly lyric tradition.⁶⁴ Daróczy's study of the performativity of Hadewijch's prose and verse works in the context of medieval music theory has drawn further attention to the stylistic devices the beguine used to establish unity with her followers.⁶⁵ Although expansive, these studies of Hadewijch's use of rhetoric do not consider, in the case of Willaert's study, for example, how the audience is rhetorically led to empathetically identify with the singer or, in the case of Daróczy, what the relationship between the mode of writing and content is. The letters are

⁶² Gilbert of Tournai, "Collectio de Scandalis Ecclesiae: Novo edition," ed. Autbertus Stroick, *Archivum Franciscanum Historicum*, 24 (1931): 61-62. "There are among us women called beguines, some of whom are famous for their subtleties and joy in speculating about novelties. They have interpreted the mysteries of Scripture and translated them in the common French idiom, although even the best experts in Scripture can hardly understand them. They read these texts together, irreverently, boldly, in their conventicles, in their workshops, and in public places." (*Sunt apud nos mulieres, quae Beghinae vocantur, et quaedam earum subtilitatibus vigent et novitatibus gaudent. Habent interpretata scripturarum mysteria et in communi idiomate gallicata, quae tamen in sacra Scriptura exercitatis vix sunt pervia. Legunt ea communiter, irreverenter, audacter, in conventiculis, in ergastulis, in plateis.*) Translation mine.

⁶³ Simons, *Cities of Ladies*, 31.

⁶⁴ Willaert, *De poetica van Hadewijch in de Strofische Gedichten* (Utrecht, Netherlands: HES, 1984).

⁶⁵ Daróczy, *Groet gheruchte van dien wondere: Spreken, zwijgen en zingen bij Hadewijch* (Leuven, Belgium: Peeters, 2007).

particularly poorly served in these respects. For example, in Paul Mommaers and Frank Willaert's essay on the Letters, the only attention given to Hadewijch's use of the formal characteristics of the letter as a textual form is their claim that she used the letter's first-person to second-person manner of address to exclude from the relationship between writer and listener anyone referred to in the third person.⁶⁶ Daróczi demonstrates how rhythm affects the way meaning is produced and potentially perceived in Hadewijch's writings, but she sees the difference between modes only as the difference between speaking and singing. It is therefore not surprising that she repeats Mommaers and Willaert's claims about Hadewijch's epistolarity without modifying or elaborating on them.⁶⁷ Understanding the correlation between intention and mode of discourse highlights the differences in affective stylistics among the modes Hadewijch uses, and this in turn indicates the different functions that her Letters, Songs and Book of Visions served in her community. Working in this manner can allow a better understanding of the nature of her teaching in the different modes she used.

To understand how Hadewijch's texts seek to change the disposition of their intended audience through affective stylistics, it is necessary to develop a method of ascertaining as precisely as possible her intention in writing. In his study of the Songs, Willaert approaches the problem of intention or the "communication situation," as he terms it, by considering the relationship between the audience and the speaking *I (Ic)* regarding *minne*.⁶⁸ According to him, the fundamental difference between the Letters and Songs is that, unlike the Letters, the women addressed in the Songs are not exhorted to undertake a new lifestyle but rather are reminded of a

⁶⁶ This claim for Hadewijch's use of epistolarity is really only an extension of Willaert's argument concerning her use of pronouns in the *Songs*. See Paul Mommaers and Frank Willaert, *De poëtica van Hadewijch in de Strofische Gedichten* (Utrecht: HES, 1984), 316-321, 326-334.

⁶⁷ *Groet gheruchte van dien wondere: spreken, zwijgen en zingen bij Hadewijch*.

⁶⁸ Willaert, *De poëtica van Hadewijch*, 304.

commitment that they have already made and now need to renew.⁶⁹ While I grant that this is a useful distinction between these two groups of texts, it does not explain how the reader or audience is directed through them and how affective stylistics and form are used to shape the reader or audience's response to the content. A more productive definition of *intention* (*intentio*) is that of Bernard of Utrecht, who defines it as a "discourse that especially directs the soul in reading a book."⁷⁰ This definition places the focus on *how* Hadewijch's texts rhetorically direct their readers and not just on their overall aims.

Even with Bernard's definition of intention in mind, it is still necessary to identify, to the extent possible, what Hadewijch sought to change in her readers in order to determine the suppositions which they brought to the texts and how the texts are designed to persuade them to pursue a higher spiritual ideal. In order for a methodological approach to be used as a means of determining how the intended audience was expected to respond several limitations must be acknowledged and addressed as they pertain to Hadewijch's Letters and Songs. There are few references in these texts to concrete events, and much seems to be assumed between writer and audience, something which is apparent in Hadewijch's use of deixis. When she writes "many things oppress me, some that you know well,"⁷¹ the specific issues are left unstated. Inevitably, it is critical to endeavor to bridge such gaps in the texts in order to develop an impression of what Hadewijch is reacting to and how she attempts to change the disposition of the audience towards this subject. To minimize the risks of over-interpretation or misinterpretation, it is necessary to

⁶⁹ Ibid., 310.

⁷⁰ "[O]ratio quae animum maxime intendit libro legendo." Bernard d'Utrecht, *Commentum in Theodolum*, in *Accessus ad auctores. Commentum in Theodolum / Bernard d'Utrecht. Dialogus super auctores / Conrad d'Hirsau.*, ed. R.B.C. Huygens (Leiden, Netherlands: E.J. Brill, 1970), lines 223-224, 67. Translation mine.

⁷¹ *CW*, Letter 9, 66, "omme dat mi vele dinghen verladen hebben, Som die ghi wel wet," *HB*, Letter 9, 72.

establish at the outset criteria for determining what occasioned Hadewijch to write and her objective in doing so.

Ascertaining her purpose in writing requires differentiating between statements that are meant to create emphasis so that the audience does not miss the point and those statements that are imperative. The latter can be interpreted as a response to some action by the addressee(s) or another party. This necessitates distinguishing between the rhetoric of the text and the representation of the event that occasioned Hadewijch to write. In the previous studies of Hadewijch's writings, this has been a stumbling block because of the difficulty in determining whether a description or characterization is a historical referent or whether it is a trope drawn from Scripture or courtly literature. When considered in terms of the medieval theory of *inventio*, the possibility exists that Hadewijch uses tropes to represent historical events, just as she uses Scripture to present herself to the reader. Determining what occasioned her to write should not be wholly contingent on rendering judgment on the reality of the descriptions and characterizations she uses. As an alternate approach to determining to what she was responding in the behavior of the audience, I utilize a technique drawn from the study of Saint Paul's epistles known as "mirror reading," which involves recognizing: (1) how frequently the writer addresses a subject, (2) if this subject is her main concern in a text, and (3) how she connects this subject to the audience.⁷² This will provide a firmer foundation for deciding what prompted her to write and the presuppositions of the audience regarding the subject.

Accepting that *intention* refers to how the reader is directed through the work means that it is imperative to take into account the role that textual form plays. In the case of the Letters and

⁷² See Nijay Gupta, "Mirror-Reading Moral Issues in Paul," *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 34.4 (2012): 368-369. I modify Gupta's criteria to suit what we are confronted with in Hadewijch's body of writings.

the Book of Visions, this means analyzing the way she orders the different structural units within each text. Her Songs, which were formerly referred to as strophic poems (*Strophische Gedichten*), are now commonly analyzed as musical texts, since Grijp demonstrated that a number of the songs are based on troubadour and trouvère models.⁷³ He argues that Hadewijch used Marian songs for some of the melodies and points to Gautier de Coincy's popular *Miracles de Notre Dame*, which set poems venerating the Virgin to popular melodies. Rather than undertaking a formal metrical analysis, however, my study of the Songs focuses on the role of rhetoric in the communication of meaning within the narrative structure of the love lyric. As the singer recounts her misfortune, the audience is led to identify with her through her appeal to their sense of pity/compassion, using a series of related topoi as she laments her treatment by *Minne*. I argue that there is a direct relationship among the rhetorical style of the Songs, the type of knowledge being presented, and the affective response that it is calculated to elicit.

The fact that there are only three manuscripts containing Hadewijch's complete works indicates a closed tradition of transmission. This closed tradition and the absence of any mention of her in archival records or in other sources evidence that Hadewijch was not of wide renown during her lifetime. Simons believes that her absence in the archival records is evidence that she operated comparatively free of clerical supervision.⁷⁴ Her body of authentic works is comprised

⁷³ Grijp also confirms that Song 45, based on the Latin hymn *Mariae praeconio*, is intended to be sung. This was first suggested by J. Bosch, "Vale milies: De structuur van Hadewijch's bundle 'Strophische Gedichten,'" *Tijdschrift voor Nederlandse taal – en letterkunde* 90 (1974): 161-182.

⁷⁴ Alastair Minnis and Rosalynn Voaden, ed., "Holy Women of the Low Countries: A Survey," in *Medieval Holy Women in the Christian Tradition C. 1100-C. 1500* (Turnhout, Belgium: Brepols Publishers, 2010), 629. Wybren Scheepma's dating of the earliest manuscript containing the Limburg sermons to the last quarter of the thirteenth century requires a consideration of the possibility that Hadewijch's letter collection was sampled and used by male clerics not long after the period she is believed to have been active as a writer. Accepting that the writers of at least two of the sermons made use of her letters, rather than Hadewijch adapting these sermons into her own works, makes it possible that her letters reached a broader community of readers than is commonly assumed on the basis of the three fourteenth-century manuscripts that each contain all of her works. The Limburg sermons may provide evidence that Hadewijch's letters were read by a secondary community of readers that was comprised of clerics preaching to a community of men. It is interesting to note that of her collection of letters, Letters 5, 6, and 10

of 31 letters that are grouped as a collection referred to by scholars as the Letters (Brieven),⁷⁵ 45 songs (Liederen), 16 poems in couplets (Mengeldichten)⁷⁶ – also referred to as the Letters in Rhyme (*Rijmbrieven*), a Book of Visions (*Visioenenboek*), and a list of people who, she believed, had achieved moral and spiritual perfection (*Lijst der volmaekten*) (the last being part of the Book of Visions). The purpose of the list, known in English as *The List of the Perfect*, is uncertain. Hadewijch's other writings have a clear pedagogical intent. Three fourteenth-century manuscripts produced in Brabant contain her complete works.⁷⁷ Erik Kwakkel has dated the oldest manuscript, Brussels, KB 2879-80, known as manuscript A among Hadewijch scholars, to the second quarter of the fourteenth century, thus narrowing the gap between the presumed date of composition (1240-1250) and start of the manuscript tradition.⁷⁸ In manuscript A the letters

are the only ones sampled for use in other manuscripts. A Middle Dutch copy of Letter 10 is included in Paris Bibliothèque Mazarin, 920. This letter is also part of the Middle High German tradition of Hadewijch's writings, as attested to in Berlin, Staatsbibliothek Preußischer Kulturbesitz, MS germ. Oct 12, and in Berlin, Staatsbibliothek Preußischer Kulturbesitz, MS germ. qu. 149. Parts of Letters 5 and 6, along with Letters in Rhyme 5 and 6 are found in Einsiedeln, cod. 277. The Einsiedeln manuscript includes Mechthild von Magdeburg's *The Flowering Light of the Godhead* (*Das fließende Licht der Gottheit*) and was originally owned by a Basel Beguine. The MHG tradition is described in Werner Williams-Krapp, "Ein puch verschriben ze deutsch in brabantzer zunge. Zur Rezeption von mystischem Schrifttum aus dem 'niderlant' im 'oberlant'," *Schnittpunkte: deutsch-niederländische Literaturbeziehungen im späten Mittelalter*, ed. Angelika Lehmann-Benz, Ulrike Zellmann, and Urban Küsters (New York: Waxmann, 2003), 41-53.

⁷⁵ The authenticity of Letter 28 is disputed because of its exuberant tone and manner of reported speech. Arguing against Hadewijch as its author are Joris Raynaert in "Attributieproblemen in verband met de Brieven van Hadewijch," *Ons Geestelijk Erf* 49 (1975): 225-247 and also in *De beeldspraak van Hadewijch* (Tielt, Belgium: Lannoo, 1981), 425-427 as well as Kurt Ruh, *Geschichte der abendländischen Mystik*, vol.2, *Frauenmystik und Franziskanische Mystik der Früzeit* (Munich: Beck, 1993), 225-230. Arguing for is Frank Willaert, "Is Hadewijch de auteur van de XXVIIIe Brief?" *Ons Geestelijk Erf* 54 (1980): 26-38; and Anikó Daróczy, *Groet gheruchte van dien wondere: spreken, zwijgen en zingen bij Hadewijch* (Leuven, Belgium: Peeters, 2007).

⁷⁶ There are thirteen additional poems that follow the poems in couplets in manuscript C (Ghent, Universiteitsbibliotheek, 941) that are widely regarded as the work of an imitator, who is referred to as "Hadewijch 2" by scholars. Saskia Murk-Jansen, in *The Measure of Mystic Thought: A study of Hadewijch's Mengeldichten* (Göppingen, Germany: Kümmerle, 1991), dissents from this consensus and argues that only five of the poems attributed to Hadewijch 2 are by her and that the other nine poems were composed by Hadewijch. Arguing that Mengeldichten 17-29 are all attributable to Hadewijch is Mary Suydam, "The Politics of Authorship: Hadewijch of Antwerp and the 'Mengeldichten,'" *Mystics Quarterly* 22 (1996): 2-20. I accept Erik Kwakkel's 1999 findings that indicate that Mengeldichten 17-29 were not part of the earliest tradition of Hadewijch's writings. Thus, I do not include those poems in my study.

⁷⁷ Antwerp, Ruusbroegenootschap, MS Neel 385, referred to as manuscript R by Hadewijch scholars, contains a complete copy of the songs and the letters in rhyme. Paris, Bibliothèque Mazarine, MS 920, referred to as Manuscript P contains copies of Letters 6 and 10.

⁷⁸ Erik Kwakkel, "Ouderdom en genese van de veertiende-eeuwse Hadewijch-handschriften," *Queeste* 6 (1999): 39.

are first, followed by the songs and letters in rhyme. This manuscript does not include either Mengeldichten 17-29 or the *Two-fold Tractate* (*Two-vormich tractaetken*). The youngest of the three manuscripts that contain all of Hadewijch's writings is Ghent, Universiteitsbibliotheek, 941, also known as manuscript C. As to whether Hadewijch's writings were arranged in a planned order, it is difficult to draw inferences from the manuscripts. Manuscripts A and B (Brussels, Koninklijke Bibliotheek, 2877-2878) begin with the letters but manuscript C begins with the Book of Visions. As Kwakkel points out, even though the Rookloster list of *Dietsche Boeke* refers to two Hadewijch codices (now lost) that started with the letters, there is no way to know how old these lost codices were.⁷⁹ Manuscript C could have a parent manuscript that began with the Book of Visions, but, on the basis of the hard evidence of A and B, it can be said that the earliest order began with the letters. The copyist of manuscript C may have placed the Book of Visions first because he believed it established the author's authority and created a connecting argument with the Letters.

Within the text blocks, researchers have tried to find a central organizing principle that would indicate whether the listener was expected to regard the prose letters as a chronology and if the songs are arranged in a cycle.⁸⁰ Some of the letters are clearly chronologically arranged, and paraphrasal connections amongst others suggest that, overall, the collection is generally arranged in the order in which the letters were written. Thus far, no convincing argument has been put forth for an arranged sequence in the order of the songs or letters in rhyme. Kwakkel points out that manuscript A is a composite manuscript comprised of three books, one containing the Letters another the Book of Visions, and the third the Songs and Letters in Rhyme. He argues

⁷⁹ Ibid., 37, n.73.

⁸⁰ Bosch attempts to find a numerological principle that would explain the number of songs in his article "Vale milies: De structuur van Hadewijch's bundle 'Strophische Gedichten,'" *Tijdschrift voor Nederlandse taal – en letterkunde* 90 (1974): 161-182.

that this indicates that, at the time of this manuscript's creation, Hadewijch's body of writing was not yet seen as an organic unity.⁸¹ Furthermore, he points out the absence of indicators in the books that show that they were supposed to be arranged in a particular order. Kwakkel's observations suggest both that in the earliest tradition Hadewijch's text groupings were not seen as having a causal relationship of one to another and that they may have been regarded as independent collections of texts. In my opinion, this indicates that early users of the three text units may have seen them as fulfilling different didactic functions..

I begin my study with the prose letters for two reasons. First, because of their doctrinal component, they provide the best insight into Hadewijch's understanding of the psychology of the affections and their place in the pursuit of perfection. Second, based on epistolary topoi and the place of the Book of Visions after the letters in manuscript A, I believe that the book was a continuance of some of the correspondence in the Letters. For example, in Letter 25 Hadewijch addresses four women with whom she appears to have shared a house: the unnamed recipient of the letter, Sara, Emma, and Margriet. This unnamed addressee (or possibly Emma or Margriet) was also the recipient of Letter 25. Hadewijch names Sara in Letter 25 as foremost among her followers ("And you, Emma and yourself – who can obtain more from me than any other person now living can, except Sara").⁸² The phrasing of this acknowledgement of her special regard for Sara is repeated in Letter 29 ("for me, you – after Sara – are the dearest person alive").⁸³ What connects Letter 29 to the Book of Visions is the phrasing of Hadewijch's belief that God is working his will in her, no matter what misfortunes befall her, and her acknowledgement of the reader's concern for her happiness in Vision 14.95-110 and Letter 29.

⁸¹ Erik Kwakkel, "The Middle Dutch Hadewijch Manuscripts," forthcoming.

⁸² *CW*, Letter 25, 106. "Ende ghi die meer van mi gheleisten moghet dan yeman die nu leuet sonder sare, Emme ende ghi, die sijt mi al eens," *HB*, Brief 25, 204.

⁸³ *CW*, Letter 29, 114. "Ende de liefste mensche die leuet na saren," *HB*, Brief 29, 234.

Regarding the audience of the Book of Visions as the same one addressed in at least two of the letters presents an opportunity to compare how the pedagogical model is similar and how the formal properties of the book of visions facilitate a different form of interaction with the audience. That Hadewijch used a book to present her visions rather than a letter⁸⁴ or series of letters indicates that she felt that the needs of the listener required her to provide a more structured program for explaining the contemplative life. The prose letters address specific topics, and the counsel which Hadewijch offers is localized to that topic, although she often points to the significance of her guidance in terms of achieving perfection. Even so, the Letters, when read as a book, do not provide a linear guide to reaching spiritual maturity. They are written as though they attend to immediate circumstances in the spiritual life of the addressee, and further directives and clarifications are contingent on the addressee's response. This gives the letters a dialogic nature that is not present in the Book of Visions until Vision 14, when Hadewijch directly addresses the reader who requested an account of Hadewijch's growth to perfection. The epistolary dialogic is punctuated by the intervals between letters, and this pause can result in misunderstanding. It is not surprising that a number of Hadewijch's letters that appear to be chronologically arranged attempt to clarify the relationship between doctrine and praxis presented in previous letters. This is observable in Letter 18 when Hadewijch quotes from the poetic stanza that begins Letter 17, explaining in the later letter, "this is what I meant when I last wrote you about the three virtues."⁸⁵ The Book of Visions, by comparison, is an integrated whole with chapters arranged in a progressive sequence that allows the reader to discern how thought and behavior at different stages enable a person to reach perfection.

⁸⁴ Some scholars have claimed that Hadewijch's acknowledgement of the reader in Vision 14 is evidence that this vision is actually a letter. Her apology for the length of Vision 14 can be read as an epistolary humility topos. However, this rhetorical gesture is not limited to the epistolary mode. It is found in prefaces of treatises and devotional works when the writer wishes to commend himself to the person for whom the work is intended.

⁸⁵ *CW*, Letter 18, 85. "Dit eest da tic meinde doen ic u lest die .iij doechden screeft," *HB*, Brief 18, 138.

There is evidence throughout Hadewijch's writings that she was concerned about the audience correctly interpreting her teachings. This serves as a caution against assuming the level of knowledge they brought to the texts and whether or not they would have recognized the Scriptural intertexts. In the case of the Letters and Book of Visions, there is reason to believe that Hadewijch's intended readers were familiar with Scripture in Latin. This is apparent when she refers to texts in Latin, as when she cites Job 4:12 in Vision 12: "You, all-powerful one, have received most profoundly that hidden word which Job understood, in the text beginning: *Porro dictum est*."⁸⁶ Of course, this does not mean that this letter's recipient was fluent in Latin. She could recognize the phrase from what she had repeatedly heard read aloud in Church. Yet in Letter 24 Hadewijch distinguishes between hearing Latin read aloud and reading the text oneself: "And give entrance into your heart to all the words you hear from him in the Scriptures, whether you read them yourself, or I, or some one else repeats them to you in Dutch or Latin."⁸⁷ Based on these passages and others, I believe Hadewijch was addressing a community with an unusually high literacy level. In my analysis, I assume that Scriptural allusions, where discernable, were meant for the listener to recognize in her interpretation of Hadewijch's text.

In the first chapter of this dissertation I analyze Hadewijch's epistolarity⁸⁸ in her prose letters. Specifically, I study how she models her letters on the apostolic letters of Paul, while utilizing the formal parts of the epistle genre common to the *ars dictaminis*, the medieval art of letter writing. Hadewijch uses Paul's letters to signal her spiritual authority within a communally

⁸⁶ *CW*, Visions 12, 296. "Du heves, alweldeghe, diepst ontfaen dat verhoelne woert dat Job verstont, dat was *Porro dictum est*," *HV*, Visioen 12.169-171, 122.

⁸⁷ *CW*, Letter 24, 105. "Ende alle die woerde die ghi hoert van hem inde scrifture, ende die ghi selue leset Ende die ic u gheseghet hebbe Ende die u yeman seghet in dietsche Ochte in latine, die laet in uwe herte gaen," *HB*, Brief 24, 200, 202.

⁸⁸ My use of the term *epistolarity* is based on Janet Gurkin Altman's definition of it as the ways a writer uses the formal properties of the epistle form to produce and present meaning. Janet Gurkin Altman, *Epistolarity: Approaches to a Form* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1982), 4.

recognized model, while using the parts of the medieval epistle to situate the reader in a subordinate role carrying ethical obligations to Hadewijch and through her to God. She draws from Paul's letters his paraenetic style of exhortation, which she uses to present her spiritual guidance in such a way that her authority is maintained while not fostering her audience's dependence on her. Used extensively throughout the prose letters, rhythm, internal rhyme (also known as colon rhyme), and figures of repetition serve to orient the reader by directing the reader towards affective attachment to God and freedom from the influence of earthly desires.

In the second chapter I analyze how Hadewijch's *Book of Visions*, a mystagogic text, guides and shapes its reader. The book presents the reader with Hadewijch's growth to perfection as an exemplar to be followed. Hadewijch's vision narratives present a problem when identified as belonging to a mode of visionary writings, for, as Fraeters points out, this was a genre without formal characteristics.⁸⁹ Mystagogic texts took different forms, including hagiographies and so-called sister books (*Schwesternbücher*). Fraeters speculates that Hadewijch composed her vision narratives using the stages described in Richard of Saint Victor's *The Four Degrees of Violent Love* (*De quatuor gradibus violentae caritatis*) and that Hadewijch's ascent over the course of her vision book can be interpreted using his contemplative theology. I argue that Hadewijch uses the biographical model central to the book of visions as a way of facilitating the intended reader's identification with Hadewijch's exemplar. Recognizing this makes it clear that Hadewijch functions as both reader and writer in her book as her present self reflects on her spiritual journey, which took place over an unspecified number of years. She chooses the visions she

⁸⁹ Fraeters, "Gender and Genre: The Design of Hadewijch's *Book of Visions*," in *The Voice of Silence Women's Literacy in a Men's Church*, eds. Thérèse de Hemptinne and María Eugenia Góngora (Turnhout, Belgium: Brepols, 2004). See also Fraeters, "Visio," in *The Cambridge Companion to Christian Mysticism*, eds. Amy Hollywood and Patricia Z. Beckman (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 178-188.

wishes to present to the reader and arranges them in a developmental sequence, thus demonstrating to the reader how she has meditated on her own experience and come to understand her growth. This differs from her attempt to show in the vision narratives that what she presents is authoritative by quoting the speech of the people she encounters in heaven.

The third chapter is a study of the role of lamentation in the Songs. Willaert argues that the *I* that speaks in the songs mirrors the *you* addressed in the audience and that the *we* unites the singer with her listeners, who share in the same suffering and are obligated to fulfill the same commitment as she.⁹⁰ He believes that the *juistheid* (correctness) of her pedantic speech derives from the audience's receiving the same invitation to love that she sings about and that the argument she advances in her songs is based on her own exemplar.⁹¹ I argue that Hadewijch appeals to the audience's sense of compassion/pity using the contrast between past riches and present destitution common in the courtly love lyric. By appealing to their sense of compassion/pity, Hadewijch's narrator draws the members of her audience into the performance, absorbing them into the narrator's cognitive processes as she understands the causes of her feelings of love and grief, and the proper response to them. This response is expressed in her laments, which are infused with phrases and allusions to the Book of Job such that her songs can be classified as a *planctus* or complaint. Compassion in the songs is self-interested in that it requires the narrator and the audience to look within themselves before they can identify with the suffering of another. Recognizing themselves, the members of the audience are led to understand that their suffering is normative and required to reach spiritual maturation.

⁹⁰ Ibid., 331.

⁹¹ Ibid., 345.

Chapter One

To Lead the Unled: Persuasion and Authority in the Prose Letters

For each revelation I had seen partly according to what I was myself, and partly according to having been chosen.

–Hadewijch of Brabant, Vision 14¹

The apostolate makes the apostle.

–Ernest McDonnell, “The Vita Apostolica”²

Section 1: Introduction

Hadewijch’s prose letters, sometimes referred to as “Letters to a Young Beguine,” are a collection of letters, letter fragments, and short devotional writings apparently intended for female recipients.³ Some of the letters are written as though they are responses to requests for guidance or to address historical events in the lives of Hadewijch and the recipients, while others seek to encourage or dissuade the reader regarding forms of behavior that have an affective component. The women she addresses are characterized as spiritually immature in comparison to her, and she presents herself as someone who has achieved perfection and acts in accord with God’s will when she exhorts, counsels, and consoles. Even though she writes as a superior, in her letters she professes spiritual friendship with her readers and exhorts them to become friends with Christ through conformity with his humanity. This conception of friendship is based in the

¹*CW*, Vision 14, 305; *HV*, Visioen 14.158-160, 148. “Want elc haddic ghesien na dat ic was ende een deel na miere vercorenheit.”

² Ernest McDonnell, “The ‘Vita Apostolica’: Diversity or Dissent,” *Church History* 24 (1955): 15.

³ My principle focus in this chapter is on the prose letters because they show more evidence of the dynamic relationship between Hadewijch and her followers. The letters in rhyme tend towards exhortations to a particular way of life, signalled by conditional phrases introducing what needs to be done in order to learn how to love God. There are comparatively few references to events in Hadewijch’s relationship with the addressees. Hadewijch apparently intended the letters in rhyme to be aids in learning this, and her guidance follows that found in the prose letters.

doctrine of the Trinity she advances, wherein faith and love of God joins friends together in the Spirit and unites their souls, even if they are physically separated;⁴ through friendship with Christ, friendship with God is established. Her letters simultaneously teach and practice this doctrine of spiritual friendship through *verbo et exemplo*.

Throughout her letters Hadewijch seeks to convey the love God has for her readers as a way of deepening their faith, and she urges them to act with charity (*karitate*) toward one another in their beguine communities and towards people outside of them in order to fulfill the first two commandments. Such objectives, Bernard McGinn has pointed out, are universal to medieval Christian literature.⁵ What is exceptional about the letters is the manner in which Hadewijch seeks to move her readers to these goals. Hadewijch uses a paraenetic style of address that she draws from the epistles of Paul, an almost unique decision among medieval female epistolary writers⁶ and, as I will argue, a revealing one. As the earliest example of exhortative-didactic letters in the vernacular,⁷ the Letters also provide insight into the nature of spiritual instruction during a period when beguines were still living outside of institutionalized communities and were therefore organized along less formal lines. Moreover, Hadewijch's letters show evidence of having been part of a network of spiritual friends in that they address a number of readers who were known to each other.⁸ While Hadewijch's contemporary, Mechthild of Madgeburg,

⁴ *CW*, Letter 14, 76; *HB*, Brief 14, 108; *CW*, Letter 30, 116; *HB*, Brief 30, 240.

⁵ Bernard McGinn, "The Changing Shape of Late Medieval Mysticism," *Church History* 65 (1996): 206.

⁶ Donna Alfano Bussell reads Heloise's third letter to Abelard as a paraenetic letter. "Heloise Redressed: Rhetorical Engagement and the Benedictine Rite of Initiation in Heloise's Third Letter," in *Listening to Heloise: The Voice of a Twelfth-Century Woman*, ed. Bonnie Wheeler (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000) 235.

⁷ Kurt Ruh *Geschichte der abendländischen Mystik*, vol. 2, *Frauenmystik und Franziskanische Mystik der Früzeit* (Munich: Beck, 1993).

⁸ On epistolary communication among female mystics in this region, see Wybren Scheepsma, "Mystical Networks in the Middle Ages? On the First Women Writers in Dutch and Their Literary Contexts," in *"I Have Heard About You": Foreign Women's Writing Crossing the Dutch Border: From Sappho to Selma Lagerlöf*, ed. Suzanna van Dijk et al. (Hilversum, Netherlands: Verloren, 2004), 43-60. Scheepsma suggests, fancifully in my opinion, that Hadewijch, the writer of Limburg sermon 39 and the writer of the *Boengaert van der geesteleker herten* were part of a secretive mystic circle whose members communicated by letter. *The Limburg Sermons* :

included letters of counsel and admonition in her book, *The Flowering Light of the Godhead* (*Das fließende Licht der Gottheit*) these letters are primarily devotional works that are framed using epistolary topoi. They are similar to Hadewijch's in that these topoi signify spiritual friendship, but there is neither any indication they were part of an actual epistolary dialog nor any that would indicate what occasioned them.

In contrast to Mechthild of Magdeburg, who does not appear to have led a community, Hadewijch's epistolarity is a response to the challenge of leading an informal spiritual community in which members associated voluntarily and maintained relationships with people outside of the community. The theory of spiritual friendship (*spirituali amicitia*) and *communitas* that is manifested in her letters, and the form of learning that is predicated upon it, reflects the secular nature of Hadewijch's community and her lay interpretation of the *vita apostolica*. It is long established that letters were a means of creating and maintaining spiritual friendship in the Middle Ages, and there are many examples that attest to this in the monastic tradition. As H.W.J. Vekeman points out, however, for uncloistered women like Hadewijch, friendship was of a more self-sustained and personal nature than the spiritual friendships celebrated by monastic writers like Aelred of Rievaulx.⁹ Even so, what was central to the antique and medieval conception of spiritual friendship was the reciprocal communication of knowledge and love of God between friends.¹⁰ The notion of the reciprocal exchange among spiritual friends persisted in the form of requests for and offers of service after the feudal conception of friendship as safeguarding the

Preaching in the Medieval Low Countries at the Turn of the Fourteenth Century (Leiden, Netherlands: Brill, 2008), 327-328.

⁹ Vekeman, "Vriendschap in de Middelnederlandse mystiek: De plaats van Ruusbroec," in *Jan Van Ruusbroec: The Sources, Content and Sequels of His Mysticism*, ed. Paul Mommaers and Norbert de Paepe (Leuven, Belgium: Leuven University Press, 1984) 125-126.

¹⁰ Jean Leclercq, "L'amitié dans les lettres au moyen âge, autour d'un manuscrit de la bibliothèque de Petrarque" *Revue du moyen âge latin* 1 (1945): 401.

honor of those who shared interests and other concerns emerged, In the case of letters of spiritual friendship, Leclercq argues, the service offered could be affection rather than a material act.¹¹

Not as well recognized is that the letter was a form of discourse amenable to the pedagogical practices of the thirteenth century, when people were accustomed to presenting and receiving knowledge and insight through interactions between two people.¹² This attitude underlies Hadewijch's claim that "it is the custom (*pleghen*) of friends between themselves to hide little and reveal much."¹³ For her, the letter form was suited for advising her readers in the exploration of self and the affections as well as a way of instructing on interpersonal relations in the setting of her informal beguine community. Medieval epistolary rhetoric was calculated to persuade the reader to accede to the writer's wishes, in part through the writer's self-representation and expressed benevolence towards the reader and also by conveying the importance of the subject matter for the well-being of the addressee. This means that there is a marked connection between affect and effect in medieval epistolary theory, one which is observable in the etymology Thomas of Capua gives for "epistola" in his *Ars dictandi*:

[T]he letter is a different kind of literal embassy, which is capable of having an effect (*effectu*) on a person's health. *Epistola* is derived from "epi," which is "in preference to," and "stolons," which is a "dispatch"; hence it is said the *epistola* is a dispatch in preference to, because it seems to announce the intention of the sender's message in a way that is more elegant and richer in the mind in the

¹¹ Ibid, 406.

¹² Anekke Mulder-Bakker, *Lives of the Anchoresses: The Rise of the Urban Recluse in Medieval Europe*, trans. Myra Heerspink Scholz (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005) 158.

¹³ *CW*, Letter 11, 69. "Alsoe also vriende pleghen deen den anderen luttel te helene ende vele te toenne" (*HB*, Brief 11, 84).

affects (*affectus*) it expresses, and frequently in the information it conveys [than a message conveyed verbally by a messenger].¹⁴

By the proper choice of words, sentence structure, arrangement of subject material, and form of address, the epistle has the power to affect the disposition of the recipient because it can simulate an appeal made in person by the writer unlike a message spoken through an intermediary.

Furthermore, as Thomas indicates at the end of the quote, the information transmitted in a letter is more faithful to the sender's intent because of its ability to record exactly what the sender said. In a letter of spiritual friendship, the letter is a tangible manifestation of the writer's affection for and fidelity to the addressee when the writer is not present in person. Through faith and charity the soul of the writer is united with that of the reader so that they become one body. Premised on this belief in the power of the Spirit to unite, letters of spiritual friendship bind reader and writer together.

Hadewijch's letters were likely written during a period when she was part of a small circle of beguines. How the collection of her letters was formed and by whom is a complicated issue, and the interpretive problems posed by the current lack of information must be acknowledged and addressed at this point. There are no significant differences among the three manuscripts containing Hadewijch's complete works, which indicates that they are not far removed from the source manuscript. In these manuscripts the same 31 letters are included and arranged in the same order. On the basis of manuscript A's dating, this fixity means that what is

¹⁴ Thomas of Capua, *Die Ars dictandi des Thomas von Capua*, ed. Emmy Heller, *Sitzungsberichte der Heidelberger Akademie der Wissenschaften: Philosophisch-historische Klasse, 1928-29*, 4. (1929):15-16. Translation mine. Thomas's etymology is fairly standard, though he makes the connection between *affectus* and *effectus* more explicit. "Est ergo epistola litteralis legatio diversarum personarum capax, sumens principium cum effectu denominata est autem epistola ab "epi" quod es supra, et "stolon," quod est missio; inde dicitur epistola quasi supramissio, quia supra intentionem mittentis gerere videtur ministerium nuntiantis, id est elegantius et locuplentius in ea mentis explicatur affectus, quemadmodum faceret aliquotiens ipse nuntians vel delegans."

preserved is representative of the earliest textual tradition, thus allowing an interpretation of observed patterns in the arrangement of the letter book as the work of Hadewijch or a follower who may have been the recipient of at least some of the letters.¹⁵ Whether or not Hadewijch created the collection herself is difficult, if not impossible, to determine. She apparently intended her spiritual counsel to have an effect beyond the addressee, albeit indirectly, in several of the letters where she calls upon the reader to practice her counsel when acting towards others.¹⁶ This does not indicate that she wrote with an eye towards posterity, however.

The high degree of stylistic sophistication shown in Hadewijch's letters is taken by some scholars as an indication that she intended her letters to be part of a planned collection.¹⁷ One of the fundamental precepts taught by the *dictatores*, however, is that the prose of a letter must be elegant and artistically arranged in order for it to be persuasive. This is stressed in the definition of *dictamen* found in manuals widely circulated in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.¹⁸ In addition to adhering to a fundamental precept of medieval epistolary writing, the prose rhythm functions in Hadewijch's letters as a means of mnemonic recall and to facilitate the reading of

¹⁵ Van Mierlo maintains that all the letters were sent to the same follower, even though a few letters use the second person plural (*HB*, Vol.2, 9-10). Hart concurs with this assessment (*CW*, 16). Among the *vitae* of the *mulieres sanctae* of Liège there are several instances where followers or clerical allies worked to preserve the memory of a holy woman by gathering reminiscences and supplying information to those writing the *vitae*. Perhaps the best known instance is Eve of St. Martin's *Fragmenta*, a book of exempla and *brevis commendatio* based on the life of her spiritual sister, Juliana of Cornillon. Another case is the Dominican Friar John, who wrote a *vita* of Margaret the Lame (1210-1250). He included her visions and didactic devotional writings.

¹⁶ *CW*, Letter 12, 72-74; *HB*, Brief 12, 94, 96, 98,100.

¹⁷ Paul Mommaers and Frank Willaert, "Mystisches Erlebnis un sprachliche Vermittlung in den Briefen Hadewijchs," in *Religiose Frauenbewegung und mystische Frömmigkeit im Mittelalter*, ed. Peter Dinzelbacher and Dieter R. Bauer (Cologne, Germany: Bohlau, 1988), 124. The fragments and questionable distinction between the end of some letters and the beginning of the next one in the collection, has led Van Mierlo to assert that Hadewijch did not intend to publish her letters. *Hadewijch, Brieven*, 2 vols., ed. J. van Mierlo (Antwerp, Belgium: Standaard-Boekhandel, 1947), vol.2, 10. On the formation of medieval letter collections see Constable, *Letters and Letter-Collections*, 56-62. See also Walter Ysebaert, "Medieval letters and letter collections as historical sources: methodological problems and reflections and research perspectives (6th-14th centuries)" *Studi Medievali* 50 (2009): 41-73.

¹⁸ For a representative definition, see Thomas of Capua, *Artes dictandi*, Chapter 1, 12 and Transmundus, *Introductiones dictandi*, ed. and trans. Ann Dalzell (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, 1995), 52-53.

the letters aloud, as Daróczy demonstrates.¹⁹ Building on her work, I argue that prose rhythm is one of the most important ways Hadewijch uses affective stylistics to emotionally stimulate her readers and lead them to new identifications.

Another possibility is that the letter collection is based on a draft book or register of correspondence. The direct references and paraphrase connections among the letters could be interpreted as evidence that Hadewijch had at hand copies of her letters as she wrote. Arguing against this hypothesis is the fragmentary state of a number of letters and the absence of the names of the recipients, which would be at odds with the intent of a register. An alternative explanation is that Hadewijch had her originals returned to her and what are preserved are those which she was able to recover and, possibly, copies which she had kept.²⁰ It is also possible that a combination of Hadewijch's efforts and those of a follower resulted in the creation of the collection.²¹ On the basis of comparison with collections whose formation history is known and in view of followers of *mulieres religiosae* in the region working to preserve the memory of the women after their deaths, I think it most likely that a follower was responsible for the creation of Hadewijch's letter collection.²² If a follower was the *compiler*²³, she may have recovered only parts of some letters and that could explain why those letters are fragments in the manuscripts.²⁴

¹⁹ Aniko Daróczy, *Groet gheruchte van dien wondere: Spreken, zwijgen en zingen bij Hadewijch* (Louvain, Belgium: Peeters, 2007).

²⁰ Hart offers this explanation. *CW*, 18.

²¹ The use of the second-person plural in some letters suggests that Hadewijch may have addressed a larger, different audience in those letters than in letters in which the reader is addressed in the second-person singular. Also suggesting different recipients is a possible connection between Letters 23 and 25. Letter 25 indicates that Margriet is living among aliens, apart from the women whom Hadewijch greets in this letter. Letter 23 is addressed to a woman living in another community, who, in the context of Letter 25, could be Margriet.

²² Van Mierlo maintains this position as well. Hadewijch, *Hadewijch, Brieven*, 2 vols., ed. J. van Mierlo (Antwerp: Standaard-Boekhandel, 1947), vol. 2, 10. On the basis of the preservation history of letters by other thirteenth-century mystics, Reynaert favors the hypothesis that Hadewijch was responsible for creating the book of letters. See Joris Reynaert, "Attributieproblemen in verband met de Brieven van Hadewijch," *Ons Geestelijk Erf* 49 (1975): 236-238.

²³ A *compiler*, according to Saint Bonaventure, is a person who "writes the materials of others, adding but nothing of his own." *Commentaria in Quatuor Libros Sententiarum*, Proemium qu.4, conclusio. Quoted and

Even though the identity of person responsible for the creation of the letter collection is unknown, it is still valid to ask what her motive was in compiling it so as ascertain whether or not the collection is meant to be regarded as a unified book unto itself. This can be deduced to some extent by considering the style, chronological range, and contents of the collection.²⁵ The style of the letters can be described as paraenetic exhortation. There is a chronological arrangement among groups of letters,²⁶ but there is no way to tell how long a timespan elapsed from the earliest letter in the collection to the latest.²⁷ Haseldine observes that more frequently than not a medieval letter collection represents the correspondence of a writer during a distinct period of his life.²⁸ It is plausible that Hadewijch's collection is comprised only of letters written while she was associated with a small circle of followers and that that is why the letters end shortly after Letter 29, in which she indicates that she will lead a wandering life having suffered a disgrace in the community.²⁹ Notably, there are sequences of letters connected through paraphrases and direct references, almost as though successive letters were written to elaborate and qualify what Hadewijch had previously written. In fact, among the Letters and Letters in Rhyme Hadewijch indicates only twice³⁰ that she is writing at the request of the addressee, which raises the possibility that she wrote some letters simply because she felt that the reader was in

translated in Alastair Minnis, *Medieval Theory of Authorship*, 2nd ed. (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010), 94.

²⁴ Alternatively, what has survived could have been made from a damaged manuscript.

²⁵ These three indicators are used by Julian Haseldine in "The Creation of a Literary Memorial: The Letter Collection of Peter of Celle," *Sacris Erudiri, Jaarboek voor Godsdienstwetenschappen* 37 (1997): 337.

²⁶ Clear chronological arrangement is evident in Letters 17 and 18; Letters 2526, and 29, with Letters 27 and 30 probably corresponding to this group. Letters 14 and 15 form a pair in that Letter 15 is a devotional treatise corresponding to the pilgrimage of life referred to in Letter 14. Hart reads a rough chronology when the letters are rearranged in the following sequence: 31, 17 and 28, 8, 12, 15, 18, 5, 19, 23, 25-26, 22, 29, 1-2. *CW*, 18.

²⁷ Somewhat fancifully, Van Mierlo claims that the letters do not extend over a period of years because the addressee is still addressed as a child throughout the collection. *HB*, vol. 2, 9.

²⁸ Haseldine "The Creation of a Literary Memorial," 336.

²⁹ *CW*, 114; *HB*, Brief 29, 234.

³⁰ Letter 12 and Letter in Rhyme 1.

need of guidance to the reader, or the letter continued a conversation begun in person.³¹ As is typical in letters of spiritual advice, Hadewijch does not advise on concrete specifics in the life of the addressee but only on what constitutes the proper Christian life and what the reader must do to conform with it. Even so, I believe there is reason to conclude that the letters do represent a specific period of time, because the connections among the texts and the indications that they were intended for a small circle of recipients suggest that this is so.

