

Somatic Memory: Trauma and the (Eucharistic) Body

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Signature:

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Abstract

The Body of Christ is a traumatised body because it is constituted of traumatised bodies. This thesis explores the nature of that trauma and examines the implications of identifying the trauma of this body. Trauma specialist Bessel Van Der Kolk posits that trauma is written into the somatic, or bodily, memory rather than the semantic memory. This somatic memory is essential to understanding trauma as this memory is repeated in the traumatised body. No theologian has yet explored what the somatic memory of the Christian body might be. This somatic memory not only tells us what the trauma of the Body of Christ is and signposts routes for healing, but also, once we identify the somatic memory, allows us to explore its implications for theology.

Beginning with the celebration of the Eucharist as the central place in Christianity where bodies and memory come together, this thesis examines what memory is being remembered and repeated at the altar. The identification of this somatic memory is then used as a hermeneutical lens through which to explore the foundational narratives of the Eucharist and the bodies involved in its celebration.

This research reveals that the somatic memory at the heart of Christianity is the memory of the Annunciation-Incarnation event. This event ruptures the foundational eucharistic narratives of priesthood, sacrifice, and presence and demonstrates that Mary must have a central place in Christian theology. It reveals that Christian liturgy holds within it an unclaimed memory and experience of trauma, and an unacknowledged instinct for trauma recovery.

The results of this research are significant because they offer a fresh perspective on Christian theology, in particular the Eucharist, and present a call

to love the body in all its guises. Furthermore, this traumatic, somatic memory opens up new pathways for considering what it means to 'be Christian'.

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Chapter One

Trauma: Bodies, Memory, and Theology

Christianity's earliest and most persistent doctrines focus on embodiment. From the Incarnation (*the Word made flesh*) and Christology (*Christ was fully human*) to the Eucharist (*this is my body, this is my blood*), the resurrection of the body, and the church (*the body of Christ who is its head*), Christianity has been a religion *of the body*. We relate to God as corporeal bodies, and in our relations with other human bodies, we experience God. It is the recognition of these experiences of God in our bodies (our own and those of others), and the *critical* reflection on these experiences, that leads us into embodiment theology.¹

Hope Deferred

Birthing in the wake of the embodied experiences of the crucifixion and resurrection of Christ, Christianity has always been a religion of the body. Whilst attitudes towards the body over the last two millennia have not always been positive, bodily experiences of baptism, communion, and community have remained at the core of the Christian faith. When one takes such embodied experience seriously—and, particularly, in the case of this thesis, the bodily experience of trauma—one not only engages in theology that is deeply meaningful and practical, but one also engages in a practice that opens up new and insightful perspectives into both theology and human experience.

My own interest in trauma theology and its potential for a positive contribution to constructive doctrine came through a recommendation made by a colleague. She referred to the work being done by Serene Jones on miscarriage and trauma.² I had experienced multiple reproductive losses and, although it was a few years since I had lost my last baby, I felt the pain of this loss sharply. I curiously sought out a copy of the book my colleague had

¹ Deborah Creamer, "Toward a Theology That Includes the Human Experience of Disability," *Journal of Religion, Disability and Deafness*, Theological Reflections on Reproductive Loss (Infertility, Miscarriage, Stillbirth)," *Modern Theology* 17, no. 2 (2001), 227-45.

mentioned—*Hope Deferred*³—and devoured it in the space of a couple of hours. It was the only piece of pastoral theology about miscarriage and infertility I had read that didn't make me angry (and I had been given many such books to read whilst I was trying to get and stay pregnant). The writers of this book, all women, knew how I felt, they took my experience seriously, and they used the experiences I shared with them to look to theology. This was not to offer me glib assurances of *all things working together for the good*, or to suggest that I needed to have more faith, but, rather to say *these experiences, that are common to so many women, mean we need to read scripture and doctrine through the lens of this trauma*.

Immersing myself in Jones' account of reproductive loss—the miscarriage of her friend, her own miscarriage and the feeling of leaving pieces of herself in various bathrooms, the sheer volumes of blood that seem to accompany this loss of life—allowed me to weep. But it was her reflection on the womb as a grave site and the experience of death within the Trinity that both comforted me and kindled my theological exploration of trauma. Her work demonstrated the enormous potential trauma had to offer to theology. A piece of research I was working on at the time that was supposed to be about the Eucharist became a reflection on Mary's trauma of the Annunciation-Incarnation event and the trauma experienced in our reception of the Eucharist. Jones' work is not liturgical in nature, but her reflections stimulated my own theological interest in liturgy. That piece of writing now forms the basis for Chapter Seven of this thesis—Rupture, Repetition, and Recovery: Trauma and Sacrament. In working out the theology that finds its fuller exploration in that chapter, I began with the nascent field of trauma theology.

³ "Rupture," in *Hope Deferred: Heart Healing Reflections on Reproductive Loss*, ed. Nadine Pence Frantz and Mary T. Stimming (Eugene, Oregon: Resources Publications, 2005), 47-66.

Drawing on the psychoanalytical study of trauma, trauma theology is concerned with bodies and memories, and with bodily memories. It is easy to see how the experience of miscarriage is intimately connected to both bodies and memories, but I will present, in this thesis, a vision of Christianity that is profoundly entwined with bodies and memories. As I noted in the opening quotation, Christianity is a religion of the body. It is with these early and persistently body-focused doctrines that I will be concerned. Taking this opportunity to present an embodied theology of trauma will reveal the interconnectedness of what I will show to be the fundamentally embodied beliefs of the Christian Church: the doctrine of the Annunciation-Incarnation event, the Christological discourse, the doctrine of the Eucharist, and the doctrine of the Church.

I found my faith again somewhere in between my contemplation of my own uterus, trauma theology, and the Eucharist. I returned to the Catholic tradition of my childhood and found there the beauty of sacramental theology. I discovered that, whilst trauma theology is a very young field of constructive systematic theology, the principles of trauma and trauma recovery were, as I will demonstrate throughout this thesis, actually well understood by the ancient liturgists. Whilst they did not have the language to describe trauma, these ancient liturgies were infused with the scent of trauma and trauma recovery. Christian liturgy, I will argue, holds within it an unclaimed memory and experience of trauma, and an unacknowledged instinct for trauma recovery.

Trauma Theory

Before demonstrating the scope of the field of trauma theology, it is helpful to consider the ways in which trauma has been studied over the last 150 years

given that the development of trauma theology is but one avenue in the evolution of this field. Suffering is “the state of undergoing pain, distress, or hardship.”⁴ This is not, as I will demonstrate, the same as trauma. The category of trauma is a relatively new distinction and its application beyond the fields of medicine and clinical psychology is even more recent. Judith Herman gives a helpful account of the emergence of this field.

Three times over the past century,⁵ a particular form of psychological trauma has surfaced into public consciousness. Each time, the investigation of that trauma has flourished in affiliation with a political movement. The first to emerge was hysteria, the archetypal psychological disorder of women. Its study grew out of the republican, anticlerical political movement of the late nineteenth century in France. The second was shell shock or combat neurosis. Its study began in England and the United States after the First World War and reached a peak after the Vietnam War. Its political context was the collapse of a cult of war and the growth of an anti-war movement. The last and most recent trauma to come into public awareness is sexual and domestic violence. Its political context is the feminist movement in Western Europe and North America. Our contemporary understanding of psychological trauma is built upon a synthesis of these three separate lines of investigation.⁶

There is no universally accepted definition of trauma in any of the fields that have concerned themselves with the study of trauma, its victims and its symptoms. Jennifer Beste attempts a definition when she notes that trauma “is the experience of terror, loss of control, and utter helplessness during a stressful event that threatens one’s physical and/or psychological integrity.”⁷ But she acknowledges herself that this definition is vague. Herman defines trauma with reference to power structures.

⁴ “Suffering”, in *Oxford English Dictionary* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015).

⁵ Herman is referring here to the twentieth century.

⁶ Judith Herman, *Trauma and Recovery: From Domestic Abuse to Political Terror* (London: Pandora, 2001), 9.

⁷ Jennifer Erin Beste, *God and the Victim: Traumatic Intrusions on Grace and Freedom* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 5.

Psychological trauma is an affliction of the powerless. At the moment of trauma, the victim is rendered helpless by overwhelming force. When the force is that of nature, we speak of disasters. When the force is that of other human beings we speak of atrocities. Traumatic events overwhelm the ordinary systems of care that give people a sense of control, connection, and meaning.⁸

This sense of being overwhelmed is a helpful one when considering trauma. In the experience of trauma almost all victims experience severe emotional distress and most experience frequent flashbacks or nightmares—the intrusion of past memory into the present. When exploring why some people seem to emerge from this ‘overwhelming’ more readily than others, Dutch psychiatrist Bessel van der Kolk, who has spent the last five decades working with victims of trauma, suggests that the inability to integrate the traumatic event into one’s understanding of reality results in a “repetitive replaying of the trauma in images, behaviors, feelings, physiological states, and interpersonal relationships.”⁹

One’s understanding of reality is, for the Christian, one’s theology. Any event that cannot be integrated into this understanding of reality thus poses a problem for one’s theology. Some trauma victims seem to come by this ability to integrate memories more readily than others. Historically, this has led to the blaming of victims for the states in which they find themselves. Women suffering from hysteria in the nineteenth century were often considered to be malingerers or simply insane. Men suffering from “shell shock” in the first and second world wars were branded cowards and accused of moral weakness.¹⁰

In both these cases, existing theology helped to support the blaming of victims. Women had been presented by the church as being crazy, subhuman,

⁸ Herman, *Trauma and Recovery: From Domestic Abuse to Political Terror*, 33.

⁹ Bessel van der Kolk and Alexander McFarlane, "The Black Hole of Trauma," in *Traumatic Stress*, ed. Bessel van der Kolk, Alexander McFarlane, and Lars Weisaeth (New York: Guildford Press, 1996), 3-23, at 6-7.

¹⁰ Beste, *God and the Victim*, 6.

the bearers of sin, and the gateway to death;¹¹ therefore it is no surprise that there was little sympathy for these “hysterical” women. Similarly, some portions of the Church of England regarded the First World War as a Holy War. For example, Bishop Winnington-Ingram, a popular London-based figure, spoke in aid of recruitment drives, and with xenophobic anti-German sentiment.

Both world wars, he believed, were great crusades. He never seemed to have been troubled by doubts as to the rightness of his stance...As late as 1917, he could still declare: “the good old British race never did a more Christlike thing than when, on August 4th, 1914, it went to war.”¹²

How could any man not fight such a battle? As these two examples, and others, show, theology is not removed from the issue of trauma. Van der Kolk considered this blaming of victims to stem from conservative impulses within society that seek to preserve notions of security.

...society becomes resentful about having its illusions of safety and predictability ruffled by people who remind them of how fragile security can be...[Society’s reactions to traumatized people are] primarily conservative impulses in the service of maintaining the belief that the world is fundamentally just...that bad things only happen to “bad” people.¹³

It was not until 1980 with the publication of the third volume of the American Psychiatric Association’s (APA) Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Psychiatric Disorders (DSM-III)—the benchmark of psychiatric diagnosis and treatment—that post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) was recognised as a psychiatric illness. At this point, the APA felt it necessary to point out that traumatic events

¹¹See, for example, analysis of these images in Pamela Cooper-White, *The Cry of Tamar: Violence against Women and the Church's Response*, 2nd ed. (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2012), 70-80.

¹² Alan Wilkinson, *The Church of England and the First World War* (London: SPCK, 1978), 251. Quoting A. F. Winnington-Ingram, *The Potter and the Clay* (London: Wells Gardner, Darton, 1917), 229.

¹³ Alexander McFarlane and Bessel van der Kolk, "Trauma and Its Challenge to Society," in *Traumatic Stress*, ed. Bessel van der Kolk, Alexander McFarlane, and Lars Weisaeth (New York: Guildford Press, 1996), 24-46 at 27-8.

were “outside the range of usual human experience.”¹⁴ Herman challenges this definition when she explains:

[R]ape, battery, and other forms of sexual and domestic violence are so common a part of women’s lives that they can hardly be described as outside the range of ordinary experience. And in view of the number of people killed in war over the past century, military trauma, too, must be considered a common part of human experience; only the fortunate find it unusual. Traumatic events are extraordinary, not because they occur rarely, but rather because they overwhelm the ordinary human adaptations to life.¹⁵

It is difficult to account for the absence of trauma awareness prior to the long twentieth century. Trauma was certainly present in society—women have always been raped, men have always been sent to fight wars as but two examples. However, Modernity has altered perspectives on trauma. Life expectancies have increased and, for some, life is not as brutal as it once was. The industrial revolution and the concomitant rise of modern technology has fundamentally altered patterns of human existence. A brush with death has become less common and thus when one does experience trauma it overwhelms “the ordinary human adaptations to life”¹⁶ precisely because in the modern world, adaptation to trauma is no longer ordinary. As modern humans we experience trauma differently to our ancestors.

In the mid-1990s, there was a literary turn towards trauma led by scholar Cathy Caruth. In her monograph *Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative, and History*,¹⁷ Caruth draws heavily on the work of both Sigmund Freud and Jacques Lacan as she seeks to explore the complexity of knowledge and language of trauma in the literature of a century marked by traumatic experience. She argues that “trauma seems to be much more than a pathology,

¹⁴ American Psychiatric Association, *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Psychiatric Disorders*, vol. 3 (Washington, D. C.: American Psychiatric Association, 1980), 236.

¹⁵ Herman, *Trauma and Recovery: From Domestic Abuse to Political Terror*, 33.

¹⁶ *Ibid.* 33.

¹⁷ Cathy Caruth, *Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative, and History* (Baltimore, Maryland: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996).

or the simple illness of a wounded psyche: it is always the story of a wound that cries out, that addresses us in the attempt to tell us of a reality or truth that is not otherwise available.”¹⁸ Caruth’s work in literary scholarship draws our attention to the somewhat surprising impact of trauma—the telling of a reality or truth not otherwise readily available. Reading through the lens of trauma unsettles us. It forces us to rethink that which has previously been taken for granted and ruptures traditional narratives.¹⁹

As I noted earlier, there is no universally accepted definition of trauma. Trauma has many different definitions drawn from the variety of different perspectives from which it has been considered. Building on Caruth, I suggest that a synthetic view of these varieties of definitions²⁰ reveals that trauma is primarily concerned with *rupture*. I conceptualise trauma, drawing both on analysis done in early works and on the experience of the individual trauma survivor, as being concerned with three ruptures that take place within the trauma survivor. Firstly, the trauma victim experiences a rupture in bodily integrity. This may be a feeling of being unsafe, or an experience of injury or invasion of the body. Secondly, the trauma victim experiences a rupture in time. This may be a simple blocking of the memory of the traumatic event, leading to a gap in their memory timeline. Or it may be the repeated incursion of that past traumatic event into the present through flashbacks or nightmares. Thirdly, the

¹⁸ Ibid. 4.

¹⁹ Caruth, "Trauma and Experience: Introduction," in *Trauma: Explorations in Memory*, ed. Cathy Caruth (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995), 3-12, at 4.

