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Pain in Representations of the Intimacy with the Crucified Christ in Lutgard of Tongeren and Caterina da Siena as Impulse to Innovative Iconographies

Many representations of the excruciation or martyrdom of saints have been frequently prohibited in Western iconography since the counterreformation and by the censorship of Inquisitors during the 16th century, as outrageous, because they were considered too emotional or staging nudity. There is a lot of material from the Vatican Archive, where catalogues of the destroyed mystical books in Venice are preserved. They help demonstrate that pain was, beside the basic level of its description and its simple but numerous accounts in the biblical tradition or in hagiographic writers, a vehicle of transcendental, overworldly experience and of mystical enactment in particular. It appears to have been a current topic in the figurative and imaginative world of convents, among their members and in several orders' representational practice. The severity of physical pain is in these cases continuously combined with its emotional meaning; it facilitates or even induces the „overstep“ to the dimension of divine sphere.

Two female saints are particularly representative for their accounts of physical pain experiences and can be considered paradigmatic for the interpretation of pain in a devotional context, valid even beyond the narrow frame of „Western“ art: Caterina da Siena and Lutgard von Tongeren. They both reenact elements of Christ's suffering and corporeal humiliation and subsequently initiate their own process of sanctification. Figurative representations of both saints, whose biographies have already been indicated as connected, show how they indulged in their own bodily pain and became paradigms for castigatory practices at large. But they have to be seen in parallel with literary accounts of the castigation practices they followed.

The early modern resumption of contents related to such scenes showed therefore the strength of a *longue durée* tradition throughout Christian art. The paper exemplarily analyses the mentioned scenes in word and image and shortly hint to that *longue durée*.