Colin Morris asserts that the surge in the number of letter collections published in the twelfth century was due in part to the format's enabling a writer to present his "character and opinions" to an audience beyond the original recipients of the letters.³² While Morris is interested in letter collections as expressions of individual consciousness, the same impulse could have motivated the writer's followers and friends to assemble a collection in order to purposefully create a representation of the writer. One such purpose for doing this was to create an exemplar to be studied and imitated. A collection that was used this way during the Middle Ages was Seneca's letters of moral advice (*Epistulae morales*) to his younger friend Lucilius.³³ Like Hadewijch, Seneca presents his advice in a paraenetic manner (referred to as *praeceptio* in his letters), offering himself as a mentor to Lucilius and a guide in the pursuit of virtue and proper behavior. I believe that the compiler intended the book of letters to function as a source of doctrinal knowledge and as an exemplar based on Hadewijch's life and teaching in a manner

³¹ Among monastic letters of spiritual advice, the writer commonly acknowledges the reader's request for guidance, typically at the beginning of the letter. For a representative example see Adam of Perseigne in *Lettres*, trans. and notes Jean Bouvet, Sources chrétiennes 66 (Paris, Editions du Cerf, 1960). Hereafter I abbreviate the series title Sources chrétiennes as SC.

³² Colin Morris, *The Discovery of the Individual 1050-1200* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1987), 79.

³³ According to Marcia Colish, by the twelfth century Seneca was the most popular classical writer after Cicero. Marcia Colish, *The Stoic Tradition from Antiquity to the Early Middle Ages* (Leiden, Netherlands: E.J. Brill, 1990), 17.

similar to Seneca's *Epistulae morales*. The educative model, that of a master instructing in matters pertaining to inner experience and morals, is the same.

There is reason to believe that the Letters was conceived as a stand-alone group of texts. In his codicological reevaluation of the manuscripts, Erik Kwakkel observes that the oldest manuscript, manuscript A, is a composite consisting of three different books, one of which contains Hadewijch's prose letters, another the Book of Visions, and the third the Songs and Letters in Rhyme. The composite nature of this manuscript and the lack of evidence indicating that the books are in a specific order suggests that, in the first quarter of the fourteenth century, Hadewijch's writings were not regarded as a unified whole.³⁴ If the prose letters were copied into a separate book, this may be an indication that the compiler saw the Letters functioning independently of Hadewijch's other writings. Even though Hadewijch's Letters have come down as a collection, in this chapter I primarily analyze Hadewijch's prose letters individually because the letters are separate texts written for different occasions.

In my analysis I differentiate where possible between letters that were occasioned by the reader's conduct, which Hadewijch seeks to encourage or correct by giving counsel, and letters that are of a general nature, which exhort the reader to follow precepts that are necessary for all who would serve God and grow to perfection. Texts that show no marks of epistolarity I assume to have been inserted among the letters when the book was compiled or it is possible that some texts were appended to individual letters, such as the appending of Letter 15 to Letter 14.³⁵ Although all of the letters in the collection can be categorized as letters of spiritual guidance, they use a variety of persuasive appeals, which makes it possible to differentiate the ways through which Hadewijch seeks to change the reader's disposition. In addition to exhortations,

³⁴ Kwakkel, "The Middle Dutch Hadewijch Manuscripts."

³⁵ In addition to Letter 15, Letters 10, 20, 22 and 28 show no indications of being letters. Letter 30 can be included in this group, although it is closer to a sermon than a devotional tract.

three additional ways of are identified in Letter 3 where Hadewijch explains that support may be given to another “with services or counsels and...with consolations or threats.”³⁶ *Services* (*dienst*) describes doctrinal instruction given at the request of the reader, whereas *counsel* (*raden*) is advice based on what Hadewijch judges to be the need of the reader, and *consolation* (*troest*) is the mode she uses to provide support to readers who are struggling in their commitment to the ascetic lifestyle of the community.³⁷ Hadewijch uses multiple modes in her letters as a way of using her own behavior as an *exemplo* used in conjunction with *doctrina*.

To date, Hadewijch’s epistolarity has been neglected in the study of the Letters and Letters in Rhyme Her letters are praised, but not analyzed, in the collection of essays on women’s epistolarity in the Middle Ages edited by Karen Cherewatuk and Ulrike Wiethaus, despite the editors’ acknowledgement that the title of their edition is derived from one of Hadewijch’s letters.³⁸ In their otherwise insightful essay, the only attention Mommaers and Willaert give to the subject of Hadewijch’s epistolarity is their claim that she uses the letter’s first-person to second-person manner of address to exclude from the relationship between writer and listener anyone referred to in the third person.³⁹ Daróczy’s study of Hadewijch’s use of rhythm and syntax demonstrates how meaning in the prose letters is produced and potentially perceived by listeners at the sentence level, but she makes no attempt to interpret her findings in the context of medieval epistolary theory, even though rhythm and syntactical arrangement are presented in the *artes* as central to the art of letter writing. Furthermore, she does not acknowledge that medieval epistolary prose style is premised on an aural model of reception and that Hadewijch’s

³⁶ *CW*, Letter 3, 52; *HB*, Brief 3, 30. “Jn dienste ochte in rade, Jn troeste ochte in dreighene.”

³⁷ Letter 12 and Letter in Rhyme 1.

³⁸ *Dear Sister: Medieval Women and the Epistolary Genre*, ed. Karen Cherewatuk and Ulrike Wiethaus (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1993) 15.

³⁹ This claim for Hadewijch’s use of epistolarity is really only an extension of Willaert’s argument concerning her use of pronouns in the Liedereren. See Frank Willaert, *De poëtica van Hadewijch in de Strofische Gedichten* (Utrecht, Netherlands: HES, 1984), 316-321, 326-334.

use of rhythm is not necessarily informed by music theory. Given Daróczy's disinterest in the letters' formal characteristics, it is not surprising that she repeats Mommaers and Willaert's claim about Hadewijch's epistolarity without elaboration.⁴⁰ This chapter, therefore, redresses the inadequate attention given epistolary style *and* form in the study of Hadewijch's prose letters in order to develop a fuller explanation of how style and form relate to the content as it pertains to emotional experience and affective attachment to God.

To conduct my analysis of Hadewijch's epistolarity best, I have divided this chapter into four sections. In section two, which follows the present section, I identify the literary models Hadewijch uses and their socio-religious significance for her community. I then consider the medieval reception of Paul's epistles in order to prove that they were associated with paraenetic exhortation and that Hadewijch may have been aware of this. Next, in section three, I compare the ways Hadewijch and Paul present their moral guidance using paraenesis in order to establish more definitively Hadewijch's use of Paul's epistles as a model of epistolary practice. Joris Reynaert notes that Hadewijch's quotations from Paul's epistles tend towards "the ascetic and caritative aspect" which implicates the "*imitatio*' [in Hadewijch's writings] as an ethical practice."⁴¹ The frequent allusions to Paul's letters to the Corinthians, Galatians, and Ephesians reveal how his ethics shape her thought regarding the centrality of love in all relationships and the moral obligations she and her followers have towards one another and towards people outside their community. Pauline ethics underpins her conception of charity and the way that this conception is manifested through her epistolarity.⁴²

⁴⁰ *Groet gheruchte van dien wondere: spreken, zwijgen en zingen bij Hadewijch*, 33, 48.

⁴¹ Reynaert, "Mystische Bibelinterpretation bei Hadewijch," 127. "[D]er asketische und karitative Aspekt, den die *imitatio* als ethische Praxis impliziert, kommt in einigen Zitaten aus den Briefen des hl. Paulus zum Ausdruck."

⁴² 1 Corinthians 13:7 "Bear all things, believe all things, hope for all things, endure all things" (*omnia suffert omnia credit omnia sperat omnia sustinet*).

In the third section of this chapter I analyze the model of community upon which Hadewijch's epistolarity is founded. This model is based in her conception of the *vita apostolica* and possibly Victorine texts. After examining the model of community which she puts forth, I consider the educative experience of living in this environment. It is in the fourth section that I examine how Hadewijch's epistolarity reflects her communitarian thought and method of teaching. Because the arrangement of Hadewijch's discourse in her letters generally follows the order proscribed in contemporary *artes dictandi*, I use several manuals to contextualize the theoretical function of the different sections of her letters, with particular emphasis on the *salutatio* and *petitio*. In addition to rhythmic patterns, she uses rhetorical ornaments in the *narratio* and *petitio* to simulate in the reader what is being said so that the reader feels the content of the words. The fourth and final section of this chapter establishes the significance of Hadewijch's epistolary in terms of her teaching on emotional control and affective attachment in the letters and her leadership in her spiritual circle.

Throughout her letters, Hadewijch urges her readers to reform (*beter*) themselves through a process of self-scrutiny and by shaping their lives to conform to the image of Christ so that they can they render what is due to God and achieve individual perfection (*volmaaktheid*). According to her, this process of reform is accomplished by reaching a state of emotional stability or inner clam that then enables the performance of "moral virtues" (*sedeleken doechden*) under the direction of a rule (*ordenen*) of reason. Emotional stability requires that one look upward towards God and the customs of heaven and away from behaviors that are engaged in for the sake of personal satisfaction and enjoyment.⁴³ The inverse of stability in Hadewijch's letters

⁴³ *CW*, Letter 2, 52; *HB*, Brief 2. 28. "Hemelsche ghewoente soudemen hier een groet deel verstaen ende pleghen die hem ghenoech ertscher seden ontrocke bi minnen bande Ende die ghenoech hadde hemelscher niede te gode Ende der broederleker minnen ten minschen in allen saken daer sijs noet hadden." See also *CW*, Letter 12, 70;

is “instability” (*onghstedicheiden*),⁴⁴ which is the Middle Dutch equivalent of the Latin *inconstantia*.⁴⁵ I argue that her characterization of her readers’ emotional state as unstable should also be associated with the monastic term *instabilitatis*, which was used to describe the mental and physical state of followers who were unable to commit to life in a spiritual community.⁴⁶ In Hadewijch’s writings, this idea refers to an emotional state more than to a commitment to a formal, institutionalized community and the avowed ethic that binds its members.

Section 2. Literary Models

In her letters Hadewijch uses a paraenetic rhetorical style to present her guidance to her readers, a style that she draws from Paul’s epistles. In the Antique tradition of epistolography to which Paul belongs, writers of paraenetic letters presented themselves as a friend to the reader or as someone more experienced and morally superior.⁴⁷ Stanley Stowers observes that paraenetic letters in antiquity encourage readers to practice certain habits and behaviors based on a model

Brief 12, *HB*, 90 and *CW*, Letter 15, 79; *HB*, Brief 15, 116, where this idea is restated using a paraphrase from Phillipians 3:20.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, Letter 6, 57; *Ibid.*, Brief 6, 46.

⁴⁵ *MNW*, s.v. “onghstedicheiden.”

⁴⁶ The first chapter of the Rule of Benedict describes a type of monk who is “always wandering and never stable” (*semper vagi et numquam stabiles*). This type differs from those who submit to a rule and the authority of an abbot in a monastery or anchorites who live alone after having learned discipline in a monastic community. Benedict of Nursia, *Benedicti Regula*, ed. Rudolph Hanslik, Corpus christianorum, series latina 75, 2nd Edition (Vienna, Austria: Hoelder-Pichler-Tempsky, 1977), chap.1, para.11, 20. Hereafter when I refer to this text, I abbreviate the series title Corpus christianorum, series latina as CCSL.

⁴⁷ Stanley Stowers observes that, among the rhetoricians of antiquity, paraenesis referred to the content, which is moral wisdom, or it could refer to a process of teaching that utilized words of dissuasion or exhortation to continue a particular way of life. Stanley Stowers, *Letter Writing in Greco-Roman Antiquity* (Philadelphia, PA: Westminster Press, 1986), 91.

and dissuade readers from imitating an opposing model of character.⁴⁸ David Aune identifies four characteristics of paraenesis found in the New Testament specifically:

[it] is traditional, reflecting conventional wisdom generally approved by society; 2) paraenesis is applicable to many situations; 3) paraenesis is so familiar it is often presented as a “reminder”; 4) paraenesis can be exemplified in exceptional people who are models of virtue.⁴⁹

Paraenesis in the Scriptural texts is a type of knowledge and a style of teaching. In the Middle Ages the type of knowledge Aune describes was referred to as *doctrina*, a word that denoted pastoral, rather than scholarly, knowledge, and was associated with Christ’s teaching and that of his disciples.⁵⁰ Hugh of St. Victor associates *doctrina* with *exemplo* (example) when he explains that knowledge of the virtues is obtained “by example and by instruction when we read the deeds of the saints, [and] by instruction when we learn what they have said that pertains to our disciplining.”⁵¹ The *doctrina* that Hadewijch imparts to her readers is given *docere et verbo* (by word and example) in a Pauline manner because her epistolarity enacts the doctrinal precepts that she imparts to her readers. Hadewijch’s use of Paul’s paraenetic style reveals her apostolic self-identification and the continuity she sees between the needs of her community and the early churches addressed by Paul as well as her understanding of the mentoring relationship between a spiritual leader and her followers.

⁴⁸ Ibid, 96.

⁴⁹ *The New Testament in its Literary Environment* (Philadelphia, PA: Westminster Press, 1987), 191.

⁵⁰ Nicolette Zeeman, *Piers Plowman and the Medieval Discourse of Desire* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 136.

⁵¹ Hugh of Saint Victor, *The Didascalicon of Hugh of Saint Victor*, trans. Jerome Taylor (1961; repr., New York: Columbia University Press, 1991), bk.5, chap. 7, 128. Translation modified. “[H]aec vero scientia duobus modis comparatur, videlicet exemplo et doctrina; exemplo, quando sanctorum facta legimus; doctrina, quando eorum dicta ad disciplinam nostram pertinentia discimus.” Hugh of Saint Victor, *Hugonis de Sancto Victore Didascalicon de studio legendi: A Critical Text*, Edited by Charles Henry Buttmer (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University Press, 1939), bk.5, chap.7, lines 18-21, 105.

Because scholars have largely focused on Pauline themes and quotations in Hadewijch's writings, the influence of his paraenetic style of instruction on the *Brieven* has gone unnoticed. Bernard McGinn, for example, sees the two connected as writers only through their participation in the "long tradition of [didactic] Christian epistolography."⁵² McGinn's passing regard for their literary relationship is telescoped by Joris Reynaert's cataloging of the quotations and paraphrases from Paul's epistles in Hadewijch's works.⁵³ Through careful study, Reynaert demonstrates that Hadewijch frequently draws from Paul's texts in the *Letters*, much more so than in the *Book of Visions*, *Songs*, and *Letters in Rhyme*, but his intentional focus on Hadewijch's literal fidelity to her sources leads him to exclude the less overt influence of Paul's paraenetic manner of offering guidance.⁵⁴

Paul's rhetorical influence also goes unnoticed in Paul Mommaers and Frank Willaert's hypothesis concerning Hadewijch's motives in choosing to use the epistolary genre. Mommaers and Willaert argue both that Hadewijch chose the epistle form in part because of its association with friendship and that its flexibility allowed her to turn her experience into an argument to persuade others to undertake a similar lifestyle.⁵⁵ Mommaers and Willaert's inattention to the symbolism of the epistle in Scripture, liturgy, and the *vita apostolica* movement causes them to overlook the possibility that Hadewijch chose the letter form because of its association with divine election, apostolic mission, and the early church. As a reformist group striving to return to the customs of the early church as described in Paul's epistles and in *Acts*, the *Beguines* were, in essence, a community of the Epistle. This historical consciousness explains why Hadewijch

⁵²Bernard McGinn, *The Flowering of Mysticism* (New York: The Crossroad Publishing Company, 1991), 201.

⁵³Reynaert, *De Beeldspraak van Hadewijch* (Tielt, Belgium: Lannoo, 1981), 405-407, 412-413.

⁵⁴Reynaert, "Mystische Bibelinterpretation bei Hadewijch," 123-137.

⁵⁵Mommaers and Willaert, "Mystisches Erlebnis," 117-151. Mommaers builds on this article in *Hadewijch: Writer, Beguine, Love Mystic*, 50-57.

would seek to advance her apostolate among her followers from whom she was separated using letters written in a Pauline tone.

There is reason to believe that some of Hadewijch's correspondents were able to read Latin⁵⁶ and knew Paul's epistles well. Hadewijch refers to his teaching on charity in Letter 14 without paraphrasing it,⁵⁷ and, when she quotes the Vulgate version of Titus 2:12 without attribution in Letter 12, she assumes that her reader will recognize the similarities between the event occasioning her letter and the one to which Paul's letter responds.⁵⁸ Even without direct access to a Bible, Hadewijch's correspondents would have encountered Paul's epistles in the *Lectio epistolae* of the Mass. His epistles dominated the readings for Sundays and feast days and take up three-fourths of the texts included in the major medieval lectionaries.⁵⁹

Reynaert has shown that Hadewijch was thoroughly familiar with Paul's epistles, and that she likely had access to a copy of the Vulgate in Latin.⁶⁰ Reading Paul in the Vulgate could have exposed her to Jerome's introduction to the epistles and the anonymous prologue describing Paul's writings that were included in copies of the Vulgate produced from the ninth century onwards.⁶¹ Jerome claims that Paul's epistles have a paraenetic relationship with the Gospels:

[W]hy would the apostle wish to send these letters to individual churches after the Gospels, which are a supplement to the Law, that provide us fully with examples

⁵⁶ She urges the recipient of Letter 24 to "give entrance into your heart to all the words you hear from him in the Scriptures, whether you read them yourself, or I, or someone else repeats them to you in Dutch or Latin" (*CW*, 105). "Ende alle die woerde die ghi hoert van hem inde scripture, ende die ghi selue leset Ende die ic u gheseghet hebbe ende die u yeman seghet in dietsche Ochte in latine" (*HB*, Brief 24, 200).

⁵⁷ "[C]onsider the lofty essence of eternal charity, [and] the characteristics Saint Paul ascribes to it," *CW*, Letter 14, 76. "[G]hedinct der hogher wesene vander eweliker caritaten, wat seden sinte Pauwels seghet dat si heuet," *HB*, Brief 14, 108.

⁵⁸ She uses the same quote in Latin in Letter in Rhyme 14, 84.

⁵⁹ Karlfried Froehlich, "Romans 8:1-11: Pauline Theology in Medieval Interpretation," *Faith and History: Essays in Honor of Paul W. Meyer*, eds. John T. Carroll, Charles H. Cosgrove, and E. Elizabeth Johnson (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1990), 240.

⁶⁰ Reynaert, "Mystische Bibelinterpretation bei Hadewijch," 129.

⁶¹ Karlfried Froehlich, "Paul and the Late Middle Ages," *A Companion to Paul in the Reformation*, ed. R. Ward Hooker (Leiden, Netherlands: Brill, 2009), 23.

and commandments for living? The reason is evident: that he might respond to the beginnings of a newborn church with its new conditions; that he might cut back immediate and widespread sins, and anticipate impending problems.⁶²

Karlfried Froehlich argues that this simplistic preface, along with an equally reductive introduction by the anonymous writer, led readers of the Vulgate to associate Paul's epistles with "little more than ethical rules and paraenetical exhortation."⁶³ These Vulgate paratexts are not alone, however, in according a paraenetic function to Paul's writings. Peter Abelard's twelfth-century commentary on the epistle to the Romans evidences that Paul's writings were similarly received among exegetes. In agreement with the Vulgate paratexts, Abelard regards Paul's epistles as exhortations to obey the Gospel commandments: "Since it is the intention of the Gospel to teach, the intention of the Epistles or the Acts of the Apostles is to move us towards obedience to the Gospel, or to strengthen our belief in those things which the Gospel teaches us."⁶⁴ Abelard and the Vulgate sources both point directly to the paraenetic nature of the epistles in their explanation of the relationship among the New Testament texts. Paul seeks to change the moral behavior of his correspondents by exhorting them to follow the teachings of the Gospels. Hadewijch may have participated in this reception of Paul's epistles and associated this rhetorical style with his reasons for writing.

⁶² "[Q]uaeritur quare post evangelia, quae supplementum legis sunt et in quibus nobis exempla et praecepta vivendi plenissime digesta sunt, voluerit apostolus has epistulas ad singulas ecclesias destinare. Hac autem causa factum videtur, ut scilicet initia nascentis ecclesiae novis causis existentibus praemuniret, ut et praesentia atque orientia reseccaret vitia, et post futuras excluderet quaestiones." *Prologus in epistulas Pauli a quibusdam Pelagio adscriptus*, in *Novum Testamentum Domini nostril Iesu Christi Latini secundum editionem sancti Hieronymi*, 3 vols., ed. John Wordsworth and Henry Julian White (Oxford UK: Clarendon, 1913), Vol.1,1. Translation mine.

⁶³ Froehlich, "Paul and the Late Middle Ages," 23.

⁶⁴ Peter Abelard, *Commentary on St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans*, trans. A.J. Minnis and A.B. Scott, in *Medieval Literary Theory and Criticism c.1100-c.1375*, ed. A.J. Minnis and A.B. Scott with the assistance of David Wallace (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), 104-105. "[C]um sit intentio Euangelii docere, hanc intentionem epistolae uel Actus apostolorum tenent ut ad obediendum Euangelio nos moueant uel in his quae Euangelium docet nos confirmant." *Commentaria in epistolam Pauli ad Romanos*, ed. E.M. Buytaert, *Corpus christianorum, continuatio mediaevalis* 11 (Turnhout, Belgium: Brepols, 1969), Prologue 32-35, 42. Hereafter I will abbreviate the series title *Corpus christianorum, continuatio mediaevalis* as CCCM.

Section 3. Learning in an Informal Beguine Community

In Hadewijch's letters, members of the community are identified by their faith in God and united by the charity with which they act towards one another. Love is therefore the unifying force in all relationships within the community and proof that the Spirit dwells amongst its members. With the aid of the Spirit, Hadewijch claims, man will "fulfill all justice and will desire that, in himself and in all of us, God may accomplish the just works of his Nature."⁶⁵ The grammatical parallelism of the phrase "in himself and in all of us" implies that man will desire to perform works of justice equally in himself and in the lives of his brethren, which evokes Jesus's second commandment to "Love your neighbor as yourself." Explaining in Letter 12 why the members of the beguine community no longer live in harmony, Hadewijch claims that the law of Love has been "violated [by] acts of injustice" (*broken bi ongherechticheden*), which caused the Spirit to depart from the community.⁶⁶ Without the aid of the Spirit, man cannot work justice, and therefore will be unable to love God as God intends. Friendship, therefore, in Hadewijch's letters means acting with charity towards one another peaceably and in good conscience.

When Hadewijch advises her readers to do or not to do something, she is giving them "counsel" (*raden*), a word that means to assist someone with advice.⁶⁷ The *MNW* notes that *raden* is equivalent to the Latin *consilium*.⁶⁸ Several Cistercian works that Hadewijch appears to have known, namely Bernard of Clairvaux's *On Grace and Free Choice*, and William of Saint

⁶⁵ *CW*, Letter 13, 74; *HB*, Brief 13, 102. "Ende hi sal begheren dat god volwerke alle die gherechte werken van siere naturen in hem seluen ende in ons allen."

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, Letter 12, 71; *Ibid.*, Brief 12, 92.

⁶⁷ *MNW*, s.v. "raden."

⁶⁸ In the Vulgate, *Spiritus consilii* is one of the seven gifts of the Spirit. Isaiah 11.2: "And the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him: the spirit of wisdom, and of understanding, the spirit of counsel, and of fortitude, the spirit of knowledge, and of godliness" (*[E]t requiescet super eum spiritus Domini spiritus sapientiae et intellectus spiritus consilii et fortitudinis spiritus scientiae et pietatis*).

Thierry's *The Nature and Dignity of Love* (*De natura et dignitate amoris*) and *Commentary on the Song of Songs* (*Expositio super Canticum canticorum*) present a theology of *consilium* that helps to clarify terminology used by Hadewijch in her doctrine of spiritual growth. Additionally, Bernard's and William's theology clarifies why Hadewijch is justified in counseling her readers, and her role in helping them to learn to act in accord with God's will. Because of this, it is worthwhile reviewing these Cistercian treatises before using them to explain aspects of Hadewijch's pedagogical practices and the way they influence her epistolary.

Both Bernard and William believe that one who has received God's grace and become enlightened is obligated to assist others and that such assistance is necessary for the unenlightened. Yet, as Bernard points out, "it is easier to know what one ought to do than to do it; for it is one thing to lead the blind and another thing to provide a vehicle for the weary."⁶⁹ This distinction he is making is between a spiritual teacher who only instructs in the proper way, and one who not only indicates the right direction but also communicates the good of what he teaches (*docere verbo et exemplo*). In Bernard's theology the human teacher is a mediator through which a person is anointed with the Spirit. By his acts and words, the teacher evidences his own anointment which the novice experiences through association and desires to be anointed, too.⁷⁰ When exercised by the individual, free choice in Bernard's theology is an act of judgment, and it is used to discern (*iudicium*) between right and wrong actions.⁷¹ Counsel is therefore

⁶⁹ Bernard of Clairvaux, *On Grace and Free Choice*, chap.1, para.1, 53. "Siquidem non est eiusdem facilitatis scire quod faciendum sit et facere, quoniam et diversa sunt caeco ducatum ac fesso praebere vehiculum." *De gratia et libero arbitrio* in *SBO*, vol. 3, ed. Jean Leclercq and Henri W. Rochais (Rome, Italy: Editiones Cistercienses, 1963), chap. 1, para. 1, 165-166.

⁷⁰ Bernard of Clairvaux, *Sermons on the Song of Songs*, vol.1, trans. Kilian Walsh (Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian Publications, 1971) Sermon 14, section 4, para. 6., 102-103. *Sermones super Cantica Canticorum* in *Sancti Bernardi Opera*, vol. 1, ed. Jean Leclercq and Henri W. Rochais (Rome, Italy: Editiones Cistercienses, 1957), Sermo 14, section, para 4, section 6, 80.

⁷¹ Bernard of Clairvaux, *On Grace and Free Choice*, chap. 4, para. 11, 67; *SBO*, vol.3, *De gratia et libero arbitrio*, chap. 4, para.11, 173-174.

related to judgment in that it verifies what is permitted.⁷² “Free counsel” is freedom from sin, possessed by those few “who have crucified their flesh with its passions and desires,”⁷³ which causes them to accept with pleasure what counsel directs them to regard as correct and proper. When someone has received the gift of counsel, which is available to all Christians, he must inspire his brethren when possible “with encouragement [and] help them with advice.”⁷⁴

William’s explanation of the necessity of counseling others is more detailed than that of Bernard. In *The Nature and Dignity of Love* William describes an initial, “youthful,” stage of love where the novice’s zeal is not yet tempered by his reason. The novice’s judgment at this point is self-indulgent and his affections are disordered, causing emotional instability. Because of this he must depend on the judgment of a senior member of the community, one “who is known for certain to learn from God when he teaches men.”⁷⁵ Through his ability to discern what God teaches this senior directs the novice by helping him to know himself and by instructing him in the correct way to love God. When the novice begins to discern the will of God, God becomes the novice’s teacher and the guidance of the human teacher becomes less important. Learning to discern God’s will requires the novice to practice the virtues of faith, hope and charity, which affects a change away from emotional attachments and self-will. Commenting on Romans 12:1-3, William explains this process:

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Ibid., chap. 4, para. 12, 68; *SBO, De gratia et libero arbitrio*, chap. 4, para.11, 174.

⁷⁴ Bernard of Clairvaux, *Sermons on the Song of Songs*, Sermon 12, section 3, para. 5, 81. Translation modified. “confortat alloquiis, consiliis informat.” *SBO*, vol.2, *Sermones super Cantica Canticorum*, ed. Jean Leclercq and Henri W. Rochais (Rome, Italy: Editiones Cistercienses, 1957), Sermon 12, section 3, para. 5, 63.

⁷⁵ William of Saint Thierry, *The Nature and Dignity of Love*, trans. Thomas X. Davis (Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian Publications, 1981), chap. 1, para. 7, 60. “maxime si seniore[m] talem habet de quo certum sit quod a Deo discit quod homines docet.” *De natura et dignitate amoris*, ed. Stanislaus Ceglár and Paul Verdeyen, *Corpus christianorum, continuatio mediaevalis* 88 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2003), chap. 2, para.7, 182. Hereafter I will abbreviate the series title *Corpus christianorum, continuatio mediaevalis* as CCSM when referring to this volume.

When our affections are restrained from the love of the world, and when not being conformed to the word has become a reality in us, then renewal in the newness of our perception will follow immediately. We shall no longer imitate our neighbor as a model, and live by the authority of a better man, for God did not say of man, “Let us make man according to a model,” but “Let us make man according to our image and likeness.” The result will be that we ourselves shall finally begin to “ascertain what is good and acceptable and perfect will of God.” When a man is renewed in mind and perceives the will of God with understanding, he does not need another man to show him how to imitate his model, but with God himself showing him, he ascertains what is the will of God and his good pleasure.⁷⁶

(Cum ergo cohibitae fuerint affectiones ab amore saeculi, completumque fuerit in nobis nouitate sensus nostri; nec iam erimus secundum genus tamquam imitantes proximum, et ex hominis melioris auctoritate viuentes. Neque enim dixit Deus de homine: Fiat homo secundum genus, sed: *Faciamus hominem ad imaginem et similitudinem nostram*, sed ut nos ipsi incipiamus aliquando probare *quae sit voluntas Dei bona, et beneplacens, et perfecta*. *Mente quippe renouatus et conspiciens intellectam veritatem Dei, homine demonstrante probat ipse quae sit voluntas Dei, et bonum beneplacitum eius.*)⁷⁷

The spiritual teacher seeks to help the novice achieve this inner stillness by helping him understand himself and the state of his affections. By accepting the grace of Christ, the novice begins to understand the teacher’s use reasoned discernment to perceive the utility

⁷⁶ William of Saint Thierry *Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*, trans. John Baptist Hasbrouck (Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian Publications, 1980), bk. 7, chap. 12, 231-232.

⁷⁷ William of Saint Thierry, *Expositio super Epistolam ad Romanos*, ed. Paul Verdeyen, *Corpus christianorum, continuatio mediaevalis* 86 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1989), bk. 7, chap. 12, lines 72-83, 166-167.

of observances “in their reality and not in their external appearances.”⁷⁸ This affects a movement from habit instilled by *disciplina* to acting spontaneously with the Spirit, thus enabling the novice to reach full maturity in Christ.

Hadewijch’s counseling practices in her letters are founded upon this theology and its goals for spiritual formation, and it is a significant influence on her epistolary in terms of how she negotiates her role as a spiritual authority while she seeks not to lead her readers to be dependent upon her. Hadewijch’s regards the guidance she offers as a service that is intended to assist her readers according to what she believes are their needs at present.⁷⁹ Offering counsel in her letters is therefore an expression of her compassion (*ontfermherticheit*) and charity (*karitate*) for others and an indication that her judgment is in accord with God’s will for those whom he has chosen.⁸⁰ His having bestowed upon Hadewijch the gift of enlightened reason (*verlichter redenen*) enables her to discern what is lacking in herself and in her intended readers.⁸¹ The justification she gives for her guidance in the Letters is the same as that attested to in Vision 4, however, her authority in the Letters is not contingent on the witness of the Book of Visions. Hadewijch repeatedly states in the letters and letters in rhyme that she does not intend to teach the reader how to love but to “point out the way” (*der minnen wise*) to Love.⁸² Directing the reader includes instructing her in conduct and habits of thought.⁸³ When she explains her

⁷⁸ William of Saint Thierry, *The Nature and Dignity of Love*, chap. 2, para. 9, 62. “Tunc in re, non specie / horum omnium et similium percipiet utilitatem.” *De natura et dignitate amoris*, CCCM 88 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2003), chap. 2, para.9, 184

⁷⁹ *CW*, Letter 29, 115; *HB*, Brief 29, 238.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, Letter 6, 59; *Ibid.*, Brief 6, 52.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, Letter 29, 114; *Ibid.*, Brief 29, 236.

⁸² *Ibid.*, Letter in Rhyme 1, lines 105-108, 313; *Ibid.*, Rijmbrief 1, lines 105-108 7; *CW*; Letter 24, 105; *HB*, Brief 24, 202.

⁸³ Cf. Letter 12: “By the emotional attraction of wordly joy one forgets the narrow ways that belong to high Love, and the beautiful behavior, the gracious bearing, and the well-ordered service that belong to sublime Love” (*CW*, 72). “Bi affectien van bliscapen verghet men der nauwer weghe die ter hogher Minnen behoren ende der scoenre seden ende dies suets ghelaets Ende der wel gheordender dienste die ter hoechster Minnen behoren” (*HB*, Brief 12, 94).

intention in Letter in Rhyme 3, “I wish to write something / By which we may learn to recognize / Great signs of spiritual love,”⁸⁴ her role in the educative experience is clarified. Hadewijch is an intermediary, one who helps her followers to discern God’s will with the hope that they will eventually realize their ability to do so without her assistance.

Hadewijch’s decision to present her doctrinal guidance paraenetically correlates with the Cistercian fathers’ theology of counseling in that by framing her guidance as a reminder, she emphasizes that the reader is capable of acting without Hadewijch’s help. A common characteristic of Paul’s paraenetic exhortations is that they assure the addressees of their own capability to learn to love God, a characteristic that Hadewijch adopts. In the letters that deal with emotional instability caused by interpersonal relationships, Hadewijch’s guidance is presented as an expression of concern regarding the misguided actions of her readers and her desire for them to understand the causes of their behavior. In Letter 6, her longest analysis of this topic, she warns her reader, who is described as experiencing melancholia (*swaerheit*) and baseness (*nederheit*),⁸⁵ that “I wish to put you on your guard this time against one thing from which much harm results” before proceeding to treat the topic of fidelity among people.⁸⁶ A similar sense of urgency is conveyed by the disclosure formula used in Letter 4, a letter apparently written to move the reader away from a state of grief and self-doubt: “My motive for telling you that reason errs in all these points, which people try to present in a favorable light, is

⁸⁴ *CW*, Letter in Rhyme 3.50-52, 322. Translation modified. “Van ere willic een deel bescriuen / Daermen van gheestegher minnen / Grote tekene ane mach kinnen” (*HM*, Rijmbrief 3.50-52, 22). Mechthild of Magdeburg claims a similar intent and purpose for one of her short meditative works. “Dear friend of God, I have written for you this path of love. May God infuse it in your heart! Amen.” Mechthild of Magdeburg, *The Flowing Light of the Godhead*, trans. Frank Tobin (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1998), bk. 1, chap. 44, 62.

⁸⁵ Hart translates *nederheit* as “cowardice,” but I believe that “baseness” is more accurate in the context of this letter because it means a lack of confidence in one’s abilities and low self-esteem which impede moral development. *MNW*, s.v. “nederheit.”

⁸⁶ *CW*, Letter 6, 56; *HB*, Brief VI, 44) “Nu willic u waernen eens dincs daer vele scaden ane leghet.” The last section of Letter 5 is a *petitio* made with “the true fidelity of love” (*gherechter trouwen van Minnen*) (*CW*, Letter 5, 56; *HB*, Brief 5, 42).

that they are important points, and reason by its nature throws light on each of these points according to their value.”⁸⁷ In these two letters the readers have allowed the negative passions they are feeling to weaken their wills, causing those readers to act incorrectly. The frank tone of these disclosure formulas conveys the urgency of the knowledge she wishes to impart as well as the immediate need for the recipients to reform themselves. An ethical appeal underlies these examples, which is amplified when the disclosure connects the writing and transmission of the letter with the love Hadewijch feels for the recipients, such is the case in Letter 8, which, like Letter 4, also treats of the salutary benefits of failing and suffering. In Letter 8 Hadewijch explains fear (*vrese*) as a positive emotion and one which ensures a proper disposition (*houtse*). She ends her letter saying, “I cannot say much more to you now, because many things oppress me... Were it possible I would gladly tell you.”⁸⁸ From an ethical perspective, her desire to correct the beliefs of her correspondents is similar to the concern Paul expresses in 1 Corinthians 10:1 “For I would not have you ignorant, brethren, that our fathers were all under the cloud: and all passed through the sea”⁸⁹ and 1 Thessalonians 4:13 “And we will not have you ignorant brethren, concerning them that are asleep, that you be not sorrowful, even as others who have no hope.”⁹⁰ Like Hadewijch’s, Paul’s guidance is motivated by a wish to see both that his spiritual kin are equipped with proper understanding of how one should assist others and that his readers do not waiver in their commitment to God when they experience negative emotions.

⁸⁷ Ibid., Letter 4, 55; Ibid., Brief 4, 38. “Dat ic segghe dat redene doelt in al desen poenten die de liede pleghen te verlichtene, Dat es omme dat dit die hoghe poenten sijn ende redene elken van desen poenten bi natueren wiset na sine werdicheit.”

⁸⁸ Ibid., Letter 8, 66; Ibid., Brief 8, 72. “Jc en mach u nu niet vele meer segghen, omme dat mi vele dinghen verladen hebben... Mocht sijn ic sprake u gherne.”

⁸⁹ “[N]olo enim vos ignorare fratres quoniam patres nostri omnes sub nube fuerunt et omnes mare transierunt.”

⁹⁰ “[N]olumus autem vos ignorare fratres de dormientibus ut non contristemini sicut et ceteri qui spem non habent.”

Presented as an expression of her concern for her readers, Hadewijch's guidance in these letters explains the relationship between negative emotions, the will, and works. This concern serves to convey the relevance of the doctrine in the reader's life at present and is a direct appeal made through the language of affection among spiritual friends. The relationship between the doctrinal section's appeal to the mind and the exhortative language's appeal to the emotions is exemplified in Letter 18. This letter begins by positioning the reader as a child who has "great need of wisdom," and does not know it. What follows is a doctrinal exposition of the relationship between love and reason that is partially adapted from William's *The Nature and Dignity of Love*. Before imparting her advice, Hadewijch argues that the reader needs to embrace the liberty of the law of love by sublimating her will to God's, thus remaining apart from earthly emotional attractions, so that she may act with moderation. The appeal to the reader stresses the importance of identifying with people who practice this asceticism:

You must know this liberty, and you must know those who serve for its sake.

People judge all sorts of things for themselves, and in this way, under the delusion of greater liberty, they scorn the works of Love...And so as to neglect the commandments of Love, some issue contrary commandments.⁹¹

Hadewijch avoids criticizing her reader directly, and she does not identify specific parties responsible for the spread of erroneous practices, if, indeed, she had an actual person in mind. She uses generalizations to differentiate the beguine community from the majority culture of the aliens who do not submit to the law of love. This "majority of souls," she

⁹¹ *CW*, 87-88; *HB*, Brief 18, 144. "Ende dese vriheit suldi bekinnen, ende diere omme dienen seldi bekinnen. Die liede maken menegherande raet bi hen seluen, daerse der Minnen werken bi versmeden In ghelikenissen van groter vriheit, Ende dat doense oec om grote vroetheit. Ende selke ghebieden ghebode daer ieghen om der Minnen ghebode te lateen."

claims, have gone “astray” and accepted less than the full enjoyment of love.⁹² In this instance and elsewhere⁹³ paraenetic speech takes the form of *sermo conversis*, intended to bring about the spiritual reorientation of the reader by correcting moral errors and exhorting the reader to perform the virtues. Indirectly referring to the failings of her readers in these letters, Hadewijch’s tone is non-confrontational as she distinguishes between the praxis of people outside her circle and her counsel.

Presenting her guidance as a reminder, Hadewijch reinforces the idea that the reader is a member of an elite community who has a special obligation to enact the doctrine Hadewijch imparts.⁹⁴ This is evident when she assures her readers of her belief in their abilities, using Pauline confidence formulas after the doctrinal exposition in the *narratio*. Hadewijch appears to have written Letter 2⁹⁵ to a woman who was sorrowful because she felt that God was absent from her.⁹⁶ Hadewijch’s language of empathy and sincerity encourages the reader to accept her guidance as borne out of experience and to avail herself of the wisdom that Hadewijch is offering:

Although, too, you sometimes feel such affliction in your heart that it seems to
you [that] you are forsaken by God, do not be discouraged by it. For I verily say

⁹² Ibid., Letter 6, 60; Ibid., Brief 6, 56. “Want het dolen nu de menechste in schine van heilegher begherten, ende nemen wel haren paraclijc van enen wel nederen troeste, mochte hi hen werden.”

⁹³ The conversion motif of turning towards God is found in Letters 2, 6, 10, and 25.

⁹⁴ *CW*, Letter 18, 86. “This is your real debt, which, according to the truth of your nature, you owe to God and to those with whom you live in him—thus to love God in simplicity and seek after nothing but this single Love who has chosen us for herself alone”. “Dit es uwe gherechte scout, die ghi gode schuldech sijt van uwen gherechten wesene Ende hen dien du met hem best: Dus enichlike gode te Minnen ende els niet te onderwindene dan der enigher Minnen, die ons te hare vercoren heuet,” *HB*, Brief 18, 138.

⁹⁵ This letter may be a continuation of Letter 1. Hadewijch ends the first letter lamenting that she lacks the sweetness of God. Functionally, this is a humility topos intended to convey that a person must maintain faith and endure suffering. The second letter begins by directing the reader to scrutinize herself to identify where she has failed because of self-will and sadness, which are the same faults that Hadewijch claims to have suffered from in the first letter. When the letters are read together, it becomes clear that Hadewijch uses her own experience in terms of her self-understanding and humility as a model and basis for the guidance that she gives in Letter 2.

⁹⁶ *CW*, Letter 2, 48. “But is true, as I well know: A person often grows sad when he is without his Beloved and cannot tell if she is growing closer to God.” Translation modified. *HB*, Brief 2, 16, “Mer dats waer, dat wetic[h] wel, dat hi dicke drouet dien sins ghebrect Ende hi dan niet en weet weder hi naket soe verret, dat es wel recht.”

to you: Whatever misery we endure with good will and for God is pleasing to God in every respect.⁹⁷

Hadewijch's concessive acknowledgement of the woman's feelings in the first sentence and her description of these feelings imply that Hadewijch understands the "doubtful fear" (*twiuelenden varen*) which they cause concerning a person's ability to conform to God's will. Maintaining that she speaks "verily" (*waerleke*) implies that her advice is based on some form of truth, which in this instance is both Hadewijch's experience and, more significantly, the Truth of Christ's suffering when he lived as man. After she gives her counsel, she reassures the reader while recognizing the reader's need for guidance.⁹⁸

But you have no need of such help. For you began early and in essential matters have not so refused anything to God that he will not lead you himself to his Being, on condition that you abandon yourself to him. But I will tell you the help that is fitting for you: Follow the demand of your heart, to live in God alone.⁹⁹

By assuring the reader that she is already equipped to endure the misery that she feels, Hadewijch encourages her to realize her potential by persevering. She gives a similar assurance in Letter 12: "Be sure that I have not said all this for your sake, but because of the harm that befalls us on account of all this, here and elsewhere, and that we cannot surmount" before

⁹⁷ Ibid., 49; Ibid., 18. "Al gheuoeldi oec bi wilen ellindicheit van herten also ocht ghi van hem begheuen waert Daer omme en mestroest u seluen niet. Want ic segghe u waerleke dat alle die ellende die men doghet met goeden wille te gode die is bequame in die ghehele nature gods."

⁹⁸ Cf. 2 Corinthians 7:4: "Great is my confidence for you: great is my glorying for you. I am filled with comfort: I exceedingly abound with joy in all our tribulation" ([M]ulta mihi fiducia est apud vos multa mihi gloriatio pro vobis repletus sum consolatione superabundo gaudio in omni tribulatione nostra).