²⁰ Drawing together the definitions given in the following texts: Pierre Janet, *L'automatisme Psychologique* (Paris: Félix Alcan, 1889; repr., Reprint: Société Pierre Janet, 1973); R. Surfield, "Post-Trauma Stress Assessment and Treatment: Overview and Formulations " in *Trauma and Its Wake, I: The Study and Treatment of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder*, ed. C. R. Figley (New York: Brunner/Mazel, 1985) 219-56; Mardi Horowitz, *Stress Response Syndromes*, 2nd ed. (New York: Aronson, 1986); Daniel P. Brown and Erika Fromm, *Hypnotherapy and Hypnoanalysis* (Hillsdale, New Jersey: L. Erlbaum Associates, 1986); Frank W. Putnam, *Diagnosis and Treatment of Multiple Personality Disorders* (New York: Guilford Press, 1989); Judith Herman, *Trauma and Recovery* (New York: Basic Books, 1992); *Trauma and Recovery: From Domestic Abuse to Political Terror*; Caruth, "Trauma and Experience: Introduction".

trauma victim will experience a rupture in cognition and language. This may be due to the fact that they simply do not remember the traumatic event in its specificity and thus they cannot access in order to be able to understand it. Or it may be that the traumatic event is beyond cognition and that the trauma victim has no language with which to express what happened to them and how they felt about it.

Similarly, the process of trauma recovery encompasses three identifiable stages. Firstly, the trauma survivor will need to establish their bodily integrity—they will need to know that they are safe. Secondly, the key to recovering from trauma is connected to remembering and to narrative. The trauma survivor must construct a trauma narrative that makes sense of what has happened to them. This narrative is both a narrative of remembering and a narrative that can carry the trauma survivor in the future. Crucially, this, and indeed trauma recovery in general, cannot be done in a vacuum; it must take place within a community of witnesses who will hear and validate the narrative of the survivor. In the final stage of trauma recovery, then, is connected to the third rupture. The third rupture of trauma is the rupture of cognition and language—this rupture serves to alienate those who experience trauma from the world around them. The trauma survivor must reconnect with society beyond the community of witnesses. Some trauma survivors reconnect by choosing to make their trauma a gift to the world through campaigning and advocating for other trauma survivors or by being open to the possibility of post-traumatic growth. This stage of trauma recovery has practical and pastoral implications.

These two accounts—of the experience of trauma and the recovery from trauma—are very simplistic in their outline of the processes at work. I do not wish to suggest that these are simple, linear processes that will always take

place in this order and subsequent to the accomplishment of the previous stage. This is because trauma is complex and individual. Each person's experience of trauma is unique. However, these accounts can be helpful in attempting to draw some conclusions about the nature of trauma and recovery from trauma.

Central to the understanding of trauma is the concept of somatic memory. Bessel van der Kolk suggests that traumatic memories are not processed in the same way as ordinary memories.²¹ He notes "[T]he imprint of trauma doesn't 'sit' in the verbal, understanding part of the brain, but in much deeper regions—amygdala, hippocampus, hypothalamus, brain stem—which are only marginally affected by thinking and cognition."²² In his revolutionary paper "The Body Keeps the Score", written in 1994, van der Kolk suggests that the core of trauma lies in somatic memory, not in semantic memory.²³ Bodies and remembering lie at the heart of trauma and trauma recovery.

Trauma Theology

Theologians have always been interested in suffering, even before the theories and theologies of trauma became prevalent. The human experience and its seeming incompatibility with a God who is omnipotent, omniscient, and loving has offered plenty of opportunity for reflection on the category of suffering and its relationship with theology. For example, in the second century, Irenaeus, Bishop of Lugdunum, posited an epistemic distance between humanity and God. Irenaeus argued that "God made man a free [agent] from the beginning,

²¹ Bessel van der Kolk and Onno van der Hart, "The Intrusive Past. The Flexibility of Memory and the Engraving of Trauma," in *Trauma. Explorations in Memory*, ed. Cathy Caruth (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995), 158-82.

²² Mary Sykes Wylie, "The Limits of Talk. Bessel Van Der Kolk Wants to Transform the Treatment of Trauma," *Psychotherapy Networker* 28, no. 1 (2004), 1-11, n.22.

²³ Bessel van der Kolk, "The Body Keeps the Score: Memory and the Evolving Psychobiology of Post Traumatic Stress," *Harvard Review of Psychiatry* 1, no. 5 (1994), 253-65. Accessed online at <http://www.trauma-pages.com/a/vanderk4.php> on 11/08/15.

possessing his own power, even as he does his own soul, to obey the behests of God voluntarily, and not by compulsion of God.”²⁴ This distance in knowledge allowed for humans to exercise free will and to reach spiritual maturity through their decisions.

Suffering was part of this experience and enabled humans to become spiritually mature. This is the purpose of suffering according to Irenaeus.

This, therefore, was the [object of the] long-suffering of God, that man, passing through all things, and acquiring the knowledge of moral discipline, then attaining to the resurrection of the dead, and learning by experience what is the source of his deliverance, may always live in a state of gratitude to the Lord...that he might love Him the more.²⁵

The experience of suffering was taken seriously by Irenaeus, even as he sought to explain its purpose. Taking as his example the experience of Jonah, Irenaeus demonstrated the way in which he perceived suffering, and God’s deliverance from such experience, to be for the good. Jonah’s suffering allowed Jonah to glorify God all the more since he did not expect to be saved from it. Jonah’s experience subsequently brought “the Ninevites to a lasting repentance.”²⁶ Whilst one may disagree with Irenaeus’ view of suffering and whether suffering can have any purpose, it is significant that even in the second century Irenaeus felt it necessary to offer some sort of explanation for the embodied experience of suffering.

In the twentieth century, in the aftermath of the horrors of the Second World War and the events of the Holocaust, theologians such as Jürgen Moltmann revisited the issue of suffering again. This time, the gap between humanity and divinity was not widened, but rather reduced. Moltmann offered a

²⁴ Irenaeus, "Against Heresies," trans. Alexander Roberts and William Rambaut in *Ante-Nicene Fathers Vol. 1*, ed. Alexander Roberts, James Donaldson, and A. Cleveland Coxe (Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Publishing Co., 1885). Book IV, Chapter 37.1. Accessed online at <http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/0103437.htm> on 01/03/16.

²⁵ Ibid. Book III, Chapter 20.2.

²⁶ Ibid. Book III, Chapter 20.1.

vision of God that does not allow suffering for our own good, nor is this God unmoved by our suffering. Rather, Moltmann offered us the Crucified God.²⁷ This God experiences the suffering of the Passion deep within his being. He is a God that suffers alongside us. Irenaeus and Moltmann were both writing before the development of anything that could clearly be identified as trauma theory. Furthermore, they were, amongst many other Christian thinkers, concerning themselves with suffering and not with trauma.

It is not, perhaps, surprising that in the post-9/11 period, the unsettling lens of trauma has been taken up by theologians.²⁸ In 2001, Jones produced an article in the journal *Modern Theology* that addressed the trauma of reproductive loss.²⁹ This article would later form a chapter in an edited collection of reflections on the trauma of reproductive loss (the chapter I encountered at the beginning of my exploration of trauma theology)³⁰ and Jones' own book on trauma and grace.³¹ It is, I suggest, the first recognisable piece of trauma theology (although Jones doesn't use the word "trauma" within the article at all) that demonstrates the methodology that would become reasonably standard within the field. The article concerns itself with the physical, emotional, spiritual, and theological rupture experienced by the miscarrying woman. Jones drew powerful parallels with the body of the miscarrying woman and the death experienced within the Trinity with the death of Christ on the Cross. The

²⁷ Jürgen Moltmann, *The Crucified God: The Cross of Christ as the Foundation and Criticism of Christian Theology* (London: SCM Press 1974).

²⁸ There are a very small number of publications on issues of trauma and theology in the pre-9/11 period. Most notably the quantitative work done on trauma and the doctrine of God by Carrie Doehring, *Internal Desecration: Traumatization and Representations of God* (Maryland: University Press of America, 1993). This study demonstrated that severe childhood traumatization results in an image of God who is absent or wrathful, but that even highly traumatized children predominantly believe in a loving God. Also Flora Keshgegian, *Redeeming Memories: A Theology of Healing and Transformation* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2000).

²⁹ Jones, "Hope Deferred."

³⁰ Nadine Pence Frantz and Mary T. Stimming, eds., *Hope Deferred: Heart-Healing Reflections on Reproductive Loss* (Eugene, OR.: Resource Publications, 2005).

³¹ Serene Jones, *Trauma and Grace: Theology in a Ruptured World* (Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster John Knox Press, 2009), 127-150.

embodied experience of the miscarrying woman is taken seriously and the lens of this trauma is used to destabilise the classical narrative of the Trinity.

A year after the publication of Jones' article, Susan Brison published her monograph *Aftermath: Violence and the Remaking of the Self*.³² Whilst I would categorise Brison's work as trauma *philosophy* rather than theology, and indeed Brison is a philosopher, her account of her assault and rape whilst on holiday in France, and her subsequent struggle for recovery, has become seminal and oft-cited in works of trauma theology. Brison began to explore some of the themes of trauma and trauma recovery that would later become the key themes of trauma theology and her work has become foundational in the construction of a post-traumatic theological anthropology.

The field of trauma theology has been dominated by female Caucasian North American theologians. White, North American, women theologians—both those who identify as feminist and those who do not—have been especially interested in the body.³³ It is, perhaps, no surprise to discover that this field of theology, to which bodily experience is integral, should be dominated by such a group of theologians. Trauma theology offers the opportunity to take the individual embodied experience (of a woman or a man) seriously. I will outline the major voices in trauma theology—those who have contributed monographs

³² Susan J. Brison, *Aftermath: Violence and the Remaking of a Self* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2002).

³³ There are a small number of black theologians who have recently begun to engage with the issue of trauma and its significance for the black community. For example, Stephanie M. Crumpton, *A Womanist Pastoral Theology against Intimate and Cultural Violence* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014). Crumpton engages with trauma theory briefly as she outlines her vision for the Church's response to violence against black women. Also, Darnell L. Moore, "Theorizing the "Black Body" as a Site of Trauma: Implications for Theologies of Embodiment," *Theology and Sexuality* 15, no. 2 (2009), 175-88. Moore engages with cultural trauma theory as he argues for a theology that allows the Black body to speak.

or significant articles to the field, but the field is, of course, larger than I will demonstrate here.³⁴

Beste used the traumatic experiences of incest survivors to challenge Karl Rahner's concept of the Fundamental Option.³⁵ She suggested that Rahner underestimates the extent to which interpersonal harm can "thwart the development of adequate subjectivity and freedom."³⁶ Beste argued that we must revise Rahner's concept to take the damage of trauma into account and instead advocates socially mediated grace that recognises the significance of supportive relationships for trauma survivors. Beste's methodology destabilises the theology of Rahner and offers a re-reading in the light of trauma. This is a methodology we will see in many of the subsequent texts. Whilst much of Beste's argument is insightful, and her work certainly takes the experience of trauma survivors seriously, I suspect her argument is limited by her determination to remedy Rahner for a traumatic theological anthropology. Her theology certainly makes way for trauma but there is little dialogue in the other direction. For example, Beste has concern for "grace as socially mediated through supportive relationships"³⁷ but does not adequately distinguish whether this grace can offer anything that cannot be found in therapy. As a result, Beste

³⁴³⁴³⁴ For other studies not discussed here see, for example, C. Kevin Gillespie, "Terror, Trauma and Transcendence: Pastoral Ministry after 9/11," *The New Theological Review* (2004), 16-25; Christopher Grundy, "The Grace of Resilience: Eucharistic Origins, Trauma Theory, and Implications for Contemporary Practice" (paper presented at the Proceedings of the North American Academy of Liturgy, 2006), 147-159; Flora A. Keshgegian, *Time for Hope: Practices for Living in Today's World* (New York: Continuum, 2006); R. Ruud Ganzeboort, "Teaching That Matters: A Course on Trauma and Theology," *Journal of Adult Theological Education* 5, no. 1 (2008), 8-19; "Scars and Stigmata: Trauma, Identity and Theology," *Practical Theology* 1, no. 1 (2008), 19-31; "All Things Work Together for Good? Theodicy and Post-Traumatic Spirituality," in *Secularization Theories, Religious Identity, and Practical Theology*, ed. W. Gräß and L. Charbonnier (Münster: LIT Verlag, 2009), 183-192; Lynn Bridgers, "The Resurrected Life: Roman Catholic Resources in Posttraumatic Pastoral Care," *International Journal of Practical Theology* 15, no. 1 (2011), 38-56; Chris Grundy, "Basic Retraining: The Role of Congregational Ritual in the Care of Returning Veterans," *Liturgy* 27, no. 4 (2012), 27-36; Karen O'Donnell, "Help for Heroes: PTSD, Warrior Recovery, and the Liturgy," *Journal of Religion and Health* 54, no. 2 (2015), 2389-97.

³⁵ Beste, *God and the Victim*.

³⁶ *Ibid.* 87.

³⁷ *Ibid.* 101.

allowed trauma to speak to theology but does not leave room for theology to speak to trauma. By contrast, I will argue that theology has something to offer to trauma, and certainly more than merely a substitute therapeutic arena in which the “talking cure” can be offered.³⁸

Cynthia Hess engaged with the work of John Howard Yoder in her monograph *Sites of Violence, Sites of Grace: Christian Nonviolence and the Traumatized Self*.³⁹ Hess is concerned to examine what it might mean for the church as a community to internalize and ‘live’ nonviolence (as advocated by Yoder), not in dichotomy to violence but as, what she calls, a kingdom practice. Hess developed this by arguing that “[A]s Christians shape their lives around this story that they hear and tell [the story of Jesus], the nonviolence of Jesus becomes part of the spirit of the church and the people who constitute it.”⁴⁰ On the surface the result is a deeply practical, pastoral book that seeks to take the individual seriously. However, Yoder is a difficult theologian to engage with, particularly on the issue of trauma, given the nature of his sexual violence towards women throughout his academic career. Hess is one of the very few female scholars to engage with Yoder’s theology but the fact that she does not consider his sexual violence against women, particularly in a monograph regarding trauma, is disappointing. As Lisa Schirch noted:

[E]ven Yoder’s most ardent male supporters seem to agree that the soul of Yoder’s pacifist, radical Christian theology depends on a critical analysis of Yoder’s actions toward women and the church’s equally appalling actions in protecting Yoder at the expense of the safety of his women students and women in the church.⁴¹

³⁸ See, for example, the critique offered in Shelly Rambo, “Review of God and the Victim: Traumatic Intrusions on Grace and Freedom,” *Modern Theology* 25, no. 3 (2009), 526-28.

³⁹ Cynthia Hess, *Sites of Violence, Sites of Grace: Christian Nonviolence and the Traumatized Self* (Plymouth: Lexington Books, 2009).

⁴⁰ *Ibid.* 141.

⁴¹ Lisa Schirch, “Afterward: To the Next Generation of Pacifist Theologians,” in *John Howard Yoder: Radical Theologian*, ed. J. Denny Weaver, et al. (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2014), 377-98, at 379-380.

Whilst one cannot easily dismiss the powerful and profound contribution Yoder has made to a theology of Christian nonviolence, it would seem remiss to not engage with the trauma he, himself, has inflicted when writing about trauma and violence, especially given that he was doing so in a church context.

Whilst sounding out the siren call for trauma theology in 2001, the fuller account of Jones' engagement with trauma did not appear in monograph form until 2009. Jones identified trauma as the disordering of the theological imagination and she is clear that her engagement with this field of theological exploration is motivated by her sense that her own understandings of sin and grace were entirely inadequate in the face of the experience of trauma. Some chapters of this book were published as separate articles⁴² before inclusion in the monograph. Jones allowed trauma to destabilise some of the narratives we have come to take for granted in Christian theology. For example, she considered the Cross in the light of trauma and, in particular, in the light of the experience of the trauma survivor who is confronted with the Cross. Jones concluded that we cannot present a singular and normative story of the Cross with universal applicability—the experience and the context of the hearer of this narrative must be considered.⁴³

Jones' work in trauma theology is unusual in that she, unlike so many of her contemporaries in the field, does not feel the need to engage with one particular (eminent, male, contemporary) theologian in order to explore the potential for a trauma theology. Jones does draw on the work of Calvin and Moltmann in supporting her arguments, but none of her trauma work is a sustained engagement with either of these theologians. Rather, she allowed her

⁴²See, for example, Serene Jones, "Hope Deferred," and "Emmaus Witnessing: Trauma and the Disordering of the Theological Mind," *Union Seminary Quarterly Review* (2002), 113-28; "Trauma and Grace," *Reflections*, 2004. The latter article is available online at <http://reflections.yale.edu/article/violence-and-theology/trauma-and-grace> accessed on 09/03/16.

⁴³Jones, *Trauma and Grace*, 81.

own experience, and the experiences of women she knows, to guide her explorations. That said, Jones does not hold the distinctions between trauma and suffering strongly enough, at times, in her text. For example, Jones identified the Psalms as the language of the trauma victim.⁴⁴ Whilst I would agree that the trauma victim can find in the Psalms language that gives them access to God, it is important that one does not merge the suffering attested to in the Psalms (which is at times, probably, traumatic) with the psycho-analytical understanding of trauma. The two are not the same and to equate trauma simply with suffering could risk devaluing the particular experience of the trauma survivors. Is there evidence for Jones' assumption that trauma victims can so quickly make the turn to God post-trauma? Jones' loss of the psychoanalytical criteria of trauma (in her mingling of it with suffering) means that the negative effects of trauma—a victim's loss of agency, inability to form healthy relationships, dissociation—are at risk of negating the powerful, positive effects of grace that Jones so helpfully outlines.

Jones is openly and obviously Calvinist in her theology. She dedicated the third chapter of her book to Calvin's engagement with the Psalms as she explores the power of his writings for those both in and alongside trauma. Calvin, of course, promoted a theology of *irresistible grace* when he suggested that salvation was not something obtained by free will but rather through the sovereign grace of God. This grace "is not violent, so as to compel men by external force; but still it is a powerful impulse of the Holy Spirit, which makes men willing who formerly were unwilling and reluctant."⁴⁵ Whilst Calvin and, subsequently, Calvinists have sought to emphasise the extent to which such an

⁴⁴ Ibid. 51.

⁴⁵ John Calvin, *Commentary on John, 2 Vols., Vol. 1*, trans. William Pringle (Grand Rapids, MI: Christian Classics Ethereal Library, 1847). Commentary on John 6:44. Accessed online at <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/calvin/calcom34.i.html> 13/10/15.

experience is not necessarily violent, nonetheless it has been and continues to be characterised as such. For example, Perry Miller referred to salvation through such grace as “a forcible seizure, a holy rape of the surprised will.”⁴⁶

Such a vision of grace could be seen to disempower the trauma victim at a time when their personal agency and sense of control in the world is at its most vulnerable. Jones does address this when she argues that understanding God as being sovereign and in control can be very helpful for the trauma victim in establishing their safety in the world.⁴⁷ Could not the same Divine sovereignty and control also be terrifying for a trauma victim who had not been protected from trauma? Could not this Divine sovereignty and grace, that requires no permission, be similarly traumatic to experience? Jones allowed trauma and traumatic experience to so profoundly influence her theological thinking in some places that it can seem jarring when one finds a theological area that is seemingly less touched by trauma, as Jones’ Calvinistic sense of Divine sovereignty seems to be. Despite these drawbacks, there is no doubt that Jones’ early work on trauma opened the way for sustained theological engagement in the field.

Building on Jones’ theological reflections on trauma, and by far the most prolific writer in the field of trauma theology is Shelly Rambo. Rambo published a series of articles⁴⁸ dealing with her particular interests in trauma theology in

⁴⁶ Perry Miller, “Preparation for Salvation” in *Seventeenth Century New England*, *Journal of the History of Ideas* 4, no. 3 (1943), 253-86, at 261.

⁴⁷ Jones, *Trauma and Grace*, 56.

⁴⁸ See, for example, Shelly Rambo, “Between Death and Life: Trauma, Divine Love, and the Witness of Mary Magdalene,” *Studies in Christian Ethics* 18 (2005), 7-21; “Saturday in New Orleans: Rethinking Spirit in the Aftermath of Trauma,” *Review and Expositor* 105, no. 2 (2008), 229-244; “Beyond Redemption?: Reading Cormac McCarthy’s *The Road* after the End of the World,” *Studies in the Literary Imagination* 41, no. 1 (2008), 99-119; “Trauma and Faith: Reading the Narrative of the Hemorrhaging Woman,” *International Journal of Practical Theology* 13, no. 2 (2010), 1-25; “Haunted (by the) Gospel: Theology, Trauma, and Literary Theory in the 21st Century,” *PMLA* 125, no. 4 (2010), 936-41.

the five years leading to the publication of her monograph on trauma.⁴⁹ Rambo, like Beste and Hess, engaged with the work of a significant male theologian—Hans Urs von Balthasar—in her exploration of trauma. Rambo, like many other trauma theologians, allowed trauma to unsettle established theological discourses. Specifically, Rambo sought to re-vision Holy Saturday through the lens of trauma as she constructed a theology of remaining—what she called the ‘middle discourse.’ She wrote:

[T]he work of this book is to uncover this middle discourse—to resist the redemptive gloss that can often be placed, harmfully, over experiences of suffering and to orient us differently to the death-life narrative at the heart of the Christian tradition. Looking from the middle, we are oriented to suffering in a different way—always in its dislocation, its distance, and its fragmentation. This orientation calls for a theology of witness in which we cannot assume presence or straightforward reception of a violent event but, instead, contend with excess of violence and its tenuous reception.⁵⁰

Rambo is profoundly influenced by the experiences of those who survived Hurricane Katrina—a category three hurricane that hit the south-eastern states of the USA (most notably New Orleans in Louisiana) in August 2005. Rambo sought to take the experience of those who survived this trauma seriously in her theology of remaining. Avoiding a triumphalist redemption, Rambo dwelt on the image of Holy Saturday as she explored a theology of those who remain in trauma.

These female-written theologies of trauma hold a number of features in common, both with regard to their methodologies, and with their results. Firstly, all of them take embodied experience, as a category for ‘doing’ theology, seriously. Rather than seeking to mould experiences of trauma to fit with existing doctrines and theologies, these theologians begin with the experience of trauma as the ‘real’ and allow that experience to inform and challenge

⁴⁹ *Spirit and Trauma: A Theology of Remaining* (Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster John Knox Press, 2010).

⁵⁰ *Ibid.* 8.

doctrine. For example, Jones allowed the trauma of miscarriage to inform the doctrine of the Trinity and to challenge the narratives of suffering and loss that have been prevalent in the church. Similarly, Rambo used the experiences of those who survived the trauma of Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans to challenge narratives of redemption and triumphalism. Beste, rooted in the experiences of incest survivors, constructed a narrative of relationship with God that challenges traditional understandings of freedom of choice and agency. In all these cases the 'real' experience of those who have survived trauma becomes the foundation point of 'doing' theology.

This is the second common feature of these trauma theologies: trauma becomes a lens through which theology can be viewed. Such a perspective causes a rupture in traditional narratives. This rupture allows space for the construction of new theology. Scripture and doctrine, when read through this trauma lens, are critiqued and challenged. Using trauma in this way reveals the extent to which traditional narratives do not respond to the traumatic experiences of those who would be reasonably expected to believe them. The lens of trauma reveals inconsistencies and inaccuracies, it highlights holes and tears in both logic and doctrine. This lens unsettles the words on the page and places the body of the trauma survivor next to the theory to ask *if* what is said is true. Trauma destabilises narratives.

Thirdly, these trauma theologians highlight the significance of witness in trauma theology. In the case of psychoanalytic approaches to trauma, the significance of speaking out one's experience of trauma and having it recognised within community is often acknowledged. For example, Jonathan Shay argued that this is a crucial point in the healing process in the work he does with the Veterans Association (VA) in America. He noted:

[W]hile most VIP [Veterans Improvement Program] veterans are also in individual psychotherapy and request medications, the heart and soul of the program is its group therapies and the ideas and rituals of the VIP veteran community. The core idea is “You are not alone; you don’t have to go through it alone.” From the beginning, other veterans provide...a knowledgeable audience...to whom the veteran’s experience matters, and who are able to support him through the confusion, doubt, and self-criticism that seem intrinsic to having survived the chaos of battle.⁵¹

Beste, Hess, Jones, and Rambo all recognise that, in responding theologically to trauma, the church should be a listening community. As such, the church must find ways of witnessing trauma that validate the narrative of the trauma survivor and offer, if required, a theology of trauma that is not lacking in respect for the body, the experience, or the ongoing nature of trauma.

Bearing this in mind, the fourth common feature of these trauma theologies is a return to the body. The body and bodily experience forms the foundation of this type of constructive theology. Trauma is, itself, a bodily event that cannot be understood except in a holistic manner. The memory at the heart of trauma is a somatic one. It is unsurprising, therefore, that the outworking of this type of trauma theology is embodied, material, and concrete. All of these authors feel the need to make very practical, pastoral suggestions for the outworking of their theology. Real changes must happen in the light of such traumatic considerations, and these changes take place in the worlds of liturgy, ritual, and community.

However, these theologies of trauma do not constitute all the major voices in trauma theology. The two male authors who have contributed significantly to this field have done so in such radically different ways that the distinction I have drawn does not seem to be an arbitrary gender-based distinction, but rather a radical difference with regards to intent, method, and

⁵¹ Jonathan Shay, *Odysseus in America: Combat Trauma and the Trials of Homecoming* (New York: Scribner Book Company, 2003), 168.

result. The first of these is the work done by UK theologian Marcus Pound. Heavily influenced by the psychoanalytical origins of trauma theory, Pound's first article on the Eucharist and trauma explored the usefulness of trauma theory in doctrinal explanation.⁵² He outlines the trauma of trying to unite the Divine and the mundane as he explores the Incarnation and the Eucharist, suggesting that the Eucharist is both a traumatic experience and an experience that offers recovery from trauma. For Pound, transubstantiation is a traumatic event that erupts from God's time into our own time. Pound concluded that the Eucharist is the paradigm for trauma and thus psychoanalysis is a parody of the Eucharist; in Pound's view both help to procure subjective reflection on the truth.⁵³

Pound thus gave an account based on Lacanian theory which succeeds in reforming our understanding of language and therapy, but it does not sufficiently explore the embodied natures of language and therapy themselves. Indeed, the body is almost entirely absent from Pound's writings—the only reference to body is made with connection to the eucharistic body of Christ. At no point does Pound engage with the bodily act of receiving and consuming the sacramental elements.

Furthermore, Pound proposed the Mass as a social form of analysis without any consideration for its practical effectiveness:

[the Eucharist is] an alternative site from which analytical methods can be developed into a form of collective analysis, a theological therapeutics where analysis itself can become a form of worship because it is figured through the liturgical reception of the Eucharist.⁵⁴

⁵² Marcus Pound, "Eucharist and Trauma," *New Blackfriars* 88, no. 1014 (2007), 187-94.

⁵³ *Theology, Psychoanalysis and Trauma* (London: SCM Press, 2007), 155. Pound explores these ideas further in "The Assumption of Desire: Kierkegaard, Lacan, and the Trauma of the Eucharist," *Journal for Cultural and Religious Theory* 9, no. 1 (2008), 67-78.

⁵⁴ "The Assumption of Desire," 77-78.

The key to recovery from trauma is the construction of the *individual* trauma narrative which must be done vocally and in the presence of a witnessing community. There is, however, no opportunity for individual vocalisation in the Mass. Any spoken responses are prescribed and given in union. Indeed, the absence of any post-Vatican II eucharistic theology would suggest Pound's Mass to be even less participative.

Dirk Lange took a very different approach from Pound in his 2010 monograph *Trauma Recalled: Liturgy, Disruption, and Theology*⁵⁵ and yet, I suggest, ultimately suffers from similar critiques. Lange sought to re-read Luther (and Lutheran Studies) through the lens of trauma theory. He suggested that there is no kernel of truth to be discovered in the search for the 'origin' of Luther's theology just as there is none to be found in the search for Christian 'origins'. Both searches are continually disrupted by the Christ event. Indeed, Lange argued that the language and action of all Christian liturgy is a struggle with the disruptive trauma of the Christ event—the paschal mystery. Lange explored the ancient accounts of the Eucharist in the *Didache*. He concluded that the lack of reference to the Last Supper and the Words of Institution in the *Didache* indicated that the meaning of the Cross was inaccessible to the early Christian community, who were still reeling from the trauma of their experience.⁵⁶ Instead, these early Christians found the meaning of the Eucharist in the sharing of the meal.

Lange's exploration of both Luther and liturgy is insightful but I suggest that ultimately Lange's vision is too narrow for an adequate account of trauma theology and its relationship with the Eucharist. His focus is so heavily textual and Lutheran that, ironically, it prevents Lange from considering both Luther

⁵⁵ Dirk G. Lange, *Trauma Recalled: Liturgy, Disruption, and Theology* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2010).

⁵⁶ *Ibid.* 143-153.

and trauma in the wider theological context. Having determined that the Christ Event—this event that continues to disrupt Christian theology and liturgy—is the Paschal event, Lange is unable to consider that this event might be something else. Wedded to his decision that the Christ event is the Paschal event, when Lange found no mention of this in his examination of the *Didache* he concluded that this must be because the early church was too traumatized to speak about the Easter events, rather than considering this early Eucharist on its own terms.

Lange noted:

[I]t is therefore astounding [given the early date of the *Didache*] that the way in which Jesus is remembered in this liturgical document is not by images of the cross but by a sharing of bread and wine. In fact, the eucharistic celebration in this document makes no (explicit) mention of the cross...The absence of the Words of Institution confronts the reader/participant with the following question: How is the Christ event “remembered” in the eucharistic liturgy? By its silence on the Last Supper and, in particular, on cross symbolism.⁵⁷

Since Lange has already committed himself to a Paschal interpretation of the Christ Event, he is not able to consider the significance of the absence of Paschal imagery in the *Didache* as being indicative of alternate meaning. Rather he seeks to find in this liturgical document the meaning he has already assumed will be there.