⁹⁹ *CW*, Letter 2, 50; *HB*, Brief 2, 24. "Dusghedaen onderstaen en hebdi niet te doene: Want ghi begonst vroech ende en hebbet gods niet gheloechent met uwen wesene soe hine salv selue wel gheleiden te sinen wesene op dat ghijs u te hem verlaet. Mer ic segghe u waer af ghi onderstaen moghet werden: volghet den eyschene van uwer herten enechlike leuende in gode."

reminding the reader of her responsibilities as a leader in her community.¹⁰⁰ By paraenetically framing her guidance as knowledge which the reader already possesses in this letter and in the others which I have quoted, Hadewijch reassures her readers of their abilities in times of self-doubt and emotional instability.

In Letter 12 Hadewijch uses Paul's epistles to frame the epistolary situation and her counsel. This letter is unique among the prose letters because it is the only instance where Hadewijch directly indicates that she is writing in response to a request she received from the reader, which means that this is likely a letter that was part of an actual epistolary exchange.¹⁰¹ After she distinguishes between people who are subject to their base desires and those yearn for union with God in heaven, Hadewijch imitates 1 Corinthians 1:10¹⁰² when she exhorts the reader: "Therefore I entreat you earnestly, and exhort you by the true fidelity that God is—make haste to Love, and help us in order that God may be loved; I ask you this first, above all things.¹⁰³ Paul's letter¹⁰⁴ was sent to a church riven with internal dissension. Hadewijch invokes Paul to remind the reader of the importance of supporting one another, something which she is doing by offering her counsel. The indirect, non-confrontational manner in which she presents her moral exhortation as well-intended advice enables her to avoid an overbearing tone. In this

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., Letter 12, 70. "Dat wet wel, dat ic al dit niet dore u en hebbe gheseghet, Mer dor die nose die ons hier af ghesiet Hier ende elre, die ons te onverwenlec es" (*HB*, Brief 12, 96). "Al wildi ghescreuen hebben, dus ghedanes dinghes wetti selue ghenoech watmen om volmaetheit doen soude te gode" (*HB*, Brief 12, 88). Cf. 2 Corinthians 9:1: "For concerning the ministry that is done towards the saints, it is superfluous for me to write unto you" ([N]am de ministerio quod fit in sanctos ex abundantia est mihi scribere vobis) and Galatians 5:10: "I have confidence in you in the Lord that you will not be of another mind: but he that troubleth you shall bear the judgment, whosoever he be" ([E]go confido in vobis in Domino quod nihil aliud sapietis qui autem conturbat vos portabit iudicium quicumque est ille).

¹⁰¹ Ibid. "You ask me to write to you about this"; *HB*, Brief 12, 88. "Al wildi ghescreuen hebben."

¹⁰² Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing and that there be no schisms among you: but that you be perfect in the same mind and in the same judgment. (1 Corinthians 1:10).

¹⁰³ *CW*, Letter 12, 71; *HB*, Brief 12, 90. "Dies biddic u sere ende mane bi gherechter trouwen die god es, Dat ghi u haest ter Minnen, Ende hulpet ons dat god ghemint werde, dies biddic u te vorst bouen alle dinc."

¹⁰⁴ "[O]bsecro autem vos fratres per nomen Domini nostri Iesu Christi ut id ipsum dicatis omnes et non sint in vobis scismata sitis autem perfecti in eodem sensu et in eadem sententia."

respect, her paraentic style may be a response to her followers' struggle to maintain the emotional control required to live wholly for God in the face of societal rejection, which caused them to waiver in their commitment to the strict asceticism counseled by Hadewijch. Yet at the same time Hadewijch emphasizes the reader's place in an elite community, and this carries obligations. To address this recurrent crisis in her community, she frequently presents her doctrinal guidance in reference to Jesus Christ's exemplar, thereby reframing the epistolary situation in terms of the Gospel narratives of his life and his response to the trials he faced. In Letter 15 she asserts that her readers need to follow the "way" that Jesus went as man¹⁰⁵. Christ showed the way to unification with God and that to achieve this experience man has to begin by imitating Christ in his humanity.¹⁰⁶ This is made explicit in the first letter in the collection when she wishes in the *salutatio* that God illuminate the reader so that she may know how to act virtuously.¹⁰⁷ Having expressed her good will for the reader, Hadewijch presents her advice:

The greatest radiance man can have on earth is truth in the works of justice performed in imitation of the Son, and to practice the truth with regard to all that exists, for the glory of the noble love that God is. Oh, what great radiance it is that we may let God act with his radiance! For in it love works—for himself and for all creatures, each according to its rights—whatever his goodness may promise to give it, in justice and radiance.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., Letter 15, 78; Ibid., Brief 17, 112.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., Letter 6, 59; Ibid., Brief 6, 50. For an overview of contemporary *imitatio* doctrines see Giles Constable, *Three Studies in Medieval Religious and Social Thought* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 218-237.

¹⁰⁷ On the theme of light and illumination in this letter see, Joris Reynaert, "Het mystieke 'Licht' en Hadewijch's Eerste Brief," *Ons Geestelijk Erf* 65 (1991): 3-12.

¹⁰⁸ *CW*, Letter 1, 47; *HB*, Brief 1, 10. "Die alre meeste claerheit die men hebben mach in ertrike Dat es ghewaricheit in ieghenwordeghen werken van gherechticheden, Ende van allen wesenen waerheit te pleghene omme claerheit der edelre minnen die god es. Ay hoe groete claerheit es dat Datmen, gode ghewerden late met siere claerheit! Daer in werct minne hem seluen. Ende allen creaturen elken na sijn recht Dat hem sine goetheit gheorconden mach te gheuene met gherechticheden in claerheyden."

Throughout this passage, Hadewijch uses consonance to create associative patterning between the conceptual words *clærheit* (radiance), *ghewaricheit* (truth), *gherechticheden* (justice) and *gheorconden* (*promise*). *Gherechticheden* can also be translated as *righteousness*, which allows the reader to infer that those who act in imitation of the Son will be the beneficiaries of God's righteousness. This belief is expressed in different means in Letter 6 when she concludes her description of Jesus's works and passion by quoting Psalm 85:10 verbatim: "Then mercy and truth met together, and justice and peace kissed each other."¹⁰⁹ Jesus's life as a man confirms the prophecy of the Old Testament. The implication of this unity between the two Testaments is that, if the readers follow Jesus's example, they will receive God's salvation. Hadewijch's allegorical interpretation of the psalm as a reference to the paschal mystery leads into her claim that the reader has an obligation to experience the paschal mystery in her own life¹¹⁰: "And just as Christ's humanity surrendered itself on earth to the will of the Majesty, you must here with Love surrender yourself to both in unity."¹¹¹ The underlying belief of Hadewijch's imperative in this sentence is that the unitive experience is only possible by first uniting with Jesus. This is invoked when she urges the reader to "think continually of that holy virtue which he himself is, and which he was in his way of acting when he lived as Man" in an exhortation that precedes the

¹⁰⁹ "[M]isericordia et veritas occurrerunt iustitia et pax deosculatae sunt." The Biblia Sacra Vulgata numbers this Psalm passage as 84:11.

¹¹⁰ Here I am closely paraphrasing Ewert Cousins's claim that in the Middle Ages the emphasis on the risen Christ led to the Psalms being "interpreted allegorically as referring to Christ...in foreshadowing the paschal mystery, in which the monks were participating in their own historical existence." Ewert Cousins, "The Humanity and the Passion of Christ," in *Christian Spirituality: High Middle Ages and Reformation*, ed. Jill Raitt (New York: Crossroad, 1987), 376. Cousins links the allegorical interpretation of the Psalms to their use in the Divine Office. Hadewijch refers to the liturgy of the hours in Letter 2, which allows the conclusion that she was familiar with the Divine Office and its associated Biblical texts.

¹¹¹ *CW*, Letter 6, 59; *HB*, Brief 6, 50. "Ende alsoe also die menscheit hier plach dies willen der maiesteit, Also seldi hier met Minnen haerre beider willen in een pleghen."

paraenesis.¹¹² This enjoins the reader to affectively meditate on the life and passion of Christ.

When she gives her counsel, Hadewijch is practicing the *imitatio*:

Love's greatest need and love's most urgent business I attend to first. So also does the brotherly love that lives in the charity of Jesus Christ. It supports the loved brother in whatever it may be—in joy or sadness, with severity or mildness, with services or counsels, and finally with consolations or threats. In order that God may have nothing to reproach you with, keep your ability always in readiness for his sake. Thus we touch him on the side where he cannot defend himself, for we do so with his own work and with the will of his father, who commanded him to do the work, and whose commandment he fulfilled. And that is the message of the Holy Spirit.¹¹³

To live the Gospel for Hadewijch is to imitate the humanity of Jesus, and, given this, the narrative of his works and life is the arbiter used to decide the proper response to the challenges her readers face in their struggle to maintain emotional stability. To prove her claim in Letter 6 that “noble service and suffering in exile are proper to man's condition” on earth, Hadewijch refers to the witness of the Gospels “we do not find it written anywhere that Christ ever, in his entire life, had recourse to his Father or his omnipotent Nature.”¹¹⁴ Hadewijch distinguishes herself as a person of superior virtue by claiming that Jesus told her directly that he did not ask

¹¹² Ibid., Letter 3, 52; Ibid., Brief 3, 28. “[I]c bidde u doer die gherechte doghet ende trouwe die god selue es, Dat ghi ghedinct al vren der heylegher doghet die hi selue es Ende die hi was in seden doen hi minsche leuede.”

¹¹³ Ibid., 52-3; Ibid., 28,30. “Der minnen meeste noet ende der minnen vorste onlede die oefene ic eerst; alsoe doet die broeder like minne die leuet in die caritate ihesu christi: Si ondersteet die broederlike minne welc het si in bliscapen ocht in rouwen, In crachte ochte in goede, Jn dienste ochte in rade, Jn troeste ochte in dreighene. Hier toe si dine cracht altoes ghereet om heme, alse god hier toe niet te segghene en heuet. Hier met gheraectmenne ane de side daer hi hem seluen niet gheweren en can: Want dat es met sijns selues werke ende met sijns vader wille die hem dat beual, ende hi voldeet; Ende dat es dies heilichs gheests boetscap.”

¹¹⁴ Ibid., Letter 6, 58; *HB*, Brief 6, 48. “ten leuene der menscheit behoert scone[n] dienst ende ellendich wesen. Men en vindet niet ghescreuen dat christus ye in al sinen leuene yet veruinc ane sinen vader Noch ane sine moghende nature.”

his Father for assistance.¹¹⁵ She then substantiates the witness of Scripture with her own testimony:

He said this himself to a certain person who is still living, whom he also charged to live according to his example, and to whom he himself said that this was the true justice of Love: where love is, there are always great labors and burdensome pains. Love, nevertheless, finds all pains sweet: *Qui amat non laborat*; that is, he who loves does not labor.¹¹⁶

To support her assertion, she adds a third source of doctrinal knowledge, an unattributed Latin maxim from William of St. Thierry's commentary on the Song of Songs,¹¹⁷ which Hadewijch uses to construct a syllogism by combining it with the knowledge that she claims to have received in her christophany.¹¹⁸ Even though it cannot be classified as a rhetorical ornament, the syllogism is a construct that engages the reader cognitively as she searches for the logical connection among its parts. The resemblance between Hadewijch's testimonial claim and Paul's

¹¹⁵ This is a reference to her conversation with God in her first vision. *CW*, Vision 1, 269. *HV*, Visioen 1.332-340, 50.

¹¹⁶ *CW*, Letter 6, 58; *HB*, Brief 6, 48. "Dit seide hi selue te selken minsche die noch leuet ende dien hi beual alsoe na hem te leuene, ende dien hi selue sede dat dat ware gherechticheit van Minnen: daer Minne es, daer sijn altoes grote werke ende sware pine. Nochtan es haer alle pine suete. *Qui amat non laborat*. Dat es: die mint hine arbeidet niet."

¹¹⁷ William claims "Sponsa vero sub fasciculo suo non laborat, quia amat nam qui amat, non laborat." *Guillaume de Saint-Thierry, Exposé sur le Cantique des cantiques*, ed. J. M. Déchanet and M. Dumontier, SC 82 (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1962), 83, 200. Mommaers and Willaert analyze the influence of William's Song of Songs commentary in "Mystisches Erlebnis." For Hadewijch's use of other writings by William, see Paul Verdeyen, "William of Saint Thierry's influence on the Flemish Mystics," trans. Jerry Cartaftan, in *William, Abbot of St Thierry*, ed. T. Mills et al. (Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian Publications, 1987), 240-253.

¹¹⁸ I cannot accept Willaert's argument that lines 89-99 of this letter indicate that Hadewijch's visions were regarded as indisputable sources of knowledge within her circle. He does not consider how her testimony is situated in relation to the Scriptural text and the Latin commentary as a way of proving the truth of her visionary experience. Frank Willaert, "Hadewijch und ihr Kreis in den Visioenen," 369. Of the letters containing references to her visions, only Letter 31, in my opinion, presents her knowledge of God's will in a way that does not use a corroborating source of authority or in the case of Letter 17 an attempt to document what she witnessed by use of liturgical "coordinates" from the liturgical event which initiated her vision.

profession of fidelity to Jesus' teaching in Galatians 1:12¹¹⁹ can be interpreted as an attempt to present her experience using a communally recognized model of apostolic witness as part of a larger strategy to legitimate her experience in this passage. To persuade her readers to follow her counsel, she utilizes her personal authority and the Logos, each reinforcing the other.

Hadewijch connects the epistolary situation with Scripture in her letters in such a way that the Biblical text is a guide to how the reader should act in her present circumstances. In Letter 12 Hadewijch quotes Obadiah 5:18 verbatim and implicitly exegetes it in the tropological or moral sense in order to explain the tensions within the beguine community.¹²⁰ Hadewijch orchestrates a textual interplay between Obadiah and Titus, demonstrating her familiarity with these sources and her knowledge of accepted interpretive techniques in order to persuade the reader that the counsel that she offers is conventional knowledge that is applicable to the epistolary situation. Hadewijch follows the tradition of tropological exegesis by using the figures in Obadiah 5:18 to classify people in the beguine community and those outside it. Jacob, in her interpretation, is everyone who wishes for God's blessing and lives exclusively for love, and Joseph is the addressee of this letter, whom Hadewijch directs to lead those in the community and outside it who are not yet aflame in their love for God. As an exegetical mode, tropology is well suited to the temporal immediacy of her letters and their personal nature, because, as Henri de Lubac argues, tropology personalizes the Word of God, making it "fully *for us*" in the "*hic et*

¹¹⁹ "For neither did I receive it of man: nor did I learn it but by the revelation of Jesus Christ" ([N]eque enim ego ab homine accepi illud neque didici sed per revelationem Iesu Christi). See also Galatians 1:16 and 2 Corinthians 4:6, 5:16.

¹²⁰ As a laywoman, Hadewijch was prohibited from publically interpreting Scripture using the four-fold method because the Church considered that the exclusive right of priests. In this letter and, indeed, throughout her letter collection, she is well aware of the relevance of tropological method for giving spiritual guidance on moral topics such as rendering charity to friends and aliens. See Bériou, "The Right of Women to Give Religious Instruction" for more information on restrictions imposed on women's use of Scripture.

nunc” of our lives.¹²¹ The hermeneutical sophistication shown in Letters 6 and 12 indicates, in my opinion, that the recipients had a higher level of literacy and may have had different expectations than the recipients of some of the other letters. It is possible to infer that the readers of the Letters 6 and 12 had some familiarity with Latin Scripture and probably the commentary tradition. If so, these letters may evidence how Hadewijch adapted her method of presenting her advice to different audiences and their expectations.

Hadewijch’s claim to lead is based not only on her mystic experiences but her lifestyle, which is in imitation of Christ. When she uses a pilgrimage metaphor in Letter 15 to explain the steps a person needs to take to progress towards God,¹²² she begins by pointing to Christ’s exemplar:

The first point is: You must ask about the way. [God] himself said this: I am the way.¹²³ Oh, since he is the way, consider what ways he went—how he worked, and how he burned interiorly with charity and exteriorly in works of the virtues for strangers and for friends. And hear how he commanded men how greatly they should love their God—with all their heart, with all their soul, and with all their strength; and that they nevermore forget this, sleeping or waking... This is the way that Jesus teaches, and that he himself is, and that he himself went, and wherein is found eternal life and the fruition of the truth of his Father’s glory.¹²⁴

¹²¹ Henri De Lubac, *Medieval Exegesis: The Four Senses of Scripture*, trans. E.M. Macierowski, 3 vols. (Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans, 1998-2000), vol.2, 140.

¹²² Letter 15 was possibly appended to the preceding letter. Hadewijch exhorts the recipients of Letter 14 to persevere in their “pilgrimage of life” (*peregrinacien des leuens*) so that they may achieve fruition in the “land of Love” (*inder minnen lant*). The steps of the pilgrimage described in Letter 15 are designed for easy recall and understanding of the relationship between the stages of the journey.

¹²³ John 14:6: “Jesus said to him: I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No man comes to the Father, but by me” ([D]icit ei Iesus ego sum via et veritas et vita nemo venit ad Patrem nisi per me).

¹²⁴ *CW*, Letter 15, 78; *HB*, Brief 15, 112, 114. “Dat eerste es: ghi sult vraghen omme den wech; dat seghet hi selue: Jc ben de wech; ay na dien dat hi de wech es, soe merket sine weghe die hi ghinc: Hoe hi wrachte ende hoe hi berrende in karitaten van binnen, Ende in werken van doechden van buten t vreemden ende te vrienden; Ende

As the reader progresses through this passage, the sentence clauses remain of roughly equal length, reinforcing the balance created by repeated phrases and the question and answer alternation in the first sentence. Daróczi argues that both Hadewijch's adherence to this balanced sentence structure throughout her prose works and the way her sentence clauses can be divided *per cola et commata* indicates that Hadewijch intended her letters to be read aloud.¹²⁵ Hadewijch appears to have composed Letter 15 with this intent, especially given the references to speaking and hearing the word of Scripture.¹²⁶ The first line contains a quote from John 14:6¹²⁷ and an allusion to Deuteronomy 6:4-7.¹²⁸ The *cola* create pauses before each Scripture reference, focusing the reader's attention and allowing her to cognitively "consider" their significance before the following clause points to the next step in the thought pathway. When Hadewijch explains "God himself said this: I am the way; Oh, since he is the way consider what ways he went" the reader is led from a reference to Scripture to meditative reflection on Christ's works.

The Scriptural references in the passage quoted above and the way the reader is led to recall and apply them typifies the medieval belief that the Bible provided patterns of thought and behavior to be imitated. Hadewijch's second step extends this idea by claiming that, because she

hoert hoe hi gheboet den mensche hoe sere si Minnen soudē haren god van alre herten, van alre zielen, van alre cracht; Ende datse dies nummermeer vergheten en moghen, slapende noch wakende....Dit es die wech dien ihesus wiset ende selue es, Ende dien hi selue ghinc, daer dat eweghe leuen in leghet Ende die ghebruenisse der waerheit sijns vader glorie."

¹²⁵ Daróczi, *Groet gheruchte van dien wondere: Spreken, zwijgen bij Hadewijch* (Leuven, The Netherlands: Peeters, 2007), 94-123.

¹²⁶ It should be noted that this letter bears no marks of epistolarity. I believe that it was intended as a meditative work to be read aloud, as were Letters 20 and 22. I include Letter 15 in my analysis because of its use of paraenesis and affective style.

¹²⁷ "Jesus said to him: I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No man cometh to the Father, but by me." "[D]icit ei Iesus ego sum via et veritas et vita nemo venit ad Patrem nisi per me."

¹²⁸ "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord. Thou shall love the Lord thy God with your whole heart, and with your whole soul, and with your whole strength. And these words which I command you this day shall be in your heart: And you shall tell them to your children, and you shall meditate upon them sitting in your house, and walking on your journey, sleeping and rising." "[A]udi Israhel Dominus Deus noster Dominus unus est diliges Dominum Deum tuum ex toto corde tuo et ex tota anima tua et ex tota fortitudine tua eruntque verba haec quae ego praecipio tibi hodie in corde tuo et narrabis ea filiis tuis et meditaberis sedens in domo tua et ambulans in itinere dormiens atque consurgens."

and others in the community are imitating Christ, their lives are exemplars for others. The reasoning behind this advice echoes Paul's in 1 Corinthians 11.1¹²⁹ and 1 Thessalonians 1:6-7.¹³⁰ Hadewijch encourages the members of the audience to "[A]sk about the way from those...who you see are now going his ways in the manner most like his" so that by following them they can "follow him who himself is the way."¹³¹ This implies that, however performative the rhythm and rhetorical ornaments used to explain the first step on the path is, it only points the way. The audience has to learn the practice of virtue through human interaction:

The second point is: You must choose good company—that is, the holy devout order, where you participate in so many advantages, and where especially you are with holy lovers of God, by whom God is most loved and honored, and from whom you feel that you receive the greatest help, and through whom your heart is most united and elevated to God, and whose words and society most draw you and advance you toward God. But with these persons shun your repose and the inclination of your senses. And closely observe, with regard either to myself or to others in whom you seek sincere practice of virtue, who they are that help you to improve, and consider what their life is.¹³²

¹²⁹ "Be you followers of me, as I also am of Christ" (*[I]mitatores mei estote sicut et ego Christi*).

¹³⁰ "And you became followers of us and of the Lord: receiving the word in much tribulation, with joy of the Holy Ghost" (*[A]t vos imitatores nostri facti estis et Domini excipientes verbum in tribulatione multa cum gaudio Spiritus Sancti*).

¹³¹ *CW*, Letter 15, 78; *HB*, Brief 15, 114. "Ende noch vraghet om den wech, dien die bi u sijn ende dien ghi siet Dat sinen weggen nu alre ghelijcst gaen ende hem ghehorsam sijn in allen aerbeide van doechden. Dus volghet hem die selue de wech es, ende hen dienne ghegaen hebben, ende nu gaen."

¹³² *Ibid.* Translation modified. *Ibid.* "Dat ander es: ghi sult goede gheselschap kiesen: dat es die heileghe ordene daer ghi menichs goets deelachtich wert, Ende te alre vorst, metten heileghen minneren gods, daer god meest af es ghemint ende gheeert, Ende daer ghi af gheuoelt dat ghi meest met gheholpen wert, Ende daer uwe herte meest met gheenicht es ende op gheheuen wert te gode, Ende diere woerde ende gheselschap u meest trecken ende voerden te gode. Mer scuwet hier in sere uwe raste ende uwe onste. Ende merct nauwe van mi ende van allen menschen daer ghi trouwe in soeket, wie si sijn, Daer ghi af ghebetert wert, Ende merct wat hare leuen es." Letter in Rhyme 7.20-26 makes the same assertion about the benefits of corporate life for the growth of the individual (*CW*, 331-332; *HM*, 38).

Hadewijch leads the auditor's thoughts through this passage by creating a progressive sequence of ideas all linked together in the form of a periodic sentence. Her use of the resumptive modifier "and" (*ende*) to add clause after clause creates a sense of continuous forward movement for the auditor, which is qualified by the verbs and phrases that point to the journey's end ("elevated to God" "advance you toward God").

A Pauline conception of *imitatio* underlies the first two steps on the path described in Letter 15, but Paul is not directly invoked as an authority. Hadewijch explicitly encourages her audience to develop their responses to the challenges they encounter in the context of Pauline ethics in other letters in the collection. Paul's conception of charity stands over her counsel when she encourages her audience in Letter 14 to "consider the lofty essence of eternal charity, [and] the characteristics Saint Paul ascribes to it" and "apply yourselves to it."¹³³ This passage (14.19-32) concretizes the preceding paragraph in which Hadewijch explains that only God can teach the women the "oneness" that Christ offered his father when he lived a man. By practicing the form of charity found in Paul's letter to the Corinthians they will bring "love into effect and then to attain fruition in the land of love where charity shall abide eternally."¹³⁴ Hadewijch's authority in this passage is founded on her command of Scripture, while at the same time she insists on her lack of agency in her role as teacher. The paraenetic style is what enables this indirect manner of leadership because it outwardly eschews innovation.¹³⁵ In the counsel that concludes Letter 12, she explicitly defines the reader's ethical responsibilities in Paul's terms and uses the epistolary

¹³³ *CW*, Letter 14, 76; *HB*, Brief 14, 108. "Siet dat ghi nuwe wert ende versch sonder moeden; ende ghedinct der hogher wesene vander eweliker caritaten, wat seden sinte Pauwels seghet dat si heuet, Watsi al es ende watsi al vermach; ende fundeerter u seluen inne."

¹³⁴ *Ibid.* "Te derre caritaten sijt wacker ende ernst inder peregrinacien des leuens, dit te veldoene Ende dan te comene in dat ghebruken inder minnen lant Daer karitate ewelike dueren sal" (*HB*, Brief 14, 108).

¹³⁵ In Letter 16 Hadewijch's counsel is presented as a pastiche of paraphrases from Paul's epistles and his name is invoked as an authority on the subject of compassion.

situation of his letter to Titus as a typology for the epistolary situation she is addressing and encourages the reader to analogize between the Biblical text and her own circumstances:

The aliens among the common people are Esau. Their house is stubble, which is rapidly ignited by fiery flames; so shall the others be ignited by you, when you are aflame. This pertains to your function of prelacy in the community: that you kindle the dry stubble by your good example, by your way of life, and by your commands, counsels, and admonitions. And you should also lead your brethren on the right way by fervent love and help them to love, so that they may love God and in veritable works, for God and for veritable virtues. And always remember what Scripture says: *Sobrie, pie, iuste viuamus in hoc seculo*. This pertains to your function.¹³⁶

The Latin is from the Vulgate version of Paul's letter to Titus, which Paul wrote to define the Church's structure and leadership positions. Hadewijch is reminding the addressee of her spiritual lineage and responsibility towards her brethren and the aliens outside the mystical community, while also assuming Paul's position in warning her reader about the need to safeguard the community from false accusations and dissension. In this latter respect, Letter 12 is insightful for understanding how Hadewijch imagined her followers functioning as teachers outside of their spiritual community. The function of the prelate in Hadewijch's model of community is reminiscent of that described by Hugh of Saint Victor in *On the Formation of Novices (De institutione novitiorum)*, a manual written for novices at Saint Victor. Hugh explains

¹³⁶ *CW*, Letter 12, 74; *HB*, Brief 12, 100. Translation modified. “[D]ie vreemde in die ghemeinte der lieden Die sijn esau; haer huus dat sijn stoppelen die saenontsteken sijn met inuieregher vlammen: Alsoeselen die andere van u ontsteken, alse ghi dus ghedanich sijt. Dit behoert oec te uwen prelaetscape: dat ghi die droeghe stoppelen ontsteken selt met goeden exemplen Ende met manieren ende met biddene Ende met radene ende met dreighenne. Ende oec suldi uwe broedere berechten met innegher minnen, Ende hulpen hen Minnen, dat si Minnen in gode ende in gherechten werken te gode Ende ter gherechter doghet. Ende altoes ghedinct dattie screfture seghet: Sobrie, pie, iuste viuamus in hoc seculo. Dit hoert te uwen ambachte.”

that an abbey canon should “edify” (*aedificatio*) people outside of the monastery through his example (*exemplo*), life (*vita*), wisdom (*doctrina*), and words (*verbo*), which Hadewijch parallels in Letter 12 when she claims that the intended reader’s example (*exemplen*), life (*manieren*), and words (*raden, bidden, dreighen*) can emotively affect those outside of the beguine community to live a life of charity.¹³⁷ The Victorines were an organization that operated in urban environments and thus provided a link between monastic communities and lay society. Likewise, Beguines sought to achieve a balance between assisting the needy in urban conditions while withdrawing into a life of religious seclusion. The parallels between Hugh’s manual and Hadewijch’s model of learning by example are close enough to suggest that she was aware of Victorine practices of spiritual formation, just as she was of the theology of Hugh and Richard of St. Victor.¹³⁸ Certainly her belief in teaching by word and example (*docere verbo et exemplo*) is in agreement with Victorine thought. This can be explained partly by the fact that the Augustinian *Rule* and Hadewijch’s conception of community are based on the description of the primitive church in Acts 4:32 and a similar understanding of the *vita apostolica*, but I think Hadewijch saw in the Victorines a model of a spiritual life and learning that was suited to her pedagogical philosophy and social position.

The unity of will and affection described in Acts 4:32 and idealized in Hadewijch’s letters derives its strength from a consensus built on shared experience. To create this consensus, Hadewijch draws upon shared texts, which function as argumentative commonplaces in her letters. This is seen in Letter 12 and in other letters where she utilizes Paul’s epistles to explain conflict in the community. She commends the recipient of Letter 5 for her progress and exhorts

¹³⁷ Ibid., 74; Ibid., 100.

¹³⁸ Given the monastic flavor of this letter, it is not surprising that Hart considers this letter to be addressed to a male cleric, who, she suggests, is Gilbertus of Saint James Abbey (*CW*, 16). Mommaers and Willaert point out that Hadewijch uses a feminine form of address, which makes it unlikely that the recipient was a man. Mommaers and Willaert, “Mystisches Erlebnis,” 129.

her to sublimate her will still further in the service of God. To explain the discord within the group, Hadewijch interprets events using Paul's epistle to the Galatians:

It is great perfection to suffer all things from all people. But, God knows, the greatest perfection of all is to suffer from false brethren who seem to be members of the household of faith. Oh, do not be surprised if it pains me that those we had chosen to rejoice with us in our Beloved are beginning to interfere with us here and to destroy our company in order to disband us, and especially me, whom they wish to leave with no one.¹³⁹

The phrase "members of the household of faith" (*schinen huus ghenoten des gheloefs*) is an allusion to Galatians 6:10.¹⁴⁰ Hadewijch's description of her opponents as "false brethren" (*valschen broederen*) indicates that her community or household is bound by faith foremost.¹⁴¹ Like Paul, Hadewijch believes that membership in the community is based on faith and the Spirit. Hadewijch's opponents within the beguine community are not acting with charity, a failure which she sees as stemming from their lack of faith. Paul exhorted the Galatians to resolve the antagonisms within the group, whereas Hadewijch uses the Pauline text to signal the nature of the tensions within her community. Her counsel chastises the recipient for her lack of stability, and Hadewijch attempts to set limits on the extent to which the recipient might help others, as Paul does in Galatians 6:10. Using the events described by Paul as a typology to explain the experience of her community helps to legitimate her counsel on the basis of Paul's

¹³⁹ *CW*, Letter 5, 56; *HB*, Brief 5, 40. "Grote volmaetheit eest alle dinc te verdraghene van allen lidene. Mer, wet god, alremeeste volmaetheit eest te verdraghene Vanden valschen broederen die schinen huus ghenoten des gheloefs. Ay dat en si u gheen wonder, al eest mi wee, dattie ghene die wi vercoren hebben met ons in Jubileerne in onse lief, Dat si ons hier beghinnen te stoerne ende te brekene onse gheselschap omme ghesceden te sine, Ende nameleec mi Diese met nieman en willen laten."

¹⁴⁰ Galatians 6:10: "Therefore, while we have time, let us work good to all men, but especially to those who are of the household of the faith" ([E]rgo dum tempus habemus operemur bonum ad omnes maxime autem ad domesticos fidei).

¹⁴¹ She asserts this in Letter 16 when she claims that works of faith are a prerequisite for loving God. *CW*, Letter 16, 81; *HB*, Brief 16, 124

authority and the historical continuity between the community addressed in his epistle and the beguine community. Throughout this letter, Hadewijch uses ornaments of amplification, such as exclamation, to signal her emotional state and induce surprise in the reader.

Although Hadewijch uses a pauline style to present her guidance and to frame it in a historical perspective, the theology of spiritual direction informing her epistolarity is more closely based on a theology of counsel set out in several of Cistercian treatises she was familiar with. The way that she uses the formal properties of the letter is shaped by her understanding of this practice of giving counsel. Her use of the paraenetic style is based on a theology of counsel in which an enlightened person, who acts with reasoned discernment, serves as a guide for a person who does not have an ordered interior life or the ability to discern God's will that results. She demonstrates her faith in Christ and charity towards the reader by offering her spiritual guidance intended to help her create the ordered life that is necessary for contemplating God. Emphasizing that she and the reader are of one body through their spiritual friendship, Hadewijch draws on the medieval conception of the letter as *sermo absentium*. This concept is enacted as the rhythm of Hadewijch's prose gives rise to a synaesthetic experience for the reader. Hadewijch's intent is to lead the reader to be a spiritual person in the Bernardine sense of someone who acts with the Spirit, thus enabling the reader to begin to discern God's will on her own. Her decision to use a paraenetic style of guidance correlates with the role she sees herself having in the process of spiritual formation, and explains her concern that her readers will rely too much on her instead of their own counsel.

Section 3. Epistolary Ethics

In this section of the chapter, I compare the formal parts of Hadewijch letters with the theoretical precepts found in contemporary dictaminal guides to demonstrate how the cognitive doctrinal teaching is related to the affective exhortation. The rhetoric taught in the *artes dictandi* was predicated on the idea that the goal of the letter writer was to persuade the reader to accede to the writer's request. The quote from Thomas of Capua's that I used in the first section of this chapter reflects this belief.

Hadewijch uses epistolary mediation in Letter 6 to establish herself as a living link between Christ and her audience. She presents her knowledge of God's will in a manner that evokes the medieval conception of the letter as *sermo absentium* or words spoken when absent. Conceived as *sermo absentium*, Constable argues, the letter enabled a type of "quasi-presence and quasi-speech between [sender and recipient]."¹⁴² This imagining of the letter is found in the *Summa de arte prosandi* of Conrad of Mure, who claims that the epistle was invented so that "the place or distance between bodies does not impede the profit or conversation with friends."¹⁴³ When Hadewijch commands the addressee in God's name, "I command you in the name of your Lover,"¹⁴⁴ God has the kind of quasi-presence described by Conrad and Constable. When she repeats God's words, his presence is even more strongly implied: "I am imparting to you these glad tidings, which our Lord uttered, so that you may better believe, and think, and know that abandonment in fidelity is the quickest way to perfection, by which we may content

¹⁴² Constable, *Letters and Letter-Collections*, 13.

¹⁴³ "localis corporum sequestratio seu distantia non impediatur comodum seu colloquium amicorum." Walter Kronbichler, ed., *Die Summa de arte prosandi des Konrad von Mure*, (Zurich, Switzerland: Fretz und Wasmuth, 1968), 30.

¹⁴⁴ *CW*, Letter 1, 47; *HB*, Brief 1, 10. "Ende ghebiede u van uwen gheminden."

God most perfectly and best.”¹⁴⁵ Hadewijch speaks on his behalf because God is not yet fully present in the mind of the reader. However, because of the difficulty in representing the sensual experience of love in language, her words cannot stand in place of his teaching. Only with the aid of the Spirit can the reader understand wisdom given by God. Hadewijch’s self-exegesis of the visionary experience in which she received these commands, however, represents an attempt to teach the wisdom she received. She not only makes God present in the epistolary exchange, but her exegesis also makes this letter the definitive account of his will. This coincidence between God’s presence and the letter as an authoritative expression of his will can be directly related to Paul’s epistles.

Konrad Krautter argues that the fusion of the “classical topos of the letter as the personal presence of the letter writer” and the notion of letter as a “particularly authoritative form of notice” occurs first in the letters of Paul.¹⁴⁶ To support his claim for the innovative nature of Paul’s epistolarity, he points to 1 Corinthians 5:3-5:

I indeed, absent in body but present in spirit, have already judged, as though I were present, him that hath so done, In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, you being gathered together and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus: To deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.¹⁴⁷

Paul draws no distinction between his authority in person and his authority in his letters. In his second letter to the Corinthians he makes this explicit when he tells them, “Let such a one think

¹⁴⁵ Ibid., Letter 31, 121; Ibid., Brief 31, 21-25, 256. “Daer omme vertelle ic u dese bliscappe, Die onse here seide, omme dat ghi te bat gheloeuen selt ende ghedincken ende weten, dat toeueraet ende trouwe die naeste volcomenheit es, daer men gode volcomenlext ende best met voldoen mach.”

¹⁴⁶ Konrad Krautter, “Acsi ore ad os... Eine mittelalterliche Theorie des Briefes und ihr antiker Hintergrund,” *Antike und Abendland* 28 (1982): 162.

¹⁴⁷ “[E]go quidem absens corpore praesens autem spiritu iam iudicavi ut praesens eum qui sic operatus est in nomine Domini nostri Iesu Christi congregatis vobis et meo spiritu cum virtute Domini Iesu tradere huiusmodi Satanae in interitum carnis ut spiritus salvus sit in die Domini Iesu.”

this, that such as we are in word by epistles when absent, such also we will be indeed when present” (2 Corinthians 10:11).¹⁴⁸ He and the members of the Corinth church were united by their acceptance of the Spirit, who was present to Paul when he passed judgment on a member of the church. Daróczy’s discovery that Hadewijch’s prose rhythm, defined in part by the divisions among the parts of her sentences, is based on an oral model, allows us to identify another dimension to Hadewijch’s use of the letter as *sermo absentium*. Daróczy argues that when read aloud, the reader’s breathing matches the rhythm matches that of clause lengths and, thus syncing it with the thought units expressed the clauses.¹⁴⁹ I believe that in terms of how the epistle was conceived of by Paul in 2 Corinthians and by medieval epistolary theorists, we can read Hadewijch’s biorhythmic prose as a way of simulating for the reader her presence.¹⁵⁰

Krautter’s evidence for a lineage between Paul’s epistles and the conception of the letter found in the *artes* is compelling and draws attention to the fact that Hadewijch’s authoritative presence in her letters derives from the same form of reasoning used by the apostolic letter writers. When she commands her reader in Letter 17, Hadewijch’s authority follows from God’s: “The things I order you in these verses were ordered me by God. Therefore I desire in my turn to order you the same things, because they belong perfectly to the perfection of Love, and because

¹⁴⁸ “[H]oc cogitet qui eiusmodi est quia quales sumus verbo per epistulas absentes tales et praesentes in facto.”

¹⁴⁹ Daróczy, *Groet gheruchte van dien wondere. Spreken, zwijgen en zingen bij Hadewijch*, 111-112.

¹⁵⁰ Some caution in crediting Hadewijch with this innovation is required here because it is possible that the punctuation and syntax of Middle Dutch prose was already based on an oral model. Caution is also warranted in dividing Hadewijch’s sentences according to the Latin *per cola et commata* as Daróczy does, especially since she is admittedly not always certain her divisions are correct. Marinel Gerritsen finds evidence in her analysis of punctuation in the form of capital letters and points used in thirteenth-century Middle Dutch prose texts that the demarcation of sentences and clauses within sentences does not always follow what could be considered an oral rhythm. Manuscript C uses a similar punctuation system to the one studied by Gerritsen, and comparison between her findings and at least this manuscript is warranted to arrive at a more certain understanding of syntactical divisions in Hadewijch’s sentences. Marinel Gerritsen, “The Relationship Between Punctuation and Syntax in Middle Dutch” in *Historical Linguistics and Philology*, ed. Jacek Fisiak (Berlin, Germany: Mouton de Gruyter, 1990), 187-225.

they belong perfectly and wholly in the divinity.”¹⁵¹ Hadewijch has the power to command her reader because she speaks from a position within God,¹⁵² which is different from Paul’s claim that both the Spirit *and* the community (“you being gathered together...in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ”) empowered him to judge others. The language she uses to defend her right to pass judgment, however, closely parallels 1 Corinthians 5:3-5 when she asserts that “With his sublimity I have felt the sins of all those whom in this life I have heard named and have seen,” and consequently “I have passed just judgments according to the depths of his truth.”¹⁵³ Hadewijch claims the right to judge on the basis of the Holy Spirit within her, and uses the ethical imperative underlying the *salutatio* and *petitio* to empower herself in relation to the addressee and to place obligations on her. This finding requires a more complicated model than Mommaers and Willaert’s explanation of the use of the grammatical person in Hadewijch’s letters. They claim that the letter form enabled her to create “an intimate and affective communication community” by using the first person to second person address in epistolary communication to exclude anyone referred to in the third person.¹⁵⁴ The exclusionary bond that Mommaers and Willaert believe was created when Hadewijch utilized an I-you address can also be used to emphasize a distinction *between* the sender and the addressee. While these two scholars are correct in the sense that she changes the grammatical person to emphasize her connection with the addressee as a way of projecting humility and communal solidarity,

¹⁵¹ *CW*, Letter 17, 82; *HB*, Brief 17, 126. “Dese dinghen waren mi van gode verboden, die ic u in desen worden verbiede. Daer omme beghericse u voert te verbiedene, om dat si volmaecteleece ter volcomenheit van Minnen behoren, Ende omme datse inder godheit volcomeleke ende gheheeke behoren.”

¹⁵² McGinn asserts that Hadewijch was the first mystic in the Western tradition to claim the authority to lead others on the basis of her experience of dwelling within God. McGinn, “The Four Female Evangelists of the Thirteenth Century: The Invention of Authority,” in *Deutsche Mystik im abendländischen Zusammenhang: neu erschlossene Texte, neue methodische Ansätze, neue theoretische Konzepte*, ed. Walter Haug and Wolfram Schneider-Lastin (Tübingen, Germany: Niemeyer, 2000), 178.

¹⁵³ *CW*, Letter 29, 115; *HB*, Vol. 1, Brief 29,74-79, 245. “Ende sijn toegheuen hem omme niet. Met siere hoecheit gheuoelde ic alle der gheenre mesdaet, die ic hier hoerde noemen ende sach. Ende daer op gauic oyt seder met gode alle gherechte doemsele na den gront siere waerheit op ons allen, soe wie wi waren.”

¹⁵⁴ Mommaers and Willaert, “Mystisches Erlebnis,” 127.

Hadewijch uses the reciprocal ethic at the heart of the letter of spiritual friendship to place obligations on her reader, thus compelling her to respond. The grammatical person enables Hadewijch to position the reader in relation to herself and others. This shifting use of the grammatical person is therefore significant for understanding the full range of ways she controls her relationship with her reader and the varying distinctions she draws between her community and the majority culture of the people who are alien to the ways of God.

Because Hadewijch gives advice that is occasioned by a request from the reader, it is based on contingency and circumstance and intended to persuade the reader to act in a particular way in the immediate future. The immediacy of the epistle as a form of communication is evident in the contrast Geoffrey of Vinslauf draws between letters and orations:

The narration of the *dictator* expresses facts or fictions about the present, past and future. It is not only past events that should direct the course of letter writing, but [the *dictator*] should interweave his narration of present and future matters, especially with an affectionate greeting, on which the whole edifice of the letter depends, at times counseling on the present, at times returning to then past, and at times extending his concerns to future matters.¹⁵⁵

Geoffrey's comparison is worth quoting at length because it calls attention to the importance of this section in analyzing how Hadewijch develops an argument in support of the advice she gives. The doctrinal information she presents refers to the past in the sense that it represents how the reader should be tendering her life solely to God and what God expects of her. This is often

¹⁵⁵ Vincenzo Licitra, ed., "La *Summa de arte dictandi* di Maestro Goffredo," *Studi Medievali* 7 (1966): bk. 3, chap. 1, 900. "[N]arratio dictatoris facta vel ficta exprimit circa presens, preterium et futurum. Non enim epistolantis est ut tantum preteria sue narrationis ducant curriculum, set etiam de futuris et presentibus negotiis suam narrationem intextat, maxime cum salutis affectus, a quo totum epistolae pendet edificium, nunc de presentibus deliberet, nunc ad preteria redeat, nunc extendat sollicitudinem ad future."

stated in reference to precedent and tradition, which she contrasts with the reader's present state of devotion, a shift which Hadewijch frequently signals in the *narratio* using the adverb *now* (*nu*) or the adverbial phrase *nowadays* (*daer...nu*). As she structures the *narratio*, the doctrinal knowledge functions as a postulate against which the failings of the present are contrasted. As knowledge for the benefit of the reader, it is positioned as an appeal to her intellect, before leading into the emotive appeal of the *petitio* that calls upon the reader to change her behavior.