I will demonstrate in Chapter Two that there are other ways of reading this absence that avoid Lange’s reliance on a traditional Paschal interpretation and allow for a wider consideration of great variety of early church theology. Furthermore, Lange’s work is heavily reliant on a specialist ‘trauma’ vocabulary (which he constructs himself) and the idea that trauma is that which disrupts and resists fixed meaning. I would agree that trauma is disruptive and defies cognition; however, not all disruption is caused by trauma, nor are all disruptions traumatic.

⁵⁷ Ibid. 9-10.

For both Pound and Lange a reliance on theory and language is given at the expense of, and removed from, the bodily experience of trauma. If bodies are at the very heart of trauma theory, then this might go some way to explain why these two contributors to the field of trauma theology seem to have produced work so vastly different to the other theologians I identified earlier. Whilst both Lange and Pound do allow trauma to destabilise narratives, and both are interested in liturgy, for both, this interest seems to be detached from actual embodied experience, either of trauma or of liturgy.⁵⁸

Method

This thesis will be informed by the process of trauma recovery. Consequently, I will draw on the psychoanalytical field of trauma theory that posits a threefold process of trauma recovery as I have outlined earlier: the establishment of bodily integrity; the construction of a trauma narrative; and the reconnection with society. When trauma survivors go through the process of trauma recovery, they do so in a non-linear manner. They might find themselves passing by the same markers repeatedly until they can consider themselves to be recovered; they might be in the process of recovery for the rest of their lives. This thesis performs my own recovery from trauma and as such it is informed by each of the three stages of trauma recovery in a similarly non-linear manner. Throughout this thesis I am seeking to establish bodily integrity (of many bodies, including my own). I am also seeking to construct a new narrative that not only takes trauma into account and establishes a narrative for remembering trauma but also is powerful enough to carry us into the future. This thesis is also

⁵⁸ This analysis of the significant works of trauma theologians appears to be split along gender lines. Whilst it appears that these two male trauma theologians have approached trauma theology in a different way to the female trauma theologians I have previously outlined, the field of trauma theology is too new and too small to draw any conclusions regarding this apparent difference in method.

concerned with the reconnection with society. In this regard, I am concerned with how theology is worked out in the community of the Church and the communal celebration of the Church's sacraments.

In this sense, the thesis is performing its content. There are a number of examples of literature functioning in a similar way that help to give context for this method. For example, Horace's *Ars Poetica* is a poem about how to write poetry. Similarly, the fragmentation of the world in T. S. Eliot's *The Waste Land* is reflected in the fragmentation of Eliot's poetry. Furthermore, Virginia's Woolf's *Mrs Dalloway* is a striking example of how the modernist literary form could delineate the psyche of a trauma survivor. Karen DeMeester notes, "[H]er [Woolf's] narrative form preserves the psychological chaos caused by trauma instead of reordering it as more traditional narratives do."⁵⁹ In each of these examples, the form of the text mirrors its content.

In terms of theologians who have worked in this way, two recent examples are helpful. The first example is the 2003 monograph by Catherine Keller—*Face of the Deep: A Theology of Becoming*.⁶⁰ Keller's narrative is an example of the way in which the content of her argument has shaped its form. As she pondered over the significance of "the deep" in the Genesis creation accounts, so water became inextricable from her writing. Thus Laurel Schneider concluded that:

this book is deliberately lush, dripping, and surprising, like a rain forest. One gets the sense that she has done this out of necessity: that her own immersion into a kind of wet thinking is required for unclogging the waters of the deep from which...creation continuously unfolds.⁶¹

⁵⁹ Karen DeMeester, "Trauma and Recovery in Virginia Woolf's *Mrs Dalloway*," *Modern Fiction Studies* 44, no. 3 (1998), 649-73, at 650.

⁶⁰ Catherine Keller, *Face of the Deep: A Theology of Becoming* (New York: Routledge, 2003).

⁶¹ Laurel C. Schneider, "Review of Catherine Keller's *Face of the Deep: A Theology of Becoming*," *The Journal of Religion* 84, no. 4 (2004), 639-40, at 639

The second example is the 2013 monograph by Frances Young, *God's Presence*.⁶² In this text Young played with form and genre in varying content, providing a compelling and powerful way of being theological. Convinced that early Christian theology lies somewhere between experience and Scripture, Young sought to exemplify the nature of this early theology in the form of her own monograph. She interweaved sermons, poetry, and meditations with her analysis of early Christian literature and the effect is one that reflects the life of the early Church in a compelling way. Young suggested that the theology of the early church was constructed in the grappling between experience and scripture—it is, by necessity, an unfinished process. Young, in her own work, models this 'unfinished-ness' as she allows the poetic form to dominate at times and resists drawing together the loose theological ends.

Whilst allowing the content of this thesis to shape its form, I will also allow trauma to constitute a hermeneutical lens. Rambo, in her monograph *Spirit and Trauma*, noted:

[I]n constructive theological work on trauma, it is common to interpret the insights of trauma as the problems posed to theological claims and teachings; theology must answer to these in order to provide an adequate account or response to traumatic suffering. Yet the claim that I am making here is slightly different: the insights of trauma actually constitute the hermeneutical lens through which an alternative theological vision of healing and redemption emerges.⁶³

Whilst I am not attempting, as Rambo was, to construct an alternative vision of healing and redemption, her insights into the method of this kind of trauma theology are crucial to my own research. Specifically, Rambo identifies how trauma provides theologians with a tool to consider theology—it is by and through allowing trauma to constitute the hermeneutical lens. It is this method

⁶² Frances Young, *God's Presence: A Contemporary Recapitulation of Early Christianity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

⁶³ Rambo, *Spirit and Trauma*, 10-11.

that I will employ throughout this thesis. I am not concerned, in this thesis, with constructing a response to traumatic suffering. Rather, in probing the relationship between bodies and memory in connection with the embodied experiences of, what I will term the Annunciation-Incarnation event and the Eucharist, I intend to demonstrate that allowing the hermeneutical lens of trauma to destabilise narratives and challenge assumptions, ultimately allows the construction of a theology informed by trauma that takes somatic memory seriously.

Such an exploration reveals twin theological ruptures at work in humanity. Firstly, the rupture between the Divine and the human. One could, if one wished, refer to this as sin, but I prefer to regard this rupture as a gulf between natures. The second rupture is the rupture caused by the theological abstraction of the body. One cannot, I believe, ‘do’ theology without taking the embodied nature of such ‘doing’ into account. Theology comes from bodies in material contexts.⁶⁴ Such an exploration reveals the need for a holistic approach to theology—one in which bodies of theology, the Trinitarian Body, the Body of Christ, and human bodies, are not separated out in an atomistic fashion, but rather are interconnected and informed by one another.

Jones demonstrates a method of theological mapping that also helps to both underpin and describe the work of my own project. She writes of Christian doctrines as “imaginative lenses” for viewing the world as well as being conceptual spaces which we inhabit.⁶⁵ If doctrines are conceptual spaces, then this project seeks to layer trauma over the landscape of Christian doctrine in order to expose the contours of theology. Focusing on the relationship between

⁶⁴ I will examine these twin theological ruptures in more detail in Chapter Seven.

⁶⁵ Serene Jones, *Feminist Theory and Christian Theology: Cartographies of Grace* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress Press, 2000), 16-17.

body and memory and taking the embodied experience of trauma seriously, I will demonstrate the ways in which this layering of trauma over the landscape of doctrine can help us to read traditional narratives in a new and helpful light.

Drawing throughout on a wide range of historical and contemporary works, I am seeking to use Heather Walton's technique of reading whereby she "re-vision(s)" texts and thereby re-fashions and transforms women's futures.⁶⁶ Similarly, Grace Jantzen's method of 'double reading' texts⁶⁷—in which she interrogates texts and so finds that which was not previously apparent—is an effective method for highlighting what is excluded or repressed in a text and allowing the gap between what is said and what is unsaid to become the site for constructing a theology of trauma. Jantzen argued that:

[I]n terms of the philosophy of religion, therefore, the work of deconstruction would not only deliver a double gesture which would overturn traditional binaries and open up conceptual space between them. It will also challenge the institutionalized methodology and pedagogy by which binaries are maintained, the social practices by which alternatives—in this case specifically feminist alternatives—are excluded or marginalized.⁶⁸

It is this "double gesture" that I seek to employ in my reading of traditional narratives through the lens of trauma theory. Such a reading allows a rupture in meaning to open up a conceptual space within these narratives.

If trauma is primarily concerned with rupture(s), then so too is this thesis. Its method of approaching theology intentionally allows trauma to cause a rupture in texts, doctrines, and theologies. It is only when these have experienced rupture, and thus been destabilised, that there is a space for the construction of something new and fresh. For example, allowing trauma to rupture our understanding of the Eucharist opens up space for the construction

⁶⁶ Heather Walton, *Imagining Theology: Women, Writing and God* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 2007), 79.

⁶⁷ Grace Jantzen, *Becoming Divine: Towards a Feminist Philosophy of Religion* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1998), 61.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.* 64.

of a eucharistic theology that not only adequately responds to the experience of trauma, but also addresses the implications for (all) the body/ies in the eucharistic experience. As a therapist gently probes the trauma survivor in order to aid their recovery so too will I confront the ruptures in Christian doctrine in order to construct a theology that is holistic and takes account of the body.

Outline

It is my contention that trauma theory offers a very rich vein of exploration for theologians which has only just begun to be explored. Drawing on the methodology of the trauma theologians I have examined above and identifying the gaps in the work already done in the field of trauma theology, I will, now, outline the research questions to be addressed in this thesis. Here I will identify how each question links to the other and also indicate which chapters will seek to address which question. This thesis encompasses the threefold pattern for trauma recovery that I outlined earlier: the establishment of bodily integrity; the construction of a trauma narrative; and reconnection with the world.

In psychoanalytical approaches to trauma recovery, the establishment of bodily integrity is always considered to be the first step in any recovery process. Establishing bodily integrity may mean ensuring the trauma survivor is in a safe space and has autonomy over their body alongside genuine choice. Theologically, I propose that the establishment of bodily integrity is concerned with an holistic approach to the body—all bodies. To establish bodily integrity is, therefore, to approach the body as a whole concept rather than dividing it into constituent parts.

Firstly, van der Kolk argues, as I have previously outlined, that the core of trauma lies in somatic memory. Whilst other trauma theologians have taken

the body seriously, and have considered the place of memory, no trauma theologian has, yet, drawn these together. I will begin by investigating this concept of somatic memory in the context of Christian theology in asking **where and/or what is the somatic memory in Christianity?** It seems to me that this is a question that has been overlooked in trauma theology. If the core of trauma is to be found in somatic memory, then, I propose, the somatic memory of the Christian faith must be explored.

I argue that if bodies are key to understanding trauma then it is with bodies that one must begin. This leads the trauma theologian, I propose, to the Annunciation-Incarnation event, and specifically to Mary's body and the Incarnate body of Christ. The place in which body and memory come together, for Christians, is in the celebration of the Eucharist. I will interrogate these ideas further in the chapter on the Eucharist as non-identical repetition⁶⁹ (Chapter Two) and in exploring the work of an ancient theologian—Cyril of Alexandria (Chapter Three). Cyril sought to draw together eucharistic and Incarnational theology in new and profound ways—suggesting that, when one allows somatic memory to come to the fore, a holistic approach to theology is established. These two chapters are both concerned with bodily integrity (both material, Eucharistic, and incarnational) and as such they correspond to the first stage of trauma recovery.

It is surprising, perhaps, that when searching for the somatic memory at the heart of trauma theology, one does not arrive at the Cross (the site of Jesus' traumatic passion and death), nor at the Resurrection (the site of the triumph of the body), but rather at the Annunciation-Incarnation event. This leads to my

⁶⁹ The term "non-identical repetition" will be used frequently throughout this thesis. It is a term taken from the work of Catherine Pickstock. I will deal with the origin and meaning of this term and its relationship with the work of the Radical Orthodoxy group in detail in Chapter Two.

second research question in which I ask **what are the consequences of considering the Annunciation-Incarnation event to be at the core of Christian somatic memory?** Crucially, I will seek to demonstrate that when one allows the Annunciation-Incarnation event to rupture the traditional narratives of Christian theology, one is left with a theological space in which to construct new narratives.

I propose that when the somatic memory of the Annunciation-Incarnation event is recognised as the event at the heart of the Christian faith this fundamentally disrupts traditional theological narratives. Having already established that somatic memory, connected as it is to both bodies and memories, is profoundly demonstrated, for Christians, in eucharistic celebrations, I will examine the ways in which narratives, so integral to eucharistic theology, of priesthood (Chapter Four), sacrifice (Chapter Five), and Real Presence (Chapter Six) are disrupted by this somatic memory. I will construct fresh narratives in the theological space cleared by such ruptures. I argue that neither priesthood, sacrifice, nor Real Presence can be understood when they are abstracted from bodies. In particular I propose a Trinitarian understanding of priesthood, sacrifice, and Real Presence informed by the concept of *perichorēsis*, that takes bodily experience—particularly Mary’s body—seriously.

I then proceed to argue that the consequences of considering the Annunciation-Incarnation event to be at the core of Christian somatic memory will be two-fold. Firstly, the significance of bodies will be highlighted further still. And secondly, it will serve to illuminate the value of taking a holistic approach to theology. This will be most clearly seen in the celebration of the Eucharist—here a holistic approach to the body becomes essential. Taking seriously the

command to “[D]o this in remembrance of me” means that the memory invoked in the Eucharist is not of one specific meal Jesus shared with his disciples on one specific evening but rather an encouragement to “remember” all of him, the full Incarnation of Christ—without privileging one aspect of the narrative above any other.

Having considered my second research question in terms of the foundational theological narratives of the Eucharist (priesthood, sacrifice, and Presence), I will then proceed to examine the impact of trauma theology on the Eucharist in a narrower focus. I examine, in the following two chapters, the corporate, ecclesial experience of the Eucharist. In Chapter Seven (‘Rupture, Repetition, and Recovery: Trauma and Sacrament’) I argue that reading the Eucharist through the traumatic lens of somatic memory locates Mary’s body in a place of significance in Christian Theology, particularly in the Eucharist. This is then further developed through my consideration of the work of Louis-Marie Chauvet (Chapter Eight). Chauvet is a contemporary Catholic theologian whose work has been pivotal in the field of sacramental theology because of its attempts to take the body seriously. I examine his work through the lens of trauma theology and somatic memory and consider the consequences of such a reading in light of his own interests in bodies and the Eucharist.