Hadewijch's epistolarity is shaped by her pedagogical intent and her pedagogy is likewise influenced by its presentation in the form of a letter. As a form of discourse, the letter was compatible with the pedagogical custom during the thirteenth century of one person presenting his or her "knowledge and insight" to another person in a private setting.¹⁵⁶ As Hadewijch was separated from her readers, the letter was a way of maintaining this dynamic between teacher and student. Letters were also appropriate because not only were they a space for the exploration of self and identity, but, in the case of Hadewijch's letters, they were also a way of instructing in interpersonal relations. In a community where members helped one another grow spiritually, the exchange of letters was a way of mutually expressing spiritual friendship and the affection associate with it in a tangible gesture.

From an interpretive point of view, the absence of the letters she replied to obscures the epistolary situation, which is significant for determining the reader's disposition and what Hadewijch sought to change. I interpret the topics of Hadewijch's letters, signaled in the specific phrasing of the *salutatio*, as Hadewijch's acknowledgement of the reader's present disposition. Support for this interpretation is found in the correlation between the particular topic announced in the *salutatio* and Hadewijch's references to the disposition of the reader in the *narratio*, when

¹⁵⁶ Aneke Mulder-Bakker, *Lives of the Anchoresses: The Rise of the Urban Recluse in Medieval Europe*, trans. Myra Heerspink Scholz (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005), 156.

this is present. Throughout the Letters there is a unity between the greeting and the forms of behavior referred to in the narration, such that the greeting frames the narration in doctrinal terms. Hadewijch's epistolary practice follows that which was prescribed in contemporary *artes dictandi* regarding the relationship between the exordium and the *narratio*.¹⁵⁷ In his *Ars dictandi*, Thomas of Capua insisted that the *narratio* be connected to the exordium "without anything in between, so that it corresponds to the events or to what seems to have taken place."¹⁵⁸ Even though Thomas had in mind the practice of placing a proverb or maxim in between the exordium and narration, his statement is useful in this context because it evidences the belief that these two sections should not only directly relate to one another but that they both refer to the epistolary situation. As I will show, by taking into account *dictaminal* theory, the epistolary situation in a number of Hadewijch's letters can be deduced by studying the phrases in the *salutatio* that are specific to each letter and the relationship of the doctrinal terms in these phrases to the events referred to in the *narratio*. This is critical for identifying the reader's disposition and how Hadewijch attempts to persuade her to change it.

This state of unity between the writer and reader is achieved when the reader is convinced of the writer's benevolence and good-will in the *salutatio* and exordium. Discussing the *salutatio*, Thomas's contemporary, Transmundus, explained that the modifiers (*adiectiua*) describing the attributes of the reader "should be such as to offer honour and respect" while the modifiers describing the sender should convey "a note of humility, suggest devotion, swear

¹⁵⁷ In Hadewijch's letters, the exordium is part of the *salutatio*, as I will argue in the second half of this chapter.

¹⁵⁸ "[N]arrationem exordio sine medio complectendo, [sed] ut congruit res gestas vel ea, que geri posse videbuntur." Emmy Heller, ed., *Die Ars dictandi des Thomas von Capua*, Sitzungsberichte der Heidelberger Akademie der Wissenschaften: Philosophisch-historische Klasse, 1928-29, Abend 4 (Heidelberg, Germany 1929), Chapter 22, 32.

fidelity, or breathe forth the odour of charity.”¹⁵⁹ As befitting letters expressing spiritual friendship, Hadwijch’s *salutatio* in her letters closely follows the advice found in Transmundus’s manual.

As preserved in the manuscripts, Hadewijch’s none of letters includes the three-part salutation prescribed in the *artes*, which would include her name and her attributes (*intitulatio*), the name and attributes of the recipient (*inscriptio*), and a greeting (*salutatio*).¹⁶⁰ The first section of the majority of her letters is a *salutatio*, the function of which Mommaers describes as a benediction.¹⁶¹ In expressing a wish or hope for the addressee, Hadewijch’s *salutatio* is given as an accusative phrase. Accusative phrases are one of the three principal greeting formulas in *salutatio*s identified by Carol Dana Lanham in her survey of medieval Latin epistolography.¹⁶² At least in part, Hadewijch’s *salutatio* is likely based on a Latin model.

Abbreviating or omitting the proper names of recipients is not unknown in the letters gathered in medieval collections,¹⁶³ so it is possible that this identifying information was present in the originals that were sent but not retained in copies. Yet, on the basis of their structural form, the salutations appear complete. One explanation of why Hadewijch may have omitted this identifying information is that she wished to be discreet and avoid drawing attention to herself if

¹⁵⁹ “Ceterum adiectiva mittentis humilitatem sonent, deuotionem insinuent, obsequium spondeant et redolent caritate.” Transmundus, *Introductiones dictandi*, ed. and trans. Ann Dalzell, (Toronto, Ontario: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1995), 10.4-5, 63. All quotations from this text in English are taken from this edition.

¹⁶⁰ Following Lanham, I use the term *salutatio* to refer only to the initial greeting and *salutation* to refer to all three parts (*salutatio*, *intitulatio*, *inscriptio*). Carol D. Lanham, *Salutatio formulas in Latin letters to 1200: Syntax, Style, and Theory* (Munich, Germany: Arbo-Gesellschaft, 1975), 7-8.

¹⁶¹ Mommaers, *Hadewijch: Writer, Beguine, Love Mystic*, 54.

¹⁶² Lanham, *Salutatio formulas in Latin letters to 1200*, 9-12.

¹⁶³ For examples of this in collections of letters by female monastics, see Debra L. Stoudt, “The Production and Preservation of Letters by Fourteenth-Century Dominican Nuns,” *Medieval Studies* 53 (1991): 309-326 and Alison I. Beach, “Voices from a Distant Land: Fragments of a Twelfth-Century Nun’s Letter Collection,” *Speculum* 77 (2002): 38-39. Beach points out numerous examples of scribes abbreviating names by using only the recipient’s first initial, even in the correspondence of prominent writers like Hildegard of Bingen and Elisabeth of Schönau. For male monastics and secular writers, see Constable, *Letters and Letter Collections*, 18, fn.34. Ysebaert reviews reasons why salutations could be omitted and what this may indicate when ascertaining the origin of a collection in “Medieval letters and letter collections,” 64-65.

her letters were received by the wrong party. The ending of Letter 19 suggests that she feared outsiders challenging her teaching,¹⁶⁴ and this caused her to self-censor. If a copyist omitted this identifying information, he may have felt that it did not enhance the authority of the Brieven and that it was unnecessary for understanding the content.

In the *artes dictandi*, status distinctions between writer and recipient are marked in the salutation by the order in which the names of the sender and addressee are listed as well as through their respective attributes.¹⁶⁵ Transmundus defines the *salutatio* simply as “the section which contains the names of the different people involved, conveying to the recipient the tone of the greeting.”¹⁶⁶ In a salutation the higher status person was put first (sender or recipient) and equals put either second or first (humility suggested that the sender be listed second among equals). Lower-status people were always named second.¹⁶⁷ Even though Hadewijch does not use a full three-part salutation, the form of the *salutatio* in her letters reflects the spiritual maturity of the recipient and whether or not Hadewijch recognizes the addressee as a member of her circle. She marks these attributes in the *salutatio* by incorporating a personal description of the addressee using modifiers.

The most common phrase found in the *salutatio* used in the letters and the letters in rhyme is “God be with you” (*God si met u*), which is often followed by a second phrase that signals the subject of the letter. In the medieval Mass, “God be with you” (*dominus vobiscum*) is the greeting the priest extends to the people before their prayers are offered up to God.

¹⁶⁴ “I do not dare say anything more about [the soul]...I fear that the aliens may plant nettles where roses should stand,” *CW*, 90. “Ic en darre nummeer af segghen...Ende oec om dattie vreemde netellen souden planten daer de ros en staen souden,” *HB*, Brief 19, 152.

¹⁶⁵ Giles Constable explored the social significance of salutation formulas in “The Structure of Medieval Society According to the *Dictatores* of the Twelfth Century,” *Law, Church, and Society: Essays in Honor of Stephan Kuttner*, ed. Kenneth Pennington and Robert Somerville (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1977), 253–67.

¹⁶⁶ “*Salutatio est oratio diuersarum personarum capax, salutis affectum insinuans receptori*” (10:2, 63). Here Transmundus uses “*salutatio*” to refer to the whole of the salutation.

¹⁶⁷ Constable, “The Structure,” 253.

Functionally, Joseph Jungmann argues, this greeting from the priest “enable[s] the congregation to return the greeting, and so, through this religious setting of reciprocal salutation, the feeling of God’s nearness is intensified.”¹⁶⁸ In Letter in Rhyme 1, Hadewijch uses the Middle Dutch greeting and grants the addressee’s request in a way that is reminiscent of the priest’s role in the liturgy. Hadewijch’s greeting does not necessarily derive from the Latin Mass, however, nor is her greeting unique in the Middle Dutch corpus, as Mikel Kors identifies similar greetings in the *salutatio* of later spiritual letters.¹⁶⁹ Nonetheless, I maintain that Hadewijch uses the greeting in a quasi-liturgical manner and to recontextualize the exchange between spiritual superior and audience through the exchange of letters:

God be with you.
From my greeting
May you draw some small profit;
Then because of your request to me,
And that you may find pleasure in it,
I answer you with pleasure
In simple terms, not at great length
Concerning what you told me to treat of.¹⁷⁰

After invoking the Spirit in the first line, Hadewijch follows the *stylus epistolaris* by using two epistolary topoi, brevity and the hope that her letter will bring pleasure, in order to convey

¹⁶⁸ *The Mass of the Roman Rite: Its Origins and Development (Missarum Sollemnia)*, trans Francis A. Brunner, rev. Charles K. Riepe (New York: Benziger Bros., 1959), 242.

¹⁶⁹ Mikel Kors, “Epistolaire aspecten van de geestelijke brief (ca. 1350-1550),” *Boeken voor de eeuwigheid. Middelnederlands geestelijk proza*, ed. Th. Mertens et al. (Amsterdam, Netherlands: Prometheus, 1993), 57.

¹⁷⁰ *CW*, Letter in Rhyme, 1.1-7, 311; *HM*, Rijmbrief, 1.1-7, 4. “God, si met u; van mijnre groeten/Mach u Ilene virtuoet ontmoeten;/Dan omme dat ghijt hebben wout / Ende ghiere mede Spelen sout, / So antwerdic u in spele, / Met Gorten worden ende niet te vele, / Daer ghi mi af spreken hiet.” Quotations from the Rhymed Letters in Middle Dutch are from van Mierlo’s edition. *Hadewijch Mengeldichten*, ed. Jozef van Mierlo (Antwerp, Belgium: N.V. Standaard-Boekhandel, 1952).

humility and commend her work to the recipient. She then stresses that her intent in offering this greeting differs from what the recipient might assume: “I did not speak thus because I wished / To pray for you or win your good will, / But because you requested it as a greeting, / And for this reason I had to speak to you thus.”¹⁷¹ Her admission that she does not wish to gain the good will of the reader reveals her understanding of the theoretical function of the letter’s first section. In addition to favorably disposing the recipient to what the sender will say, the style of the greeting reflects the letter’s occasion and purpose. Hadewijch’s denial of the intent of her greeting, demonstrates her awareness of the precepts taught by *dictatores* like Thomas, who asserts that the *salutatio* functions “in a broad sense...that is to say ‘health,’ or to secure good will, because at the time the greeting is used any good or any desired devotion is exhibited humbly” by the writer.¹⁷² Hadewijch deconstructs the *salutatio* of her letter by drawing attention to the difference between its customary purpose as a means of gaining the good will of the reader and her actual motive for offering it, which is that she feels compelled to grant the reader’s request because of custom.¹⁷³

If regarded as a benediction in the context of medieval epistolary theory, the *salutatio* of her letters can be interpreted as a reflection of the relative status of Hadewijch and her reader. Blessings, according to Thomas, could only be given by a superior because “to salute and to

¹⁷¹ Ibid., 27-30, 311; Ibid., 1.27-30, 5. “Dit en seidic dus niet om dat ie woude / Vore u bidden noch dore u koude, / Maer dat ghijt wondt in groeten hebben, / Daer omme moestict u dus segghen.”

¹⁷² Thomas of Capua, chap. 6, 17. “Et est notandum, quod salutatio largo modo accipitur, sive dicamus salutem, sive etiam captemus benevolentiam, quia vice salutationis accipitur, quodcumque bonum alicui affectatur vel devotionis causa humiliter exhibitur.”

¹⁷³ Her forthrightness can also be interpreted as an expression of humility: “For it occurs to me as to a child / That repeats what it has heard said, / Before it has known or experienced it,” *CW*, Letter in Rhyme, 1.8-10, 311. “Mi es als enen kinde ghesciet / Dat na spreect dat het spreken hoert, / Eert bekint heeft oft becoert,” *HM*, Rijmbrief 1.8-10, 4. Restraint in speaking is part of proper conduct in Hadewijch’s letters and is connected with submission to God’s will (cf. *CW*, Letter 18, 87; *PH*, Song 24.22, 158-159; *CW*, Vision 6, 279). Speaking is also necessary and beneficial for the individual, for one must speak “when he would have gladly fixed his thought on divine fruition, in order that no one blame the Beloved on account of his love,” *CW*, Letter 8, 65 and to “speak of the Beloved is exceedingly sweet...it awakens Love immeasurably, and it lends ardor to works,” *CW*, Letter 15, 79.

bless is from the authority of the greater, not from the presumption of the lesser.”¹⁷⁴ Since Letter in Rhyme 1 was occasioned by a request for advice, the form of Hadewijch’s *salutatio* reflects her awareness of the assumption of her superior status upon which it is predicated. I believe that it is more accurate to regard them as benedictions in the sense that they are requests for God to assist the addressee in what she needs for her spiritual growth, and as a way of expressing her affection for the reader. Her acknowledgement of the reader’s request in this letter, in Letter 12, and in the epistolary section of Vision 14 evidences more the reciprocal custom identified by Leclercq in medieval letters of spiritual friendship in which friends offered and rendered service to and requested service from each other as a way of demonstrating their affection. When Hadewijch quits the house she shared with the women addressed in Letter 26, she herself makes a request when she asks for consolation, after having begun her letter with a profession and offer of her fidelity to the addressees.¹⁷⁵

To establish her authority in the *salutatio*, Hadewijch incorporates personal descriptions of the addressee to distinguish her status from Hadewijch’s. Letters sent to women whom Hadewijch regards as spiritually immature use the description “child” (*kint*) with the modifier “dear” (*lieue*). This modifier intensifies the tone of Hadewijch’s acknowledgment of their relationship and stresses its emotional nature. Her practice, in this respect, accords with the guidance given by Transmundus regarding the use of modifiers (*adiectiua*). The location of the personal description in the *salutatio* can be interpreted as another indication of the status of the reader in the epistolary exchange. Locating the personal description at the beginning of the

¹⁷⁴ Thomas of Capua, *Ars dictandi*, chap. 6, 17. “Salutare namque sicut et benedicere de auctoritate maiorum est, non de presumptione minorum.” Translation mine.

¹⁷⁵ *CW*, 107. “But I, unhappy as I am, ask this, with love, from all of you – who should offer me comfort in my pains, solace in my sad exile, and peace and sweetness.” *HB*, 26, 210. “Mer ic, onsaleghe, diet met Minnen beghere van vallen, die mi soudet sijn recreacie in mijnre pinen ende solacie van miere droeuer ellenden Ende peys ende soetheit.”

greeting emphasizes that Hadewijch is making a request of the addressee in Letters 11 (“O dear child, may God give you what my heart desires for you, that God may be loved by you worthily”)¹⁷⁶ and 18 (“O sweet, dear child, be wise in God”).¹⁷⁷ Another effect of placing the personal description at the beginning of the *salutatio* is that it conveys a sense of humility. Hadewijch is writing to the recipients of Letters 11 and 18 to correct misinformed beliefs, so locating the personal description at the beginning also stresses the immaturity of the addressees. A different effect is achieved by situating the description in a medial position, which emphasizes Hadewijch’s place in the reader’s relationship with God: “God be with you, dearly beloved, and give you consolation and peace in himself.”¹⁷⁸ Until he is present in the mind of Hadewijch’s correspondents, consoling and teaching them, her words of consolation occupy his place. Hadewijch’s role in the reader’s relationship with God is made more explicit when Hadewijch tells her, “this [God] will do, and willingly if you will entrust things to him and rely sufficiently on him.”¹⁷⁹ By assuring her of the normativity of her experience, Hadewijch indicates that she possesses greater knowledge of God’s will than the reader, and, on the basis of this authority, she directs her to “fully...observe the commandments of love, eternally laid on us,” prohibiting her from what Hadewijch deems undisciplined forms of behavior.¹⁸⁰

In all of the occurrences of the word “dear,” whether used as a modifier or a stand-alone description, the addressee is recognized as a member of Hadewijch’s circle. The significance of the modifier “dear” in the letters is clarified when read with the final entry in the *Lijst der*

¹⁷⁶ Ibid., Letter 11, 69; Ibid., Brief 11, 84. “Ay, lieue kint, god gheue di dat mijn herte aen di begheert; dat ware dat god ghemint ware van di werdelike.”

¹⁷⁷ Ibid., Letter 18, 85; Ibid., Brief 18, 136. “Ay, suete lieue kint, sijt vroet in gode.”

¹⁷⁸ Ibid., Letter 5, 55. Translation Modified. Ibid., Brief 5, 40. “God si met u, herteleke lieue, ende gheue u troest ende vrede met hem seluen.”

¹⁷⁹ Ibid.; Ibid., 42). “[A]lse hi wel sal Ende gherne, wildijs hem ghetrouwen ende ghenoech in hem verlaten.”

¹⁸⁰ Ibid., 56. “Bouen al beuelic u dat ghi ons eweleec beuoelne ghebode der Minnen gheheel houdet ende onghequetset van allen vreemden sorghen ende van allen rouwe.” Hadewijch is alluding to Matthew 22:37-40.

volmaakten which describes two virgins who are too shy to communicate with one another. Even though they have “seen” and learned about each other in the Spirit, “they...do not dare to call each other ‘dear’ in the Spirit or with their mouths.”¹⁸¹ These two women are singled out for their perfection and humility, which is a state of being yet unrealized by the recipients of Hadewijch’s letters. The comparative immaturity of her correspondents necessitates urgent speech (“you must know those who serve for [Love’s] sake”)¹⁸² so that they may learn to identify as members of the community. When she addresses the recipients of her letters as “dear,” Hadewijch is acknowledging their spiritual friendship and like-mindedness. Further support for this reading is found in Letter 31, where Hadewijch hails the addressee as “child” and tells her that she knows that the woman will join Hadewijch’s community because “I saw in a dream vision in the past that you would rally to my blazon.”¹⁸³

The patterned usage of personal descriptions and associated modifiers in the *salutatio* is the most overt way Hadewijch marks the relative status of her readers in the first section of her letters. A second way she differentiates herself is through the use of *distinctiones* and rhetorical figures. These prose elements reinforce the idea expressed in the sentence, such that in some instances, the prose is a mimesis of the idea. This is seen in her greeting to the women she once lived with:

In God may greeting come to you, and perfect fidelity be sent you from me, and offered from me; and may it be demanded that every moment, in veritable love, you live for truth and perfection, in order to give God satisfaction and

¹⁸¹ *HV, Lijst der volmaakten*, 232-234, 162. “Sine dorren oec haerlijc anderen van binnen metten geeste noch metten monde heten lieve.” Translation mine.

¹⁸² *CW*, Letter 18, 87; *HB*, Brief 18, 144, “Ende dese vriheit suldi bekinnen, ende diere omme dienen seldi bekinnen.”

¹⁸³ *Ibid.*, Letter 31, 121; *Ibid.*, Brief 31, 256, 258. “[O]mme dat mi hier voermaels van u droemde, Dat ghi mine tekene sout leren.”

contentment, and honor and right, in himself first of all and then in the good men who are loved by him, and he by them, and to give them everything they need, in whatever situation they may be.¹⁸⁴

Hadewijch structures and punctuates this greeting to stress the relative position of the sender and recipients in relation to God. In the first clause, her status as a servant to God is signified by placing herself after the invocation of his presence, but she does not use a *distinctio suspensiva* to create a pause separating God's greeting from her offer of perfect fidelity. Without a pause, the single expression of thought suggests that God and Hadewijch exist as one.¹⁸⁵ The pause created after this thought by the *distinctio constans*, which would be emphasized in an oral reading, is symbolic of the distance between the sender and the recipients. After the *distinctio constans* is an *explanatio* setting out the terms of the demand made of those who wish to have a reciprocal relationship with the divine. This explanation develops the contractual theme underlying the salutation by identifying what services must be rendered to God, as is his "honor and right," which can be interpreted as a reference to the first commandment. The second commandment is alluded to when she hope that her followers will perform acts of justice for the "good men" whom God loves. Hadewijch claims in the *narratio* following that she lived her life in accord with God's commandments but that the other women did not. Although she conveys a

¹⁸⁴ Ibid., Letter 26, 106; Ibid., Brief 26, 208. "Jn gode si u groete ende trouwe volcomeleke ghesendet van mi ende van mi ontboden; Ende dat alle vren in ghewaregher Minnen ghemaent, dat ghi leuet der waerheit ende der volmaectheit, om gode ghenoech te doene, Ende lieue Ende ere ende recht, Jn hem seluen te vorst, Ende daer na in de goede die ghemint sijn van hem ende hi van hen; Ende hen alle noetdorfte te gheueene, in welken manieren soe si sijn" Cf. 1 Thessalonians 3:11-12 "Now God himself and our Father and our Lord Jesus Christ, direct our way unto you. And may the Lord multiply you and make you abound in charity towards one another and towards all men: as we do also towards you" ([I]pse autem Deus et Pater noster et Dominus Iesus dirigat viam nostram ad vos vos autem Dominus multiplicet et abundare faciat caritatem in invicem et in omnes quemadmodum et nos in vobis).

¹⁸⁵ This is further implied when she asserts her probity regarding the demand alluded to in the salutatio, "I myself have ever done this since I lived in your house," *CW*, Letter 26,106. "Ende hebbe ghedaen ye sider dat ic te uwent woende," *HB*, Brief 26, 208.

sense of humility by “offering” fidelity, she does not use personal descriptions and modifiers to indicate her feelings of spiritual friendship.

While the *salutatio* used in Letter 7 does not indicate displeasure or spiritual distance from the recipient, the distinctions which Hadewijch draws clearly convey her sense of authority and attitude towards the addressee:

Oh, I greet you, dear, with the love that God is himself, and with what I am,
which is also somewhat what God is. And I congratulate you insofar as you are
that, and I do not congratulate you insofar as you are not.¹⁸⁶

There is no personal description casting the recipient in a subordinate familial relationship in this greeting. Having accepted God’s teaching, the addressee has grown spiritually, and this is why she is not addressed as a child in the greeting or other parts of the letter. Through their mutual effort to abandon all for the sake of Love, they have progressed towards God.¹⁸⁷ The greeting in this letter is unlike the other greetings, which hope that God will bestow some form of teaching on the addressees. Hadewijch conveys humility by distinguishing herself from God, but she concludes the first sentence by pointing out that she is partially what God is. When she congratulates the recipient on her growth, Hadewijch uses a *contentio* to praise the recipient in the first clause and then , by using a negation in the final clause, stresses that the woman is not in a state of perfection.¹⁸⁸

¹⁸⁶ *CW*, Letter 7, 64; *HB*, Brief 7, 60. “Ay ic gruede u, lieue, metter minnen die god es, ende met dat ic ben ende dat god yet es. Ende ic dancke u dat ghi sijt, Ende ic ontdancke u dat ghi niet en sijt.”

¹⁸⁷ My interpretation of Hadewijch’s reference is based on the similarity between this greeting and her statement in the previous letter: “All your perfection depends on this: shunning every alien enjoyment, which is something less than God himself; and shunning every alien suffering, which is not exclusively for his sake” (*CW*, Letter 6, 59). “Hier ane es al u volcomenheit belanc: Vreemde ghenuechte te scuwene die yet men es dan god seluer; Ende vreemde pine te scuwene die niet puerleec en es omme heme” (*HB*, Brief 6, 50,52).

¹⁸⁸ Hadewijch’s qualified congratulation is reminiscent of the advice given by the writer of the *Rationes dictandi*, who explains that, when a prelate is cautioning or warning one of his subordinates, the appropriate phrases are “greetings according to merit,” “favor where it is considered deserved,” and “greetings as they can be deservedly bestowed.” Murphy, *Three Medieval Rhetorical Arts* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971), 13.

Hadewijch continues to use personal descriptions in the *petitio*. The *petitio*, according to Transmundus,

is the section which sets down what is desired, with the intention of making a request. A petition may proceed by instruction, by threat, by encouragement, by advice, by warning. Each has its advantages, whether of function or expression, depending on the attitude of the writer and the type of style.¹⁸⁹

Thomas of Capua concurs with the first part of Transmundus's definition of the *petitio*, but he adds that the importance of the writer's request be conveyed so that the reader will understand "that it is just, useful, and necessary" (*quod sit iustum, utile et necessarium*).¹⁹⁰ The words *just* (*iustus*) and *necessary* (*necessarius*) associate the *petitio* with rendering what is duly owed another person and with unavoidable obligations. Hadewijch invokes the concept of "justice" (*recht*) in the *petitio* of her second letter, when she directs her reader to "live for God" because "in justice you [owe] it to God to do," which parallels Thomas's definition.¹⁹¹ Hadewijch consistently exhorts her readers using personal descriptions and the social obligations associated with these terms. A striking example of her epistolarity in this regard is found in the *euphanophoric petitio* of Letter 1:

This is why I entreat you, as a friend entreats his dear friend; and I exhort you, as a sister her dear sister; and I charge you, as a mother her dear child; and I command you in the name of your Lover, as your bridegroom commands his dear

¹⁸⁹ "Petitio est oratio cum postulandi officio desiderata proponens, Est tamen quaedam praeceptiua, quaedam comminatiua, quaedam exhortatiua, quaedam consultoria, quaedam commonitoria; quae secundum scribentis affectum formamque sermonis tam officii quam uocabuli merita sortiuntur." 10:17-18, 63, 62.

¹⁹⁰ Chapter 23, 33.

¹⁹¹ *CW*, Letter 2,49; *HB*, Brief 2, 18. "Ende leuet soe gode, dies biddic u, dat ghi nieten ghebrect dien groten werken daer hi u toe gheroepen heuet: Dat en versuemt niet bi ghenen lichteleyen werken.... Ende te vollen hebdi luttel ghenoech doeghens groet met te wassene Alsoe ghi sculdich waert, soudi gode recht doen, also ghi bi wilen gherne daet."

bride: that you open the eyes of your heart to see clearly and contemplate yourself
in God as holiness commands.¹⁹²

Hadewijch sets herself and the addressee in a network of relations with corresponding forms of emotional appeal. *Friend* (*vrient*) and *sister* (*suster*) can be read as an acknowledgment of their spiritual kinship. By characterizing herself as the “mother” (*moeder*) responsible for the woman’s birth of the Spirit, Hadewijch is claiming authority as the leader, if not the founder, of their community. Moreover, this can be read as an invocation of cultural model of a mother teaching her child how to behave through exhortation.¹⁹³ Hadewijch’s final command, given “in the name of your Lover” (*u van uwen gheminden*), implies that she is authorized to speak as God’s representative. On the basis of the roles assigned in this analogy and its counterpart in Letter 29, the woman is expected to regard Hadewijch with filial respect and obligation.¹⁹⁴ “And this I entreat you urgently, and exhort you, and counsel you, and command you as a mother commands her dear child, whom she loves for the supreme honor and sweetest dignity of Love, to cast away from you all alien grief.”¹⁹⁵ All of the relationships in these *petitios* are composed of two parts, something which emphasizes the corporate nature of the religious life that Hadewijch is exhorting the reader to maintain. Furthermore, they are secular domestic relationships, and this

¹⁹² Ibid., Letter 1, 47. Translation modified. Ibid., Brief 1, 10. “Hier omme bidic u alsoe vrient sinen lieuen vrient, Ende mane u alsoe suster haere lieuer suster, Ende hete u alsoe moeder haren lieuen kinde, Ende ghebiede u van uwen gheminden Alsoe brudegom ghebiedet siere lieuer bruyt: Dat ghi ontpluuct die oghen uwer herten claerlike ende besiet u in gode heilichleke.” Even though it is placed first in the collection, Hadewijch could have written this letter after or during the difficulties in her community alluded to in Letters 25, 26, and 29. Based on the statement “he has now withdrawn [from me] as... you well know” in Letter 1, we can infer that she might not have needed to establish the basis of her authority, given a prior relationship with the addressee.

¹⁹³ Bériou, “The Right of Women to Give Religious Instruction in the Thirteenth Century,” 138.

¹⁹⁴ In 1 Corinthians 4:15, Paul claims he has fathered his addressees in the Spirit: “For if you have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet not many fathers. For in Christ Jesus, by the gospel, I have begotten you” ([N]am si decem milia pedagogorum habeatis in Christo sed non multos patres nam in Christo Iesu per evangelium ego vos genui).

¹⁹⁵ *CW*, Letter 29, 114; *HB*, Brief 29, 234. “Ende dies biddic ouer sere Ende mane ende rade Ende ghebiede alsoe moeder haren lieuen kinde Dat si mint ter hoechster eren Ende ter soetster werdicheit der Minnen, dat ghi alle vreemde rouwen, van u doet.”

can be read as an acknowledgement of the secular nature of the beguine community. The domestic relationships Hadewijch invokes function as commonplaces that situate her in a position from which she can authoritatively persuade or dissuade the reader.

The examples from these letters show how the ethical imperative of Hadewijch's petitions is based on social structures common to the experience of all members of the mystical community. A friendly context is often part of paraenesis, such as a parent to a child, invoking friendship. As Leclercq points out, in Late Antique and medieval feudal models of friendship, friends were supposed to act out of care for the spiritual development of one another.¹⁹⁶ Hadewijch's description of the various social roles conforms to Stower's claim that in paraenetic letters "the author's self-presentation is often the relational framework for providing exhortation and specific advice."¹⁹⁷

Hadewijch shifts the grammatical person in the *petitios* of her letters to emphasize the ethical demand she makes of the reader by addressing her in the second person or uses the first person plural to collapse any distinction:

O dear child, lose yourself wholly in him with all your soul. And lose in him likewise whatever befalls you (apart from all things love is not); for our adversities are many, but if we can stand firm, we shall reach our full growth.¹⁹⁸

The *conduplicatio* in both sentences of this *petitio* amplifies the emotional tone established by the personal description. Hadewijch uses the first-person-to-second-person address in the

¹⁹⁶ Leclercq, "L'amicie dan les lettres," 401.

¹⁹⁷ Stanley Stowers, *Letter Writing in Greco-Roman Antiquity* (Philadelphia, PA: Westminster Press, 1986), 95.

¹⁹⁸ *CW*, Letter 5, 55; *HB.*, Brief 5, 40. "Ay, lieue kint, sincke met al dijnre zielen in hem gheheel Ende buten al dien dinghen dat minne niet en es, Wat soe u ouer geet: want onser stote sijn vele, ende moghen wi ghestaen, soe selen wi vol wassen."

opening sentence and the first clause of the second to stress the request she is making of the addressee, who is cast in the role of the subordinate by the personal description. Indicating that they are both striving to be fully grown, Hadewijch changes the grammatical person in the final three clauses, yet still continues to use *conduplicatio*.

The exclusionary I-you relationship to which Mommaers and Willaert point is evident in the *petitio* of Letter 5 in the sense that Hadewijch aligns herself with the reader; but what must also be accounted for, however, is the way the difference between the first and second person *separated* her from the addressee when Hadewijch directly commands her in the first person. This difference is also marked in Hadewijch's *petitios* through the repeated use of personal descriptions and the familial obligations associated with them. Even without the personal description, Hadewijch's *petitios* are predicated on the ethical dimension of the first-person-to-second-person address. The direct address requires the reader to respond in some manner to Hadewijch's appeal.

The ethical imperative stressed in the use of the grammatical person is also found in *petitios* where Hadewijch uses the first-person-to-second-person address to situate the recipient not inside the mystical community, as Mommaers and Willaert argue, but presently outside it. Writing to a woman who has apparently left her group, Hadewijch urges her to "Live in the same fervor as we; and let us live in sweet love. Live for God; let his life be yours, and let yours be ours."¹⁹⁹ Similarly, the recipient of Letter 12 is urged to love God with her whole heart so that the community might profit by her success.²⁰⁰ Hadewijch's authority in these letters is uncertain,

¹⁹⁹ Ibid., Letter 23, 103; Ibid., Brief 23, 192. "Ende leuet in enighen vlite met ons, ende laet ons inder soeter Minnen leuen. leuet gode ende hi u ende ghi ons."

²⁰⁰ Ibid., Letter 12, 74; Ibid., Brief 12, 100. "Ay, met pure enigher Minnen hulpet ons, dat onse lief ghemint werde. Corteleke gheseghet, dit willic bouen alle dinc van u: gherecht Minne te gode. Dat manic u ende bidde gode te gheue, Ende dat ghi hem voldoet dat ons ontbliuet."

and the tone of the *petitio* reflects this. The addressees are physically and spiritually distant from Hadewijch's circle, which is signaled by the third person.²⁰¹

Hadewijch uses personal descriptions and changes in the grammatical person in the *salutatio* and *petitio* to mark distinctions between herself and her reader. When she incorporates personal descriptions, these differences assume a social character that evokes obligations between friends and kin. Her epistolarity results in self-empowerment within a network of domestic relations. In view of this, it is not surprising that the letters incorporating personal descriptions are those in which Hadewijch asserts the necessity of total obedience to God. Letters without personal descriptions generally emphasize the importance of love in human relations and how it enables man to progress towards God.

Section 4: Conclusion

Throughout this chapter I have analyzed Hadewijch's use of epistolarity and affective stylistics in her letters. By focusing on the formal and stylistic aspects, I have drawn attention to both her use of Paul's epistles as models of epistolary practice and the ways in which affective stylistics are employed to emotionally engage the reader and lead her to new identifications. This directed engagement with the content of the texts is facilitated by rhetorical figures that arouse emotions and a bio-rhythmic prose rhythm that synchronizes the reader's breathing with the units of thought encapsulated in the sentence clauses. The rhetorical figures, particularly figures of amplification, are used to signify intensity of feeling and to arouse emotional states, whereas the rhythmic variations in her letters serve to simulate the movement associated with these emotional

²⁰¹ Unlike the *petitios* of Letters 1 and 5, where Hadewijch "commands" the addressees to follow the laws given by Christ, here she uses "entreat" (*mane*) and "exhort" (*bidden*), which are verbs lacking the same force of authority.

states and to direct the reader to an understanding of them.²⁰² In this way Hadewijch uses affective stylistics to enable the reader to “feel” the content of the words, and to combine affective and cognitive understanding.

Hadewijch’s decision to use Paul’s epistles as a model should be interpreted as part of a strategy to provide a specific perspective on the challenges faced by her correspondents in terms of the *vita apostolica* and *imitatio Christi*. Because Paul’s epistles were known to her readers, they provided a means of accommodating her teaching on emotional control and desire for God to her audience by using texts shared in common. Moreover, her decision to use Paul’s epistles is revealing of her self-identification as an apostle. His letters provided her with a typological model of apostolic authority that operates in several different ways. Directly, she claims authority through her personal knowledge of God’s will, which he imparted to her during their moments of union. The second direct way she claims authority is through her scriptural exegesis. This exegesis follows established practice, which implies that the paraenesis she derives from it is “correct” and arrived at in a conventional manner. Her interpretive command of the Biblical texts and her mystical experience provide a warrant for her authority and enable her to offer her counsel from a vantage point superior to that of the reader. When she demonstrates that she is living as Christ did when he lived as man, she is following another typology, one that requires her to deny her own will for the sake of accepting God’s.

When members of the audience perform an *imitatio*, the community is formed through their like-mindedness. The conclusion to Letter 23, “Live for God; let his life be yours, and let

²⁰² I suggest that this may provide some evidence towards responding to Sarah McNamer’s questioning of whether or not emotions expressed in one medieval language, such as Middle English, were understood differently from similar emotions expressed in other medieval vernaculars. Comparison of the ways that Hadewijch simulates and names emotions in her writings with the discourse on feelings in the Middle English devotional texts studied by McNamer might prove fruitful. McNamer, “Feelings,” 248.

yours be ours,”²⁰³ encapsulates this idea, which should be read in the context of Acts 4:32.²⁰⁴ In Hadewijch’s letters, however, the *imitatio* has a dimension beyond its immediate association with imitating the humanity of Christ. *Imitatio*, as Caroline Walker Bynum points out, was understood by writers like Bernard of Clairvaux to mean “experiencing,” “learning,” and to “take into oneself.”²⁰⁵ Through the use of affective stylistics, the reader of Hadewijch’s letters enters into Hadewijch and experiences what she has experienced, and learns from it in an *imitatio* that is performed through the act of reading.

Hadewijch positions herself as an intermediary between God and her followers in such a way that her letters act as *sermo absentium* on his behalf as well. This vertical relationship is evident in her counsel in Letters 6, 17 and 31 when she claims to be reiterating what was first told her by God. It is also evident in the personal descriptions she incorporates in her *salutatio*, which emphasizes her role as a spiritual mother and partner in the reader’s relationship with him. My interpretation of Hadewijch’s epistolarity in this respect supports Vekeman’s claim that spiritual friendship in the letters is based on an “apostolate of friends” who acknowledge her call to be friends with God by acting with noble unfaith (*ontrouwe*) towards him. Spiritual friends who are united in this way deny the impossibility of a fully reciprocal relationship with Him, and strive constantly to achieve equality.²⁰⁶

Even though Hadewijch presents her counsel in a self-effacing way when she asserts that only God can teach a person to love, her guidance plays an instrumental role in making God present to the reader: “[N]o one can teach a person; but these virtues lead fully to love. May God

²⁰³ *CW*, Letter 23, 103; *HB*, Brief 23, 192. “Leuet gode ende hi u ende ghi ons.”

²⁰⁴ Acts 4:32: “And the multitude of believers had but one heart and one soul. Neither did any one say that aught of the things which he possessed was his own: but all things were common unto them.” “[M]ultitudinis autem credentium erat cor et anima una nec quisquam eorum quae possidebant aliquid suum esse dicebat sed erant illis omnia communia”

²⁰⁵ Caroline Walker Bynum, *Metamorphosis and Identity* (New York,: Zone Books, 2001), 52.

²⁰⁶ Vekeman, “Vriendschap in de Middelnederlandse mystiek,” 127-128.

give you success in achieving this.”²⁰⁷ Without knowledge of the virtues and their importance in the situation being discussed, the reader cannot practice them, and therefore she will not receive God’s teaching. Hadewijch is therefore an essential intermediary in the reader’s relationship with God, who will advise her until she is able to discern God’s will and act appropriately without Hadewijch’s counsel.

Recognizing Hadewijch’s function as an intermediary makes it possible to identify another parallel to Paul’s epistles. Alain Boureau argues that, by affirming that the “Incarnation brought God to the earth at an ordinary moment and among ordinary people,” Paul’s epistles represent “the essential originality of Christianity.”²⁰⁸ Boureau sees this reflected in the combination of the rhetoric of spiritual friendship in his epistles with the sacredness of the Word of God. By affirming the importance of Christ’s example for what was presumably a lay readership comprised of spiritual friends, Hadewijch speaks *ex gratia* in a vernacular language, thereby echoing the primitive church.

Hadewijch’s self-identification with Paul offers insight into her understanding of the apostolate given her by God and the textuality of her community, whose members appear to have been thoroughly familiar with Paul’s epistles. Unfortunately, it is not possible to know to what extent her letters record the lived experience of this group of women. The identity of the historical Hadewijch is unconfirmed, and so at present the possibility that the events referred to in her letters are literary tropes cannot be ruled out. Even though the collection of letters ends shortly after Hadewijch appears to have been rejected by her housemates,²⁰⁹ I believe that it was

²⁰⁷ *CW*, Letter 24, 105. “Want menne mach nieman Minnen leren, Mer dese dogheden volleiden den mensche ter Minnen. God gheue u spoet, dit te verwlne” *HB*, Brief 24, 200). Translation modified.

²⁰⁸ Alain Boureau, “The Letter-Writing Norm as a Medieval Invention,” in *Correspondence: Models of Letter-Writing from the Middle Ages to the Nineteenth Century*, ed. Roger Chartier, Alain Boureau, and Cécile Dauphin, trans. Christopher Woodall (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997), 28.

²⁰⁹ Cf. Letters 25, 26, and 29.

for one of these women that Hadewijch composed her Book of Visions. This mystagogic text represents Hadewijch's attempt to provide her follower with a structured guide to the practice of contemplation. In the next chapter I analyze how the book shapes the affective and cognitive response of the intended reader to the text and the transformative effect that this experience is meant to have. Unlike in the letters where the reader is directed through an argument, the reader of the visions is lead through a series of narratives, whose structure is intended to facilitate meditation and reflection.

Chapter Two

Mystagogy and Affective Response in the Book of Visions

Section 1: Introduction

In this chapter I analyze how the book of visions interacts with its reader to reveal how the process of reading the text affects the reader's disposition and habits of thought as it describes Hadewijch's spiritual ascent. My interpretation of the book of visions is based in the reader-response theory of Wolfgang Iser.¹ Utilizing his model of reading, I argue that the synaesthetic descriptions of sensory perception and the emotions associated with these sensations excite the mind of the reader, simulating the experience described in the narrative. This simulation is connected with the explication of what led to the sensation and emotions that resulted so that there is a patterned movement at the sentence level from sense and feeling to cognitive understanding of the causes of this experience. Unlike the letters, where this process of cognitive understanding of affect is stated in relation to the reader's behavior, the book of visions explains this relationship almost entirely in reference to Hadewijch's spiritual ascent. To paraphrase Kurt Ruh, the voice that describes the experience of love *in patria* in the visions becomes the first-person voice that offers counsel *in via* in the letters.² This distinction is apt, in my opinion, and one which I will develop further by analyzing its implications in terms of the reader's experience of the book and the formal and stylistic differences between Hadewijch's book of visions and her prose letters. Fundamentally, the reader of the book is interpolated

¹ Wolfgang Iser, *The Act of Reading: A Theory of Aesthetic Response* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1980).

² Ruh, *Frauenmystik und Franziskanische Mystik der Fruhzeit*, 210.

differently into the vision narratives than she is in the letters. The reader who is interpolated into the letters by being addressed as “you” (*du*) and directed to respond affectively to Hadewijch’s exhortations is interpolated in the book of visions through analogizing between herself and Hadewijch. This analogizing allows her to enter into the narratives, and enables her to transfer into her own devotional practices what Hadewijch describes. This is most clearly evident in the difference in the way the reader of the book is lead through each account. Hadewijch’s use of rhetorical ornaments, in particular, is intended to facilitate this transference.

The experience of the liturgical rituals described at the beginning of each vision narrative were no doubt known to the intended reader of the book and were a common point of reference. However, Hadewijch’s language of bodily sensation and affect as a response to the liturgy may have been unfamiliar to the reader, thereby presenting her with an experience from a perspective other than her own. Iser describes this movement from the familiar to the unfamiliar as part of the process of identification in which the reader is led to identify with something outside of herself.³ This is not the end process, he argues, but the means by which a writer “stimulates attitudes” in her reader.⁴ The perspectival changes within the narrative frame of the vision accounts, once Hadewijch is taken up in spirit, have the power to change the reader’s attitude by showing her the sanction and efficaciousness of certain practices over others as they are related to Hadewijch’s spiritual growth. The most striking example of these perspectival shifts is the distinction between Hadewijch’s outer person and inner person.⁵ Through this progression the reader is shown in dynamic fashion how works done by Hadewijch’s outer person enable her

³ Iser, *The Implied Reader*, 291.

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ Patricia Dailey uses these terms to distinguish between Hadewijch’s two persons. See *Promised Bodies: Time, Language, and Corporeality in Medieval Women’s Mystical Texts* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2013), 104-105. I utilize them throughout this chapter because they are true to the strong strain of Pauline theology in Hadewijch’s writings.

inner person to grow in God and how the two persons ultimately merge as one in a state of perfection while still on earth. It is in through these perspectival shifts, managed by the affective experience of the text, that the original reader was lead to and understanding of the process of growth and self-understanding through which Hadewijch progressed.

To present this argument, I have divided this chapter into a series of subsections. Following this introduction, I review previous research on the pedagogical function of the book of visions and situate my analysis in relation to it. In the third section I analyze the language of synaesthesia and affection used in the description of Hadewijch's response to the liturgical rituals in which she was participating at the time in the first section of her vision accounts. The fourth section then considers the effect of perspective shifts within the vision narrative on the reader's identification with the narrating subject. The fifth section examines the way the experience of wonder is presented and its significance for understanding the communitarian aspect of Hadewijch's mystagogy. To situate Hadewijch's representation of this quasi-emotion in historical context, I read her descriptions of her experience of wonder alongside Richard of Saint Victor's *The Twelve Patriarchs*, also known in Latin as *Benjamin Minor*⁶

Section 2: The Question of the Book of Vision's Purpose

Willaert's claim that the Book of Visions was written to show the intended reader that fruition in God was possible during a person's earthly life remains the accepted explanation of

⁶ English citations from *Benjamin minor* are from Richard of St. Victor, *The Twelve Patriarchs; The Mystical Ark; Book Three of the Trinity*, trans. Grover A. Zinn (New York: Paulist Press, 1979). Latin citations are taken from Richard de Saint-Victor, *Les douze patriarches ou Beniamin Minor*, ed. and trans. Jean Châtillon and Monique Duchet-Suchaux, intro., notes, and index by Jean Longère. SC 419 (Paris, France: Éditions du Cerf, 1997).

Hadewijch's *intentio*.⁷ He argues that the book was meant to inspire a reader who despairs of achieving union with God.⁸ In his reading, Hadewijch demonstrates through her own example how following Christ can move a person from a state of *onghenade* (disfavor) to joy (*blisclap*) and *enicheit* (union).⁹ Willaert argues that the intended reader could have identified with Hadewijch's narrative by recognizing herself in Hadewijch's characterization of her own spiritual immaturity. To support this claim he points to Hadewijch's description of the reader as a child (*kint*) in Vision 14, a description which Hadewijch gives to herself in Vision 1.¹⁰

Other than that she was not as spiritually mature as Hadewijch and that she seems to have asked Hadewijch to write down an account of her spiritual ascent, there are few clues about the intended reader.¹¹ Lines 57-64 of Vision 14 suggest that this reader may have felt despair at what she perceived to be an absence of God's love:

[B]ecause I loved you so greatly, and neither could nor can forget you in any hour; and because I felt this death [*doet*] and your disfavor [*onghenade*] in love so closely with you, in stormy desire of God that I was closer to God than you, pained me the more. And it was yet more painful to me because you were a child and on the human level.¹²

⁷ Willaert, "Hadewijch und ihr Kreis in den Visioenen," 368-387.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 372.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 380.

¹⁰ *CW*, Vision 1, 263. "I was still too childish and too little grown-up; and I had not as yet sufficiently suffered for it or lived the number of years requisite for such exceptional worthiness." *HV*, Visioen 1.5-9, 32. "[I]c te kinsche toe ende te onghewassen ende ic en hadder niet genoeg toe ghepijnt noch gheleeft int ghetal van soe hogher werdeheit also daertoe behoerde ende also mi daer wel vertoent wart doe ende mi noch wel scijnt." I agree with Fraeters that each vision is more accurately described as a chapter. Just as she does, however, I refer to each account as a vision along with the numbering sequence standard in Hadewijch studies.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, Vision 14, 304; *Ibid.*, Visioen 14.110-124, 146.

¹² *Ibid.*, Vision 14, 303; *Ibid.*, Visioen 14.57-64, 142. "Ende dat ic di soe sere minde ende neghene ure dijns vergheten en conste noch en can, da tic dier doot ende dijnre onghenaden van minnen soe na te di gevoelde in verstormtheiden te Gode dat mi te meer was te Gode met di, dat swaerde mi te meer. Ende omdattu kint waers ende mensche, des waest mi te swaerre."

This characterization of the text's intended reader is reminiscent of the letters in which Hadewijch consoles and exhorts women who apparently were feeling grief and self-doubt. In these letters Hadewijch's guidance is stated in direct reference to her own experience.¹³ Because she feels (*dier*) the reader's disfavor (*onghenaden*) from love, Hadewijch has an affective understanding of the internal state of the reader, one which she desires to change. The sense of empathy in this quote is conveyed again in lines 110-125, where Hadewijch apologizes for the length of her account, explaining that she writes at such length because "you are glad to hear in what that happiness consisted which was so beautiful."¹⁴ Her explanation assumes that the reader wants to empathize with her, for Hadewijch acknowledges her reader's request by noting, "since you wish to know all that concerns me"¹⁵ and apologizes for being unable fulfill that request.¹⁶ This reciprocity of empathy and affection is premised on the same idea that faith in Christ makes of two friends one body, an idea which underpins Hadewijch's conception of spiritual friendship in her letters. In the context of the book of visions, however, the reciprocity acknowledged in the final narrative in the book parallels the way God and Hadewijch are described in the visions as desiring to live through one another. When God acknowledges Hadewijch as his bride in Vision 10, before the moment of mystic union he tells her, "You shall suffer everything to the end with what I am, and we shall remain one. Now

¹³ Cf. Letters 2, 11, 16, 22, and 29.

¹⁴ *CW*, Vision 14, 304; *HV*, Visioen 14.110-111, 146. "[O]mdat ghijt gherne hoert in wat ghevalle dat was dat soe scoene."

¹⁵ *Ibid.*; *Ibid.*, 23-24, 146. "Ende nadien dattuut mi gherne al wists."

¹⁶ The phrasing of this sentence is reminiscent of the conclusion to Letter 8. *CW*, Letter 8, 76. "I cannot say much more to you now, because many things oppress me, some that you know well and some you cannot know. Were it possible, I would gladly tell you." *HB*, Brief 8, 72: "Jc en mach u nu niet vele meer segghen, omme dat mi vele dinghen verladen hebben, Som die ghi wel wet, Ende som die ghi niet weten en moghet." In Vision 14, Hadewijch's apology for the length of the text is a traditional epistolary topos intended to convey humility and demonstrate the writer's earnest desire to fulfill the reader's request.

enjoy fruition of me, what I am...and they shall live eternally contented through you.”¹⁷

The spiritual friendship implied in Hadewijch’s address to the reader in Vision 14 is based on mutually sharing in one another’s grief and joy, especially for the benefit of the intended reader. Hadewijch, as Willaert¹⁸ and Fraeters¹⁹ argue, is not writing to substantiate her claims to authority but to provide a textual guide for a reader who already accepts Hadewijch as a spiritual mother and teacher.

The book of visions’ organization and the narrative structure of the vision accounts have been studied by Fraeters in relation to medieval literary theory and comparable writings on mystic contemplation and experience.²⁰ She demonstrates that Hadewijch adheres to the following formula in structuring the individual visions: (1) liturgical setting, (2) vision in the spirit, (3) union out of the spirit, and (4) return to her body. Vision 1 recounts how God gave her two commandments: the first is to will only what he wills²¹; and the second is to live on earth in

¹⁷ *CW*, Vision 10, 288; *HV*, Visioen 10.56-58, 65-68, 98. “Siet hier, dit es mine bruut, die heeft doregaen alle uwe ambachte metter volmaecter minnen, wies minne es soe sterc daerse bi alle dus wassen...Du salt al ute doghen ten inde met dac ic ben, ende wi selen een bliven. Nu ghebruke mijns da tic ben metter cracht dijns verwinnens, ende die ghesade selen eweleke leven ute di.”

¹⁸ Willaert, “Hadewijch und ihr kreis.”

¹⁹ Fraeters, “Visioenen als literaire mystagogie.” She is refuting Geert Warner’s argument that the purpose of the book of visions is to substantiate Hadewijch’s claims to authority. Geert Warner, “Boekbeoordeling van Hadewijch, Visioenen, vertaald door Imme Dros, met een inleiding en een teksteditie door Frank Willaert, Amsterdam, 1996,” in *Tijdschrift voor Nederlandse Taal-en Letterkunde* 114 (1998): 182-185.

²⁰ Fraeters, “Gender and Genre: The Design of Hadewijch’s *Book of Visions*,” in *The Voice of Silence: Women’s Literacy in a Men’s Church*, 57-81. For other studies of the formal features of the book, see Willaert, “Hadewijch und ihr Kreis in den Visioen”; Norbert de Paepe, “Hadewijchs Vijfde Visioen en de Apokalyps. Dood is niet dood,” *Ut goeder jonsten: Studies aangeboden aan prof. der. L. Roose naar aanleiding van zijn emeritaat* (Leuven, Belgium: Uitgeverij Acco, 1984), 13-21; H.W.J. Vekeman, “Angelus sane nuntius. Een interpretatie van het Visioenenboek van Hadewijch,” *Ons Geestelijk Erf* 50 (1976): 225-259. Gerald Hofmann has extended de Paepe’s argument about Hadewijch’s use of the Apocalypse in Vision 5 to the whole of the book of visions and challenged Vekeman’s claim regarding the symbolic significance of the angels in Hadewijch’s visions. Gerald Hofmann, ed., *Hadewijch, Das Buch der Visioenen*, vol. 1, trans. Gerald Hofmann (Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt, Germany: Frommann-Holzboog, 1998), 30-34.

²¹ *CW*, Vision 1, 268. “If you dare to do that in any way whatever, you will be the one who wishes to supplant my right, and who mars my greatness.” *HV*, Visioen 1.286-288, 46. “Daer du di dies onderwins in enegher manieren, soe betsu deghene die mi mijn recht ondergaen wilt ende mijn moghentheit onderwints.”

suffering and misery without calling upon God for consolation.²² She fulfills the first commandment by Vision 5, which is the first time she describes experiencing mystic union with him. It is not until Vision 14, the final chapter of the book, that she fulfills the other goal – to live on earth as a human being in imitation of Jesus Christ and to abstain from asking for God’s assistance. This consistency in the formal organization of the individual vision narratives and the linkage amongst them helps the reader to comprehend the unfamiliar experiences as she learns to anticipate features of the narratives and recognizes – through retrospection – differences between accounts and seeks to understand them through the work of interpretation.

Medieval practices of meditative reading, with their emphasis on visualization and techniques for memorization and recall, emphasize sensory metaphors. Sense produces understanding through synaesthesia, combining feeling with knowing.²³ As Hadewijch explains, “For all that is seen in the spirit when one is ravished by love is understood, tasted, seen, and heard through and through.”²⁴ She warns that those who do not serve diligently “will be eternally deaf to happiness and nevermore hear or see the highest melody and wonder of powerful love.”²⁵ These intermodal associations created by synesthetic descriptions in the Book of Visions serve to span the experiential gap between Hadewijch and the intended reader, allowing the reader to sense what Hadewijch describes as her own inner experience. This occurs when the interdependent elements of a sensory description interact, causing the sense of one sensory mode to be transferred to another while still pointing to a single object of identification. Through this process of transference, Hadewijch’s description of what she experienced in her spiritual

²² Ibid., 269. “I wish that on earth my life in you should be so fully lived in all virtues that you in no point fail me in myself.” Ibid., 350-353, 50. “Ic wille van di mi alsoe volcomeleke gheleeft hebben in allen doechden in erdrike dat du mi in mi selven in ghenen poente en ghebrekes.”

²³ Bernard McGinn, “The Language of Inner Experience in Christian Mysticism,” *Spiritus* 1 (2001): 156.

²⁴ *CW*, Vision 11, 298; *HV*, Visioen 11.39-42, 104. “Want al dat men siet metten geeste, die met minnen es opghenomen, dat dorekint men, dat doersmaect men, dat doersiet men, dat dorehoert men.”

²⁵ Ibid., Vision 9, 285; Ibid., Visioen 9.23-25, 92. “Die de weghe vlieghe ende geet die mijn vrouwe mint, hi sal gheweldech sijn van der minnen rike.”

sensorium retains its complexity while allowing for the reader's understanding. Another form of synesthesia found in the book of visions, psuedosynesthesia, occurs when a concrete sensation is used to describe an abstract concept. Psuedosynesthesia provides another means of creating identifying associations on a sensory level.²⁶ When she speaks of God's *sweet nature* (*soeter naturen*), a sensory similarity is created between the adjective and the noun it describes, thereby transferring the sensation from the first word to the second. Hadewijch uses these two forms of modal association to represent her sensory awareness and the knowledge derived from it.

While the language of the spiritual senses is constitutive of bodily mysticism of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries,²⁷ Hadewijch's use of synesthesia also alludes to the use of such language in scriptural texts in the Old and New Testaments. When she recalls in the sixth vision, "I heard a voice speaking to me...It spoke to me through an image," her phrasing echoes Apocalypse 1:12.²⁸ This is significant because her use of synesthetic language could be related to her use of the Apocalypse as a textual model for her vision narratives, as de Paepe and Hofmann argue to different degrees. The language of sensory perception is not only metaphoric, it can also be tropic. When it is tropic, it typologizes Hadewijch's description of the sensations she felt, thereby showing their conformity with the model established by the scriptural texts in the Bible such as this example from Apocalypse.

²⁶ I am using the definition of pseudosynaesthesia given by P. Dombi Erzsébet in "Synaesthesia and Poetry," *Poetics* 3 (1974): 26.

²⁷ Bernard McGinn provides a brief history of the doctrine of the spiritual senses in "The Language of Inner Experience in Christian Mysticism." See also Patricia Dailey, "The Body and the Senses," in *The Cambridge Companion to Christian Mysticism*, ed. Amy Hollywood and Patricia Z. Beckman (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 264-276. For extended studies of the doctrine of the spiritual studies as they pertain to specific writers, including Hadewijch, see Gordon Rudy, *The Mystical Language of Sensation* (New York: Routledge, 2004) and Boyd Taylor Coolman, *Knowing God by Experience: the Spiritual Senses in the Theology of William of Auxerre* (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 2004).

²⁸ "And I turned to see the voice that spoke with me. And being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks" (*et conversus sum ut viderem vocem quae loquebatur mecum et conversus vidi septem candelabra aurea*).

While it is accepted that the Book of Visions was intended to provide the reader with an exemplar, the nature of the book's teaching has been the subject of much debate.²⁹ Indeed, Fraeters questions the usefulness of the word *teaching* and proposed *mystagogy* as a replacement. Fraeters maintains that in didactic texts there is a gap between the master, who teaches on the basis of his superior knowledge and experience, and the student, who is interested but uninformed.³⁰ This is a professional relationship, she argues, and it lacks the affectionate bond observable between Hadewijch and the recipient of the book of visions. Moreover, Fraeters claims, while no information is being transmitted in the vision narratives, the reader's personality is "(re)formed."³¹ For these reasons, she believes that Hadewijch's educational intent is better described as mystagogy because the hierarchical gap between teacher and student is ultimately transcended as the student ascends to a state of perfection, something which does not occur in didactic works.³² A passage in Letter 22 evidences Hadewijch's understanding of mystagogy and her role as mystagog when she describes (circumspectly) the experience of being initiated into the divine:

Then anyone whom, yes, with the earthly man, God elevates with himself, he shall draw most deeply within himself and have fruition of him in non-elevation. Oh, deus, what a wonder takes place then when such great dissimilarity attains evenness and becomes wholly one without elevation. Oh, I dare write no more here about this; I must always keep silence about the best, because of my sad lot, and besides no one can truly reproach himself because he knows nothing about God. People are easily satisfied at this point; and if they hear anything they do not

²⁹ For a history of this debate, see Veerle Fraeters, "Visioenen als literaire mystagogie Stand van zaken en nieuwe inzichten over intentie en functie van Hadewijchs Visioenen," *Ons Geestelijk Erf* 73 (1999): 111-130.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 128.

³¹ *Ibid.*

³² *Ibid.*, 129.

understand, they doubt it immediately. And therefore I am distressed that I dare not say or write to persons what is worth the trouble, or write any words about the depth of my soul.³³

Although it is expressed using a humility topos, this passage is an indication of Hadewijch's desire to initiate others who are willing to seek the ways in which someone can achieve perfection while living as a human being. The book of visions is a guide to this end, using her life as an exemplar.

By analyzing the use of sensory and affective language in the book of visions in terms of how style is used to elicit emotions, I am responding to Fraeters's call for research on the vision narratives beyond what she terms the "(macro) text structuring elements" to the study of the complex phrases and imagery by showing how these phrases and images function to guide the reader through the text and its interpretation.³⁴ In her most recent essay on the function of the book,³⁵ Fraeters concludes that Hadewijch intended it to provide a follower with a guide modeled on Hadewijch's experience, which, when followed mimetically, also gives the recipient of the book a chance to achieve perfection.³⁶ While I do not contest her thesis, I feel that her explanation does not address how style functions in shaping the reader's experience and understanding.

Understanding how the reader is re-formed requires moving beyond studying allegorical

³³ *CW*, Letter 22, 96. Translation modified. *HB*, Brief 22, 172. "Dien dan god met hem seluen verhoghet, Ja sonder den ertschen man, dien sal hi diepst in hem trecken ende sijns ghebruken in onuerhauenheiden. Ay deus, wat wonder gheschiet dan daer, Daer groet onghelijc effene ende al een wert sonder verheffen. Ay ic en dar hier af nummer scriuen; ic moet emmer vanden besten meest swighen dore mijn ongheual, Ende om dat wel na nieman en ghemest ane hem seluen dat hi van gode niet en weet. Den lieden dunckes soe lichte ghenoech; Ende horensen datsi niet en verstaen, soe twifelen si. Ende hier omme quetse ic mi, dat ic niet segghen en dar ieghen menschen, noch scriuen, dat ter pinen wert es, ocht woerde na miere zielen gront."

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 38ff., 122.

³⁵ Fraeters, "Handing on Wisdom and Knowledge in Hadewijch of Brabant's *Book of Visions*," in *Women and Experience in Later Medieval Writing: Reading the Book of Life*, ed. Anneke B. Mulder-Bakker and Liz Herbert McAvoy (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 149-168.

³⁶ Fraeters, "Handing on Wisdom," 153-54.

symbolism and Scriptural allusions to an analysis of how the reader is led to identify with the speaking *I* of the text and how this identification leads to a changed understanding of self. The objective of this chapter is to provide a more complete explanation of how this transformative process could occur for the original reader.

In the previous chapter, I showed how Hadewijch uses rhythm and rhetorical figures to simulate the content of the words and to enable the reader's cognitive understanding of these emotions. I argue that this prose style results in a form of *imitatio* because of the way the reader enters into Hadewijch's described experience and learns as a result of it.. Throughout Hadewijch's writings, learning occurs through close interaction between two people. Letter 14 describes a process of instruction that is based on observing and considering the practices of senior members of the community. Referring to the community as a "holy order" (*heileghe ordene*), she counsels the addressee:

You must chose good company – that is, the holy devout order, where you participate in so many advantages, and where especially you are with holy lovers of God, by whom God is most loved and honored, and from whom you feel that you receive the greatest help, and through whom your heart is most united and elevated toward God, and whose words and society most draw you and advance you toward God. But with these persons shun your repose and the inclination of your senses. And carefully observe, with either regard to myself or to others in whom you seek sincere practice of virtue, who they are that help you improve, and consider what their life is.³⁷

³⁷ *CW*, Letter 15, 78-79. Translation modified.. *HB*, Brief 15, 114. "Dat ander es: ghi sult goede gheselschap kiesen: dat es die heileghe ordene daer ghi menichs goets deelachtich wert, Ende te alre vorst, metten heileghen minneren gods, daer god meest af es ghemint ende gheeert, Ende daer ghi af gheuoelt dat ghi meest met gheholpen wert, Ende daer uwe herte meest met gheenicht es ende op gheheuen wert te gode, Ende diere woerde ende

Hadewijch does not directly call for the reader to imitate the life of those in the community. She advises her to “carefully observe” (*merct nauwe*) and to “consider” (*merct*) the virtuous life that that senior members of the community, including Hadewijch, lead. While this may move the reader to perform an *imitatio*, there is no call for direct imitation in this letter. Instead, what is described is a deliberative process based on observation and interaction. Moreover, the reader is not encouraged to consider the specific practices of the members, but the spirit that motivates them. The importance accorded observation and interaction in this passage is reflective of a cultural belief in the thirteenth century of their pedagogical value as a method of transmitting knowledge and teaching proper behavior.³⁸ In the book of visions this process occurs as the reader is led through the individual visions and told of the significance of the symbols. This attitude towards learning suggests why Hadewijch clarifies in Vision 4.9 that what she sees is an “unusual image” (*selsene ghelike*). When the Angel explains the purpose of the vision of the two kingdoms, he tells her that they represent two heavens and that “these two heavens, which you behold, are wholly hers and mine, and that these you saw as two kingdoms that were separated were our two humanities before they attained full growth.”³⁹ The kingdoms are a symbolic representation of Hadewijch’s own person. This recognition transforms the image for the reader into a cognitive image to aid in visually conceiving and remembering what is an abstract concept.

gheselschap u meest trecken ende voerden te gode. Mer scuwet hier in sere uwe raste ende uwe onste. Ende merct nauwe van mi ende van allen menschen daer ghi trouwe in soeket, wie si sijn, Daer ghi af ghebetert wert, Ende merct wat hare leuen es. Want diere es u nu overluttel in ertrike die ghewareghe trouwe hebben connen: Want alle die liede wel na willen nu van gode ende vanden Mensche dat hem ghenoeghet ende datsi begheren, ocht si ontberens.”

³⁸ See Anneke B. Mulder-Bakker, *Lives of the Anchoresses*, trans. Myra Heerspink Scholz (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005), 158.

³⁹ *CW*, Vision 4, 274; *HV*, Visioen 4.74-78, 64. “Dese ghehele hermele die du sies dat hare sijn ende mine ende die du saghes also II coninciken die verwoest waren, dat was onser twier menscheit eer si volwies.”

While the vision accounts are not intended to establish Hadewijch's authority to give spiritual counsel, in the first vision narrative she does receive an apostolic commission from God, and this commission is connected at least symbolically with the production of the book of visions:

You must go back quietly and do what I have commanded you. If you wish, take from this tree a leaf to symbolize the knowledge of my will... You shall always have knowledge of my will, and experience Love; and at the expedient time you shall feel me in fruition... My beloved, help all persons in their affliction impartially, whether they do you good or evil. Love will make you capable of it. Give all, for all is yours.⁴⁰

Possession of the leaf (*bladere*) authenticates Hadewijch's knowledge (*kinnesse*) of God's will. This moment legitimates her authority and right to transmit this knowledge in the form of *orconde*, a word that signifies spoken or written witness testimony.⁴¹ As written testimony, the leaf can also be interpreted as a symbolic representation of the leaf of a manuscript, the type of which the book of visions was comprised.⁴² In the following section of this chapter, I analyze the use of rhetorical ornamentation in Hadewijch's descriptions of what she sees, hears and feels during her participation in the liturgy. The use of rhetorical ornamentation in these sections serves to facilitate reader identification.

⁴⁰ *CW*, Vision 1, 270-71; *HV*, Visioen 1.407-415, 423-425, 54) "Du moets soete werderkenen ende doen da tic di bevolen hebbe. Also du wils, soe nem bladere van desen bome, date s kinnesse mijns willen... Dat es: soe salic di geven mijns te ghevoelne. Aldus saltu kinnesse mijns willen hebben, ende minnen ghevoelen... Hen allen, lieve, die di goet ende quaet doen, wes al eens van werken in hare noet."

⁴¹ *MNW*, s.v. "orconde." I find this moment reminiscent of the one in which Elizabeth of Schönau is shown a stack of books by an angel in a vision and told that one of them, entitled *Liber Viarum Dei*, is the book that Elizabeth is to write.

⁴² This is the second instance in Vision 1 of a plant leaf symbolizing the page of a book. On each of the leaves of the fourth tree she is shown by the angel is written, "I am discernment: without me you can do nothing," which is a quotation from John 15:5. The leaf in that instance can be interpreted as a symbolic representation of a page from the Bible. *CW*, Vision 1, 264; *HV*, Visioen 1.77-79, 36. "Ende ic verstont dat ane elc blat was te lesene: 'Ic ben die onderscedechheit. Sonder me en mach men niet doen.'"

Section 3: The Experience of Liturgical Synesthesia

As a mystagogic text, the book of visions presents the reader with an exemplar intended to enable her to apprehend a higher order of reality in this life. The apprehension of this higher order of reality is represented through the language of sense and emotion. Because bodily sensations have an evaluative component that is expressed in terms of the affections they evoke, it can be said that descriptions of affections in the Book of Visions have an embodied aspect. Yet in all of Hadewijch's writings there are only three occurrences of the verb *rueren* or *berueren* (the arousal of affections leading to movement of the will and the body), none of which is in the Book of Visions. Though she does not draw attention to the connection between sensation and movement of the will and body in an explicitly stated causal manner in the visions, the connection is apparent. Describing her emotions after being taken up in spirit in Vision 11, on reflection Hadewijch recalls, "I was not contented with what my dearly beloved had just permitted in spite of my consent and emotional attraction (*affectien*); it weighed on me now that this union with Saint Augustine had made me so perfectly happy."⁴³ This description of affect and psychological processes is similar to what Cistercian and Victorine writers term the *affectus*.

Among the Cistercians and the Victorines, the *affectus* was considered to be of great significance for the practice of contemplation because it indicated a state of intense desire for God. Richard of Saint Victor, writing in *The Four Violent Degrees of Charity* uses *affectus* to describe how the heart is roused to feel desire:

⁴³ *CW*, Vision 12, 290; (*HV*, Visioen 11.72-77, 106). "Hier na, alsic te mi selven quam, daer ict aerm ende ellendeck vant, doe bedachtic mi diere enecheit daer ic met Sente Augustijn in gevallen was. Soe en ghenoeghet mi niet dat mijn overlieve dat ghedaen hadde bi miere onste ende bi miere affectien."

Does not your heart seem to be deeply touched when the inflamed arrow of love penetrates the human soul in its last recess and pierces so completely its affective power that the soul has no more strength to contain or dissimulate the ardor of its desire.⁴⁴

Richard claims in *The Twelve Patriarchs* that the *affectus* creates seven *affectiones*: *spes* (hope) *amor* (love), *timor* (fear) *gaudium* (joy), *dolor* (distress) *odium* (hatred) and *pudor* (shame).⁴⁵

The opening section of most of the visions describes how Hadewijch was affected and moved in the spirit using language reminiscent of Richard's. At the beginning of Vision 1 Hadewijch writes:

It was Sunday, in the Octave of Pentecost, when our Lord was brought secretly to my bedside, because I felt such an attraction of my spirit inwardly that I could not control myself outwardly in a degree sufficient to go among persons; it would have been impossible for me to go among them. And that desire which I had inwardly was to be one with God in fruition.⁴⁶

Hadewijch's explanation of what she desired indicates to the reader her thought processes in relation to the focal object, thus linking *affectus* to *cognitiones*. God gives himself through the host and the wine and through his person. Such is the intensity of the taste and his embrace that their interpenetration feels "as if we were one mind without difference." The sensory language in

⁴⁴ Richard of Saint Victor, *Épître à Séverin sur la charité. Richard de Saint-Victor: Les quatre degrés de la violente charité*, ed. and trans. Gervais Dumeige (Paris: J. Vrin, 1955), 131. "Nonne tibi corde percussus videtur, quando igneus ille amoris aculeus mentem hominis medullitus penetrat, affectumque transverberat transverberat, in tantum ut desiderii sui estus cohibere vel dissimulare omnino non valeat?" Translation mine.

⁴⁵ Richard of Saint Victor, *The Twelve Patriarchs*, trans. Grover Zinn (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1979), chap. 6, 60.

⁴⁶ *CW*, Vision 1, 263; *HV*, Visioen 1.1-9, 32. "Het was in enen sondage ter octave van Pentecosten dat men mi Onsen Here Heimelike te minen bedde brachte, omdat ic ghevoelde soe grote treckinghe van binnen van minen gheeste, da tic mi van buten onder de menschen soe vele niet ghebben en conste da ticker ghegaen ware. Ende at eyschen da tic van binnen hadde, dat was om een te sine ghebrukeleke met Gode."

the following description encourages the reader to recall her experience receiving Communion and the consumption of the Host:

It was thus: outwardly, to see, taste, and feel, as one can outwardly taste, see, and feel in the reception of the outward Sacrament. So can the beloved, with the loved one, each wholly receive the other in all full satisfaction of the sight, the hearing, and the passing way of the one in the other.⁴⁷

Sensation, affect, and cognition are closely linked in the vision accounts, evidenced when Hadewijch refers in Vision 5 to the danger of “thoughtless desire” (*ombesetter begherten*), which suggests that desire has a cognitive component. She reaches the realization in this vision that “unrestrained charity” (*ongebondender caritaten*) and ignorance of God’s justice are faults that are not corrected until God gives knowledge of himself. Learning this from him, she “understood how I must hate and love wholly with you, and how I must be in all respects.”⁴⁸ For the reader of the book of visions, the vivid descriptions of sensation have the potential to stimulate memory of similar personal experiences and to lead to an understanding of them in a changed way as they are compared with Hadewijch’s understanding of her experience. Just as Hadewijch understands afterwards how she must hate and love with God as a result of this vision experience, so, too, the reader learns to regard the subordination of her affections.

The liturgy enables Hadewijch to reach the high state of emotional and sensory excitation that is necessary to initiate the visionary experience. Indeed, some of the most

⁴⁷ Ibid., Vision 7, 281-282; Ibid., Visioen 7.88-94, 82.. “Dit was al van buten in siene, in smakene, in ghevoelne als men smaken mach van ontfaen in den sacramente van buten, alsoe lief met lieve ontfaen ach in allen voller ghenoechten van siene ende van hoerne, van vervaerne deen in den anderen”

⁴⁸ Ibid., Vision 5, 277; Ibid., Vision 5.52-55, 70. Doe ghi mi selve in u selven naemt, ende daed mi weten hoeghedaen ghi sijt, ende haet ende mint in enen wesene, doe bleef mi bekint hoe ic al met u soude haten ende minnen ende in alle wesene sijn.“

charged language in the book of visions is found in the descriptions of her response to the liturgy before she is taken up in spirit. This is best exemplified in Hadewijch's self-description that begins Vision 7:

On a certain Pentecost Sunday I had a vision at dawn. Matins were being sung in the church, and I was present. My heart and my veins and all my limbs trembled and quivered with eager desire, and, as often occurred with me, such madness and fear beset my mind that it seemed to me I did not content my Beloved, and that my Beloved did not fulfill my desire, so that dying I must go mad, and going mad I must die. On that day my mind was beset so fearfully and so painfully by desirous love that all my separate veins were in travail.⁴⁹

In terms of Richard's theory of the *affectus*, Hadewijch's *affectien* is experienced as fear (*vreseleke*). This affection is connected to her desire for God, and, presumably, the words of the Psalms sung during Matins have intensified this desire. The ritual celebration of the liturgy is preparation for her mystic experiences, and routine practice affords entry into a space where experiential knowledge of God becomes possible. Hadewijch describes in detail the transition from ritual to inner experience in Vision 4:

I sat one day in May, ready to hear the Mass of Saint James, as was right, for that was his feast day. Then during the Epistle my senses were drawn inwards with a

⁴⁹ Ibid., Vision 7, 280; Ibid., Visioen 7.1-14, 78.. "Te enen cinxendaghe wart mi vertoent in de dagheraet. Ende men sanc mettunen in de kerke ende ic was daer. Ende mijn herte ende mine aderen ende alle mine leden scudden ende beveden van beghten. Ende mi was alst dicke heeft gheweest, soe verwoedeleke ende soe vreseleke te moede dat mi dochte, ic ne ware minen lief ghenoech ende mijn lief en vervulde minen niet, da tic stervende soude verwoeden ende al verwoedende sterven. Doe was mi van begheerleker minnen soe vreseleke te moede ende soo wee dat mi al die lede die ic hadde sonderlinghe waenden breken ende alle mine aderen waren sonderlinghe in arbeide."

great tempestuous clamor by an awe-inspiring spirit that from within drew me
within myself.⁵⁰

Focusing her attention, she prepares herself to hear (*horen*) the Mass. The Epistle lesson that day would have included Wisdom 5:1-5,⁵¹ the text of which informs the vision that she receives.

Hearing the Epistle lesson during the Mass is a powerful stimulant for Hadewijch, as indicated in this vision and in Vision 12, where hearing Isaiah 60:1⁵² read during the Mass of the Epiphany affects a similar movement leading to a vision based on that Scriptural text.⁵³

What she experiences in the first part of her visions could be described as liturgical synaesthesia, exemplified in her description of her emotional response to the multi-modal stimuli of Matins and the inner experience it precipitates:

I was at Matins on the feast *In nativitate beatae Mariae*, and after the Third Lesson something wonderful was shown me in the spirit. My heart had been moved beforehand by the words of love that were read there from the Song of

⁵⁰ *CW*, Vision 4, 273. *HV*, Visioen 4.1-7, 60. “Ic sat op enen meidach ende soude messe horen van Sente Jacoppe alst recht was, want het doe sijn dach was. Doe worden mi binnen der epistolen mine sinne binnen ghetrect met enen groten verstormden ghelate van enen gruweleken geeste dat mi van binnen tracinbinnen mi.”

⁵¹ Willaert, *Hadewijch Visioenen*, trans. Imme Dros (Amsterdam: Bert Bakker, 1996), 174. Wisdom 5:1-5: “Then shall the just stand with great constancy against those that have afflicted them, and taken away their labors. These seeing it, shall be troubled with terrible fear, and shall be amazed at the suddenness of their unexpected salvation, Saying within themselves, repenting, and groaning for anguish of spirit: These are they, whom we had sometime in derision, and for a parable of reproach. We fools esteemed their life, and their end without honor. Behold, how they are numbered among the children of God, and their lot is among the saints.” “[T]unc stabunt iusti in magna constantia adversus eos qui se angustaverunt et qui abstulerunt labores illorum videntes turbabuntur timore horribili et mirabuntur in subitatione insperatae salutis dicent inter se paenitentiam agentes et per angustiam spiritus gementes hi sunt quos habuimus aliquando in risu et in similitudine inproperii nos insensati vitam illorum aestimabamus insaniam et finem illorum sine honore quomodo computati sunt inter filios Dei et inter sanctos sors illorum est.”

⁵² Willaert, *Hadewijch Visioenen*, 194, citing Josef van Mierlo, *De visioenen van Hadewych*, ed. Josef van Mierlo, 2 vols. (Leuven, Belgium: De Vlaamsche Boekenhalle, 1924-1925), 125. Isaiah 60:1: “Arise, be enlightened, O Jerusalem: for your light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon you” (*[S]urge inluminare quia venit lumen tuum et gloria Domini super te orta est*).

⁵³ *CW*, Vision 12, 293. “Once on Epiphany, during Mass, I was taken up out of myself in the spirit; there I saw a city, large, and wide, and high, and adorned with perfections.” *HV*, Visioen 12.1-4, 114. “In enen dertiendaghe was ic binnen der messen opghenomen in den geeste ute mi selven. Daer sach ic ene stat, groet ende wijt ende hoghe ende gheciert met volcomenheiden.”

Songs, by which I was led to think of a perfect kiss. Shortly afterwards, in the Second Nocturn, I saw in spirit a queen come in, clad in a gold dress.⁵⁴

The Nocturns she refers to would be a combination of singing and listening as Psalms and Lessons were performed.⁵⁵ Hearing the “words of love,” which is likely a reference to Song of Songs 2:1: “Let him kiss me with the kiss of his mouth” (*osculetur me osculo oris*), she visualizes the kiss, thereby understanding the Lesson through a visual representation of what was read aloud. The second Nocturn involves singing, so it is possible that she was experiencing this sensory experience as Queen Reason appeared to her.⁵⁶

Fraeters argues that Hadewijch’s specificity in locating her visions within the liturgical calendar is indicative of a wish to create a “fixed formal mould” that could be used to structure all of her vision accounts.⁵⁷ I believe the inclusion of this information to have at least one additional purpose: to facilitate recall of the visionary experience and to aid in her reflection on its meaning. It is apparent that some of the initial imagery in her visions is drawn directly from liturgical readings and connected with the days on which the visions occurred. Even in a case where this connection is not as evident, as in Vision 1, the liturgical date serves as an aid to recall and understanding. Describing how on a Sunday in the Octave of Pentecost she received communion in secret, Hadewijch explains that her desire was to experience God in fruition but that she was too immature. In recalling this moment, she tells the reader, “That was what was

⁵⁴ Ibid., Vision 9, 285; *HV*, Visioen 9.1-9, 92. “Ic was in Nativitate Beate Marie te mettenen ende na die III lessen wart mi vertoent in ene geeste een lettel wonders. Mijn herte wart mi beroet tevoren van worden van minnen die men daer las in die Cantiken, daer mi bi ghedachte eens gheels cussens. Corteleke daerna in dandere nocturne, soe sach ic in den geeste dat quam ene coninginne ghecleedt met enen guldenen clede.”

⁵⁵ Willaert, *Hadewijch Visioenen*, 186.

⁵⁶ Ibid. Willaert points out that, during the second Nocturn of Matins, Psalm 45 is sung and that images from this song can be found in this vision.

⁵⁷ Fraeters, “Gender and Genre,” 67-68.

shown me then and still seems the same to me.”⁵⁸ Hadewijch also uses her recollection to draw comparisons between her unitive experience and her life at the time of writing the book of visions, as she does when she ends Vision 10 by noting that she has lamented her exile all winter in the way she lamented after the feeling of fruition left her.⁵⁹

The specificity of the liturgical settings and the way Hadewijch uses them to recall her experience and reflect upon it encourage the reader, who has partaken in at least some of the same rituals, to do the same and to compare her experience to what she reads. The formalization of the beginning to each vision creates in the reader anticipation as she reads further and retrospection as she compares what she reads with what she has read previously in the book.

Section 4: Narrative Perspective and Reader Identification

Hadewijch identifies herself with a variety of symbolic representations in her visions. She identifies as the kingdom in Vision 4, as the fifth way of ascent to the mountain top in Vision 8, her soul’s faculty of reason as a Queen in Vision 9, her conscience as a city in Vision 10 and as an eagle in Vision 11, and finally as a bride in Vision 12. Hadewijch uses the constituent parts of these symbolic representations to create mnemonic loci intended to help the reader recall doctrinal concepts and their significance. A representative example of this technique is the description of the tree whose leaves have hearts etched on them in three different colors. The branches of the tree are of three types and they are arrayed in three tiers of three:

The first of the middlemost branches –those with leaves etched with the white heart –signified chastity: of body, in deportment, in words, and in deeds. The

⁵⁸ *CW*, Vision 1, 263; *HV*, Visioen 1.13-14, 32. [A]lse mi daer wel vertoent wart doe ende mi noch wel sciijnt.”

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, Vision 10, 288; *Ibid.*, Visioen 10.74-78, 100.

second branch was to desire that everyone's work be innocent and pure, and to watch over one's works in order that they may please our Beloved. The third branch was to remain so pure of all stain in spirit, in desire, and in soul that no baseness may penetrate there by error, haughtiness, vainglory, despair, or excessive hope of what one does not yet possess.⁶⁰

The spatial arrangement of the branches allows Hadewijch to represent distinct parts without losing their interconnectedness. The ornamentation on Queen Reason's dress in Vision 9 and the bride's gown in Vision 12 represent the virtues, associating these behaviors with the possible beauty of the inner and outer person. These images become objects of meditative focus for the reader, leading to their internalization and storage in the reader's memory.⁶¹

The forms of *amplificatio* in the allegorical visions serve to encourage the reader to implicate herself into the narrative. Personifications are used to give a visual representation of abstract concepts for easier comprehension and remembrance. The first personification in Vision 9 is the Queen, who represents Hadewijch's reason. She is clad in a "gold dress," which is an allusion to Psalm 44:10.⁶² This dress is covered with eyes, and her crown has as many crowns as her dress has eyes. Hadewijch tells the reader, "you shall hear the number [of eyes] when she herself declares it." This deferment is important because Hadewijch is calling upon the reader to

⁶⁰ Ibid., Vision 1, 265; Ibid., Visioen 1, 138-149. "Die eerste middelste telch, die de witte herten hadde ane die bladere, dat was reinecheit ane den lichame, in den seden, in woerden, in werken. Die ander telch was dat werken in ieghenwelken onnosel ende reine te begherne ende te hoedene sine werke na ghetamen ons lief. Die derde telch was soe puer te blivene van alre beveletheit in den geeste, in den gare, in der zielen, dat ghene nederheit daerin en come van dolinghe, van hoverden, van ydelre glorien, van disperatien, van te vele te hopene dies men noch niet en heeft."

⁶¹ Cf. Willaert, "Pilgrims naar het land van de minne Mystagogie en memoria bij Hadewijch van Brabant," *Op reis met memoria*, ed. P. de Wilde, Annelies van Gijsen, Jesse Mortelmans, and Patricia Stoop (Verloren, Netherlands: Hilversum, 2004), 80.

⁶² "[W]ith which kings' daughters have gladdened thee for thine honor: the queen stood by on thy right hand, clothed in vesture wrought with gold, and arrayed in diverse colors" (*filiae regum in honore tuo adstetit regina a dextris tuis in vestitu deaurato circumdata varietate*).

use her imagination to give a virtual reality to the vision narrative.⁶³ Hadewijch's identifying the Queen as a faculty of her soul encourages the reader to interpret the following passage as an imaginative representation.

After personification, *descriptio* is the second form of rhetorical ornamentation that is used to draw the reader into the text and cause reflection. In Vision 10 Hadewijch sees a "new city" that shares the same name as Jerusalem. She claims the city was "adorned" with "ornaments." Ornamentation refers to the physical appearance of the city in her vision but also inevitably in medieval rhetorical theory to forms of amplification. While Hadewijch claims the ornamentation of the city was "unspeakably" beautiful, she uses resumptive modifiers to heighten the description by adding additional clauses. This is combined with the superlative "most." As she regards the city, John the Evangelist tells her:

The city that you see adorned is your free conscience; and the lofty beauty that is here is your manifold virtues with full suffering; and the adornment is your fiery ardor, which remains dominant in you in spite of all disasters. Your unknown virtues with new assiduity are the manifold ornaments that adorn the city.⁶⁴

Conscience (*consciencie*) in this allegorical explanation is likened to a complex structure and is the support for virtues. A city is a social space as well, which in this allegory conveys that the symbolic representations exist in relation to one another. Virtues give the city beauty, but, without the firmness of clear conscience, they have no planned purpose. Similarly, "ornaments" (*cierheide*) have purpose only in their arrangement,

⁶³ That she is asking the reader to wait until the Queen states the number of eyes on her dress may also be a way of reminding the reader to heed reason. Such playfulness is unusual in Hadewijch's writings.