In the final chapter ‘Body: A Love Story’ I will draw together the results of the two research questions I have posited: firstly, where and/or what is the somatic memory at the heart of the Christian faith? Establishing that the somatic memory is the memory of the Annunciation/Incarnation event, this leads to the second question: what are the consequences of considering the somatic memory of the Annunciation-Incarnation event to be at heart of the Christian

faith? I will draw these findings together using the motif of loving the body and identify that the result of this project is a call to love the body in all its guises.

Conclusion

Somatic memory teaches us that memories and ways of remembering cannot be removed from bodily experience. Trauma is not a rare occurrence limited to those unfortunate enough to be in the wrong place at the wrong time. Rather trauma is part of the common experience of men, women, and children. Their bodies, necessarily then, hold the memory of trauma and it is through the body that one can be healed. Trauma theologians are seeking new language to explore this theology and this new language comes through the destabilising of old stories and the reading of these revealed narratives with fresh eyes. Allowing the hermeneutical lens of trauma to bring theology into a new focus brings with it the opportunity to take these traumatised bodies—that belong to so many of us—seriously. This lens enables us to see past the traumatised body of Christ on the Cross to the other traumatised bodies in scripture. This lens allows us to find the somatic memory of theology not in suffering, torture, and death, but in the Incarnate body of Christ—ruptured, along with the body of His mother, Mary—in the Annunciation-Incarnation event.

Chapter Two

The Eucharist as Non-Identical Repetition: What is being (re)remembered at the altar?

“Do this in remembrance of me.”¹

The sacrament of the Eucharist is the place in which bodies and memory come together. Jesus, in his celebration of the Passover meal with his disciples—rightly or wrongly taken as the model for subsequent celebrations of the Eucharist—refers to the bread as his body, the wine as his blood, and instructs a repetition of *something* as a way of remembering him. In searching for the somatic memory at the heart of Christianity we find the Eucharist to be a helpful starting place, precisely because it deals with bodies and memories. The celebration of the sacrament is repeated as a traumatic memory replays in the mind of a trauma survivor—intensely real and yet only to the person experiencing it. Traumatic memory is held in the somatic rather than the semantic memory and as such this investigation is focused on bodily memory. In this chapter I will examine *what* is being remembered as bodies and memories come together in the celebration of the Eucharist. Having established that the Christian understanding of the celebration of the Eucharist lies in somatic memory, I will probe more deeply the nature of that memory.

In the contemporary understanding of the Eucharist, the dominant interpretation of the meaning of the sacrament, across Christian denominations, is largely couched in references to the Paschal suffering, death, and resurrection of Christ. The Eucharist is primarily viewed as a sacrament in

¹ Luke 20: 19-20a, *The Holy Bible, New Revised Standard Version, Catholic Edition, Anglicized Text*. All subsequent bible references are taken from the same edition.

which the death of Christ is remembered. The Protestant reformers of the sixteenth century might have unanimously rejected the theology of the Eucharist as a sacrifice, but they retained an understanding of the Eucharist as connected to the final days of Jesus' life. Edward Foley noted:

Just as there was a broad consensus among Protestant reformers in rejecting the concept of transubstantiation, there was virtually unanimous acceptance among this same group of Luther's critique of the Eucharist as sacrifice. In the public debates on religion in 1523, for example, Zwingli proclaimed that the Mass was not a sacrifice, but was a commemoration of the one sacrifice of the cross and a seal of redemption through Christ. Calvin also sought to protect what he considered the biblical heritage of the once-and-for-all sacrifice of Christ on the cross and thus considered it "devilish" to think of the eucharistic celebration as a sacrifice.²

In the twentieth century, Catholic theologian Louis-Marie Chauvet, in his work *Symbol and Sacrament: A Sacramental Reinterpretation of Christian Existence*, argued that the Pasch of Christ is the essential event from which theological discourse can begin. For Chauvet, the ancient cores of liturgical tradition are passion-focused.³ Similarly, in his work on the Eucharist as a rite of initiation, Nathan Mitchell also drew a clear and strong connection between the Eucharist and the death of Christ. For example, he noted that the death of Christ became ritually embodied in the broken bread and the poured out wine and that because the Eucharist celebrates the death of Jesus "the table welcomes all human beings as equal partners in the Mystery of God."⁴

I do not wish to suggest that either Chauvet or Mitchell, nor indeed the great Protestant reformers, are incorrect in their interpretation of the significance of the Eucharist. However, close analysis of the writings of

² Edward Foley, *From Age to Age: How Christians Have Celebrated the Eucharist* (Collegeville, Minnesota: Liturgical Press, 2008), 286.

³ Louis-Marie Chauvet, *Symbol and Sacrament: A Sacramental Reinterpretation of Christian Existence*, trans. Patrick Madigan and Madeleine Beaumont (Collegeville, Minnesota: A Pueblo Book published by The Liturgical Press, 1995), 486.

⁴ Nathan D. Mitchell, *Eucharist as Sacrament of Initiation* (Chicago: Liturgy Training Publications, 1994), 40.

Christians regarding the meaning of the Eucharist from the early church until the medieval period reveals that, certainly in antiquity and late antiquity (and arguably later still), understanding the Eucharist in sacrificial terms was only one, amongst many, legitimate interpretations of the sacrament. Something is clearly being repeated and remembered in the ritual actions of the priest at the altar. This chapter will offer some suggestions as to what is being non-identically repeated, in order to understand what is at the core of Christian somatic memory.

To briefly indicate the argument I will pursue: I will explore the concept of non-identical repetition with regard to interpretations of the Eucharist and its sacramental meaning. Then, beginning by offering the Annunciation-Incarnation event as a model for thinking about the Eucharist, I will explore two images used by early Christian theologians in conjunction with the Eucharist. Firstly, the metaphor of 'dough' and its connection with both the Eucharist and the Nativity and secondly, the imagery of the Eucharist as mother's milk. The consideration of both the linguistic and the theological implications of these metaphors will allow analysis of the parallels between the Annunciation-Incarnation event and the consecratory epiclesis during the Mass. A subsequent exploration of the role of the Spirit in these non-identical repetitions of the Eucharist then serves to highlight the relationship between Mary and the flesh and blood of Christ. This critical relationship will be further developed in an analysis of the narrative of the Kollyridian eucharistic celebrations. Finally, the concept of non-identical repetition will be considered within the traditional interpretation of the Eucharist as a remembrance of the Last Supper. In this chapter I will demonstrate that in understanding Jesus' commandment to "do this in remembrance of me" is a command to non-identical repetition that defies a single, homogenised

interpretation and opens up multiple opportunities for the exploration of somatic memory. This exploration will be attended to in later chapters of this dissertation.

The Whole Incarnation of Christ

Throughout this thesis I will use the term Annunciation-Incarnation event. When doing so I am not referring to the temporal moment of the Incarnation, whether we consider that to be at the Annunciation—the moment at which Mary becomes pregnant—or the ‘quickenings’ of Christ at some later date. Rather, the term Annunciation-Incarnation event is used in order to remind us that the Incarnation stretches beyond one moment in time and instead encompasses the whole of Christ’s life from the moment of conception, his birth, his childhood, his adulthood, his ministry, his death, and his resurrection. The Incarnation of Christ is a holistic moment that draws all of these aspects together. Furthermore, it cannot be separated from his mother, Mary. The Incarnation, at its very beginning, is entirely dependent on her.

Non-Identical Repetition

Then he took a loaf of bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to them, saying, “This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.” And he did the same with the cup after supper...⁵

In these “Words of Institution”, Jesus instructs his disciples to “[D]o this in remembrance of me”. What is it he is instructing them to remember? James Heaney questioned this remembering when he asked:

⁵ Luke 20: 19-20a.

Can we, in fact, “remember” the request of Jesus and respond to it adequately simply by repeated the text of the anaphora? If not a re-enactment, what is the “remembrance” that fulfilling the request requires? And should it happen that a given liturgical event is in itself some way unique or singular, what then is its relationship to the original Last Supper?⁶

Contemporary Christian liturgies primarily focus on the death of Christ and the Last Supper as the events Jesus is instructing his followers to remember, but it is possible to offer alternative understandings of Jesus’ instructions. When one takes a holistic perspective on the Annunciation-Incarnation of Christ, the moment which is being repeated and remembered—the event at the core of Christian somatic memory—has an even wider variety of interpretations.

Whatever the answer to the question of remembering is, this remembering takes the form, to use Catherine Pickstock’s term, of “non-identical repetition.”⁷ Non-identical repetition is a form of analogous repetition in which history and novelty are combined. All repetition is, inevitably, non-identical because it differs in location, intent, action and/or outcome. Heaney argued, with relation to the Eucharist, that “it must be recognised that the celebration is a self-identical, unique event that, even though itself a repetition, cannot be repeated historically.”⁸ But this specific type of acknowledged non-identical repetition is, for Pickstock, intimately connected to the Eucharist. Pickstock noted that “[T]he words of Consecration ‘This is my body’ therefore, far from being problematic in their meaning, *are the only words which certainly have meaning, and lend this meaning to all other words.*”⁹ The eucharistic transubstantiation becomes the condition of possibility for all meaning and,

⁶ James Heaney, *Beyond the Body: An Antitheology of the Eucharist* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2014), 100.

⁷ Catherine Pickstock, *Repetition and Identity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 177.

⁸ Heaney, *Beyond the Body*, 70.

⁹ Catherine Pickstock, *After Writing: On the Liturgical Consummation of Philosophy* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers Ltd., 1998), 263. Italics Pickstock’s own.

therefore, the distinction between thing and sign becomes unsustainable.¹⁰ For Pickstock, the words of Jesus at the Last Supper become intrinsic to everything else. Thus, her *Radical Orthodoxy* colleague, John Milbank boldly declared: “[N]on-Identical Repetition. Perpetual Eucharist. Perpetual Eucharist: that is to say, a living through the offering (*through* the offering, through the *offering*) of the gift given to us of God himself in the flesh.”¹¹ Milbank drew an incarnational relationship between the Eucharist and Christian living—the Eucharist celebrated today is a non-identical repetition of the Incarnation and we, ourselves, repeat this incarnation in our celebration of the Eucharist. The Eucharist is essential as the basis for all non-identical repetition, but furthermore, it is, itself, a non-identical repetition of a prior event. Thus, it is possible to perceive of the *Logos* as the gift of God to the world in which the *Logos* becomes, himself, a personal gift to the individual in their participation in the Eucharist.

I find Pickstock’s concept of non-identical repetition a helpful way of exploring what is taking place on the altar in the celebration of the Eucharist. It allows a broadening of interpretative perspective that will reveal a variety of eucharistic referents in chapter two. However, Pickstock uses this notion of non-identical repetition to claim that the Words of Consecration are words that are paradigmatic of all meaning. Pickstock is an advocate of the Roman Rite which “provides a model for genuine consummation of language and subjectivity in and through a radical transformation of space and time.”¹² I disagree with such an emphasis on the Words of Consecration (and indeed with such a positive

¹⁰ Ibid. 261.

¹¹ John Milbank, "Can a Gift Be Given? Prolegomena to a Future Trinitarian Metaphysic," *Modern Theology* 11 (1995), 119-61, at 152. Italics Milbank’s own.

¹² Pickstock, *After Writing*, 169.

view of the Roman Rite). The emphasis, in my reading of the Eucharistic Prayers, will be on the Epiclesis rather than the Words of Consecration.¹³

Relatedly, David Ford suggested that the complex development of eucharistic practice and the diverse forms of celebration are intrinsic to the Christian faith, which:

is true to itself only by becoming freshly embodied in different contexts...Theologically understood, they [such repetitions] are testimony to God's creativity and abundance...They show the particularising activity of the Holy Spirit—a flourishing of distinctive and different realisations of the eventfulness of God.¹⁴

The key to such repetitions and their non-identical nature with the original event they seek to repeat is an element of 'critical difference'. In our examination of the Eucharist and its potential various meanings, this element of critical difference will be considered.

Ambrose of Milan: A Case Study in the Varying Forms of Non-Identical Repetition

The early Church theologians employed the concept of non-identical repetition in their eucharistic theology in a variety of forms. Taking just one example, that of Ambrose of Milan, it is possible to see the variety of forms of non-identical repetition employed by these early theologians in their explorations of the Eucharist. Ambrose is a particularly helpful example to consider. His writings demonstrate so many of the varieties of non-identical repetition quite typical in early eucharistic theology. Furthermore, writing towards the end of the fourth century, Ambrose is one of the most important ecclesiastical figures of his time and had a significant influence on Augustine (who, himself, laid the foundation

¹³ I explore this in more detail in Chapter Five.

¹⁴ David F. Ford, *Self and Salvation: Being Transformed* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 144.

for sacramental theology). As Raymond Moloney notes “[I]n Ambrose and Augustine we meet two writers whose works contain within themselves in embryo not only the teachings but the controversies which are to mark the history of the Western Eucharist.”¹⁵

Ambrose dealt with the sacrament of the Eucharist explicitly in a number of areas of both his catechetical and commentarial writings. It is clear from even a cursory analysis of his understanding of the Eucharist that Ambrose saw this sacrament as a non-identical repetition of many other events and moments. For Ambrose the sacrament of the Eucharist, and, in particular, the moments of consecration and consumption, are the supra-fulfilment of all these precursory events.

Ambrose explored the power of human language through the examples of Moses and Elisha the Prophet. Having established the power of the words of the human being, Ambrose asked how much more powerful is “the divine consecration itself, in which the very words of our Lord and Saviour function?”¹⁶ Drawing on the powerful words of God in creating the world, Ambrose demonstrated that human language finds its fulfilment in the words of the Lord, repeated in the sacrament of the Eucharist at the moment of consecration, an idea developed further by both Pickstock and Milbank, as I have previously demonstrated. No other words spoken by a human will ever have more power than these. Ambrose noted:

[F]or that sacrament, which you receive is effected by the words of Christ. But if the words of Elias (Elijah) had such power to call down fire from heaven, will not the words of Christ have power enough to change the nature of the elements.¹⁷

¹⁵ Raymond Moloney, *The Eucharist* (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1995), 102.

¹⁶ Ambrose of Milan, “The Mysteries,” trans. Roy J. Deferrari in *Saint Ambrose: Theological and Dogmatic Works*, ed. Roy J. Deferrari, (Washington D. C. : The Catholic University of America Press, 1963). Chapter 9: 52. All quotations from Ambrose of Milan are taken from this translation unless otherwise stated.

¹⁷ Ambrose, “The Mysteries,” Chapter 9: 52.

Furthermore, when seeking to explain what is happening in the Eucharist at the moment of consecration, Ambrose turned to the mystery of the Incarnation and uses the one mystery to explain the other. Here Ambrose illustrated how Christ was conceived against the course of nature. This being the case, Ambrose presented the sacrament of the Eucharist, and in particular the moment of consecration, as a non-identical repetition of the Incarnation. Why would we expect the consecration of the Eucharist and the Christ-focused change in the eucharistic elements to conform to the course of nature, when Christ himself did not? The Annunciation-Incarnation event is one that defies and supersedes nature, therefore the eucharistic event does too. Ambrose asked “[W]hy do you seek here [in the Eucharist] the course of nature in the body of Christ, when the Lord Jesus himself was born of the Virgin contrary to nature?”¹⁸

Ambrose drew on this non-identical repetition connection again in his work *On The Sacraments*. Here he posited the change in the eucharistic elements at the moment of consecration as a non-identical repetition of the creation of the world, the Incarnation, and our own regeneration through baptism. For example, Ambrose first noted that:

[T]he Lord ordered, the heaven was made; the Lord ordered, the earth was made; the Lord ordered, the seas were made; the Lord ordered, every creature was generated. You see then how the creating expression of Christ is. If then there is so great a force in the expression of the Lord Jesus, that those things might begin to be which were not, how much more creating, that those things be which were, and be changed to something else.¹⁹

It is this “expression of Christ” by which all things were made and by which the designs of nature were changed when he wished. Thus Christ’s own generation defies the course of nature in the same way the mystery of the Eucharist does.

¹⁸ Ambrose, “The Mysteries,” Chapter 9: 53.

¹⁹ Ambrose, “The Sacraments,” Chapter 4: 15.

Furthermore, Ambrose forged an explicit connection between the Eucharist and Baptism. He wrote:

there was no body of Christ before consecration, but after the consecration I say to you that now there is the body of Christ. He Himself spoke and it was made; He Himself commanded and it was created. You yourself were, but you were an old creature; after you were consecrated, you began to be a new creature.²⁰

There is, clearly, a unity with regard to the Incarnation and the Eucharist mirrored in the historical and sacramental bodies of Christ. This unity gives, to those that receive the sacrament, a unity with Christ himself. For example, Ambrose used the Song of Songs to illustrate the relationship between the Lord and the Church. The Lord, having fed the Church with the sacrament in an image redolent of breast-feeding,²¹ delights in her fertility and is one with her. Ambrose noted “that in us He himself eats and drinks, just as in us you read that He says that He is in prison.”²²

Although it is in his catechetical texts that Ambrose offers his most concise reflections on the nature of the sacrament of the Eucharist, his commentaries on the Psalms also allow a glimpse into his Incarnation-centred reflections on the Eucharist. Again, Ambrose is drawing out the various events, particularly in the Old Testament, that are fulfilled in the sacrament of the Eucharist. Here the notion of non-identical repetition works alongside the established understanding of typology and typological fulfilment. For example, in his commentary on twelve of the Psalms, Ambrose indicated his understanding of the consumption of the Jewish Passover as a typological pre-figuration of “the passion of the Lord Jesus on whom we daily feed in the

²⁰ Ambrose, “The Sacraments,” Chapter 4: 16.

²¹ I will explore the relationship between the Eucharist and breast-feeding later in this chapter.

²² Ambrose, “The Mysteries,” Chapter 9: 57.

sacrament.”²³ Thus, for Ambrose and many subsequent Christian writers, the sacrament of the Eucharist can be understood as a non-identical repetition of the Passover.

Furthermore, the sacrament of the Eucharist finds its origin in the gushing forth of blood and water from Christ’s side which is itself a non-identical repetition of the water gushing forth from the rock of Horeb.²⁴ Ambrose noted that as eating the Passover lamb delivered the Israelites from the persecution of Pharaoh in Egypt so the consumption of the eucharistic bread and wine brings deliverance from sin. In this sense, the sacrament of the Eucharist is a non-identical repetition of the Fall, but with a critical difference. For as Satan tempted with food that brought death, so in the Eucharist, does the Lord repair the damage wrought through food. What once brought death, now, in this repetition, brings eternal life.

As I noted at the beginning of this section, the significance of Ambrose is not to be underestimated. His eucharistic theology set the scene for over a thousand years of thinking on the matter. Owen Cummings noted:

[T]he influence of Ambrose is to be found especially in two features: his emphasis on the conversion of the elements of the bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ, and his emphasis on the eucharistic words as bringing about this change. These two aspects of eucharistic theology were to figure prominently in the tradition at least until the time of St. Thomas Aquinas’ treatment of the doctrine of transubstantiation, and even beyond.²⁵

Ambrose, then, laid the foundations for what would come to be considered the central elements of eucharistic theology—a proto-doctrine of Real Presence, and the significance of the words of consecration in effecting this Real Presence. Ambrose has a clear understanding of an actual transformation of

²³ Finbarr G. Clancy, "The Eucharist in St Ambrose's Commentaries on the *Psalms*," in *Studia Patristica*, ed. Markus Vinzent (Leuven, Paris, Walpole, MA: Peeters, 2011), 35-44, at 37.

²⁴ See Ambrose, "The Mysteries," 8.49.

²⁵ Owen F. Cummings, *Eucharistic Doctors: A Theological History* (New York / Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 2005), 66.

the bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ and is able to identify the moment at which such a transformation takes place—the Words of Institution. I propose that Ambrose’s theology of non-identical repetition within the Eucharist is similarly significant in the history of the Western Eucharist.

Having considered Ambrose’s understanding of the sacrament of the Eucharist, it is clear that he considered the Eucharist (and in particular the twin orally fixated moments of consecration and consumption) to be the high point of theology. The sacrament itself is a typological fulfilment, a non-identical repetition, and a supra-expression of history, theology, and language. It is in the human-Divine words of consecration and the human consumption of the Divine that, for Ambrose, we are united with the Lord. If we consider the Eucharist to be a repetition of somatic memory in the traumatic sense, then we can see in microcosm that the memory is varied and by no means necessarily Pasch-focused. I will return to this variety of expression later in this chapter.

The Annunciation-Incarnation as a Model for Thinking About the Eucharist.

In the search for the somatic memory that is at the core of Christianity (and, I propose, non-identically repeated in the Eucharist), one event is prominent amongst many others in the early Church. From the time of the early Church onwards, Christian writers have engaged with the doctrine and event of the Annunciation-Incarnation in order to aid their understanding of the Eucharist. Edward Kilmartin notes that “[S]ince the second century, especially in Eastern theology (rooted in the impetus provided by the Gospel of John), the Incarnation

itself provided the conceptual model for thinking about the Eucharist."²⁶ For example, in the early second century, Justin Martyr used the mystery of the Annunciation-Incarnation to explain what was happening in the Eucharist. He wrote:

[F]or not as common bread and common drink do we receive these; but in like manner as Jesus Christ our Saviour, having been made flesh by the Word of God, had both flesh and blood for our salvation, so likewise have we been taught that the food which is blessed by the prayer of His word, and from which our blood and flesh by transmutation are nourished, is the flesh and blood of that Jesus who was made flesh.²⁷

This extract indicates that Justin viewed both the mystery of the Annunciation-Incarnation and the mystery of the Eucharist to be events in which the same process is being undertaken. As Christ was made flesh and blood for our salvation, so are the bread and wine made flesh and blood for our nourishment. In the Latin Church, Ambrose of Milan, as has already been demonstrated, is similarly keen to use the Annunciation-Incarnation to elucidate the Eucharist:

Let us use the examples He gives, and by the example of the Incarnation prove the truth of the Mystery (the Eucharist)...this body which we make is that which was born of the Virgin...It is the true Flesh of Christ which crucified and buried, this is then truly the Sacrament of His Body.²⁸

At the end of the fifth century, Pope Gelasius I made the connection between the two mysteries clearer:

Certainly the image and likeness of the body and blood of Christ are celebrated in the action of the Mysteries [the Eucharist]...Therefore it is shown clearly enough to us that we ought to think about Christ the Lord himself what we confess, celebrate and receive in His image [the

²⁶ Edward J. Kilmartin and Robert J. Daly, "The Eucharistic Theology of Pope Gelasius I: A Nontridentist View," in *Studia Patristica: Papers Presented at the 12th International Conference on Patristic Studies Held in Oxford 1995: Historica, Theologica Et Philosophica, Critica Et Philologica*, ed. Elizabeth A. Livingstone (Leuven: Peeters, 1997), 283-89, 284. This article was written by Kilmartin and edited posthumously by Daly; therefore I shall refer only to Kilmartin as the author but note both scholars in the bibliographic citation.

²⁷ Justin Martyr, "Apology 1," trans. Marcus Dods and George Reith in *Ante-Nicene Fathers Vol. 1*, ed. Alexander Roberts, James Donaldson, and A. Cleveland Coxe (Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Publishing Co., 1885). Paragraph 66. Accessed online at <http://newadvent.org/fathers/0126.htm> on 13/05/14.

²⁸ Ambrose of Milan, "On the Mysteries," trans. H. de Romestin, E. de Romestin, and H. T. F. Duckworth in *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Second Series, Vol. 10*, ed. Philip Schaff and Henry Wace (Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Publishing Co., 1896), Chapter 9: 53. Accessed online at <http://newadvent.org/fathers/3405.htm> on 13/05/14.

eucharistic elements]; that just as they pass over into this, namely, divine substance, by the working of the Holy Spirit, yet remaining in the peculiarity of their nature; so they [the visible elements/eucharistic signs] demonstrate by remaining in the proper sense those things which they are, that the principal mystery itself, whose efficacy and power they truly represent to us, remains the one Christ, integral and true.²⁹

The eucharistic theology of Gelasius is particularly helpful in the light of the current investigation in this thesis. In his brief elucidation of the eucharistic theology of Gelasius, Kilmartin specifically located Gelasius' "eucharistic theology within the history of the theology of eucharistic incarnation."³⁰ Gelasius understood the eucharistic consecration as analogous to the Incarnation of Christ. Furthermore, Gelasius specifically rejected any understanding of the bread and wine changing in their substances but rather suggested a hypostatic union of Christ's humanity and the substance of bread and wine.³¹ Ultimately, this view was rejected by the Council of Trent, but if we are to see the Eucharist as a non-identical repetition of the Annunciation-Incarnation event, then I would argue that Gelasius' understanding of the change within the elements is a more accurate one than that described in discourses of transubstantiation.³² After all, in the hypostatic union of the Incarnation, the humanity of Jesus is not subsumed by the *Logos*, but rather exists alongside the Word. So too, then, in the Eucharist, does the fully hypostatically united being of the Word exist alongside the material nature of the bread and wine. In this sense the Eucharist, as a non-identical repetition of the Annunciation-Incarnation event, is a model for how unity and difference can co-exist together.

²⁹ Gelasius, "Tract 3, No. 14" trans. Edward J. Kilmartin and Robert J. Daly, cited in Kilmartin and Daly, "The Eucharistic Theology of Pope Gelasius I," 284-288.

³⁰ Kilmartin and Daly, "The Eucharistic Theology of Pope Gelasius I," 284.

³¹ *Ibid.* 289.

³² In the period subsequent to the 2nd Vatican Council there has been a marked shift away from the theology of transubstantiation towards a broader theology of Real Presence. This shift will be examined in more detail in Chapter Six.

Each of these Christian writers has, when faced with incomprehension with regards to the Eucharist, turned to the mystery of the Annunciation-Incarnation event in order to grasp what is taking place on the altar. It seems that, for these theologians, the natural point of reference in aiding understanding of what was actually happening in the Eucharist and why it was happening, was not to look to the Paschal suffering of Christ, as became common in later centuries, but rather to focus on the beginning of his life. The somatic memory at the core of the Christian faith is, therefore, the trauma of the Annunciation-Incarnation event.

The transformation of the earthly elements of bread and wine into eucharistic flesh and blood would seem, to these early writers, to bear something intrinsically in common with the Incarnation. To understand the Eucharist as a continuation, a re-actualisation, or a “non-identical repetition” of the Annunciation-Incarnation event would seem to have once been a legitimate understanding of the mysteries of this sacrament. As such, one can answer the question ‘what is the somatic memory at the core of Christianity?’: The Annunciation-Incarnation event is the somatic memory at the core of the Christian faith. It is repeated in the celebration of the Eucharist as a repetition of this traumatic event.

The Eucharistic Dough and the Nativity

Whilst the connection between the Annunciation-Incarnation event and the Eucharist had a great deal of currency in the early Church’s understanding of the Eucharist, the early Church theologians drew on other imagery, both natal and maternal, to convey this understanding. In considering a variety of early Church homilies, a number of connections between not just the Annunciation-

Incarnation and the Eucharist, but also the Nativity and the Eucharist are made apparent. For example, in the fourth century work of John Chrysostom, we find that “[F]or this reason He was placed in a manger, so that He who nourishes all might receive a child’s nourishment from a virgin mother.”³³ The use of “nourishing” imagery here draws an implicit connection between the Nativity of Christ and his subsequent designation as “the Bread of Life”, and, as such, directs the hearer to the Eucharist as a point of reference.

Furthermore, in the writings of Andrew of Crete regarding the Nativity, Andrew referred to the term “dough” on a number of occasions. He wrote:

[T]oday Adam, presenting [her] out of us and on our behalf as first-fruit to God, dedicates Mary, she indeed who was not mixed with the whole dough; through her is bread made for the remodelling of the race.³⁴

At the time of Andrew’s writing on the island of Crete, the bread predominantly eaten there was most likely bread made from barley. This barley bread would have been unlikely to be leavened.³⁵ The more refined wheat bread was very costly as much of it had to be imported.³⁶ This refined, white, purer, wheat bread would have been leavened and would have been consumed by even the poorest at festivals and holy days.³⁷ I argue, therefore, that it is this refined, purer wheat bread that Andrew is referring to when he uses dough imagery in his homilies. With this context in mind then, Andrew seems to be implying that because Mary was not ‘mixed with the whole dough’, i.e. that she was conceived immaculately and not tainted with the stain of original sin, from her a new batch of bread is made—the race of believers. Mary is a new starter dough

³³ John Chrysostom, "On the Birthday of Our Savior Jesus Christ a Sermon," http://www.tertullian.org/fathers/chrysostom_homily_2_on_christmas.htm. Translated by Bryson Sewell. Accessed online on 24/11/15.

³⁴ Mary Cunningham, *Wider Than Heaven: Eighth Century Homilies on the Mother of God* (New York: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2008), 75.

³⁵ Thomas Braun, "Barley Cakes and Emmer Bread," in *Food in Antiquity*, ed. John Wilkins, David Harvey, and Marcus Dobson (Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 1995), 25-37, at 27.

³⁶ Andrew Dalby, *Food in the Ancient World from A to Z* (London and New York: Routledge, 2003), 59.

³⁷ Braun, "Barley Cakes and Emmer Bread," 30.

which, when mixed with the dough of Christ, creates a new batch of bread. In this sense, then, as the starter dough from which the new race is formed, Mary is uniquely connected to the Eucharist. She is, in this understanding, the key ingredient in the eucharistic bread, prior even to Christ. The consequence of (re)considering what might be being non-identically repeated in the celebration of the Eucharist, what the somatic memory at the core of the Christian faith might be, is to open up theology to new perspectives on traditional ideas.