⁶⁴ *CW*, Vision 10, 287; *HV*, Visioen 10.31-38, 96, 98. "[E]nde die stat die du hier sies gheciert es dine vrie consciencie; Ende dese hoghe cierheit die hier es, dat sijn dine menechoudeghe dogede met uollen doghene; ende die omhanc es dijn viereghe vlijt die di uerwonnen heft bouwen alle vernoye; dine ombekinde doghede met nuwen erenste, dat sijn de menechoude cierheide die de stat cieren."

without which they do not signify interior beauty. The level of description in this paragraph slows the reader down, causing her to consider how the parts relate to the whole, the remembrance of which is facilitated by relating them to a representable structure.

Although the symbolic representations with which Hadewijch identifies herself are not unusual in the context of medieval allegorical literature, they present the reader with different ways of understanding the relationship between virtuous behavior and doctrine in a memorable way. As mnemonic devices, they have the potential to reshape the reader's habits of thought and resultant behavior. Through the speech of the angels and the members of the Trinity, the reader is presented with a higher order of perspectives against which to evaluate both Hadewijch's and the reader's own behavior.

As Herman Vekeman demonstrates the angels in the visions serve as a guide for the reader, indicating the stages of Hadewijch's spiritual ascent.⁶⁵ The Angel in Vision 1 names what is shown to Hadewijch as she is led amongst the trees. His address to her is provided in direct reportage, although it is Hadewijch's inner self who explicates the meaning of what she is shown. Throughout Vision 1 this pattern is utilized, and the Angel's speech serves to confirm Hadewijch's character. This pattern conveys what Hadewijch is shown and able to comprehend due to her virtuous character:

[T]he Angel said to me again: "O seeker of veritable love solely in your God, acting perfectly in all things according to the customs of the holy law, which God sanctified by the holy life he lived, and by his great commandments and his sublime counsels! O loving soul, observant of the holy customs by loving service

⁶⁵ H.W.J. Vekeman, "Angelus sane nuntius. Een interpretatie van het Visoenenboek van Hadewijch," *Ons Geestelijk Erf* 50 (1976): 225-259.

according to the good pleasure of the omnipotent God! O being of constancy, since God always finds in you the fidelity of veritable Love, and in you he will eternally possess it! Understand these three highest branches!” And I understood.⁶⁶

Because she has faithfully followed the customs and commandments given in Scripture, she is able to correctly interpret the symbolism of the branches, which pertain to the importance of remaining in a state of fear both that a person does not practice perfect virtue or show God proper homage and that people are afraid to die each day with Christ on the cross. What this passage and its subsequent exposition present to the reader is a way of remembering the difference between the proper cause of fear and the fear of those who are weak of will.

Hadewijch is guided in Vision 4 by another angel, who announces to the personages in heaven: ““All you who have been brought to a standstill in your service, and all you who, having been served thereby, appeared, be herewith witnesses to me of what I shall reveal to this soul, who is in wonder and fear of you that stand here!”⁶⁷ Even if the reader were not aware of the intertextual allusions that Vekeman identifies, it is apparent that the angels serve to affirm both Hadewijch’s growth and what has made it possible. In some Visions this affirmation is direct, as in Vision 6⁶⁸, where, as in others,

⁶⁶ *CW*, Vision 1, 265; *HV*, Visioen 1.112-123, 38. “[D]ie inghel seide echt te mi: ‘Ghi soekende ghereechte minne allene in uwen God, in al die zeden volmaectelege die ter heiligher wet behoren te werkene, die God gheheilecht heeft met sinen heilighen levende dat hire in levede ende met sinen groten gheboden ende met sinen hoghen raden; ghi minnende ende pleghende met minnenden dienste der heiligher zeden na die behaghenesse des alweldeghen Gods; ghi, ghestadege wesinghe daer God trouwe van gherechter minnen altoes in vent ende ewelike in besitten sal, verstant dese III overste telghere.’ Ende ic verstont.”

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, Vision 4, 273; *Ibid.*, Visioen 4.38-42, 62. “Alle ghi ghestilde die dient, ende alle gheopenbaerde die men daermede dient, sijt mi hiermede oerconde van da tic toene derre wonderendere ende derre gruwelendere van mi die hier seet.”

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, Vision 6, 278. “This place is unknown to all those who do not send you such an enkindled offering with such sharp arrows as she sends you with her new burning youth....For that mysterious life, which you with

her growth is discernable in the attributes given her by the angel in that particular vision.⁶⁹

When God appears to Hadewijch's soul, his words, too, are presented in such a way that it is clear that her virtuous character has made this vision possible. God, in effect, commends her for what she has done until this point. Since God issues the commandments, Hadewijch must be judged according to them by the reader. In effect, the reader is considering how Hadewijch responds to the directives she received in Vision 1.

In Vision 3, which is a continuance of Vision 2, Hadewijch perceives the countenance of the Holy Spirit. When the countenance speaks to her, it acknowledges the steadfast devotion to which Hadewijch referred to at the end of Vision 2. The countenance tells her, "When you fully bring me yourself, as pure humanity in myself, through all the ways of perfect Love, you shall have fruition of me as the love who I am....Go forth, and live what I am; and return bringing me full divinity, and have fruition of me as who I am."⁷⁰ This passage establishes a horizon of expectation against which she would judge past actions and creates expectations for what she will read in the subsequent narratives in the book.

burning charity have aroused in her, has led her to this place." *HV*, Visioen 6.29-32,36-39, 72, 74. "[D]ie ombekint es al denghenen die di dus onstekene offerande niet ne senden met al soe scerpen scichten also si di sent met nuwer berrender joghet....Want dat ombekinde leven dattu in hare heves ghesticht in der berrender caritaten, dat heefse hier gheleidt."

⁶⁹ For example, Vision 13, *CW*, Vision 13, 297, when the first seraph tells Hadewijch, "See here the new secret heaven, which is closed to all those who never were God's mother with perfect motherhood, who never wandered with him in Egypt or on all the ways, who never presented him where the sword of prophecy pierced their soul, who never reared that Child to manhood and who, at the end, were not at his grave: for them it shall remain eternally hidden." *HV*, Visioen 13.16-23, 124.. "Sich hier den nuwen verlorenen hemel die besloten es vore alle dieghene die nye moeder Gods der volcomenre dracht en waren, noch ne doelden met hem in Egipten noch alle weghe, noch ne presenteerden hem daer der prophetien swert dore die ziele ghinc, ended at kint niet man ne soechden, noch ten inde niet te sinen grave en waren: dien sel hi eweleke verborghen bliven."

⁷⁰ *CW*, Vision 3, 272; *HV*, Visioen 3.15-18, 23-25, 58. "Ende also du mi di volbringhes puer mensche in mi selven dore alle weghe van volre minnen, soe saltu mijns ghebruken wie ic minne ben....Vare ende leve dat ic ben, ende comt weder ende bringhet mi ghehele godheit ende ghebruket wie ic ben."

God in Vision 8 tells her that, of the paths that lead to the summit of the mountain, Hadewijch has taken the way that is the shortest and leads most quickly to perfection. This is repeated when he explains the different paths; he indicates that it pertains to Hadewijch and others who share the same experience as they progress along each particular pathway. The ways that God explicates are not limited to her alone and present the reader with different means of realizing perfection, the presentation of which, in the form of the spiritual metaphor of a mountain ascent, may have been unfamiliar to the reader.⁷¹

What is important in this vision is the reference in lines 8.46-50 to Hadewijch's responsibilities as a mystagog: "And by this way I went forth from my Father to you and those who are yours, and I came again from you and those who are yours back to my Father. With myself I have also sent you this hour, and you must, with me, pass it on to those who are yours."⁷² The reader could interpret this as a reference to her relationship with Hadewijch and read the descriptions of the other paths to perfection as applicable to her, particularly given that the other ways are said to apply to Hadewijch and others like her. She could have called her relationship with Hadewijch to mind as she read the following lines spoken by Mary:

See, if you wish to have ampler fruition, as I have, you must leave your sweet body here. But for the sake of those whom you have chosen to become full-grown

⁷¹ This visual representation echoes the pilgrimage imagery of Letter 15.

⁷² *CW*, Vision 8, 283; *HV*, Visioen 8.46-50, 86.. "Ende daarmede ghinc ic ute minen Vader te di ende te dinen, ende quam weder van di ende van den dinen te minen Vader. Die ure hebic di ghesent met mi ende di sent voert ten dinen met mi."

with you in this, but who are not yet full grown, and above all for the sake of those whom you love most, you will yet defer it.⁷³

These passages referring to Hadewijch's responsibilities as a spiritual leader could be interpreted as a justification for the demanding asceticism she advocates in her writings, particularly her letters. For a follower, the visions would reveal behavioral motives in a different perspective.

The ability of the shifting narrative perspectives to dynamically represent the relationship between the works of the outer person and the benefit derived by the inner person is shown in a remarkable moment in Vision 4 when Hadewijch's inner person is shown her outer person and told:

Now see me united in unity with your Beloved – and you are my loved one, loved with me. These heavens, which you behold, are wholly hers and mine; and these you saw as two kingdoms that were separated were our two humanities before they attained full growth. I was full-grown before; and nevertheless we remained equal. And I came into my kingdom yesterday, and you became full-grown afterwards; nevertheless we remained equal. And we shall become full-grown today and tomorrow with you into her kingdom; and nevertheless shall remain equal with me. You have wished, dear strong heroine and lady, with your doubts, to know from me how it might come to pass, and through what works, that she should attain full growth so as to be like me, so that I should be like her and you

⁷³ Ibid., Vision 13, 301; Ibid., Visioen 13.241-246, 136. "Sich, wiltuus alsoe voertmeer ghebruken alsoe ic, soe moetstu dinen sueten lichame hier hebben. Mer omne die die du vercosen hebs met di in dit te volwassene, die noch niet volwassen en sijn ende te vorst die du alremeest mins, soe wiltuut noch versten."

like myself. Let this be in me, and let it be announced to you by my mouth; it is my understanding of my rich nature.⁷⁴

The directives and the doctrinal information that Hadewijch receives are not different from what the reader would be exposed to in her parish church. What has the potential to challenge the reader's acceptance of norms is the way the information is presented, from divine viewpoint to subject, and the way the subject responds, expressed in Hadewijch's self-understanding. The reader is told what must be done to achieve perfection and also told what she must feel.

Hadewijch's repeated patterns of behavior described in the vision narratives build expectations in the reader. One expectation of this horizon as it pertains to a cultural norm is the repeated descriptions of Hadewijch prostrating herself when she appears before the countenance in Visions 1 and 5. In Vision 12 Hadewijch does not fall prostrate when she is brought before the countenance because the eagle tells her:

Have patience, and watch, and do not fall down before that Countenance! They who fall down before the countenance and adore receive grace; they who contemplate the Countenance standing receive justice and are enabled to fathom the deep abysses that for those unacquainted with them are so terrifying to know.⁷⁵

⁷⁴ Ibid., Vision 4, 274; Ibid., Visioen 4.72-89, 64. "Nu sich mi eneghe, genecht dinen gheminden, ende mine gheminde sisi ghemint met mi. Dese ghehele hemele die du sies dat hare sijn ende mine ende die du saghes also II coninciken die verwoest waren, dat was onser twier menscheit eer si volwies. Ic wies vore. Nochtan bleven wi effene. Ende ic quam in mijn rike ghisteren ende ghi weist na. Nochtan bleven wi effene. Ende si wal volwassen heden ende met di comen morghen in haer rike ende nochtan bliven effene met mi. Du heves, lieve, sterke, grote ende vrouwe, willen weten met dinen twivele te mi, waerbi dat wesen soude ende met wat werke dates mi ghelijc volwassen soude, da tic hare ghelijc wesen soude ende di ghelijc mi selven. Dat si in mi. Ende dat si di cont van minen monde. Dat es mine verstanesse miere riker nature."

⁷⁵ Ibid., Vision 12, 294; Ibid., Visioen 12.43-48, 116. "Ghedoechde ende beide, ende en valle niet in dit aenscijn. Die in daenscijn vallen ende anebeden, die ontfaen ghenade. Die dore daenscijn staende sien, si ontfaen

The reader is cued to recall the previous descriptions of Hadewijch falling prostrate, and the change here prompts comparison with them. At this point the reader's anticipation changes, as does her retrospective understanding of the significance of what she has read previously. Hadewijch's behavior in this vision defies anticipation as well as the customary model of visionary behavior. She is told by the eagle, "When you previously fell down before the Countenance, you, like an ordinary soul, confessed it as frightening. When you stood up and contemplated it, you saw yourself perfect, together with us, a veritable bride, sealed with love."⁷⁶ His words echo God's in Vision 1 when he tells her to stand after she falls before him.⁷⁷ When the reader makes this connection, the configurative meaning of Hadewijch's behavior becomes apparent, and what may have seemed unfamiliar becomes part of the virtual reality of the text constructed by each reader.

Section 5: Wonder and the Perception of Community

Love and fear are the most frequent emotions described in the visions, but wonder is integral to Hadewijch's cognition in terms of her growth and self-understanding. Wonder (*wondere, eyselijc*) occurs as a verb, adjective, and noun in the book of visions, which is indicative of its multivalent importance. Mommaers argues that wonder in Hadewijch's prose writings is a form of mystic emotion. He distinguishes between affections, such as those

gherechteheit ende warden mogende te bekinne die diepe afgronde, die soe vreseleke sijn te bekinne den onbekinden."

⁷⁶ Ibid., Vision 12, 296; Ibid., Visioen 12.165-169, 122.. "Doen ghi vielt te voren in daenscijn, doe bekindijdt alsoe eene simple siele onghenade. Doe ghi opstont ende doersaghet, doe saechdi u selven volcomeleke met ons gherechte bruut ghezeghelt metter minnen."

⁷⁷ Ibid., Vision 1, 268; Ibid., Visioen 1.265-267, 46.

classified by Bernard of Clairvaux, and emotion (*exmovere*), which is a change in the state of the soul brought about by the frightening shock of the unexpected.⁷⁸ Emotions, Mommaers argues, create a state in the soul where a particular form of knowledge is made possible.⁷⁹ As a source for this idea, Mommaers points specifically to the similarities between Richard of St. Victor's theology of *devotio desiderium* and *admiratio* in his treatise *Benjamin Major* and desire (*begherte*) and wonder in Hadewijch's writings.⁸⁰ In this section of the chapter, I focus on how wonder is enacted in the narratives and Hadewijch's cognitive response to the experience of it. Caroline Walker Bynum maintains that "[medieval] texts may give us access to reactions less through adjectives attached to nouns... than by indicating the responses of an implicit reader or viewer or by describing acts and objects intended to provoke responses."⁸¹

Wonder as a response in Hadewijch's book is sometimes used as a humility topos, such as when her sense of wonder caused by God's favor leads her to see her fellow men as objects of her concern:

Ah! When I think of what God wills in me, and what he has done for me in preference to others, it is a wonder how I remain alive, unless because of the great Love who can do all things. But it is certainly a great wonder to me when I think that God prefers me to all creatures I ever saw; so I wonder much more about the men who live and to whom he gives so much less than to me – that they let me live so long, and that they offer me protection or respect or favor, and that they do not afflict me with ever-new torments.⁸²

⁷⁸ Mommaers, "Is Hadewijch Emotioneel?," 137.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 138.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 147.

⁸¹ Caroline Walker Bynum, *Metamorphosis and Identity* (New York, Brooklyn: Zone Books, 2005), 56-57.

⁸² *CW*, Vision 14, 302. Translation modified. *HV*, Visioen 14, 26-37, 140, 142. "Ay, also mi ghedinct wat mi Gid wilt ende wat hi mi gedaen heeft vore andere, soe eest wondere hoe ic gheduere mer metter groter minnen die al vermach. Mer dats groet wonder. Also mi gedinct wat mi God wilt ended at hi mi wilt vore alle creature die ic

The emotion she describes in this passage is not borne out of mystic union but out of her inability to understand her own fortune in relation to others. Hadewijch's perspectival reflection on her spiritual growth in Vision 14, which concludes the book, is different from her descriptions of the feeling of wonder when she experiences mystic union. During these moments, wonder leads to narrative intelligibility. Vision 6 is initiated by Hadewijch's desire to be taken up to Heaven and made to conform with God's will during her participation in a feast of the Epiphany. This desire causes her "to be moved" in love, which indicates that her desire leads her to feel love. When she is taken up, God is represented only by symbols such as a seat of judgment and a crown, and this, she claims, is how he spoke to her. Despite the pains to which she goes to stress the ineffable nature of God, his nature is represented using bodily metaphors. The representation of God in this manner enables the readers to use their own sense of their bodies to understand the relationship among God's attributes. The significance of all of the symbols and Hadewijch's understanding of them is abruptly ended when the narrative transitions into her description of wonder:

But then wonder seized me because of all the riches I had seen in him, and through this wonder I came out of the spirit in which I had seen all that I had sought; and in this situation in all this rich enlightenment I recognized my awe-inspiring, my unspeakably sweet beloved, I fell out of the spirit – from myself and all I had seen in him – and, wholly lost, fell upon the breast, the fruition, of his nature, which is love. There I remained, engulfed and lost, without any comprehension of other knowledge, or sight, or spiritual understanding, except to

ie sach, wondert mi vele meer van den menschen die leven ende dien hi soe vele onthoudet vore mi, dates mi soe langhe laten leven, ende dates enegen raet ochte enech sparen ochte genade te mi hebben, sine tormenten mi altoes met nuwen tormente."

be as one with him and to have fruition of this union. I remained in it less than half an hour.⁸³

The feeling of wonder, which preempts Hadewijch's will and senses as she experiences fruition, is evident when she describes in Vision 9 how she "came out of the spirit and remained lying until late in the day, inebriated with unspeakable wonders."⁸⁴ She makes a similar statement at the end of Vision 10:

The voice embraced me with an unheard-of wonder, and I swooned in it, and my spirit failed me to see or hear more. And I lay in this fruition half an hour; but then the night was over, and I came back, piteously lamenting my exile, as I have done all this winter. For truly the whole winter long I have been occupied with this kind of thing. I lay there a long time and possessed love, or revelations, or anything else in particular that love gave me.⁸⁵

In Vision 8 the Angel tells Hadewijch: "Behold how I am the champion and vassal of this true countenance, which sees to the depths of all things and irradiates perfect service, leads to perfection, teaches both the science of God and wisdom, and gives the riches of all fruition of all

⁸³ Ibid., Vision 6, 279; Ibid., Visioen 6.76-89, 76. "Mer doe wonderde mi van al dier rijcheit die ic ghesien hadde in heme. Ende bi dien wondere quam ic buten den geeste daer ic in hadde ghesien al da tic sochte. Ende alsoe ic alsoe ghedaen in al dier riker verweentheit kinde mijn anxteleke lief ende mijn onseggeleke soete, doe viel ic buten den geeste van mi ende van al dien da tic in hem ghesien hadde, ende viel al verloren in die ghebrukeleke borst siere nature der minnen. Daerin blevic verswolgenleke verloren buten allen verstantesse van el iet te wetene noch te siene noch te verstane dan ien te wesenemet hem ende dies te ghebrukene. Daerin blevic mkin dan ene halve ure."

⁸⁴ Ibid., Vision 9, 286; *HV*, Visioen 9.69-71, 94. "Ende ic quam buten den geeste ende bleef liggende verdronken tote hoghe opten dach in onseggeleken wondere"

⁸⁵ Ibid., Vision 10, 288; Ibid., Visioen 10.71-80, 98,100. "Ende die stemme omvinc mi met esen onghehoerden wondere, ende ic viel in heme, ende mi ghebrac des geests meer te siene ende te hoerne. Ende ic lach in dien ghebrukene ene halve ure. Maer hier was de nacht al over, ende ic quam weder jammerleke clagende mine ellende, alsoe ic al desen winter hebbe ghedaen. Want ic hebbe welna al desen winter alsoe ghedaenre dinc gheploghen. Ic lacher toe alle uren ende oefende minne, ochte revelation, ochte iet anders sonderlines dat mi minne gaf."

refined sensations.”⁸⁶ This statement is important for it shows how fruition is linked to a high order of comprehension – that of “refined sensations.” Those whose desire causes them to perform good works, even in the face of social criticism, become a source of wonder to the uncomprehending masses.

When used as an adjective, as in the case of Vision 9 (“I was at the Matins on the feast *In nativitate beatae Mariae*, and after the Third Lesson something wonderful was shown to me in the spirit.”),⁸⁷ *wonder* indicates that the symbolic imagery was previously unimaginable. This wonderful vision was shown to her once her emotions were aroused by hearing a passage from the Song of Songs. This narrative movement is initiated by the stirring of Hadewijch’s heart, which the reader may also be moved to feel if she calls to mind the liturgical moment referred to in the vision narrative. The ornateness of the description of the queen’s garment inevitably causes the reader to slow down and ponder the symbolism and the rhetorical figures of thought used to describe it. The importance of noting the details is reinforced when the trumpeter tells Hadewijch, “whoever does not hearken to my lady will be eternally deaf to happiness and nevermore hear or see the higher melody and the wonder of powerful love.”⁸⁸ This description of her desires is rendered into a representable account of her thoughts, one which demonstrates a process of listening and visualization. The auditory and visual language of Vision 9 stimulates the senses of the reader/listener, leading her through the affections and thoughts felt by Hadewijch in the vision. This reading experience is process-orientated and intended to facilitate

⁸⁶ Ibid., Vision 8, 282. Translation modified. Ibid., Visioen 8.16-21, 84. “Sich hier hoe ic ben kimpe ende rijclec ghenen ghewareghen aenschine dat al doresiet ende dorelicht den velcommen diensten, dat volleidet ende leert diviniteit ende vroetheit, ende rijcheit gheeft aller ghebrukenessen van allen vollen consteleken smake.”

⁸⁷ Ibid., Vision 9, 285; Ibid., Visioen 9.1-3, 92. “Ic was in Nativitate Beate Marie te mettenen ende na die III lessen wart mi verতো in ene geeste een lettel wonders.”

⁸⁸ Ibid., Vision 9, 285; *HV*, Visioen 9.15-22, 92. “Vore die coninginne quamen III joncfrouwen, ene met enen roden purpere ende II bosinen in hare hande. Ende sib lies metter eenre ende seide: ‘Die miere vrouwen verhoert, hi sal eweleke verdoven in die salecheit, ende hi ne sal nemmermeer horen noch sien die hoechste melodie ende die wondere der gheweldegheer minnen.’”

recall and practice of the virtues emphasized by Queen Reason. The rhetoric of sensation and affect allows the reader/listener to feel and experience the pedagogy.

Section 6: Conclusion

The book of visions' language of sensation and affect combine with its perspectival changes to create a sense of alterity in the reader, which has the potential to lead her to question or modify previous attitudes and behaviors. This process in the first four visions leads the reader to understand how Hadewijch learned to discern God's will and act with justice towards others. It is through the figurative language of bodily sensation, a form of metaphoric representation, that she empathically participates in Hadewijch's visions. This allows the reader to appropriate the figurative language of the text, assessing it in terms of her own experience, and to identify with it. When the reader understands what she reads metaphorically, she becomes implicated in the text. In identifying with Hadewijch as a spiritual director and with the process by which a person learns to discern the right actions for herself and for counseling others, the reader becomes better able to provide charity.

The ways the reader is implicated in the book of visions are different from those of the letters, Hadewijch's other prose writing, for reasons that are both obvious and less apparent. They differ in one respect because of the differences in "temporal dynamics." While there are recurrent themes in Hadewijch's letters, the letter collection is not arranged in a particular order, either chronologically or according to recipient. This, in addition to the one-sided nature of the preserved correspondence, creates interruptions and gaps that make it difficult to read into the collection a progressive temporal pattern. Individually, the letters treat specific topics, and the

doctrinal exposition is intended to give support to the guidance which Hadewijch gives on that particular matter. Arranged into chapters describing Hadewijch's spiritual ascent, the book of visions by comparison is a cohesive whole. The themes of ascent and union are combined and intensified over the course of the chapters. Moreover, Hadewijch is not overtly trying to change the disposition of the reader of the book by actively exhorting her. The book of visions is intended to be a meditative work in which the reader is guided through the book by the *ductus* of the formalized structure of Hadewijch's narratives and by the rhetorical ornamentation of the descriptions, which are intended to facilitate remembrance and cognition.

Chapter Three

“Let all of you be to pity moved”: Lamentation as Pedagogy in the Songs

“And perchance it was this that Divine Providence designed, that I[,] a stricken one, should set forth Job stricken, and that by these scourges I should the more perfectly enter into the feelings of one that was scourged.” – Gregory the Great, *Morals on Job*, vol.1, bk.1¹

“May all those who love be moved to pity / That love makes me keen thus.”² – Hadewijch of Brabant, Song 20

Section 1: Empathetic Identification in the Songs

The letters (predominantly) and book of visions were intended for individual readers, evidenced by the use of the second-person singular. While the affective language Hadewijch uses in her songs is apparent to any reader, the rhetorical means by which the songs seek to change the disposition of the intended audience is less obvious and, indeed, virtually unexamined.

Hadewijch scholars have regarded the representation of emotion in Hadewijch’s songs skeptically and avoided analyzing the singer’s emotive display as anything other than generic convention.³ My approach in this chapter is not to read the range of emotions as tropes but to analyze them as part of the discourse on the affections found in the letters and book of visions.

¹ Gregory the Great, *Morals on the Book of Job*, trans. anonymous, 3 vols, 1844-1850. Reprint. (South Bend, IN: Ex Fontibus Company, 2012), Epistle, Chapter 5, 14. All quotations from the *Moralia* in English are from this edition. “Et fortasse hoc diuinae prouidentiae consilium fuit, ut percussus Iob percussus exponerem, et flagellati mentem melius per flagella sentirem.” *S. Gregorii Magni Moralia in Iob*, ed. Marci Adriaen, 3 vols., CCSL, 143 (Turnhout, Belgium: Brepols, 1979). vol.1, 6. Quotations from the *Moralia* in Latin refer to this edition. Here after I will refer to the series title Corpus christianorum, series latina as CCSL when referring to this particular volume.

² *PH*, Song 20, lines 68-69, 151. “Hen allen die minnen moet ontfarmen / Dat mi minne aldus laet carmen.”

³ Frank Willaert’s assertion that the aesthetic aspects of the *Liederen* mask Hadewijch’s emotions and therefore make the songs unsuitable for emotional analysis is typical of this position *De poëtica van Hadewijch in de Strofische Gedichten*, (Utrecht, Netherlands: HES, 1984), 358.

In the first chapter I showed how Hadewijch's letters are written as though they are replies to requests for spiritual guidance by women who were subject to their passions and unable to discern God's will. Hadewijch tells the recipient of Letter 5, "You busy yourself unduly with many things... You waste too much time with your energy, throwing yourself headlong into things that cross your path. I could not persuade you to observe moderation in this."⁴ *Moderation* or *constancy* (*constic*) implies the use of discretion and reasoned judgment in deciding how best to help others. This interpretation gains plausibility when considered with the *petitio* in the following letter where Hadewijch requests "that you keep yourself from instability" (*ghi u huet van onghestedicheiden*).⁵ As I have shown, Hadewijch believes her followers lack inner stability because they are subject to their affections, and, consequently, their actions are ungoverned. They are *un-tempered* (*onghetempert*), a term associated with the hardening of metals.⁶ She flatly states in Letter 16, "You are too quickly saddened, and you lack temperance in all your activity... Master yourself as you ought."⁷ These themes recur in the songs prompting an interpretation of Hadewijch's lyric texts as an attempt to instruct her followers on understanding their affections and the correct behavioral responses using a different mode. I argue this pedagogic dimension to the songs is most apparent in the heuristic nature of the singer's laments and her request that the audience pity and feel compassion for her.

One of Hadewijch's foremost concerns in her letters is the level of self-knowledge exhibited by her readers. She exhorts them to learn to know themselves and to master their passions, for without these capabilities, they cannot learn to contemplate God. Knowledge of the

⁴ *CW*, Letter 5, 56; *HB*, Brief 5, 42. "Te sere veronledichdi u met vele dinghen Daer u soe vele niet ane en leghet. Ghi quist te vele tijts met uwer haesticheit dat ghi soe sere inden dinghen valt die u ontmoeten. Daer toe en constic u niet bringhen dat ghi mate daer ane hielt."

⁵ *CW*, Letter 6, 57; *HB*, Brief 6, 46..

⁶ *MNW*, s.v. "onghetetempert."

⁷ *CW*, Letter 16, 81; *HB*, Brief 16, 122. "Ghi sijt te weec van herten ende te kinsch in al uwen seden. Ghi sijt te saen droue ende onghe tempert in al u doen."

causes of an individual's affections and their temperance is essential for achieving perfection.⁸ The turn towards interiority that she counsels for her readers does not come at the expense of an active engagement in the world, as the Second Commandment is a necessary precondition to knowing God. Commanded to love one's neighbor as oneself, all Christians are required to cultivate the disposition to feel compassion for others and to be motivated by it to act with charity. When Hadewijch criticizes the reader of Letter 16, telling her "Always be joyous among your companions, and let all their sufferings be yours," she situates her advice in the context of 2 Corinthians 11:29.⁹ Hadewijch, in this letter and in others, is trying to influence the disposition (*sin*)¹⁰ of her readers so that they will feel compassion for others and be moved to act with charity and virtue.

In the songs, the audience's compassionate response to the singer's lamentations is intended to affect their dispositions and reorient them towards God. By recognizing themselves in the singer's lamentations and the process of self-exploration through which Hadewijch goes in the course of her songs, the members of her audience are taught the necessity of lamentation in affective attachment. This self-exploration is focused on the four affections (joy, sadness, love, fear) and the suffering which she experiences. When the singer directs her lamentations to God, she demonstrates what is appropriate to lament and the way in which her faith and will are strengthened through this cry for recognition and acknowledgement of her dependence on him. Hadewijch appeals to communal customs and the audience's affections simultaneously to render them sympathetic to the singer's laments. Each of these forms of argumentative persuasion confirms the other and acts upon the disposition of the auditors.

⁸ Cf. Letter 16, 77; *HB*, Brief 16, 110.

⁹ *HB*, Brief 16, 124. "Sijt altoes blide onder u gheselschap, ende al hare pine si die uwe, Also sinte Paulus seghet: Wie es siec ende ic niet?" 2 Cor 11:29: "Who is weak, and I am not weak" (*quis infirmatur et non infirmor*).

¹⁰ "Sin" is a polysemous word in Middle Dutch. It can signify "mind," "intellect," "feelings," and "senses" among others. These faculties in medieval psychology were believed to reside in the "seat of the soul."

This symbiotic relationship between customary belief and affective response in the songs is most easily understood in the context of Augustine's revision of Cicero's three duties of the orator (to teach, to delight, and to persuade)¹¹ into three different styles of speech: the subdued manner, used to teach; the temperate manner, used to delight; and the grand manner, used to persuade.¹² The subdued manner used to teach correlates to the Word. Because the moderate style is used to condemn or praise, it functions as an appeal to the customs observed by the speaker and the audience. It is the grand style, spoken with the "violent affections of the spirit" (*violentum animi affectibus*), that is used when attempting to move the audience to act by appealing to their emotions:

But just as he...is delighted if you speak attractively, so he is moved if he finds pleasure in what you promise, dreads what you threaten, hates what you condemn, embraces what you praise, grieves over what you emphasize as deplorable, rejoices when you say something he should rejoice at, pities those whom in your discourses you set before his eyes as objects of pity, avoids those whom you by awakening fear point out should be avoided.¹³

In Augustine's theory, the moderate style is based on virtuous works, the life of the speaker, the extent to which his life is lived in accord with what he condemns or praises, and the audience's awareness of this accordance. The orator should "order his life that he not only prepares a reward for himself, but also so that he offers an example to others, and his way of living may be, as it

¹¹ Cicero, *Orator*, trans. H.M. Hubbell, rev. ed. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1962) chap. 21, para. 69, pgs. 356-357.

¹² St. Augustine, *De doctrina Christiana*, ed. J. Martin. Corpus christianorum, series latina, 32. (Turnhout, Belgium: Brepols, 1962), bk. 4, chap. 17, para. 34,141. Hereafter I will abbreviate the series title Corpus christianorum, series latina when used to refer to this particular volume as CCSL.

¹³ Augustine, *De doctrina Christiana*, bk. 4, chap 12, para. 27, 135. "Sicut est autem... sicut delectatur, si suauiter loqueris, ita flectitur, si amet, quod polliceris, timeat, quod minaris, oderit, quod argues, quod commendas, amplectatur, quod delendum exaggeras, doleat; cum quid laetandum pareddicas, gaudeat, misereatur eorum, quos miserandos ante oculos dicendo constituis, fugiat eos, quos cauendos terrendo proponis."

were, an eloquent sermon.”¹⁴ Augustine’s orator is thereby able to claim the moral right to direct others. This aspect of the teaching is even more important for rendering an audience obedient than any appeal to their emotions, he claims.¹⁵

Augustine’s theory of Christian oratory was widely influential, and its influence can be seen in the combination of exhortation and doctrinal exposition in Hadewijch’s letters. I bring Augustine’s theory to bear on her songs, specifically because they are intended to move an audience to act, and, given this, the singer stands in a different relationship to the audience than Hadewijch does when she speaks directly to a single reader in her letters. In other words, the songs are performative in a way that the prose works are not. For example, in Song 9 the singer maintains that those who submit to love may be recognized “If they are confirmed in truth, / And compose their life within truth with fair splendor.”¹⁶ By organizing and living life according to God’s will (Truth), a person displays total devotion to him, thus achieving the capacity to teach through personal example. The metaphor of life as a poetic composition used in Song 9 is elaborated on in Song 14, providing a fuller understanding of the performative pedagogy used in the songs:

[T]hose composing upon love with truth
And then clarifying this with clear reason,
In them love will found her school;
They shall be masters
And receive love's highest gifts.¹⁷

¹⁴ Ibid., para. 61, 165. “Si autem ne hoc quidem potest, ita conuersetur, ut non solum sibi praemium comparet, sed et praebeat aliis exemplum et sit eius quasi copia dicendi forma uiuendi”

¹⁵ Ibid., bk 4, chap. 27, para. 59,163. “Habet autem ut oboedienter audiamus, quantacumque granditate dictionis maius pondus uita dicentis.”

¹⁶ *PH*, Song 9, lines 46-47, 87, 88. “Eest dat si inder waerheit stichten / Ende met scoenre cost daer binnen dichten.”

¹⁷ Ibid., Song 14, lines 61-66, 114, 115. “Maer die met waerheiden in minnen dichten / Ende met clare redene dan verlichten / Daer sal die minne hare scole in stichten / Die selen meestere wesen / Ende ontfaen der minnen hoechste ghichten / Die wonden sonder ghenesen.”

The first line implies that arranging an interior life requires adherence to the precepts of Truth, just as verse composition requires adherence to the rules of an artistic discipline. The arrangement of a person's interior life is a prerequisite to obtaining experiential knowledge of love. The singer's description of the process calls to mind the distinction between *matière* and *sens*, where, in this case, love is the material and reason is means of arranging it into a unified composition according to Truth. Hadewijch's own composition demonstrates how she has become a "master" (*meestere*) in love's school and an example for others to follow. The audience probably would have recognized and perhaps delighted in the reflexive nature of the metaphor describing the arrangement of interior life as a process of composition and the singer's demonstration of her teaching.

People who arrange their lives in the manner the singer describes have a moral right to lead others, just as Augustine's orator assumes moral authority through his lifestyle and conformity with the Truth. Hadewijch's singer teaches in different ways, however. When the singer claims in Song 12 that people who study the Word with faith are connected to like-minded people through charity, she supports this claim using a proof text from the Gospels: "My yoke is sweet, my burden is light" / Himself says the lover of love. / This word he has composed in Love."¹⁸ She is quoting Matthew 11:30 in the first line, a scriptural verse in which Jesus beckons man to seek the Kingdom by learning of God's will. Through faith, the singer claims, those who open their hearts to love will learn how to practice love. Hadewijch structures Song 12 like a sermon, connecting the Scriptural verse with the spring seasonality implied in the first stanza, and explains the import of the verse over the course of the song. This song is intended to encourage those already cleaving to love to persevere and remain disposed to love. Songs 14 and

¹⁸ Ibid., Song 12, lines 11-13, 103, 104. "Mijn joc es soete mine bordene es licht / Seghet selve die minnare es der minnen / Die word hadde hi in minnen ghedicht."

12 both encourage the audience to be ardent in their desire for love, but Song 12 conveys the how the Truth unites the faithful, while Song 14 speaks to personal discipline.

Regardless of how the singer seeks to move her audience, the ultimate end of her appeal is to instruct the audience in the relationship between faith, compassion, charity, and the affections that are proper to these concepts. Approaching the strategies of audience persuasion used in the songs from the point of view of rhetoric is not incompatible with previous studies based on the formal conventions of courtly lyric or *minnesang*. Even though Hadewijch warns of the potential for “fine words referring to other things than God” (*sconen worden daer anders es dan god*)¹⁹ to deceive²⁰, she believes that the experience of suffering “makes a person courtly in speech, because he fears everything that he says about Love will be of no account to her.”²¹ Love’s vassals may be known by their “fair demeanor” (*scone ghelaet*) and “fair-spokenness” (*scone redene*).²² The level of education apparent in Hadewijch’s texts suggests that she belonged either to the class of wealthy urban burghers or was possibly a member of the landed rural nobility.²³ As C. Stephen Jaeger has shown, people of the upper social classes were instructed in the code of courtesy, which included manners and spoken eloquence.²⁴ Hadewijch’s

¹⁹ *CW*, Letter 12, 72.; *HB*, Brief 12, 94.

²⁰ When considered alongside similar statements in Letter in Rhyme 1.27-29 and Song 4.32, this remark indicates that Hadewijch was wary of rhetoric’s power to manipulate affections through false sincerity. In the case of Song 4.32 she questions the purpose of *amplificatio* while attempting to flatter members of the audience by extending Matthew 22:14 (“Many are called, but few are chosen” *multi autem sunt vocati pauci vero electi*) by inserting a new clause: “Many are called and grandly present themselves / But few are chosen. What use to embellish the way it is?” *PH*, Song 4, line 63, 62. *Vele esser gheroepen ende scoene ghetoeent / Ende luttel vercoren wat hulper verscoent.* Ironically, the question she poses is a form of rhetorical ornamentation, *dubitatio*, which was another form of appeal to the audience’s emotions.

²¹ *CW*, Letter 8, 64; *HB*, vol. 1, Brief 8.16-17, 76. “Want hi vreset al dat hi spreect van Minnen Dat onghehoert sal sijn voer hare.”

²² *PH*, Song 9, line 32, 87, 88.

²³ Walter Simons, email communication to Benjamin Breyer, August 11, 2013.

²⁴ C. Stephen Jaeger, *The Origins of Courtliness: Civilizing Trends and the Formation of Courtly Ideals 939-1210* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1985), 211-235.

standing in either of these social classes could have made her aware of the significance accorded to decorous speech.²⁵

The recent musicological turn in Hadewijch scholarship, initiated when Louis Peter Grijp confirmed that Hadewijch used troubadour melodies and Latin hymns as models for her songs, has resulted in interpreting the songs as para-liturgical texts that were performed by Hadewijch's community.²⁶ While unquestionably a breakthrough in the understanding of the metrical and melodic aspects of these works, this discovery should not preclude studying how rhetoric is used in the text to create and convey meaning. As Margaret Switten demonstrates, rhetorical analysis does not exclude analysis of formal structures and that, for strophic works like the *Liederen*, it is necessary to analyze how the song plays out in its entirety in order to fully understand how meaning is created and not to rely on formal patterning found in the first stanza alone.²⁷

The importance of the text in Hadewijch's songs is apparent when her singer distinguishes between song and poem in Song 2 by lamenting, "Now my joyful songs / Have changed into great weeping, / And yet long have I sung them / And fair poetry

²⁵ On the consumption of chivalric romance and courtly poetry among urban burghers, see Walter Prevenier, "Court and city culture in the Low Countries from 1100-1530," in *Medieval Dutch Literature in its European Context*, ed. Erik Kooper (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 11-29.

²⁶ Louis Peter Grijp, "De zingende Hadewijch. Op zoek naar de melodieën van haar Strofische Gedichten", *Een zoet akkoord. Middeleeuwse lyriek in de Lage Landen*, ed. Frank Willaert et al. (Amsterdam: Prometheus, 1992), 72-92, 340-343. See also Grijp's reconstruction of the melodies used in the strophic poems in *Hadewijch Liederen*, ed. and trans. Frank Willaert and Veerle Fraeters (Groningen, Netherlands: Historische Uitgeverij, 2009), 325-418. For musicological studies of Hadewijch's other writings, see Anikó Daróczy, *Groet gheruchte van dien wondere. Spreken, zwijgen en zingen bij Hadewijch* (Leuven, Belgium: Brepols, 2007), "Hadewijch: mystiek tussen oraliteit en schriftelijkheid. Over de verbinding van inhoud en vorm" *De fiere nachtegaal. Het Nederlandse Song in de middeleeuwen*, ed. Louis Peter Grijp and Frank Willaert (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2008); and Björn Schmelzer, "De zingende Hadewijch II. Uitvoeringspraktijk van de Liederen en praktische mystiek," *De fiere nachtegaal. Het Nederlandse Song in de middeleeuwen*, ed. Louis Peter Grijp and Frank Willaert (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2008), 55-74. Information on singing in beguine communities can be found in Walter Simons, "Beguines, Liturgy and Music in the Middle Ages: An Exploration," *Beghinae in cantu instructae. Musical Patrimony from Flemish Beguinages (Middle Ages – Late 18th C.)*, ed. Pieter Mannaerts (Turnhout, Belgium: Brepols, 2009), 15–25.

²⁷ Margaret Switten, "Music and Words: Methodologies and Sample Analysis," in *Songs of the Troubadours and Trouvères*, ed. Samuel N. Rosenberg, Margaret Switten, and Gérard Le Vot (New York: Garland Publishing, 1998), 15-16.

composed on love.”²⁸ These lines indicate that her singing is a performative act born out of positive emotion and that the poetry of her song lyrics, described as *scone*, whether translated as “fair,” as van Baest does, or as “fine” implies judgment and cognition both for the poet who composes and for the audience who evaluates her performance. What the singer is expressing is the theory of affectivity characteristic of the first-person love song, in which the poet attributes her motive for composing and performing to the love she feels in her heart.²⁹

The singer’s description of her shift from joyful singing to weeping is of further importance because it points out two different forms of affective display. Augustine explains that one laments things of the present by praying and rejoices by singing of what one hopes for in the future.³⁰ Hadewijch’s singer explains in Song 19, the themes of which are premature rejoicing and following the guidance of reason, that “both old and young / Soothe their heart by singing of love,”³¹ which implies that the women find solace in singing of what they hope to experience in the future. The singer in this song, however, laments that in her present destitution “Love has the days / And I the nights and love’s fierce fury,”³² after she has concluded that “My song, my weeping seem to no avail.”³³ Her complaint about her experience in this song can be characterized as a

²⁸ *PH*, Song 2, lines 46-49, 51, 50. “Mi sijn mine nuwe sanghe / Intoe in groten wenene bracht / Die ic hebbe ghesonghen laghe / Ende van minnen scone hertracht.”

²⁹ Cf. Le Châtelain de Couci, “Merci clamans de mon fol errement,” in *Lyrics of the Troubadors and Trouvères*, ed. Frederic k Goldin (Garden City, NY: Anchor Books, 1973), 356-363.