In a later homily regarding the feast of the Annunciation, Andrew went on to note “it is therefore fitting that the current splendid and radiant festival is applauded today as it celebrates the acceptance in all its diversity of our dough.”³⁸ The translator, Mary Cunningham, noted that “the vocabulary and metaphor used here are obscure: Andrew means that the feast is celebrating the Incarnation of Christ and his complete assimilation of human nature in becoming man.”³⁹ It is significant to note that in both of these instances, the metaphor of the dough, an image that early Christians would have associated with their regular eucharistic celebrations, is used in reference to the Incarnation. Andrew of Crete is, implicitly, drawing the connection between these two occurrences for his hearers. Following in the footsteps of Paul in his first letter to the Corinthian Church,⁴⁰ Andrew implied that there is something in the dough (perhaps the yeast) that is sinful—hence the immaculately conceived Mary is “not mixed with the whole dough”. But the bread that is made from her—the Bread of Life received by the Church in the Eucharist—is bread that will reshape humankind.

³⁸ Cunningham, *Wider Than Heaven*, 198-9.

³⁹ *Ibid.* footnote 11 on 199.

⁴⁰ “Your boasting is not a good thing. Do you not know that a little yeast leavens the whole batch of dough? Clean out the old yeast so that you may be a new batch, as you really are unleavened. For our paschal lamb, Christ, has been sacrificed. Therefore, let us celebrate the festival, not with the old yeast, the yeast of malice and evil, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.” 1 Corinthians 5: 6-8.

Germanos of Constantinople, also writing in the eighth century, drew a connection between the foreshadowed eucharistic experience of the Hebrews in the desert, the body of Mary and the *Logos* when he noted “[H]ail, favored one, the all-gold jar of manna...Hail, favored one, who brings Life and nourishes the Nourisher.”⁴¹ For Germanos, drawing on the ‘bread of life’ imagery in chapter six of John’s Gospel, the Eucharist is a non-identical repetition of the Nativity. Just as Mary nourished Christ with the flesh and blood of her womb and the milk of her breasts, so now does Christ nourish all of humankind with his own flesh and blood. The implicit linking of these exaltations of Mary and food imagery once again draws together our understanding of both the Nativity and the Eucharist.

The uses of terms related to bread, dough, nourishment etc. in the early Church draw, for the hearers of these homilies, implicit connections between the festivals at which these words were spoken—for example, the Feast of the Annunciation or the celebration of the Nativity—and their experience of the presence of Christ in the celebration of the sacrament of the Eucharist (regardless of whether, as laity, they were actually permitted or expected to receive this Eucharist). This connection certainly had currency in the eucharistic theology of the time alongside other, more widely known connections between the Eucharist and the Last Supper or the Eucharist and the Paschal experience of Christ.

The connection made by these Patristic writers in the early church between the Nativity and the Eucharist is an important one, particularly when one begins to explore the implications. Whilst certainly connected to the incarnational ideas of the Eucharist explored previously, understanding the

⁴¹ Cunningham, *Wider Than Heaven*, 226.

Eucharist as a non-identical repetition of the Nativity draws some different conclusions. For example, if one considers the Eucharist to be a non-identical repetition of the Nativity, then, by analogy, Christ must already be present in the elements of bread and wine at the eucharistic table (as Christ was already present in Mary's womb). I propose that the mystery of the Eucharist in this interpretation, therefore, is not the transformation of the eucharistic elements into something else, but rather the revelation of the already-manifest presence of Christ in those elements. It is clear that some of the Church fathers viewed the Annunciation-Incarnation, itself, in precisely these terms. Athanasius, for example, noted that:

He was not far from us before. For no part of Creation is left void of Him. He has filled all things everywhere, remaining present with His own Father. But He comes in condescension to show loving-kindness upon us, and to visit us.⁴²

The implication in Athanasius' words is that although in the Annunciation-Incarnation event Christ became particularly present, he is universally present as the Word of God from the beginning of creation and eternally beyond. In the extended understanding of the Incarnation of Christ, of course, the Nativity is as much a part of the Incarnation of Christ as the moment of Annunciation is.

Furthermore, the shepherds' and Magi's experience of the Nativity offers, for them, a conversion experience. The shepherds leave the presence of the Holy Family, "glorifying and praising God for all they had seen and heard"⁴³ and the Magi pay homage to the Christ-child.⁴⁴ If one understands the Eucharist as a non-identical repetition of the Nativity, then we are also to imply that partaking of the Eucharist (as the Shepherds and the Magi did at the proto-table

⁴² Athanasius, "On the Incarnation of the Word," trans. Archibald Robertson in *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers Vol. 4*, ed. Philip Schaff and Henry Wace (Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Publishing Co., 1892), Chapter 8. Accessed online at <http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/2802.htm> on 01/03/16.

⁴³ Luke 2: 20.

⁴⁴ Matthew 2: 11.

fellowship of the Nativity) is an experience that has the potential to convert non-believers into believers. The insistence then, for example, that only those who have been baptised and made a sacramental confession of faith may receive the Eucharist,⁴⁵ would seem to deny the power this sacrament has to convert non-believers. In the Gospel of Luke, the author specifically introduces the shepherds as trope of universal salvation—the inclusion of the shepherds suggests to the reader that the Christ-child is born for all. As the (most likely) Jewish⁴⁶ shepherds and Gentile Magi were welcomed to the Nativity, so, perhaps, should our altar tables be open tables at which those of all faiths, and none, are welcome, with the expectation that an encounter with the transforming presence of Christ is available for everyone.

In locating the somatic memory at the core of Christianity in the extended incarnational event of the Nativity, once again it is possible to demonstrate that the theological consequences of such an interpretation of the Eucharist open up the boundaries of understanding and offer new perspectives on traditional doctrines.

The Eucharist and Mothers' Milk

When one considers the multi-faceted nature of somatic memory in the Eucharist, one is confronted with a wide array of bodies and memories. A distinct, but perhaps surprising, connection in early Christian writings is drawn between the milk of a nursing mother and the Eucharist. Milk manifests as a eucharistic element in two ways. Firstly, milk features in some eucharistic

⁴⁵ Canons 912 and 914 of the Code of Canon Law http://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG1104/_P39.HTM accessed online on 09/05/2014. See also Canon B15 of the Anglican Canon <https://www.churchofengland.org/media/35588/complete.pdf> accessed online on 09/03/16.

⁴⁶ Raymond Brown notes that in coming to understand the significance of the inclusion of the shepherds in the Gospel of Luke, “the primary symbolism is to be sought in the Jewish background.” Raymond Edward Brown, *The Birth of the Messiah* (New York: Doubleday, 1979), 421.

liturgies up to the beginning of the fourth century. But secondly, the Eucharist as mothers' milk is also present as an image or symbol in early Christian writings. The prevalence of this milk image can prompt us to ask what its symbolism in literature, and presence in liturgy, mean. To put it another way, when milk is used as part of the instruction to "do this in remembrance of me," what exactly is being remembered?

There is clear evidence that milk was used in a liturgical and sacramental manner by the early Christians. Andrew McGowan pointed out that there was a tradition of using cheese within Eucharist. Epiphanius, writing in the fourth century, makes reference to a group of Christians known as the 'Artotyritai' who were so called because "in their rites they set out bread and cheese and thus celebrate their rites."⁴⁷ This cheese was most likely a semi-solid cheese that may have been spread on the bread. He argued that this cheese is symbolically identified with milk⁴⁸ and indeed, for ancient cultures, the distinction commonly drawn between milk and cheese today would have been alien. Cheese was the best way of keeping milk without the aid of refrigeration. In the minds of these early Christians, it is also quite possible that cheese would have had explicit connection with the Incarnation itself. Aristotle noted:

[W]hat the male contributes to generation is the form and the efficient cause, while the female contributes the material. In fact, as in the coagulation of milk, the milk being the material, the fig-juice or rennet is that which contains the curdling principle, so acts the secretion of the male, as it gets divided into parts in the female.⁴⁹

⁴⁷ Epiphanius of Salamis, "The Panarion of Epiphanius of Salamis Books 2 and 3.," in *The Panarion of Epiphanius of Salamis Books 2 and 3. De Fide*, ed. Johannes van Oort and Einar Thomassen (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2013), 49.1.1.

⁴⁸ Andrew McGowan, *Ascetic Eucharists: Food and Drink in Early Christian Ritual Meals* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1999), 95-8.

⁴⁹ Aristotle, *Generation of Animals*, trans. A. L. Peck (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1943), 106.

Rennet is a key ingredient in the production of cheese. This image of curdling in the womb forming the foetus is later used by Tertullian⁵⁰ and indicates that the early Church understood the process of conception as similar to the process by which milk became cheese.

McGowan also noted that in some parts of the early Christian world there was a tradition of giving a cup of milk and honey to newly baptised Christians in their first celebration of the Eucharist, alongside a cup of wine. The second century writer Marcion clearly knew of this tradition, as did Tertullian in the third century.⁵¹ In this case, the use of a milk and honey cup would have been a once-only eucharistic event.⁵² This baptismal milk and honey cup is attested to in the most likely third century *The Apostolic Traditions* wherein the clergy are instructed to prepare a cup of:

milk and honey mingled together in fulfilment of the promise which was <made> to the Fathers, wherein He said I will give you a land flowing with milk and honey; which Christ indeed gave, <even> His Flesh, whereby they who believe are nourished like little children, making the bitterness of the <human> heart sweet by the sweetness of His word (λόγος).⁵³

Teresa Berger, in her analysis of the significance of milk in such eucharistic celebrations, suggested that the theological explanation of this milk and honey cup here comprises of three themes. Firstly it is connected to the eschatological promise of a land flowing with milk and honey. Secondly, this eschatological promise points directly to the body of Christ who feeds the believers with his sweet milk. The third theme is the evocation of a maternal body that breastfeeds—indeed the maternal imagery employed by early Christian writers

⁵⁰ Tertullian, "On The Flesh of Christ," trans. Peter Holmes in *Ante-Nicene Fathers Vol. 3*, ed. Alexander Roberts, James Donaldson, and A. Cleveland Coxe (Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Publishing Co., 1885). Chapter 4. Accessed online at <http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/0315.htm> on 01/03/16.

⁵¹ McGowan, *Ascetic Eucharists*, 109.

⁵² *Ibid.* 114.

⁵³ Gregory Dix, ed. *The Treatise on the Apostolic Tradition of St. Hippolytus of Rome, Bishop and Martyr* (London: SPCK, 1937), 40 (Apostolic Traditions XXIII: 2).

is explicit. Such imagery was a key feature of the milk and honey cups shared in the celebration of the Eucharist—a practice that receded in the late third century.⁵⁴

Ultimately, milk used in liturgy is rich, not only in nourishment, but also in theological meaning. Cheese, used as a milk substitute in a pattern of repeated ascetic Eucharist⁵⁵, marked a specific opposition to the eating of flesh and thus removed the participant from society in general. This could be characterised as a deliberate distancing of the ritual from the sacrificial rituals of the pagans. It is possible to interpret such distancing from sacrificial ritual as an indication that these Christians did not view their ceremony as a repetition of the sacrificial death of Christ, but rather as a repetition of something else. The somatic memory at the core of their faith is not the trauma of Jesus' death. Given the use of milk, I argue that they viewed their rituals as a repetition of something life-giving and nourishing, and the actual somatic memory at the core of their Christian faith appears to be more strongly connected to the Annunciation-Incarnation event. However, milk used in a once-only baptismal Eucharist was full of eschatological, incarnational and eucharistic overtones. In the light of this evidence of practice, it is worth considering whether, when New Testament writers and early Church theologians use milk imagery in their writings, they are making eucharistic references.

The first extant theological reference to breast milk in Christian writings comes towards the end of the first century in the first Epistle of Peter. The author of the Epistle encourages believers to “[L]ike newborn infants, long for

⁵⁴ Teresa Berger, *Gender Differences and the Making of Liturgical History: Lifting a Veil on Liturgy's Past*. (Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2011), 82.

⁵⁵ In using the term 'ascetic Eucharists' I am not referring only to Eucharists celebrated in monastic settings but rather all Eucharists which I consider to be ascetic as those celebrating them seek to distance themselves from pagan meals.

the pure, spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow into salvation.”⁵⁶ Rather than offering these new Christians a simple form of Christianity as opposed to a more advanced form (or solid food) of Christianity they might be ready for later (as Paul’s use of the term ‘milk’ indicates in 1 Cor. 3:2), the milk, in this verse, appears to be the simplicity of the Christian way of life as opposed to the guiles of the world around them. There is no explicit connection made with the Eucharist here but the connection between this milk and salvation is an important one and one that is frequently repeated. Karen Jobes, in her analysis of this verse and its relationship to Septuagint Psalm 33, suggested that:

Peter is not describing the recent conversion of his readers for he has already described all believers as new-born children of God, and uses the metaphor to instruct them to crave pure spiritual milk, even as a newborn baby craves its mother’s milk, that is, instinctively, eagerly, and incessantly. Although milk is elsewhere in the New Testament used as a metaphor for teachings suitable for immature Christians (Heb 5: 12) and worldly Christians (1 Cor. 3:1) such a negative connotation is not found here. Rather Peter presents pure spiritual milk as that which all Christians need in order to grow up in their salvation.⁵⁷

The referent of the pure spiritual milk metaphor is not immediately clear but Jobes concludes that most interpreters understand the referent to be the word of God. The interpreters predominantly conceive of this with regards to apostolic preaching or the Bible.⁵⁸ Jobes herself argued that the referent is the grace of God for which Christians should always be longing.⁵⁹ I contend that, although there is not an explicit connection to the Eucharist made here, the connection between milk and the Word, or rather the *Logos*, is implicit. To feed on the Word

⁵⁶ 1 Peter 2: 2

⁵⁷ Karen H. Jobes, "Got Milk? Septuagint Psalm 33 and the Interpretation of 1 Peter 2: 1-3," *Westminster Theological Journal* 64, no. 1 (2002), 1-14, at 1-2.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.* 2

⁵⁹ *Ibid.* 14.

is to consume Christ in the eucharistic ritual. Thus the pure spiritual milk is the body and blood of Christ.⁶⁰

Clement of Alexandria also uses the imagery of breast milk. In this case, Clement drew a connection between the spiritual teaching believers receive and the nourishment provided to infants through breast milk. Clement didn't leave the image there but extended the symbolism of the image to drawing a distinct link between this breast milk and "the Word, the milk of Christ."⁶¹ Drawing on the ancient belief that breast milk was heated or frothed blood,⁶² for Clement, this milk is clearly sacramental. He noted:

"[F]or my blood," says the Lord, "is true drink."⁶³ In saying, therefore, "I have given you milk to drink,"⁶⁴ has he not indicated the knowledge of the truth, the perfect gladness in the Word, who is the milk?⁶⁵

This explicit connection of milk with the drinking of Christ's blood in the sacrament of the Eucharist transforms Clement's use of the image of breast milk from the realm of metaphor into the realm of sacrament.

The writer of the first Petrine Epistle and Clement are not alone in this use of the breast milk imagery. Similar imagery can be found in the writings of Irenaeus:

⁶⁰ Regardless of one's position on the distinction between agape meals and eucharistic meals, one can agree that, whatever early Christians were doing, they were eating community meals together.

⁶¹ Clement of Alexandria, "The Instructor Book I," trans. Rev. William Wilson in *Clement of Alexandria. Vol. IV, Ante-Nicene Christian Library: Translations of the Writings of the Fathers Down to A. D. 325*, ed. Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson. (Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Publishing Co., 1885), chapter 6. Accessed online at <http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/02091.htm> on 01/03/16.