³⁰ Augustine, *Ennarationes in psalmos, Aureli Augustini Opera*, ed. Eligius Dekkers and Johannes Fraipont, 3 vols, Corpus christianorum, series latina 38 (Turnhout, Belgium: Brepols, 1956), vol. 1, 29 (2) 16, 183. “[I]n psallendo exsultatio, in orando gemitus. Gemede praesentibus, psalle de futuris; or de re, psalle de spe.”

³¹ *PH*, Song 19, lines 88-89, 145, 144. “Maer dien ouden ende dien jonghen / Coelt sanc van minnen haren moet.”

³² *Ibid.*, lines 93-94, 145, 144. “Die minne heeft die daghe / Ende ic die nachte ende orewoet.”

³³ *Ibid.*, line 91, 145, 144. “Mijn sanc mijn wenen scijnt sonder spoet.”

planctus (lament), a type of verse that expresses grief, sometimes in the form of song.³⁴

Like the love song, laments, when sung or otherwise, were an especially emotive form of verse.

In the same stanza from Song 2 referred to above, the singer states that her joyful songs have “changed in[to] great weeping,” which provides a view into what Hadewijch sought to teach her audience about responding to the feeling of love’s absence. Her “weeping” (*bracht*) has counterparts in numerous Biblical passages, such as Psalm 41:4 when the psalmist laments “My tears have been my bread day and night, whilst it is said to me daily: Where is thy God?”³⁵ In medieval Christianity weeping was regarded as an expression of grief over sins. Exegeting Joel 2:12-13 in his second sermon on Lent, Bernard of Clairvaux explains that, in turning towards God, it is necessary to mourn the way of life away from which a person has turned and to weep out of “desire for future beatitude.”³⁶ Weeping is a form of begging for these joys and a refusal to accept less than the comfort that they are expected to bring. In the stanza from Song 2, the singer grieves because she knows that she has “labored too little” (*Al hebbic te clene ghewracht*) in the present and that is why her desire for fruition is unfulfilled. The effectiveness of weeping as a way of expressing grief to God is indicated by the association created between *bracht* and *cracht* (power) in the end-rhymes in this stanza.

Even though no sources of insight into Hadewijch’s beguine community exist other than her own writings, the characterization of emotion in the verse and prose works are expressed

³⁴ On the *planctus* in medieval music, see John Stevens, *Words and Music in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 119-140. In Middle English, see George R. Keiser, “The Middle English *Planctus Mariae* and the Rhetoric of Pathos,” in *The Popular Literature of Medieval England*, ed. Thomas J. Heffernan (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1985), 167-193.

³⁵ Psalm 41:4 (*[F]uerunt mihi lacrimae meae panis die ac nocte dum dicitur mihi cotidie ubi est Deus tuus*).

³⁶ Bernard of Clairvaux, “Lent: Sermon Two,” in *Sermons for Lent and the Easter Season*, trans Irene Edmonds, ed. and rev. Mark A. Scott (Collegeville, MN: Cistercian Publications, 2013), 33.

using Scriptural models that were known to her readers through their experience of the liturgy of the parish church.³⁷ The investigation in this chapter will further the understanding of Hadewijch's emotional community begun in the first two chapters. Frank Willaert argues that her songs are intended to remind the audience of the "consequences" of maintaining total submission to God as his lovers,³⁸ but the same can be said of her letters, in which paraenetic rhetorical style presents counsel and doctrinal teaching in the form of a reminder. Willaert claims that the themes and tropes of the courtly love song reflect the "ideological and affective system of values" of courtly society and the "dreams and aspirations" of the audience for these songs.³⁹ The "motives, words, rhetorical gestures" used to express this community's attitude towards *Minne* in the songs is what I refer to as a register.⁴⁰ In this chapter I will endeavor to distinguish the songs from the letters on the basis of this register and its intended effect on the auditor.

To develop this argument about the affective pedagogy of the songs, the next section of this chapter identifies the theory of affections (*affectien*) evident in them and the role of the affections in lamenting (*claghen* or *beclaghen*). I relate the emotional oscillations that the singer describes in herself to the theory of the passions found in medieval devotional psychology. To identify the distinctive elements of Hadewijch's doctrine, I compare her statements on affective attachment and lamentation to those found in Augustine's *Ennarationes in psalmos*, Gregory's *Moralia in Job*, and the commentaries on the Biblical lament poetry in the *Glossa Ordinaria*.

³⁷ For an attempt to use modern sociolinguistics to predict the emotional response of historical audiences to pathos, see Robert Cockcroft, *Rhetorical Affect in Early Modern Writing: Renaissance Passions Reconsidered* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2003).

³⁸ Frank Willaert, *De poëtica van Hadewijch in de Strofische Gedichten*, (Utrecht, Netherlands: HES, 1984), 310. "Haar spreken is er dus niet zozeer op gericht de toehoorders over te halen tot een andere manier van leven, maar veeleer om hen de consequenties in herinnering te brengen van het engagement waartoe zij zich als minnaars bereid hebben verklaard."

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 298-299.

⁴⁰ Switten, "Music and Words," 18.

The second section analyzes the ways by which the songs are calculated to move the audience to act by interpreting a series of related topoi in the context of Ciceronian rhetoric. The third section examines the pedagogical function of suffering for the individual and the emotional community, and the fourth section addresses how the community supports a person who is suffering. As Hadewijch's singer discerns between suffering inflicted by God as punishment and suffering that God intends as instructive, it also instructs her audience, whom she has led to identify with her.

To explore this relationship between singer and audience further in the songs I will analyze Hadewijch's use of the Book of Job and Gregory's *Moralia*. The influence of the exegetical tradition of commentary on the Song of Songs on beguine love mysticism is well known.⁴¹ Niklaus Largier claims that the dialogic structure of this scriptural text, in which an eroticized dialogue between a lover and her beloved occurs, provided a literary model for a *confabulatio* or *conversation* between the soul and God represented in the form of a soliloquy.⁴² The Book of Job, while also using at times a dialogic form, is about suffering and divine justice. To understand Hadewijch's use of this Scriptural text, it is necessary to consider its medieval exegetical tradition and place in the liturgy. This will make possible identifying the distinctive elements of her use of Job and allow the best appreciation of the distinctive character of her emotional community. E. Ann Matter argues that twelfth century monastic exegetes used the Song of Songs "freely, dipping into it for images which served as tropes, poetic or rhetorical figures which carr[ied] meaning according to an established code."⁴³ Hadewijch does the same with the Book of Job. Her use of Scripture throughout her writings evidences her awareness of

⁴¹ See Barbara Newman, *From Virile Woman to WomanChrist*, 137-167; and Barbara Newman, "The Beguine as the Knight of Love," in *God and the Goddesses: Vision, Poetry and Belief in the Middle Ages* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003), 169-181.

⁴² Largier, "Inner Senses-Outer Senses," 4.

⁴³ E. Ann Matter, *The Voice of My Beloved: The Song of Songs in Western Medieval Christianity* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1990), 178.

the four-fold method and the correspondence of each method of exegesis to a specific heuristic mode. Her use of Job favors a tropological mode, which is the dominant mode of Gregory's commentary and the one associated with the moral meaning of the Word and its implications for Christian conduct. This is the same manner of interpretation she uses in the letters when she is advising on interpersonal relations. Using verses from Job to characterize the singer's suffering and her relationship with *minne* in the songs signals the *modus* of the type of speech she is making, which in several songs can be termed prophetic. Hadewijch's singer uses these different modes of speaking (*genera loquendi*), notably in her apostrophes, to assume different roles in relation to the audience. The changes in the singer's appeal to the audience are indicative of a change in her mode of speaking, and this reflects a shift in her appeal to the sensibilities of the audience.

Section 2: Hadewijch's Understanding of Lamentation

Hadewijch uses the psalms of lament and the Book of Job as a language model for the singer's lamentation in the songs. Comprising about one-third of the Psalter, the psalms of lament begin with an invocation of God, after which the psalmist laments and pleads. During his prayer, the psalmist expresses his trust in God, and then a vow is made to praise him. Hadewijch and her followers would have experienced these psalms weekly as part of the psalmody in their parish church or in the monastery.⁴⁴ Elements of the structure of Hadewijch's Songs are similar to psalms of lament, most notably in the singer's rapid shift in mood from one stanza to the next and the concluding praise of God and reference to her enemies.

⁴⁴ For the Psalms in the medieval liturgy see, James W. McKinnon, "The Book of Psalms, Monasticism, and the Western Liturgy," in *The Place of the Psalms in the Intellectual Culture of the Middle Ages*, ed. Nancy van Deusen (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 1999), 43-58.

Hadewijch uses a series of terms to signal her lament speech, that are all designed to activate pity/compassion. *Claghen* or *beclaghen* is used to refer to the act of lamenting or complaining⁴⁵, and *ontfermerticheit* (passion of the heart), a compound based on the Latin adjective *misericors*, refers to compassion.⁴⁶ *Ontfermherticheit* is found in Song 8 and Letters 6 and 17 in manuscript C.⁴⁷ Van Mierlo, working from this manuscript, reads *ontfermherticheit* as *mercy*.⁴⁸ Van Baest's rendition as *compassion* is the more accurate, in my opinion, since it distinguishes the term from the related but not directly equivalent concepts of *mercy* (*ontfermene* or *ontfarmen*) and *charity* (*karitate*). *Ontfermherticheit* also differs from *ontfermene* and *ontfarmen* in that it emphasizes the feeling within the heart for the suffering of another that is signified in the Latin root word. As Augustine explains in *Against Adiamantus*, "'misericordia' is so called because the misery of others makes our heart miserable."⁴⁹ Compassion in Christian theology is the sharing of affection or feeling with the suffering of Christ. In contrast, *charity* refers to brotherly love and works that aid one's fellow man. Compassion has the power to move someone to act, so that works of charity are performed as a response.⁵⁰

⁴⁵ Willaert includes "accuse" as part of the semantic range of *claghen* and *beclaghen* because in several songs the singer accuses herself of being unwilling to bear her suffering. Willaert, *De poëtica van Hadewijch*, 336-337.

⁴⁶ *MNW*, s.v. "onfermherticheit."

⁴⁷ Manuscript A uses *ontfarmecheit*, translated by Fraeters and Willaert as *barmhartigheid* (charity). Veerle Fraters and Frank Willaert, *Hadewijch Liederen* (Groningen, Netherlands: Historische Uitgeverij, 2009), Song 20.15, 175.

⁴⁸ Jozef van Mierlo, ed. *Strofische gedichten*, 2 vols, (Antwerp: Standaard-Boekhandel, 1942), vol.1, 50, ff. 15. "[D]oor 't vermijden der zonden en het beoefenen der werken van Barmhartigheid: die cost, dienst, uitgaven, offers, zelfopoffering vergend."

⁴⁹ Augustine, *Contra Adimantum, Manichaei i discipulum, Sancti Aureli Augustini*, ed. Joseph Zycha, *Corpus scriptorium ecclesiasticorum latinorum*, 35 (Prague: F. Tempsky, 1891), 11, 137. "[E]t tamen ex eo appellatam misericordiam dicunt, quod miserum cor faciat dolentis aliena miseria." Hereafter I will abbreviate the series title *Corpus scriptorium ecclesiasticorum latinorum* using CSEL.

⁵⁰ The distinctions I am drawing amongst these terms can be observed further in the counsel Hadewijch gives the recipient of Letter 16. She tells the woman "[P]erform charity, or an act of virtue, or serve the sick....[and] [a]lways be joyous among your companions, and let all their sufferings be yours, as Saint Paul says: 'Who is weak, and I am not weak?'" *CW*, Letter 16, 81. Translation modified. *HB*, Brief 16, 124. "Altoes bedet ocht mint, ocht werct doghet, ocht dient den sieken....Sijt altoes blide onder u gheselschap, ende al hare pine si die uwe, Also sinte Paulus seghet: Wie es siec ende ic niet?" Charity is linked to compassion, but it is not synonymous in this example.

Hadewijch's understanding of compassion is made clear in Song 8, when the singer uses a Pauline formulation to explain: "The charge of compassion and what is due to the law: / Those apply to the lover in the beginning" (*Der ontfermherticheit cost ende die scout der wet / Gheldet die minnate int beghin*).⁵¹ Alluding to Matthew 22:37 two stanzas later, Hadewijch explains that one must: "Serve the aliens, giving to the poor, / Comforting the sorrowful as best he may" in order to render faithful service to God and humanity.⁵² These acts of compassion, along with the allusions to Matthew 22:37 and Galatians 6:2, clarify Hadewijch's understanding of compassion as giving selflessly to all through works of charity, even though giver may not identify with them ("serve the aliens"). The singer's appeal to the audience is an invocation of the Second Commandment, a binding element among spiritual friends.

Broadly stated, lamentation in the songs is a verbal expression of an internal feeling of despair. It is a natural, universal expression of grief that man and the animal kingdom share, although for those in pursuit of love, the grief they feel is more abject than that felt by animals and aliens.⁵³ As a speech act, lamentation is an expression of the grief felt in the heart due to loss, lack, or denied recompense. Hadewijch's conceptualization of lament follows that found in several major commentaries which she might have known. Commenting on Lamentations in the *Glossa ordinaria*, Paschius Radbertus defines lamentation as "a compunction of the human heart, implanted by the gift of the Holy Spirit, due to sorrow in this life or for a desire of the life everlasting."⁵⁴ He points out that the affections and lamentations of figures described in

⁵¹ *PH*, Song 8, lines 22-23, 81. Cf. Galatians 6:2 "Bear one another's burdens: and you will fulfill the law of Christ" (alter alterius onera portate et sic adimplebitis legem Christi).

⁵² *PH*, Song 8, lines 29-30, 80-81. "Den vrenden dienen den armen gheven / Den sereghen troesten als hi mach / Den vrienden gods met trouwen leven / In heyleghen in menschen nacht ende dach."

⁵³ See *PH*, Song 10 lines 1-10, 90-91; and Song 27 lines 3-5, 190-191.

⁵⁴ Paschius Radbertus, *Biblia Latina cum glossa ordinaria: Facsimile Reprint of the Editio Princeps Adolph Rusch of Strassburg 1480/81*, ed. Karlfried Froehlich and Margaret T. Gibson, 4 vols. (Turnhout, Belgium: Brepols, 1992), vol. 3, Prologue to Lamentations. "Lamentatio est aut ex merore presentis vite aut ex desiderio eterne cordibus humanis dono Spiritus sancti infusa compunctio." Translation Mine.

Scripture result in different types of weeping and tears, and, therefore, there are different reasons for lamenting.⁵⁵ Augustine emphasizes the importance of grieving the right kind of losses, those which are not those due to earthly attachments. When people grieve for those who have lost faith or lament for the wrong reasons, they express that she is united with the body of Christ. By lamenting the state of those who have lost faith, the community is bound together by the compassion of the strong for the weak, according to Augustine.⁵⁶

In the *Moralia*, Gregory regards the grief expressed by Job's friends as a model of how people should appropriately respond to the suffering of another with compassion. The voluntary grief of Job's friends is a choice that requires them to undergo a change of mind:

The order in consolation is that when we would stay one that is afflicted from his grief, we must first essay to accord with his sorrow by grieving. For he can never comfort the mourner who does not suit himself to his grief, since[,] from the very circumstance that his own feelings are at variance with the mourner's distress, he is rendered the less welcome to him from whom he is parted by the character of his feelings; therefore, the mind must first be softened down so that it may accord with the distressed, and by according attach itself, and by attaching itself be drawn [to] him.⁵⁷

⁵⁵Ibid., Radbertus cites David and Jeremiah to prove his point and then explains that the pious reader, having just read the two proof texts and moved by the affections they express, "will have recalled to their minds the entire volume of Ezechiel[,] in which there have been written lamentations and songs of woe." Translation Mine. "His affectibus fideles moventur, qui totem illud volume Ezechielis in sensum mentis traiecerunt, in quo errant scripte lamentationes et carmen et ve." Radbertus's claim is suggestive of the way the allusions to Job in the singer's songs might have triggered associations with the lament tradition and its doctrinal precepts.

⁵⁶ Augustine, *Ennarationes in psalmos*, Psalm 101, para. 6,1430.

⁵⁷ Gregory the Great, *Moralia*, bk.3, chap. 12, para. 20, 127. Translation modified.. "Ordo quippe consolationis est ut cum uolumus afflictum quempiam a maerore suspendere, studeamus prius maerendo eius luctui concordare. Dolentem namque non potest consolari qui non concordat dolori, quia eo ipso quo a maerentis afflictione discrepat, minus ab illo recipitur, cui mentis qualitate separatur. Sed emolliri prius debet animus ut afflicto congruat, congruens inhaereat, inhaerens trahat."

Job's suffering was instructive for his friends and drew out their emotions through identification with his plight. A person who weeps and gives compassion, Gregory argues, offers "something even from his very self." Interpreting the scriptural text, Gregory accords Job's suffering a teaching function:

For, in fact, [Job] saw his friends weeping and wailing...he saw them struck dumb at the thought of his affliction; and the Saint perceived that those whose hearts were set upon temporal prosperity, took him, by a comparison with their own feelings, for one brokenhearted with his temporal adversity...[W]hile he outwardly burst forth into the voice of grief, he showed to persons inwardly wounded the virtue of a healing medicine.⁵⁸

The theories of lamentation articulated by Augustine and Gregory share the belief that witnessing the lamentation of another person is a powerfully affective experience, one which has the power to affirm the faith and unity of a group. Hadewijch's singer alludes several times to the response of Job's friends and family to his suffering, which suggests that Hadewijch, too, believed in the educative value of witnessing the suffering of others. Lines 71-80 of Song 24 are reminiscent of verses in Job where he laments his friends and family trying to convince him that he has done wrong. Describing the efforts of others to weaken her belief in her own righteousness, Hadewijch's singer complains:

The cruel aliens

Grieve me to excess

⁵⁸ Ibid., bk. 4, chap. 1, para. 3, 165. "Vidit quippe amicos cum clamore flere, uidit uestes conscindere, uidit puluere capita consparsisse, uidit consideratione suae percussione obmutescere; et uir sanctus inspexit quia hi qui prospera temporalia requirebant, ex comparatione mentis propriae eum temporali fractum aduersitate crediderant. Perspexit quod transitoria afflictione percussus desperare non fleret nisi ipsi desperatam mentem ab spe incolumitatis internae subtraherent. Et dum erumpit foras in uocem doloris, uulneratis intus ostendit uirtutem medicaminis."

In this oppressive exile
 By their false counsel.
 They show me no mercy
 And cause me many a fear,
 For in their blindness they damn me.
 They cannot attain to
 Understanding the love
 That has captured my heart with excessive longing.⁵⁹

Gregory claims that, by sympathizing with neighbors who are suffering and bearing their weaknesses, the soul grows in strength and endurance so that it may endure the present period of exile.⁶⁰ To properly administer to their suffering, those who possess spiritual gifts must lower themselves so that they can offer their aid with “the condescension of charity” (*condescensio passionis*)⁶¹ in order that “[their] grief ought to be so blended with the grief of the distressed.”⁶² This lowering of oneself in order to enter into the emotional life of another person can be excessive or overzealous, which makes it necessary to match charity to the level of affliction.⁶³ It is through the binding power of charity that social life is made possible in Gregory’s theology:

But when it is immediately observed, The Lord also was turned at the penitence
 of Job, when he prayed for his friends; it is plainly shown, that a penitent has
 deserved to be heard the more quickly in his own behalf, the more devoutly he has

⁵⁹ *PH*, Song 24, lines 71-80, 176-177. “Mi doen die vremde wrede / So onghemate lede / In dit alende swaer / Met haren valschen rade / Sine hebben mijns ghene ghenade / Si doen mi meneghen vaer / Want si mi met hare blintheyet doemen / Sine connen daer niet toe comen / Dat si die minne verstaen / Die mijn herte met lustre hevet ghevaen.”

⁶⁰ Gregory the Great, *Moralia*, bk. 3, chap 12, 20.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, Preface 3, 7, 13.

⁶² *Ibid.*, bk. 3, chap. 12 para. 21, 127 “Sic enim dolor noster moerentium dolori jungendus est, ut per temperamentum subleuet, non autem per augmentum gravet.”

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 128.

interceded for his friends. For he makes his prayers more powerful in his own behalf, who offers them also in behalf of others. For the sacrifice of prayer is more willingly received, which, in the sight of the merciful Judge, is flavored with love for one's neighbor.⁶⁴

This communal aspect of the power of lamentation is invoked in Song 11. After complaining about the change in the community's disposition, the singer ends with a *tornada*: "Because our tepid usage / Exposes us as being very cold towards love. / What help would be my wanting her caress / Since we feel inclined to be beggarly?"⁶⁵ The proper response to the suffering of another is to encourage them to persevere, as the singer does in response to her own self-doubt.

As a response to the suffering of another, *pity* differs from emotions that are reflexive and prompted by the unexpected. David Konstan differentiates the classical concept of pity from instinctive responses:

Pity differs from a response such as surprise precisely in the degree to which it necessarily involves judgment and other cognitive operations that are learned and socially conditioned, and it accordingly demands an approach that takes account of beliefs and values as well as of physiological excitation.⁶⁶

Konstan's emphasis on judgment and cognition in the definition of pity is important in that it draws attention to the processes involved in experiencing and understanding this feeling, as does his acknowledgement of the influence of socially conditioned beliefs and values. In the passage from Radbertus's commentary on Lamentations analyzed earlier, Radbertus claims that the pious

⁶⁴ Ibid., bk 35, chap. 11, para. 21, 622. "Sed cum protinus subinfertur: dominus quoque conuersus est ad paenitentiam iob, cum oraret pro amicis suis, aperte ostenditur quia etiam pro semetipso paenitens tanto citius exaudiri meruit, quanto deuote pro aliis intercessit. Plus enim pro se ualere preces suas efficit, qui has et aliis impendit. Libentius quippe sacrificium orationis accipitur, quod in conspectu misericordis iudicis proximi dilectione conditur."

⁶⁵ *PH*, Song 11, lines 99-102, 101-102. "Want onse seden oude / Tonen ons vore minne so coude / Wat holpt dan dat ict woude / Sint."

⁶⁶ David Konstan, *Pity Transformed* (London: Gerald Duckworth, 2004), 8.

reader, having read the quotes from Psalm 42:3 and Psalm 6:8 that he has just given, “will have called to their minds the whole volume of Ezekiel in which there have been written lamentations and songs of woe.”⁶⁷ This claim is suggestive of the way the allusions to Job in the singer’s songs triggered associations with the lament tradition and its doctrinal precepts. Radbertus’s theory of the reader’s affective response to Biblical descriptions of lamentation is not unique.⁶⁸ Hugh of St. Victor analyzes prayer in terms of rhetorical theory in *De virtute orandi*, which was widely disseminated in the Middle Ages, and argues that interior affective states can be evoked during communal liturgical activities, notably the chanting of the Psalms. The work of these two exegetes helps in the understanding of how, in the context of rhetoric and the affections, the allusions to Job serve a function in addition to signaling the mode of the singer’s speech: The commonplaces can also be interpreted as a means of triggering an affective state.

Section 3: The Rhetoric of Lament

Based on her evident knowledge of rhetoric and poetics, it is likely that Hadewijch received instruction in the trivium, possibly at a convent school or at a non-monastic Latin school where her contemporaries, Beatrice of Nazareth and Ida of Gorsleeuw, were educated.⁶⁹

⁶⁷ Radbertus, *Commentary on Lamentations*, vol. 3 Prologue to Lamentations, n.p.. “His affectibus fideles moventur, qui totem illud volume Ezechielis in sensum mentis traiecerunt, in quo errant scripte lamentationes et carmen et ve.” Translation mine.

⁶⁸ For a general overview of the medieval interpretation of affective rhetoric in Scripture, see Alastair Minnis, *Medieval Theory of Authorship: Scholastic Literary Attitudes in the Later Middle Ages*. 2nd ed. (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010), 49-52.

⁶⁹ For the program of instruction offered women at these types of schools in the Low Countries, see Alphonsus M.J. Van Buuren, “Want ander kosten sijn my te hogne: De stadsschool in de Nederlanden in de late Middeleeuwen,” in *Scholing in de Middeleeuwen*, ed. R.E.V. Stuip and Cornelius Vellekoop (Hilversum, Netherlands: Verloren, 1995), 221-238. Other alternatives were beguinages, private tutoring, and home schooling. Juliana of Cornillon was instructed by two beguines who worked in a hospital. Her biographer claims she knew Latin well, studied the Bible in Latin and French, and could recite all of Bernard of Clairvaux’s sermons on the Song of Songs. Penelope Galloway surveys the levels of beguine education and what was taught in beguine communities in “‘Life, learning and wisdom’: the forms of and functions of beguine education,” in *Medieval Monastic Education*,

If so, she would have received instruction in rhetoric, which was often taught using Cicero's *De inventione* and the pseudo-Cicero's *Rhetorica ad Herennium* as text books. Columba Hart⁷⁰ suggests that lines 75-76 of Letter in Rhyme 2, "The fourth is truth: It conquers all / That was, and is, and shall be" (*Die vierde es waerheit: si verwint al / Dat was ende es endewesen sal*),⁷¹ are inspired by Cicero's definition of truth in *De inventione*, "as that through which things are, or were before, or shall be, are said to be unchanged" (*veritas, per quam immutata ea quae sunt aut ante fuerunt aut futura sunt dicuntur*).⁷² This seems likely, given the fact that both writers are speaking of the permanence of truth. While it cannot be said with certainty that Hadewijch based the singer's affective appeal to the audience on the theory of pathos which Cicero sets out in *De inventione*, the similarities are such that his ideas can be productively used to explain features of her songs.

The schoolroom was not necessarily the only place Hadewijch would have been exposed to Ciceronian rhetoric. Jan F. Vanderheyden argues that, alongside the works of classical rhetoricians, the foremost influences on Middle Dutch literary theory were medieval encyclopedists and biblical commentaries.⁷³ The encyclopedists incorporated paraphrases from Cicero's juvenilia into their compilations, providing another source for the transmission of Ciceronian rhetoric in the medieval Low Countries. Since Vanderheyden's work was published, Karen Pratt has demonstrated that the thirteenth-century Middle Dutch adaptation of the *Floire et*

ed. George Ferzoco and Carolyn Muessig (London: Leicester University Press, 2000), 153-167. Cf. Walter Simons, *Cities of Ladies* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001), 80-85.

⁷⁰ Columba Hart, *Hadewijch: The Complete Works* (New York: Paulist Press, 1980), 386, note 12. Ida attended the chapter school in Borgloon.

⁷¹ *CW*, Rhymed Letter 2, lines 75-76, 320. *HM*, Mengeldicht 2, lines 75-76, 17.

⁷² Cicero, *De inventione*, trans. H.M. Hubbell (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1949), bk. 2, chap. 53, para. 161, 328]. Unless otherwise noted, all quotations from the Latin text of *De inventione* and its English translation refer to this edition.

⁷³ Jan F. Vanderheyden, "Literaire Theorieën en Poëtië in Middel nederlandse Geschriften: Enkele Losse Beschouwingen," in *Verslagen en Mededelingen - Koninklijke Academie voor Nederlandse Taal- en Letterkunde* N.S. (1961), 266. Vanderheyden's investigation is based primarily on Jan van Boendale's *Der leken Spieghel*, which was written a century after the period Hadewijch is believed to have been active. I interpret the influence of the Latin literary tradition on Boendale as an indication of its continuity in the late Middle Ages in the Low Countries.

Blancheflor conforms to the advice given in Geoffrey of Vinsauf's *Poetria nova*,⁷⁴ a preceptive guide that borrows heavily from *De inventione* and *Rhetorica ad Herennium*.⁷⁵ The work of Vanderheyden and Pratt proves that through different pathways Ciceronian rhetoric informed Middle Dutch poetic theory and practice. Interpreting the use of commonplaces used to stir the affections of the audience in the songs in terms of Ciceronian rhetoric provides a theoretical basis against which to evaluate the strategies Hadewijch uses to persuade her audience to remain steadfast in their pursuit of love.

When the singer complains of her mistreatment by love and her rights as a lover, she is trying to persuade the audience to understand the oscillations between the presence and the absence that they feel in their souls and the resulting affective states. She begins Song 9 by explaining "Always one may sing of Love...And plead one's case against her sovereignty," before explaining that pleas will go unacknowledged unless "faithfulness gives [one's] seal and pledge"⁷⁶ to live only for love. The audience of the songs judges the singer's arguments based partly on their emotions, which is why pathos figures so prominently in these texts. By assessing her arguments against their own feelings, the audience internalizes the reasoning process that the singer goes through as she tries to understand the causes of her affections. When the singer pleads "Were anyone to put me on trial, I would make complaint to him / Of what befalls me:

⁷⁴ Karen Pratt, "The Rhetoric of Adaptation: The Middle Dutch and Middle High German Versions of *Floire et Blancheflor*," in *Courtly Literature: Culture and Context*, ed. Keith Busby and Erik Kooper (Philadelphia, PA: J. Benjamins, 1990), 483-497.

⁷⁵ On Geoffrey's indebtedness to these two texts, see Ernest Gallo, *The Poetria Nova and its Sources in Early Rhetorical Doctrine* (The Hague: Mouton, 1971) and Jean-Yves Tilliette, *Des mots à la parole: une lecture de la Poetria nova de Geoffroy de Vinsau* (Geneva: Droz, 2000), 23-46.

⁷⁶ *PH*, Song 9, lines 1, 3, 24, 84-85. "Altoes mag men van minnen singhen....Ende jeghen hare ghewout verdinghen....Dies gheeft die trouwe zeghel ende pant."

indeed I cannot bear it,”⁷⁷ the audience serves as a surrogate judge and participant in this process. Listeners are drawn into the song and the interpretive process of the singer.

Cicero’s theory of audience arousal is set out in Book 1 of *De inventione*, where he enumerates the commonplaces associated with the *conquestio*, which is a passage expressing a lament or complaint, and the *indignatio* commonplaces which are used to rouse the listeners to anger. The function of these commonplaces is to prepare the audience to feel pity and/or anger and make them receptive to the specifics of the narrative.⁷⁸ To make the auditor willing to experience the *conquestio*, the orator must render the auditor’s spirit “gentle and merciful.” The commonplaces used to facilitate this state of receptiveness focus on power of fortune over the lives of all men and the weakness of humanity. This is conveyed by commonplaces that contrast past prosperity with present destitution either through a simple past/present contrast or by leading auditors through the events that led to the speaker’s fallen state, thereby making them a participant in the events. Related to these are commonplaces conveying unexpected disappointment after expecting a positive outcome. Other commonplaces are intended to appeal the audience’s cultural values such as obligations and deference in social relationships. The orator can entreat the audience to pity her, or she can claim that she bemoans not her condition but that of those who are close to her.⁷⁹

In *De inventione*, Cicero’s advice on rousing the audience to feel pity (*miser cordia*) is based on the assumption that its members must identify with the one requesting pity. The audience will experience fear as they listen to the misfortune of one who is like them. During

⁷⁷ Ibid., Song 22, lines 50-51, 160-161. “Waer iemant die mi richte Ic soude hem claghen/Over mi selven ic en caent niet wel verdragen.”

⁷⁸ In the *Tusculan Disputations* Cicero defines pity as the “distress arising from the wretchedness of a neighbor in undeserved suffering” (*Miser cordia est aegritudo ex miseria alterius iniuria laborantis*). Cicero, *Tusculan Disputations*, trans. J.E. King (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1927), bk. 4, chap. 8, para. 18, 346-347.

⁷⁹ Cicero, *De inventione*, bk.1, chap. 55-56, para. 108-109, 158-163.

antiquity, Christian theologians broadened the semantic range of *miser cordia* to include *charity* and *charitable works*, which could be rendered to everyone as an act of justice, not just to those with whom a person identifies. Like the psalms of lament, Cicero's commonplaces emphasize a lack of certainty in the world. However, while both language models incorporate images of woe and misfortune, the psalms of lament stress that rescue from these misfortunes requires total dependence on God.

Underlying Cicero's prescriptive advice is the belief that an auditor who hears of another's misfortune described in a *conquestio* will be moved to "contemplate his own weakness," because he has identified with the suffering of another.⁸⁰ To achieve this empathetic identification, Cicero advises that, in the *peroratio* of a speech, the speaker should sum up his argument and incorporate a *conquestio* and an *indignatio*.⁸¹ Cicero's theory is based on affinities between an orator and his audience, and he does not explain how an orator should present emotional experiences unfamiliar to the audience, neither does the anonymous writer of the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*. Iser argues that identification with the unfamiliar occurs first through affinities, and by this the writer is able "to convey the experience and, above all, an attitude towards that experience."⁸² Hadewijch's singer does not necessarily describe emotional experiences that are unfamiliar to her audience; on the contrary, they were perhaps uncomfortably familiar to her listeners. Where the new identification may have occurred is in relating their emotional experience to the ethic of courtly love and the forms of conduct embodied in it.

⁸⁰ Ibid., bk.1, chap 55, para.106, 159. "[C]um in alieno malo suam infirmitatem considerabit."

⁸¹ Ibid., bk. 1, chap 51, para 8, 147. "Conclusio est exitus et determination totius orationis. Haec habet partes tres: enumerationem, indignationem, conquestionem."

⁸² Wolfgang Iser, *The Implied Reader*, 291.

Section 4: Individual Lamentation and Communal Response

Through the use of commonplaces intended to elicit the audience's pity, the singer and the audience theoretically share an affective identity when the singer laments her woes. By feeling pity for her, the audience is meant to contemplate their own struggle to achieve perfection.⁸³ To elicit the desired emotional response from her audience, Hadewijch uses commonplaces that refer to a preexistent reality. This preexistent reality is recognizable to the audience because in the songs it is based on specific experiences, their shared Christian belief and the social structure of their society. This appeal to cultural norms is exhibited in the *indignatio* commonplaces used to arouse the audience to anger in the first stanza of Song 22:

My need is great and unknown to the crowd,
They are cruel to me, for they would dearly like to sever me
From what the forces of love have all summoned me to;
They do not know it and I cannot interpret it to them. Thus I must practice to be
what I am,
That is what love has incited me to,
Therein is my being, to this end I will vigorously exert myself.⁸⁴

Hadewijch's singer distances herself from the uncomprehending crowd by placing her self-references at the opposite end of the line or clause from the third-person reference to them. As the reader moves through the stanza, the distance between the singer and the crowd is constantly maintained. By following their own will rather than the forces of Love, the crowd deny their

⁸³ For example, see *PH*, Song 10, 15-18 and Song 11, 43-54.

⁸⁴ *PH*, Song 22, lines 1-7, 158-159. "Mine noet es groot ende onbekint den Songen / Si sijn mi wreet, want si mi gherne scieden / Daer mi die crachte van minnen al toe rieden / Sine kinnets niet, ende ic en caent hen ghedieden / Dus moetic pleghen dat ic ben / Dat minne bracht hevet in minen sen / Ic ben indien: dies willic mi ghenieden."

true selves as beings created in God's image. As a vague, indistinct group, the crowd fails to constitute a community, but the singer does belong to a corporate body when she vows that she will strive to "be what I am." When she claims that the crowd is interfering with what love has summoned her to, the singer rouses the audience to feel indignation by describing how she is being denied what is a birthright.

When used in the singer's apostrophes, the pathos commonplaces are the primary means of inducing pity and indignation. As an address to someone who is absent, apostrophe (*apostrophatio*) is naturally suited to laments directed to God and audience segments. There is no reply to an apostrophe by the person being addressed, just as God will not respond directly to a speaker's lament. As a means of amplification, apostrophe is of value to the poet, Geoffrey of Vinsauf argues, because "in the manner of a master it corrects vicious error; or it is neglected in tearful complaint against all that is harsh; or is roused to anger over some great crime; or appears with derisive force in attacking fools."⁸⁵ In the songs the singer's apostrophes have a pedagogical function in that they provide the audience with examples of correct speech in response to their affections. In addition to the speech model provided by the singer's apostrophes, Hadewijch helps the audience to identify the correct manner of speaking by attributing different perspectives to segments of the imagined audience or the aliens outside the community. In the *Summa de coloribus rhetoricis* Geoffrey explains the relationship between *apostrophatio* and the representation of emotion:

It is to be noted that of the aforementioned ornaments, certain are necessary for certain kinds of subject matter; for matter which treats of anger, or indignation, or

⁸⁵ Geoffrey of Vinsauf, quoted in *Les arts poétiques du XIIe et du XIIIe siècle; recherches et documents sur la technique littéraire du moyen âge*, ed. Edmond Faral (Paris: Librairie Honoré Champion, 1962), lines 455-460, 211. "[V]el more magistri / Corripit errorem pravum; vel ad omnia dura / In lacrimis planctuque jacet; vel surgit in nam / Propter grande scelus; vel fertur ridiculose / Contra ridiculos. Ex talibus edita causis?" Translation mine.

sorrow, or love, or hatred, or madness, the following are necessary: *repetitio*,
articulus, *exclamatio*, *conduplicatio*, *dubitatio*, and *subjectio*.⁸⁶

Exclamatio is of particular interest in this list because Hadewijch relies on this ornament to signal her lament speech in her apostrophes. Geoffrey defines *exclamatio* as the rhetorical color “when we exclaim from sorrow or some other cause.”⁸⁷ The *exclamatio* signals the intensity of the singer’s sorrow or grief and is a cry for recognition in the Songs. Hadewijch’s use of *exclamatio* is not limited to the singer’s complaints addressed to God. By using it to address members of her spiritual community, she employs it to command their focus before she begins her lament. When the singer directly solicits pity from a specific part of the audience, she does so using *exclamatio* as part of an apostrophe. By having the singer address a particular segment of the imagined audience, Hadewijch creates different perspectives, a strategy which allows her to lead the real audience to the correct interpretation of the song. A representative example of this is found in Song 17:

Ah, You fierce ones, enduring all with love
And freely living on trust in her,
Take pity on one divided against herself and smitten by love
Who oppresses her with hopeless desolation.
O, whoever is equal to it, let him live unconcernedly in his resolve;

⁸⁶Geoffrey of Vinsauf, “Summa de coloribus rhetoricis,” quoted in Farel, ed., in *Les arts poétiques du XIIe et du XIIIe siècle*, 325. “Nostandum est quod ex praedictis exornationibus quaedam quibusdam materiis sunt necessariae; materiae vero quae tractatur ex ira vel indignatio vel dolore vel amore vel odio vel insania, haec sunt necessariae: repetitio, articulus, exclamatio, conduplicatio, dubitatio, subjectio.” Translation mine.

⁸⁷Geoffrey of Vinsauf, “Documentum de modo et arte dictandi et versificandi,” quoted in Farel, ed., *Les arts poétiques du XIIe et du XIIIe siècle*, chap 2, para 5, 276. “Est autem exclamatio color quando ex dolore vel ex alia causa exclamamus.” Translation mine.

My heart lives in hopelessness.⁸⁸

When the singer praises this segment of the audience for their “fierce” (*fiere*) disposition and faithfulness, she is using commonplaces to describe their attributes before requesting that they feel pity for her. In the scheme of this stanza, the first three lines share end rhyme, but the fourth line and sixth line do not. The fourth line ends with *nopen* (desolation) and the sixth *onthopen* (hopelessness), and in between them is the *raet* (resolve) of the fierce ones. Their endurance (*ghestaet*) and trust (*roeverlaet*), established in the first two end line rhymes, enables them to withstand the negative affective states signified in lines four and six. This end rhyme pattern offers the actual audience a basic way of understanding what a person must be equipped with to counter the inevitable negative emotions so that such an individual is not turned away from love by despair. This stanza parallels the poetic stanza in Letter 17 when Hadewijch counsels “Have good will and mercy for every need, / But take nothing under your protection.”⁸⁹ The first line quoted from this letter is a spiritual reference to the passion of Jesus Christ, and the second line refers to God’s justice. For humanity, the divine unity between these two beings means that man cannot leave anyone in want, for justice requires that “one’s charity and compassion” is given to “loving souls, who have more sorrow than all the rest, since they lack what they love.”⁹⁰ Even though she asks that the audience regard her with compassion, the singer’s intent in Song 17 is to help them so that they do not experience the disillusionment which she has experienced. To experience fruition in God, those who would be perfect must not take anything under their protection, for everyone must “live unconcernedly in his resolve.” The *exclamatio* in this

⁸⁸ *PH*, 17, lines 31-36, 134-135. “Ay ghi fiere die als met minnen ghestaet / Ende vri leeft in hare roeverlaet / Ontfarmt den verdeylder die minne verslaer / Ende met onthopenden ellencd gheet nopen / Och die raets mach pleghen Leve vri in raet / Mijn herte lever in onthopen.”

⁸⁹ *CW*, Letter 17, 82; *HB*, Brief 17, 126.. “Te alre noet hebbet onste ende ontfermen, / Ende en nemt niet in u beschermen.”

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 83; *HB*, Brief 17, 128. “Ende si nemt op die caritate ende die ontfermherticheit...Ende op die minnende die wee hebben bouen al dit want si dies daruen dat si Minnen.”

example serves to focus the attention of this audience segment, while the described attributes in the *apostrophatio* make them well-disposed to her *petitio*.

A second use of *exclamatio* is repetition. In the following example, the exclamation *Ah* marks an emotional response to the paradoxical reversal of fortune described in the lines immediately preceding. The intensity of the narration's exclamation is heightened when she moans that not only is she upset by love but also because she is destitute and without means. This occurs through the repeated *Ah* that is intensified each time by the accretion of information as the stanza progresses:

Those living thus in hunger of love
And still deprived of fruition,
Ah! Who could call them blessed?
For they utterly cleave to love,
But when love should give herself utterly in return,
It turns into a raid on them,
And so a turmoil of fear convulses them.
Ah! If only it were love that upset me!
Where shall I, poor woman, turn?
If only she had caressed me to death
-Ah, would it were so –
Before I had come to this pass.⁹¹

⁹¹ *PH*, Song 15, lines 25-36, 118-119. “Die dus in hongher van minnen leven / Ende noch ghebruken es ontbleven, / Ay wie mach hen gheloven / Want si hen een ane minne al cleven / Als hen dan minne hare soude al gheven, / So wordet een beroeven, / Ende so roerste een vaer. / Ay, amabaer / Waer salic, arme, henen / Eert mi dus quam, / Ay, utinam / Hadde si mi doch doet gherenen.”

Identifying her perspective as that of someone who desires love but is thus far denied it, the singer explains why Love's presence causes emotional upheaval, particularly fear. Her faculty of reason, a personification in this song, will not tolerate the singer's despair and requires her to continually ascend towards love. By crying out, the singer is demonstrating that she is not satisfied with herself, and, even though she is frustrated with the circuitous path to love, she knows that reason will make clear to her which works she has yet to complete. This cognitive shift away from a state of fear and despair to understanding begins with the use of the adversive conjunction *maer* (but) in line 43, which initiates a dialectic between exuberant love and disciplined reason. This is the cause of the turmoil described by the singer in line 31:

Storms of this sort
Mould the ardent want.
That is unintelligible to the aliens
Who never yet thought
That to savour every kind of death
For love's need, was seemingly for them.⁹²

To underscore the conclusion of her argument, the singer points directly to the import of what she just told the audience: "That anyone doubts the following is a great loss: / Lover ever requites, even though she comes late."⁹³ This example demonstrates how Hadewijch uses *apostrophatio* to represent an attitude towards an emotion, the cause of which the singer explicates.

⁹² Ibid., Song 15 lines 55-60, 120-121. *Dus ghedane storme / Maken eyes in vorme / Dats onbekent den vremden / Die alre doet / Vore minnen noedt / Te smakenne nie en gheteemden.*"

⁹³ Ibid., Song 15 lines 81-82, 122-123. "Dats yemant twivelt, dats grote scade: / Minne loent altoes al comt si spade." I have reinserted the colon at 15.81 to reflect the punctuation in manuscript C, since Hadewijch uses it to particular effect.

To further the understanding of the pedagogical function of the singer's apostrophes, it is necessary to consider the use of Scriptural models of self-understanding and behavioral response. Geoffrey describes *apostrophatio* as having a *vultum* or "countenance," implying that this ornament is expressive of a mood and the bearing of the speaker. When the singer infuses her apostrophes with allusions and paraphrases from Job, she is signaling the manner of her speech. The final stanza of Song 44 typifies the way the singer weaves paraphrases from the Biblical text into her own lament:

Ah, Love, restrain your sovereign powers
You have the days and I have the nights.
Whatever for do you make me chase after you in hot pursuit
When you flee so far from me?
You make me yield such levy,
That I loathe [that] I ever became a human being.⁹⁴

Her *exclamatio* indicates her sorrow and signals that the speech to follow is a lamentation and, therefore, an appeal to God's mercy. Referring to his sovereignty indicates that she is subject to him and not controlled by self-will. The second line in this stanza is an allusion to Job 5:14, "They shall meet with darkness in the day, and grope at noonday as in the night,"⁹⁵ a verse that Hadewijch favors in the *Liederen*.⁹⁶ The tone of this vers, and of this lament overall is one of hopelessness. Love beckons the singer to follow her, but the singer has grown distrustful. In the final line she alludes to Job 10:1, "My soul is weary of my life, I will let go my speech against myself, I will speak in the bitterness of

⁹⁴ Ibid., Song 44 lines 49-54, 286-287. "Ay minne ghemaet uwe gheweldeghe crachte / Ghi hebt die daghe ende ic die nachte / Wat doedi mi jaghen uwe jachte / Ende ghi mi so verre vore ontvaert / Ghi doet mi ghelden selke pachte / Mi gruwelt da tic ie mensche waert."

⁹⁵ "[P]er diem incurrent tenebras et quasi in nocte sic palpabunt in meridie."

⁹⁶ Cf. Song 19, lines 92-94.

my soul.”⁹⁷ Her sense of injustice leads her to speak out. This example shows how the singer enters into the person of Job as a means of appealing to the beliefs and customs of her community simultaneously, thereby signaling her authority and mode of speaking. In essence, she enters into the person of Job and uses his experience to compose her

Despite the frequency with which the singer alludes to Job, the function of this Biblical text in the Songs is little studied, as is, more broadly, the influence of Gregory’s *Moralia*.⁹⁸ Hadewijch could have known Gregory’s *Moralia* directly, copies of which most monastic libraries held.⁹⁹ Assuming that she was a beguine, she may have had access to a copy through a friend in a monastery or from a former teacher.¹⁰⁰ Her familiarity with Gregory’s works and hagiography is suggested by his ranking on her *List of the Perfect* at number seven, which makes him the first non-Biblical figure named.¹⁰¹

Job is mentioned by name in Song 29, where he is described as a prophet who foretold the coming of Christ and his wisdom and power.¹⁰² He was an imperfect man, in the singer’s opinion, because, despite his patient suffering and piety, self-will made him inconstant in his submission to God: “Clear and pure love / Remained all unpracticed by them. /...Now here, now

⁹⁷ “[T]aedet animam meam vitae meae dimittam adversum me eloquium meum loquar in amaritudine animae meae.”

⁹⁸ Joris Reynaert draws attention to passages in Hadewijch’s works that are reminiscent of passages from the *Moralia*. *De beeldspraak van Hadewijch* (Tielt, Belgium: Lannoo, 1981).

⁹⁹ Lawrence Besserman, *The Legend of Job in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1979), 56.

¹⁰⁰ Walter Simons, email communication to Benjamin Breyer, August 11, 2013. Professor Simons points out that, if Hadewijch was a Cistercian nun, she might have access to the *Moralia* in her convent library or her confessor could have arranged for her to use a copy held by one of men’s Cistercian monasteries in Brabant or Liège. If she were a member of what Professor Simons characterizes as the “urban, non-noble upper class of burghers,” which he thinks is likely, or even a member of landed, rural nobility, she could have commissioned copies of commentaries. Her access would be influenced by the time she was active. In the middle of the thirteenth century, the market for such commissions was not as well developed as it would be by the end of the century, so, if the current date of 1250 is kept, she would be dependent on personal connections, such as a former teacher, contact in a monastery, or even a student in Paris for access to commentaries.

¹⁰¹ *HV*, *Lijst der volmaakten* 22-23, 150. “St. Gregory is the seventh. He was supremely perfect in all three [manners].” (Sente Gregorius die .vij.de die in allen drien ouer volmaect was.) Translation mine.

¹⁰² *PH*, Song 29, lines 51-60, 204-205..

there, now off, now on.”¹⁰³ In comparison, the Virgin Mary is exemplar of total self-annihilation and devotion to God’s will for she “said nothing / But: ‘Be it unto me according to what God purposes.’”¹⁰⁴ Hadewijch’s interpretation of Job’s ordeal differs from that of Gregory, who believes Job’s failing was that he did not suffer gladly and thank God in the midst of his misery. Even though his self-will was a failing, or perhaps because of it, Hadewijch uses Job as an exemplar in the Songs. Her singer’s speech is infected with paraphrases and allusions to this biblical text to such an extent that the singer seems to inhabit Job. His suffering becomes a means to understanding and to responding to her own, just as she offers her life as a model for others.

As Lawrence Besserman shows, Job was an omnipresent figure in the Middle Ages through the Office of the Dead and the widespread dissemination of Gregory’s exegesis of Job in monastic libraries and clerical schools. Besserman claims that through the liturgy “the Book of Job was experienced *daily* by medieval clergy and laity, who recited the Divine Office and...additional prayers, like Matins of the Dead.”¹⁰⁵ During the Matins of the Dead, a sequence of nine lessons from Job was read.¹⁰⁶ This liturgical event provided a bonding experience in which the participants were members of the body of the church, thus making the death of a member the death of all. It also served as a reminder that man is predestined to return to God. As part of their charitable work, beguines participated in the Office of the Dead along with wakes

¹⁰³ Ibid., lines 65-66, 68.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., lines 69-70, 206-207.. “Maer maria en sprac el nier / Dan mi werde dar god versier.”

¹⁰⁵ Besserman, *The Legend of Job*, 58-59. See also Paul Binski, *Medieval Death: Ritual and Representation* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1996), 54.

¹⁰⁶ In the three hours of the Matins of the Dead, the readings were verses 7:16-21, 10:1-7, and 10:8-12 at 9:00 pm; verses 13:23-28, 14:1-6, and 14:13-16 at midnight; and verses 17:1-3, 17:11-15, 19:20-27, and 10:18-22 at 3:00 am. Besserman claims that laity’s knowledge of the Book of Job was only through the verses used during the Matins of the Dead. *The Legend of Job*, 59. Knud Ottosen lists in his catalog of medieval responsories to be used during the Office of the Dead five manuscripts dated between 1200-1300 from Liège. Ottosen, *The Responsories and Versicles of the Latin Office of the Dead* (Aarhus, Denmark: Aarhus University Press, 1993), 176-177. Comparison of these texts with Hadewijch’s use of the Book of Job could offer additional insight into her use of liturgical materials.

and funerals. According to Simons, laypeople believed that the mourning of beguines was especially effective, because it was “inspired by compassion” and “punctuated by tears and moans.”¹⁰⁷ Several conclusions can be drawn about Hadewijch’s use of Job. Since Job was a text held in common in beguine communities, one that they routinely participated in through the liturgy, Hadewijch may have intended the allusions to Job in the Songs to function as commonplaces. Second, the allusions can be regarded as signaling a mode of speech related to the lament tradition in the Bible. It is perhaps not too much to read the singer’s frequent exclamations of *Ah* as an acknowledgment of her wretchedness and praise of those from whom she requests pity:

Ah, What shall I do, wretched woman?

I have a right to hate happiness,

I sorely rue my life,

I can neither love nor leave off.

Truly, both are fell to me,

The happy and the adventurous life,

I am astray inside myself as no one else is,

That seems contrary to nature.

- *Ay vale vale milies* -

Let all of you be to pity moved

- *Si dixero non satis est* -

Since love it is thus makes me moan.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁷ Simons, *Cities of Ladies*, 80.

¹⁰⁸ *PH*, Song 1, lines 25-36, 42-43. “Ay wat salic doen alendech wijf / Met rechte maghic tghelucke wel haten / Mi rouwet wel sere mijn lijf / Ic en mach minnen noch laten / Te rechte mi es beide fel / Gheluc ende

When she requests pity in the ninth line, the singer alludes to Job 19:21.¹⁰⁹ Job uses this to address his friends, as does Hadewijch, in the absence of Love's pity. This verse is also used in Song 17 where she asks the "fierce ones" in the audience to take pity on one who has lost hope.¹¹⁰ The inclusion of these paraphrases from Job over the course of these songs conveys to the audience that they function as more than language models: they represent habits of thought. This is significant because a habit of thought is an indication of the singer's will or disposition, from which her behavioral actions are motivated.

While the *Matins of the Dead* conveys that Job's experience is in essence that of all Christians, in Hadewijch's writings the knowledge that Job obtained is for an elect few. The aliens do not hear the hidden word that God spoke to Job because it has to be understood through love.¹¹¹ Gregory claims the "hidden word" is "delivered to the minds of the elect" so that they hear in their heart the "utterance of the Holy Spirit."¹¹² Song 4 contains an allusion to Job 4:12: "Whosoever faithfully gives himself in truth, / And then truthfully shapes faithfulness in his life, / To him the hidden word is spoken / Which no alien can understand."¹¹³ *Faithfully* (*trouwen*) is an adjective in line 13 that refers to the noun *truth* (*waerheit*), but in the following line this relationship is reversed, creating a chiasmus. What this figure conveys is that people must consistently submit to God's will and allow their lives to be shaped by it. The structure of the chiasmus reflects this reciprocal process. It also emphasizes that it is necessary to begin life with

avontuere / Ic dole mijns en es niemant el / Dat scijnt teghen natuere / - Ay vale vale milies- / U allen laet dies ontfaermen / -Si dixero non satis est- / Dat minne mi dus laet carmen."

¹⁰⁹ Have pity on me, have pity on me, at least you my friends, because the hand of the Lord hath touched me." "[M]iseremini mei miseremini mei saltim vos amici mei quia manus Domini tetigit me."

¹¹⁰ *PH*, Song 17, lines 31-36, 134-135. "Ay ghi fiere die als met minnen ghestaet / Ende vri leeft in hare toeverlaet / Ontfarmt den verdeylder die minne verslaet / Ende met onthopenden ellende gheet nopen / Och die raets mach pleghen Leve vri in raet / Mijn herte levet in onthopen

¹¹¹ She is referring to Job 4:12: "Now there was a word spoken to me in private, and my ears by stealth, as it were, received the veins of its whisper" ([P]orro ad me dictum est verbum absconditum et quasi furtive susceptit auris mea venas susurri eius).

¹¹² Gregory, *Morals on the Book of Job*, vol. 1, bk. 28, chap. 50, 256-57.

¹¹³ *PH*, Song 4, lines 13-16, 60-61. "Die hem met trouwen in waerheit ghevet / Ende met waerheden dan trouwe levet / Dat verhoelne word wordt hem gheseghet / Dat niemant vremders en mach verstaen."

God through faith and then act so that this state of devotion is manifested outwardly. A person who hears the hidden word spoken is united with God in an experience that only a few others have achieved: “Job said he had received hidden words. / Other souls too have been granted them since.”¹¹⁴ Job is an exemplar to be followed, one whose life is not beyond the ability of others to imitate, although few will be able to do so.

Few of the individual allusions to Job in the songs are used in a way that similarities can be found with Gregory’s exegesis. Gregory argues that man progresses towards God through suffering. Significant parallels exist in the value accorded suffering and compassion by both writers and the way in which they find proof of this in the Scriptural text. Hadewijch, like Gregory,¹¹⁵ believes that the oscillation between joy and spiritual suffering experienced by those who love God is beneficial:

Now sweet, then again spiteful,

Now aloof, then again at hand.

To whoever understands this with the faithfulness of love

It is jubilation:

How love smites

And embraces

In one handling.¹¹⁶

In the Songs this movement is connected to the importance of understanding suffering and the dangers of being complacent with only a modicum of divine favor. It is necessary to learn to

¹¹⁴ *CW*, Letter in Rhyme 3, lines 115-18, 324; *HM*, Mengeldicht 3, lines 115-118, 24. “Job reide, hi hadde tuerhoelne ontfaen./ Oec heuet selc sint so ghedaen./Te rechte eest hen verholen, die nemen.”

¹¹⁵ See Carole Straw, *Gregory the Great* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), 90-106.

¹¹⁶ *PH*, Song 5, lines 29-35, 64-65. “Bi wilen lief bi wilen leet/Bi wilen verre bi wilen ghereet / Die dit met trouwen van minnen versteet / Dat es jubileren / Hoe minne versleet / Ende omme veet / In een hanteren.”

discern between joy and spiritual suffering and to interpret their occurrence correctly using reason:

However alluringly she showed it to me at first
She has turned cruel since, that is quite clear to me now.
That she did neither deceive nor deride me
With whatever woe, if only I might take that in
She meant to make clear
And reveal to me
That reason illumines all of love's ground.¹¹⁷

This emphasis on perception of spiritual realities and self-knowledge through patient endurance of suffering is a significant parallel with the *Moralia*. Gregory believes that Christians must ceaselessly struggle in order to grow spiritually and that virtues can only be demonstrated during times of affliction. Hadewijch makes a similar assertion in Song 5:

Though the season and the birds are grieving,
That is not done by the heroic heart
That is willing to endure pain for love.
He shall know and experience all:
Sweet and cruel,
Joy and sorrow,
That one must practice towards love.¹¹⁸

¹¹⁷ Ibid., Song 19, lines 22-28, 140-141. "Hoe scone dat sijt mi ierst toende / Ende sint wart wreet es mi nu cont / Dat si mi niet en bedroech noch en hoende / Met wat wee so ict verstont / Met si woude mi verclaren / Ende openbaren / Dat redenne dore licht alle der minnen gront."

¹¹⁸ Ibid., Song 5, lines 1-7, 64-65. "Al droevet die tijt ende die vogheline/ Dan darf niet doen die herte fine/ Die dore minne wilt doghen pine/ Hi sal weten ende kinnen al/ Suete ende wreet/Lief ende leet/Wat men ter minnen pleghen sal."

The righteous man, Gregory argues, “endeavors to regard all his neighbors as superior to himself. . . . [i]n order that in the thoughts of the heart I should prefer him to myself, and he in return should prefer me to himself.”¹¹⁹ This doctrine of charity that Gregory finds within the Book of Job directs Christians to be like Christ and allow themselves to feel the suffering of others. When the singer laments on behalf of her community in her songs she is assuming their burden before God. She decries the complacency of her audience; the injustice is now done to love: “I lament what displeases me more: That we are weighted down by the gentle weight / Of love, whom we should strive after, / And that we content ourselves with manageable joys, alien to love.”¹²⁰ The exclamation of her grief following this lament (“Ah, What havoc our abjectness has wreaked”) requires reading Song 10 as the singer’s response to this perceived injustice. It is a cry for the audience’s attention and a warning that the members of the community are dependent on one another in order to progress towards fruition, for without perseverance, she warns, “love cannot accept us like that.” The singer’s censure of the community and her warning of the consequences of the members’ behavior gives her lamentation in a prophetic tone. When she speaks in this style using commonplaces from Job, this mode of address is more explicit.

The link between injustice and lamentation is seen when the singer describes her woes without lamenting in Song 11. She is distressed that members of the audience, like the audience in Song 10, are willing to accept lesser joys, a concession which is preventing them from receiving love’s rewards:

And I sing with new woe:

Where formerly gentle faithfulness wrought

¹¹⁹ Gregory, *Moralia on the Book of Job*, book 1, chap 2 para 45; *Moralia in Job*, CCSL, 143, 49.

¹²⁰ *PH*, Song 10, lines 10-15, 90. “Ic swighe vander voghele claghe: / Hare vroude, hare pine, es saen vergaen; / Ende claghe dat mi meer meshaghe: / Die minne, daer wij na soudē staen, / Dat ons verweghet hare edele waghe, / Ende nemen vremde naghelaghe.”

I now behold fraudulence:
Therefore my heart is sad.
What wonder that I droop
And rue this manner of loving? Love is lady of all
And even at her side we manage to go astray.¹²¹

The temporal contrast in the second and third lines of the stanza alludes to a change in the disposition of the audience, and this has moved the singer to compose a new song.¹²² The singer's response is not to lament to God, however, but to express her sadness (*onblide*), which is directed at members of the community, who, she feels, have misled her. *Therefore* functions as a deictic in the fourth line, connecting the acknowledgement of affection with its cause. Their failure is the failure of all members of the community and a setback, since the community appears to have progressed, given that they are described as working "at [Love's] side." This self-inflicted wound is an injustice on the part of the community, and so the singer does not express her disappointment in the form of a lament to God, because it is not he who has failed to give of himself.

Hadewijch does not always use *conquestio* commonplaces to prompt the audience to identify with the singer by lowering themselves to experience her woe, however. Where the identification occurs through the singer's acknowledgment of directly shared experiences, she appeals to them using ethos. Referring in Song 19 to the suffering she has experienced as a result of her premature expressions of goodwill and rejoicing, the singer acknowledges that she is not

¹²¹ Ibid., Song 11, lines 7-14, 94,-95. "Ende ic singhe met nuwen rouwe: / Daer wilen wrachte edele trouwe, / Dat ic daer nu loesheit scouwe; / Dies es mijn herte onblide. / Wat wondere eest dat ic douwe / Ende rouwe om minne bouwe / Die minne es alles vrouwe, / Ende wij dolen bi hare side." This is the one instance in the songs where singing is born out of a state of negative emotion.

¹²² Whether or not this song is in response to a particular event is difficult to say, because the previous songs in this manuscript reiterate similar concerns.

the only one to have fallen short (“Through both we have been deprived of much”).¹²³ Love’s “showings” have placed heavy demands on the community. (“He to whom this applies knows it of himself. / I know of myself that I am one”).¹²⁴ By grouping her failure with other members of the community, the singer is explicitly calling for them to contemplate their own shortcomings. It is an expression of humility and an attempt to persuade them to remain faithful to love.

There are no commonplaces before the first *conquestio* in the third stanza (“Woe to poor me, / Where is now the solace / And the peace of love / With which she provided me at first?”). The commonplace is utilized later in lines 22-23 (“However alluringly she showed it to me at first / She has turned cruel since, that is quite clear to me now.”). Love, the singer realizes, is not her antagonist, for “she did neither deceive nor deride me / With whichever woe... She meant to make clear /That reason illumines all of love’s ground.”¹²⁵ This understanding, though belated, is brought about by the singer’s cognition. Hadewijch draws the audience into the singer’s process of reasoning that leads to her lamenting her present state. The pity the audience is meant to feel is for the singer’s belated recognition that she must work continuously to satisfy the debt she owes love. This song ends with a commonplace in which the singer laments that, despite now serving love with “high faithfulness,” the “healing” process is slow and not the joyful experience felt by other people. The final lines, “I cry out, I lament: / “Love has the days / And I the nights and love’s fierce fury,” is a combination *conquestio* and a Job commonplace in the sense that it is a lament that is based on inequality.

Love is the axial point for the various perspectives which the singer assumes in her laments. Ultimately, by the end of each lament, she expresses either faith in love’s abilities or

¹²³ *PH*, Song 19, line 4, 140-141. “Ons es van beiden vele ontbleven.”

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, Song 19, line 13, 140-141. “Ic weet van mi.”

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, Song 19, lines 22-28, 140-141. “Hoe scone dat sijt mi ierst toende / Ende sint wart wreet es mi nu cont / Dar si mi niet en bedroech noch en hoende / Met war wee so ict verstont / Met si woude mi verclaren / Ende openbaren / Dat redenne dore licht aile der minnen gront.”

complete dependence on love. This is the process of realization that occurs over the course of each lament song. Praying to love in Song 19, the singer hopes that love will enable the members of the community to grow spiritually. In the sixth stanza, the singer's assured tone changes as she laments that love has left her. This shift from assured guarantee to the beginning of the *conquestio* occurs through a commonplace that signals a loss of this secure emotional state ("Now my joyful songs / Have changed into great weeping"). Even though the singer experiences "woe and worry" in love's absence, she understands that her fear is due to the realization that she is imperfect. She recognizes her self-delusion and its consequences in her quest for love. Hadewijch uses this contrast at the beginning of stanzas five through seven, followed by her wish at the beginning of stanza eight that love will give her joy in the future. Love's absence is described in commonplaces that amplify the sense of loss due to separation ("While now I suffer pain / And heartache"). The singer's response to her self-delusion in Song 19 is paralleled by her recognition of the same failing in Song 21:

I bid love farewell now and forever.

Whoever wishes it may follow in her train; to me too much woe has happened.

I deceived myself into thinking I was lady of the court from when first I chose
her;

I completely laid myself out in singing her praises but this is beyond me.

Now her benefits appear to me

To be like the scorpion's,

That puts on fair seeming,

Only to strike savagely afterwards.

Ah, What does such travesty mean?¹²⁶

The singer's naiveté has led her to believe that she has chosen love and that singing love's praises is sufficient service. She now realizes that it is love that controls the terms of their relationship. By asking what has caused the state of her affections, the singer invites the audience to participate in the process of comprehension.

Similarly, though more detailed than the simple past/present contrast, when described events are divided according to time, the verses show what the singer has suffered in the past, is still suffering, and expects to suffer in the future. This commonplace is used when the singer describes the development of her relationship with love in Song 16:

During the days of my youth
When love first joined battle with me,
She showed me the well-spread boards of
Her wisdom, her riches, her goodness, her power.
When I kept company with her
The full score of love's levy
Above all else she delighted in
Attaching me utterly to herself.
Now that storm seems to have abated indeed.¹²⁷

¹²⁶ Ibid., Song 21, lines 46-54, 154-155. "Ic gheve der minnen orlof nu ende altoes / Die wille, volghen haren hove Mi es wel wee ghesciet / Ic waende gheweest sijn vrouwe int hof sint icse ierst coes / Ic leide al toe in love; Ic en caen ghevolghen niet / Nu scinen mi hare lone / Ghelijc den scorpioene / Dat toent scone ghelaet / Ende na so sere verslaet / Ay, wat meynen selke gheoene."

¹²⁷ Ibid., Song 16, lines 41-50, 126-127. "In minen jonghen daghen / Doen mi die minne ierst jeghen vacht / Toneste mi grote ghelaghen / Hare wise hare rike hare goedde hare macht / Doen ic met hare omghinc / Ende ic ontfinc / Al te geldene der minnen pacht / Gherne boven alle dinc / Si mi een ane hare hinc / Nu scijnt die storm wel sere ghesacht."

Through *descriptio* Hadewijch amplifies the sense of the initial riches she felt by using a metaphor of serving boards laden with food. After narrating this sequence of events and the emotions she felt at each point, the singer uses *thus (dus)* to signal that the claim, “love has betrayed me,” (*heft mi minne verraden*) follows logically from the narration of events in the preceding stanza. The singer, righteously claiming to have “gladly endured all,” believes that she is entitled to receive love’s levy, yet love has not acknowledged this obligation. This entitles the singer “to accuse and reproach” love, which is a phrase reminiscent of a judicial debate. This reproach is revealed to be unwarranted, as it is in Song 19, and the singer lacks the insight necessary to intuit the affective states that she must pass through in the course of her spiritual development.

In Song 35 the singer laments that love has deviously denied her all love despite her prayers for mercy. Love rejects the singer’s prayer capriciously, rendering a “verdict” (*vonessen*) which leaves the singer confused as to why love “seemed to favor me sometime,” (*si mi ye in onsten sceen*) when now it appears that “what happens to me is all one to her” (*Wat mi ghesciet dats hare al een*). Love’s ways are “alien vacillations” to the singer that cause her to live “through night by day” (*nachte bi daghe leven*) in a state of uncertainty, an allusion to Job.

Hadewijch uses an *indignatio* in this song to rouse the audience when the singer claims she was mistaken to trust in love: “You are to blame for all that happens to me” (*Si al u scout wat mi ghesciet*). Even though love counseled God when the singer was made a human being, love always intended for the singer to be rejected. This type of *indignatio* plays upon the audience’s sense of outrage by establishing that love, having been present at the singer’s birth, should be the least likely to abandon her.¹²⁸ The singer’s accusation and sense of despair at this

¹²⁸ Cicero, *De inventione*, bk. 1, chap. 54, para. 105, 156-157. “Undecimus locus est per quem ostendimus ab eo factum a quo minime oportuerit, et a quo, si alius faceret, prohiberi convenerit”

point in the poem is another Ciceronian commonplace wherein the speaker complains that he is being treated by someone “whom such conduct least becomes...whom we have treaty kindly [and expected] to help us.”¹²⁹ Personifying love in this stanza, Hadewijch draws upon social customs of fealty and obligation. Love “owes” her support and, by denying it, leads the singer to turn to faith, another personification.

The most frequent commonplace in the songs is the singer’s distress after she did not receive love’s favor after submitting to love’s decree. Hadewijch frequently decries the lack of equity in her dealings with love, as she does in Song 16, “My earnest heart / Is well versed in the wise insight / That love will remunerate with love.”¹³⁰ This lack of equity appeals to the audience’s sense of fairness. When describing love’s refusal to fulfill her obligations towards her friends, the singer claims love has treated her unfairly:

Who would forever be singing love’s praises
When by day she gives so many a night?
Those she ought to clothe, honour and nourish,
She strips of all their strength[.]
Anyone who would gladly settle love’s dues,
She rightfully ought to direct.¹³¹

Despite the sense of despair and injustice in this stanza, the singer asserts that, even though she has suffered misfortunes, she feels mercy for others and will endure for the sake of love. This

¹²⁹ Ibid., bk. 1, chap. 55, para 109, 160-161. “Tertius decimus, per quem cum indignation conquerimur, quod ab eis a quibus benigne fecerimus, quos adiutores fore putarimus, aut a quibus indignum est, ut servis, libertis, clientibus, supplicibus.”

¹³⁰ *PH*, Song 16, lines 68-70, 128-129. “Mijn hoghe moet / Es dies wel vroet / Dat minne met minnen orsaten sele.”

¹³¹ Ibid., Song 9, lines 61-66, 88-89. “Wie soude van minnen altoes geprisen / Die ghevet bi daghe so meneghen nacht / Dien si soude cleden eren ende spisen / Diet doet si al ute sijnre macht / Die gherne goude der minnen pacht / Soundsi in allen rechte wisen.”

commonplace serves to recommend the character of the speaker in Cicero's theory.¹³² After relating the difficult experiences she has suffered and love's lack of equity, the singer concedes in the final stanza of Song 16, "I acknowledge love to be well worth it; / Whether I lose or win, it is all one,"¹³³ and exhorts the audience to follow her example. The singer's perseverance in this example moves the audience to pity her circumstances while recognizing the positive value of suffering.

Lamenting is not a form of speech used exclusively to pray to God in the songs. The singer also uses it in the sense of a complaint directed towards the members of her community. This differing approach to persuading the audience is seen in Song 36, when the singer speaks with authority as she directly addresses different groups in the audience. The first, "You, who are lovers" (*Die minnaren sijt*) are counseled to use their zeal in proper moderation. These zealous members of the audience must learn "everything in the right measure" and be willing to accept love's decrees whether they bring joy or pain. This group is in distinction to those in the audience whom the singer addresses as "you that shirk love's decree" (*die van minnen raet ontseghet*). The singer describes the type of speech she directs towards those who are selfishly unwilling to follow love's decree as "censure" (*scelden*) in Songs 7 and 11. This form of speech is used by the singer when she feels emboldened to condemn the moral failings of members of the audience, who are not serving love "as a newly-made person should properly do" (*Also nuwe te rechte al soude*).¹³⁴ Songs 7 and 11 do not emphasize doctrine foremost, so the use of censure in Song 36 allows the conclusion that Hadewijch did not regard its application as limited to one

¹³²Cicero, *De inventione*, bk. 1, chap. 56, para. 109, 160-161. Cicero claims that, when the orator shows that, despite the hardships she has faced, she is patient and merciful towards others, the audience will be moved to pity more so than if she begged directly for their pity. "[P]er quem animum nostrum in alios misericordem esse ostendimus et tamen amplum et excelsum et patientem incommodorum esse et futuram esse, si quid acciderit, demonstramus. Nam saepe virtus et magnificentia, in quo gravitas et auctoritas est, plus proficit ad misericordiam commovendam quam humilitas et obsecratio."

¹³³ *PH*, Song 8, lines 81-82, 128-129. "Ic bekins minne wel wert / Verliesic winnic dies al een."

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, Song 7, line 16, 74-75.

type of communicative situation. Lamenting that she does not feel gladness, the singer in Song 11 attributes the absence of this feeling to the audience members, who are acting out of self-interest in regards to love, which leads the singer to censure them. She expresses her disappointment in an introspective comment that ends the seventh stanza, “Now that I am emboldened to censure, / It appears to me I hardly even want / Love to caress us anymore” (*Nu ic te sceldenne boude / Ic wane ic cume woude / Da tons minne meer gherine*).¹³⁵ This expression indicates that her lament is not only for the sense of absence that she feels within her but also for the helplessness that she feels because of the audience’s unwillingness to give whole-hearted service to love.

Section 5: Conclusion

In Song 23 the singer makes an insightful boast about her knowledge of love by comparing it with the method of inquiry used by theologians: “In spite of all the perceptive probings of the church’s scholars, / I say that no scholar can perceive / How fair would be the state / Of one having wrought strong works in love.”¹³⁶ Scholastic methods of investigation are limited in their perception (*ghemerc*) because there are cognitive limitations in academic learning. The refrain in the last line in each stanza of this song, “Now God must find our ways and means” (*Nu moete ons god beraden*), indicates that it is only through the gift of the Spirit that someone may know how to serve love. The singer’s boast evidences the way that her emotional community shares in the larger emotional community of the institutional Church, while challenging in some respects its control of spiritual knowledge. This differing approach to

¹³⁵ Ibid., Song 11, lines 96-98, 100-101.

¹³⁶ Ibid., Song 23, lines 101-104, 171, 172. “In al der kerken clercke ghemerc / So segghic dat en merke clerck / Hoe scone het den ghenen stoede / Die in minnen wrachte sterc werc.”

spiritual authority is seen in the ways Hadewijch uses pathos to lead and teach her followers. Lamentation brings to consciousness the place of God in a person's life and the centrality of dependence on his mercy. The act of public lamenting and its recognition by the members of the community represented in the songs unify the group through brotherly love. I suggest that the singer's avowed commitment to God in her laments and the expectation that the people of her audience will also profess their commitment in their own expressions of grief take the place of the permanent vows in a monastic community.

The singer demonstrates through her laments that union with God is not attainable through joy but rather through self-abasement and dependence on God, which is demonstrated by the act of lamenting. The self-knowledge that the singer gains through cognition of the causes of her affections leads to feelings of wretchedness. When she gains insight into the cause of her woes, she signals her insight with lamentation and tears. Hadewijch's songs are designed so that the engaged auditor will understand herself just as the singer comes to understand herself. This process of identification is facilitated by the Ciceronian commonplaces and rhetorical ornaments such as *apostrophatio*, which are intended to make the auditor a vicarious participant in the singer's woes. Cicero's pathos and *indignatio* commonplaces reflect a cultural ethos based social and kinship obligations. In the songs these commonplaces are found in the singer's invocation of the obligations which her soul and love owe one another and her questioning of whether the terms of their relationship are fair. If it is assumed that the singer and auditor belong to the same emotional community, the singer's laments directed to love, in which she pleads for emotional recognition, will be felt by the auditor, who also desires recognition.

As well as a personal necessity, the performance of lament is also necessary for the integrity of the community. On one level the singer laments her personal woes and the state of a

community beset by enemies outside and by apathy within. The apathy or weak disposition of that community's members causes the singer to lament the loss of communal unity. This explains why charity is a recurrent theme in the songs. Theologically, the singer's cries are the cries of the entire group, and her pain should be recognized and felt by all. In view of this, the allusions to Job can be seen to have a three-fold purpose. First, Job is an exemplar of enduring suffering with faith and hope, and, by incorporating his speech into her own, the singer demonstrates her conformity to this exemplar. Second, by using Job's speech as a *modus* or manner of speaking, she signifies that she is speaking in a prophetic voice when she addresses the fallen state of the emotional community. Finally, the singer uses the Job text to demonstrate her affective orientation while enduring suffering. In her description of her own destitution, she alludes to the verses where Job complains of his friends' abandonment of him and of the enemies who oppose him. Since she feels she has been ostracized undeservedly, the singer draws strength by speaking to God as Job did during his abandonment. Invoking Job and the exemplar of suffering he represents, she demonstrates the pedagogical value of suffering and lamenting as a means to develop humility, patience, and affective attachment to God.

Judging from the similarity in themes among the different forms of writing, the actual audience of the songs was likely comprised of women similar to those addressed in the letters and book of visions. Hadewijch's prose works were occasioned by requests from her followers, however, and there are only a few songs that can be interpreted as having been occasioned by an event in the community of women. The songs' strophic form emphasizes patterning and recursion, unlike the prose works, where such features tend to be localized to the structure of the periodic sentence but do not appear not among the different thought units. Moreover, the arrangement of the thought units in the letters varies with the topic, whereas the development of

themes in the songs is determined by the tradition of the courtly love song. What further distinguishes the songs are their explicitly performative nature, which emphasizes ritual and community in the affective relationship between the singer and her audience. The singer's emotive appeals to the audience in a number of the songs are an ethical gesture that calls for a moral response, which the songs frame in terms of compassion and charity. During the performance, the singer and audience share an affective identity that differs from that which exists between Hadewijch and her readers in the letters, where each letter is predicated upon the idea that it can make present the absent speaker but not in actuality and not in the same instant. It is through rhythm and rhetorical ornamentation that Hadewijch's prose texts affect their readers, leading them to accept her arguments on the basis of the feelings which the texts evoke as they are read aloud.

While the *I* and the *you* in the songs reflect each other, as Willaert argues, and the *I* provides an exemplar for the *you* to imitate,¹³⁷ this empathetic identification occurs in the moment of performance when singer and audience are present to one another. By contrast, the prose works exist in a different temporality, because the texts themselves stand in place of Hadewijch's presence and are designed to function as devotional aids for private use. The letters and vision accounts are structured in a way that allows the reader to dwell on individual thought units. Their spatiality in terms of the arrangement of the thought units and in terms of the relationship between writer and reader is primarily graphic and secondarily phonocentric, which is the inverse of the songs. The sampling of Hadewijch's letter collection in manuscripts P and R suggests that Letters 6 and 10 were regarded as texts for personal devotion, further evidenced by the meditative works by other writers in these two manuscripts. Though they were written down

¹³⁷ Willaert, *De poëtica van Hadewijch*, 327.

at some point, the songs were composed as oral texts that sought to move the audience through an aural affectivity.

The emotional register of the Songs partly derived from the courtly love tradition, is based on the same psychology found in the prose texts. Contrast – a formal element characteristic of the strophic poetry – is used by Hadewijch to represent the emotional oscillation described in pastoral texts by Augustine and Gregory the Great. Passion is central to the courtly love song as is introspection and emotional vulnerability, and thus the continuity between the concerns of the prose texts and the songs becomes evident. Willaert is correct to argue both that the songs were intended for an audience comprised of women already dedicated to the pursuit of *minne* and that Hadewijch's intention was to exhort them to remain steadfast amid suffering. However, the songs seek to instruct in emotional self-understanding and behavioral response.

In the next section I conclude my analysis of Hadewijch's use of affective style by situating her pedagogical methods and doctrinal teaching in the broader context of vernacular spirituality in the thirteenth century.

Conclusion

Throughout this dissertation I have shown how style and form are related to the content of Hadewijch's texts. Stylistically, her use of rhetoric and rhythm in all of the modes in which she wrote reveals a belief in the power of affective rhetoric to emotionally engage the reader and to teach non-rational knowledge. Her writings are designed to shape the reader's affective response in a way that merges affective and cognitive understanding. Indeed, in the book of visions she teaches the intended reader proper affective response by describing her own affective reaction to the liturgy, while presenting her experiences in a narrative structure that formalizes the contemplative process. In the letters and songs she uses the features of each textual form to present the reader and listening audience with an ethical imperative, to which they are obliged to respond. Through their affective stylistics and formal properties, Hadewijch's texts create readers and listeners who are more empathic, communally-oriented, and less self-interested.

Hadewijch's letters were most likely written in response to questions that the intended reader(s) put to her, judging from internal clues and contemporary descriptions of beguines in the Brabant-Liège region providing spiritual counsel and instruction to small groups of followers. Her decision to write in the letter mode was both strategic and symbolic. It was strategic in that the formal properties of the medieval letter, premised upon societal notions of deference and obligation, allowed Hadewijch to place the addressee in a role in which she was compelled to respond to Hadewijch's exhortative appeal to her affections. Her use of the letter form in this manner correlates with the medieval notion of spiritual friendship as the reciprocal requesting and offering of service, expressed as *caritas*. In the Vulgate Paul's letters were presented as teaching texts, and Hadewijch's readers may have regarded his letters similarly from their

experience with the epistles as part of the Epistle Lesson during the Mass. Paul's letters were the authoritative teachings of an apostle who had knowledge of God's will through personal experience and his command of Scripture. Hadewijch uses Paul's epistles as a model of epistolary practice for her own letters, thereby presenting her teaching as that transmitted by an apostle.

Throughout her letters, Hadewijch presents her counsel using a Pauline style of paraenesis, which is a moral exhortation presented in the form of a reminder. Presented as knowledge that the reader already possesses, her counsel seems natural and something with which the reader should agree. This also has the effect of assuring the reader of her own abilities and dissuading her from relying entirely on Hadewijch. To encourage her readers to accept and internalize her teachings, Hadewijch addresses them as members of an elect group chosen by God, each of whom has a special obligation to practice the virtues and turn away from earthly attractions. The intended readers of the letters are inscribed by the personal descriptions in the *salutatio*, marking them as members of Hadewijch's community. In addition to creating identities for them in the text, Hadewijch interpolates her reader(s) by shifting from a second-person address to a third-person address. This makes it seem as though what she exhorts them to practice is a communal value that they already share and must practice for the good of all. Even though the paraenetic style presents her guidance in the form of a reminder, Hadewijch situates the reader within a hieratic network of obligations and deference, creating a sense of exigency by arguing that failure to heed her counsel will negatively affect the community. The letters are a tangible manifestation of *the caritas* she feels for her readers, and she expects that they will reciprocate and spread their love among their companions. Writer and reader are united and bound by the *amicita* that Hadewijch invokes in her salutations.

Hadewijch's exhortative speech in the letters urges the reader to reject self-will and earthly joy for virtue and total subordination to God's will. Through the rhythm of the prose and rhetorical figures of repetition, the reader of her letters is reoriented towards affective attachment to God. The division of the clauses of her sentences corresponds with this prose rhythm, leading the reader to feel the content of the words when the letters are read aloud, as Daróczy first observed. As I have shown, however, this use of prose rhythm and rhetoric is not necessarily derived from music theory but, in fact, was part of medieval epistolary theory. Hadewijch's epistolarity in this regard should be read as her interpretation of the medieval conception of the letter as a means of making the writer present to the reader. By affectively simulating for the reader what she felt during her moments of divine union and the knowledge she derived from it, Hadewijch shares an affective identity with her reader.

My analysis reads the book of visions as the continuance of Hadewijch's correspondence with the reader addressed in some of the letters placed late in the collection. Her book of visions reveals something about the intended reader: the book was written at the request of one reader. This indicates, in my judgment, that this reader sought a systematic guide to Hadewijch's doctrine of the contemplative life. As an arranged composition, the chapters of the book of visions present the reader with a developmental sequence that provides a reading experience unlike that of the letters or songs for several reasons. Even though Hadewijch is writing from the point of view of her present, full-grown self, the narratives describe her at immature stages. This allows the reader to analogize between herself and the immature Hadewijch in the vision narratives. Hadewijch's use of a patterned structure for her vision narratives creates expectations in the reader when she recognizes these features of the accounts. As Hadewijch indicates her spiritual growth, the reader's expectations change based on changes in the narratives. The

reader's recognition of this is facilitated by the formalized structure of the narratives, which aids comparison between the visions and the identification of differences and their significance.

The changes noticed by the reader modify the preconceptions that she has brought to the text based on her own past experience and knowledge. Integral to this process is her identification with the speaking *I* of the text. Hadewijch uses synaesthetic language to stimulate in the reader the *affectien* and sense impressions that she felt during her visions, enabling the reader to identify with what is unfamiliar from her own experience. The cross-modal associations of the synesthetic language in the book of visions, I argue, serve to help bridge the gap between Hadewijch's experience and that of the reader. The book's structure and formalization tended to systematize the process of contemplation and reflection on the visionary experience. In the letters, prose rhythm is one of the principal ways that the reader is led to new identifications. By contrast, the narrative form of the visions causes the reader to have a different interaction with the text. The rhetorical ornaments in the descriptions within the vision narratives slow the reader, causing her to re-read passages and consider how the parts of the complex objects being described relate to one another. Hadewijch's wish for her reader to understand what she describes in a relational whole is explicit in the tree metaphors in Vision 1, for example. Notably, the letters that utilize this kind of mnemonic feature are ones that bear no indications that they were actually letters.¹ The use of ornament in all of Hadewijch's writings shows the confluence of rhetoric and pedagogy at the sentence level.

The process of identification and changed self-understanding that occurs in the reader of the prose texts occurs differently in Hadewijch's songs because of the relationship between the narrator and her audience. In some of the songs, the narrator imparts doctrinal information from

¹ Letters 15, 20, and 22. Letter 22 breaks off abruptly, so it could have originally had an epistolary element that is now lost.

a position of authority, but in others she teaches by enjoining the readers to pity her and identify with the affective and cognitive process she goes through in trying to understand the causes of her misery and grief. Regardless, the audience is interpolated into the text through the narrator's direct address to them as "you" and the way their affective response is directed through rhetorical devices such as apostrophes.

In her letters Hadewijch calls on her readers for emotional support and implies that her letters and book of visions are an expression of her love for them, but they are not absorbed into the textual performance as they are when the narrator of songs complains of her misery and requests compassion from the implied audience. Those listening to the songs are meant to pity the narrator's suffering and to be instructed by it as they follow her cognitive processes. For the audience there is a process of identification through empathy, the reception of affective and cognitive knowledge, and strengthened devotion. The audience for the songs is invoked when the narrator identifies segments of the audience and characterizes them as either positive examples or negative ones. The attitudes which the narrator attributes to the different audience segments serve to guide the actual readers to the correct interpretation of her arguments and, by their identification with her, the correct understanding of their emotions and the proper behavioral response.

Each of the modes in which Hadewijch writes presents her teaching in different ways, making it necessary to initially study her letters, book of visions, and songs apart from one another. Her letters address circumstantial topics specific to the spiritual life of an individual reader and seek to reorient the reader's affective disposition regarding that topic. The songs, by contrast, treat of subjects that are not circumstantially localized but are applicable to the emotional disposition of her entire community. The book of visions is Hadewijch's introspective

analysis of her spiritual growth to perfection, and the absence of a direct address to the reader until the very end requires the reader to analogize between herself and the spiritually immature Hadewijch in the narratives. Even though there are significant differences among them, Hadewijch's writings are unified by her use of affective stylistics to convey the knowledge learned through her personal experience.

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