⁶² Clement goes on to note that "milk is the sweeter and finer part of blood" in "The Instructor Book I," chapter 6.

⁶³ This is based on Jesus' words in John 6: 55—"For my flesh is food indeed, and my blood is drink indeed."

⁶⁴ It seems that Clement is quoting the words of the apostle Paul here from 1 Corinthians 3: 2 – "I fed you with milk, not solid food." This is a curious choice on the part of Clement as Paul here is referring to giving new Christians simple teaching because they were not yet ready for the more challenging doctrines. However, if this is the verse that Clement is referring to, then he seems to be doing so in a positive and eucharistic manner. Drinking the Word, the Christ, is the action Christians share in at the Eucharist.

⁶⁵ Clement of Alexandria, "The Instructor Book I," chapter 6.

He, who was the perfect bread of the Father, offered Himself to us as milk, [because we were] as infants. He did this when He appeared as a man, that we, being nourished, as it were, from the breast of His flesh, and having, by such a course of milk-nourishment, become accustomed to eat and drink the Word of God, may be able also to contain in ourselves the Bread of immortality, which is the Spirit of the Father.⁶⁶

This curious image combines references to the Incarnation, the Eucharist, spiritual growth, and Spirit-indwelling. Christ is milk. He feeds us from his breast with milk—the breast of His flesh being a reference to the Eucharist. The reference to ‘flesh’ here recalls the repeated use of the term in chapter 6 of John’s Gospel, where Jesus exhorts his followers to feed on his flesh, and, by extension, makes the connection with the early Christian understanding of the Eucharist. This understanding of the Eucharist is not couched in sacrificial or Last Supper overtones, but rather in an eschatological hope of eternal life. By this nourishment at his breast, Christians are able to digest the Bread of immortality, presumably indigestible to them in any other format.

Each of these writers draws a parallel between the milk they are referring to and the Word or the *Logos*. In the Western, Latin tradition, particularly in the light of the Reformation, sharp distinctions are drawn between the Word and the Eucharist. In response to the perceived over-sacramentalism of the medieval church, the Protestant Reformers elevated the reading of the Word as the pure, unadulterated mode of worship and advocated a theology of the Eucharist that moved away from the doctrine of transubstantiation. Many contemporary evangelical Protestant churches prioritise the reading and preaching of Scripture at the expense of the celebration of the Eucharist to the extent that the Eucharist, in some cases, is celebrated perhaps once a year. Even now, within the Catholic Church (and indeed, in most Anglican services) the Mass is divided

⁶⁶ Irenaeus. “Against Heresies,” trans. Philip Schaff. In *Ante-Nicene Fathers Vol. 1*, ed. Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson. (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1885). Book IV, Chapter 38. Accessed online at <http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/0103438.htm> on 01/03/16.

into the Liturgy of the Word followed by the Liturgy of the Eucharist. But in the early Church not so sharp a distinction was drawn. The consumption of the Word was seen as a necessary pre-requisite for the consumption of the Eucharist and the two 'eatings' were two courses of the one meal. For example, Ambrose encouraged believers to "eat this food first [the scriptures], in order to be able to come afterward to the food of the body of Christ."⁶⁷ Similarly, Augustine noted:

let all this, then, avail us to this end, most beloved, that we eat not the flesh and blood of Christ merely in the sacrament, as many evil men do, but that we eat and drink to the participation of the Spirit, that we abide as members in the Lord's body, to be quickened by His Spirit.⁶⁸

Contemporary French sacramental theologian Chauvet considered this connection between the Word and sacrament, specifically the Eucharist, in the context of the Bread of Life discourse in the sixth chapter of John's Gospel. Chauvet contended that this discourse is not solely about the Eucharist but rather it is a discourse about faith in Jesus as the Word of God expressed in eucharistic language. From start to end it is a discourse about eating set against the backdrop of the Jewish narrative of God's provision of manna from heaven in the Exodus story.⁶⁹ Both eating the word (or 'chewing the book' as Chauvet entitled it) and eating the Eucharist are sacramental actions and intimately associated with one another. Thus, he concluded:

In the sacraments, as in all other ecclesial meditations, it is always as *Word*, bitter and sweet at the same time, that Christ gives himself to be assimilated...the efficacy of the sacraments cannot be understood in any other way *than that of the communication of the Word*.⁷⁰

⁶⁷ Ambrose, "Homily on Psalm 118," in *Patrologiae Cursus Completus: Series Latina*, ed. Jacques-Paul Mignes (Paris: Migne, 1844-1891), 15:1197-1526. Cited in and translated by Chauvet, *Symbol and Sacrament*, 214.

⁶⁸ Augustine, "Tractate 27 (John 6:60-72)," trans. John Gibb in *A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers Vol. 7.*, ed. Philip Schaff (Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Publishing Co., 1888). Accessed online at <http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/1701027.htm> on 01/03/16.

⁶⁹ Chauvet, *Symbol and Sacrament*, 225.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.* 226.

To understand the milk as the *Logos* is to understand that the Eucharist enables the text of the Scriptures to become reality in the body of each believer who receives the sacrament. For Chauvet, the reception of the sacrament is the bridge between the Scriptures in writing and the Scriptures in action—or ethics—because of the connection he draws between bodies and words; corporality is the speech of the body.

Perhaps one of the most significant and challenging uses of breast milk imagery, to the contemporary interpreter at least, is that presented in the Odes of Solomon, specifically in the nineteenth Ode. The Odes of Solomon are the oldest extant collection of Syriac poems.⁷¹ Numbering forty two in total, they are powerful and haunting in both their imagery and their theology. There is much scholarly debate on the date of composition but, as a starting point, Michael Lattke, in his commentary on the Odes, notes that “a *Greek* version of the *Odes of Solomon* was in circulation no later than the end of the second/beginning of the third century C.E.”⁷² By process of elimination, Lattke further refines the date of composition to the first quarter of the second century.⁷³ Most scholars tentatively agree that by the mid to late third century copies of the Odes of Solomon were circulating in various languages in North Africa.⁷⁴ The Odes of Solomon can, therefore, be considered to be contemporary to evidence of liturgical practice that included milk and/or cheese in the Eucharist which we have already considered in this chapter.

⁷¹ G. K. Taylor, "The Syriac Tradition," in *The First Christian Theologians*, ed. G. R. Evans (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2004), 201-24, at 207.

⁷² Michael Lattke, *Odes of Solomon: A Commentary* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2009), 6. Emphasis Lattke's own.

⁷³ *Ibid.* 10.

⁷⁴ Taylor, "The Syriac Tradition," 207.

It is worth reading the ode in its entirety to fully appreciate the “dissonant gender imagery”⁷⁵ at play there and the extent of the metaphor in use.

A cup of milk was offered to me
And I drank it in the sweetness of the Lord’s kindness.
The Son is the cup
And he who was milked, the Father,
And [the one] who milked him, the Spirit of holiness.
Because his breasts were full
And it was not desirable that his milk should be poured out/discharged
for no reason/uselessly,
The Spirit of holiness opened his [viz., the Father’s] bosom
And mixed the milk of the two breasts of the Father.
And she/it gave the mixture to the world, while they did not know,
And those who receive [it] are in the pleroma of the right [hand].
The womb of the Virgin caught [it],
And she conceived and gave birth.
And the Virgin became a mother in great compassion
And she was in labor and bore a son.
And she felt no pains/grief,
Because it was not useless/for no reason.
And she did not require a midwife
Because he [viz., God] kept her alive.
Like a man
She brought forth by/in the will [of God]
And brought forth by/in [his] manifestation
And acquired by/in [his] great power
And loved by/in [his] salvation
And guarded by/in [his] kindness
And made known by/in [his] greatness.
Hallelujah.⁷⁶

Whilst the milk imagery is used in other Odes, it is here in Ode Nineteen that the most pronounced development of the imagery takes place. A beautiful, if unusual, image of Trinitarian incarnation, this image has been dismissed by some as being too explicit for modern tastes. James Harris and Alphonse Mingana noted that “[T]his Ode is, in modern eyes, altogether grotesque, and out of harmony with the generally lofty strain of the rest of the collection.”⁷⁷

⁷⁵ Jennifer A. Glancy, *Corporal Knowledge: Early Christian Bodies* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 96.

⁷⁶ Lattke, *Odes of Solomon: A Commentary*, 268.

⁷⁷ James Rendel Harris and Alphonse Mingana, *The Odes and Psalms of Solomon*, Vol. 2 (California: The University Press, 1916), 304.

Whilst the Father and the Son⁷⁸ both have bosoms that are brimming over with milk, Mary brings forth her child “like a man” with God the Father as her midwife. The gender imagery here is “played with for all participants in the salvation drama, both human and divine.”⁷⁹

Here we see the Spirit milking the two breasts of the Father. The milk, when mixed together in a foreshadowing of the idea of the mixed natures of Christ—one Divine and the other human—is Christ the cup. This milk that the Spirit expresses from the Father’s bosom has generative capabilities. In the ancient world, there was a close relationship between breast milk and semen. Aristotle, for example, understood semen to be heated blood and that menstrual blood, when heated by contact with semen, turned into milk.⁸⁰ Thus the liquid offered from the breasts of a nursing mother was the result of contact between menstrual blood and semen.⁸¹ It is entirely reasonable then, given this connection, that the Odist should note that this milk should not be “poured out for no reason” in the same way that semen must not be discharged fruitlessly.⁸²

In the case of the nineteenth Ode, the milk here is specifically connected to the Incarnation and only secondarily to the Eucharist (as it [the body and blood of Christ] is given to those who will receive it). This corresponds to early Christian celebrations of the Eucharist in which the bread and cup ritual is not primarily viewed as being connected to the Last Supper. Instead these early Christians “view[ed] the eucharistic elements as life-giving and spiritually

⁷⁸ In Ode 8 the Redeemer declares that he has “fashioned their members: my own breasts I prepared for them, that they might drink my holy milk and live thereby” (Ode 8.17).

⁷⁹ Susan Ashbrook Harvey, “Feminine Imagery for the Divine: The Holy Spirit, the Odes of Solomon, and Early Syriac Tradition,” *St Vladimir’s Theological Quarterly* 37 (1993), 111-39, at 126-7.

⁸⁰ Aristotle, *Generation of Animals*, 172.

⁸¹ Alicia D. Myers, ““In the Father’s Bosom”: Breastfeeding and Identity Formation in John’s Gospel,” *The Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 76 (2013), 481-97, at 484-5.

⁸² See for example the story of Onan in Genesis 38 and the Levitical instructions for purification in Leviticus 15.

nourishing rather than in sacrificial terms.”⁸³ It would seem that even the early Christians sought to view the primary ritual of intimacy with the Divine not in terms of the horror and violence of the Cross, nor making any connection with the pagan sacrificial activity of their contemporaries, but rather with the miracle of the Annunciation-Incarnation event with all its generative and life-giving promise. The spiritually nourishing image of milk would sit well in this understanding of the significance of the Eucharist. If one considers this imagery of the milk in connection with a search for the somatic memory at the core of Christian faith and in dialogue with the multivalent options for understanding the Eucharist, one arrives, once again, not at the Cross but at the Annunciation-Incarnation event. The nineteenth Ode provides strong indications that the Eucharist and the Incarnation cannot be separated. Indeed, we see in this Ode that the Eucharist and the Annunciation-Incarnation event are two parts of the same happening—the Odist is offered a cup of milk even as the milk (or the *Logos*) is given to the world. Edward Engelbrecht concluded his analysis of the milk imagery in the *Odes of Solomon* by noting that:

[I]f the Odist’s uses of milk analogy are read in isolation from one another, there is no obvious reference to the eucharist. But when read together, a pattern emerges. Baptismal language is followed by the milk analogy. This suggests the author’s familiarity with the cup of milk and honey in the baptismal eucharist. The passages may be eucharistic after all.⁸⁴

If this is the case, then such an interpretation raises the question—what is being remembered in the celebration of the Eucharist?

There is a further element to this connection between the Eucharist and breast milk. Breast feeding in the biblical narrative is an important element in the formation of identity. In the Hebrew Bible there are a number of accounts of

⁸³ Paul Bradshaw and Maxwell E. Johnson, *The Eucharistic Liturgies: Their Evolution and Interpretation* (London: SPCK, 2012), 21.

⁸⁴ Edward Engelbrecht, "God's Milk: An Orthodox Confession of the Eucharist," *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 7, no. 4 (1999), 509-26, at 517.

“preposterous breastfeeding”⁸⁵ narratives. For example, Sarah nurses Isaac when her age, status, and the presence of her slave Hagar would have indicated the role could be delegated to a wet nurse. Similarly, Moses is nursed by his actual mother—a Hebrew—rather than one of the Egyptian wet nurses. Furthermore, Obed is not nursed by his mother Ruth—the Moabite, but rather by his grandmother Naomi—an “Ephrathite[s] from Bethlehem of Judah.”⁸⁶ In all these cases, to be nursed by any of the alternatives would be to have been nursed by a tribal outsider. Thus, Cynthia Chapman concludes that the “Hebrew narrative provides evidence for the understanding of breastfeeding as a practice that conferred upon sons tribal identity, royal or priestly status, and ritual purity.”⁸⁷ It clearly matters who breastfeeds a child, which makes it significant that none of the canonical Gospels record Mary breastfeeding Jesus. In contrast, the beginning of John’s Gospel, full of generative imagery, presents Jesus as one breastfed by God—one who is in the bosom of the Father.⁸⁸ Alicia Myers suggested:

following the telling of the λόγος’s generative abilities and its embodiment in Jesus, the Gospel audience is invited to imagine Jesus resting in the Father’s bosom like a suckling child. Given the cultural expectations surrounding breastfeeding, this symbolic image not only communicates Jesus’ closeness to the Father but also his reliance on the Father as the source of his being and revelation. Like a child nursing from his mother, Jesus continues to feed on his Father’s seed while in his bosom.⁸⁹

In contrast to this omission in the New Testament writings, the Church Fathers were keen to emphasise that Mary had, indeed, breastfed Christ as part of their insistence that Christ was truly formed from her flesh and therefore truly human.

For example, Tertullian interpreted Psalm 22: 2 “And my hope is from my

⁸⁵ Cynthia R. Chapman, ““Oh That You Were Like a Brother to Me, One Who Had Nursed at My Mother’s Breasts.” Breast Milk as a Kinship-Forging Substance,” *Journal of Hebrew Scriptures* 12 (2012), 1-41, at 26

⁸⁶ Ruth 1:1.

⁸⁷ Chapman, ““Oh That You Were Like a Brother to Me,”” 39.

⁸⁸ John 1: 18.

⁸⁹ Myers, “In the Father’s Bosom”, 493.

mother's breasts" as being words from Christ directed to the Father and thus indicating that Jesus had suckled at the breasts of Mary. Mary could not, Tertullian argued, have produced any milk for Christ to drink, if she had not truly been pregnant and given birth to Him.⁹⁰ Donna-Marie Cooper concluded her analysis of Tertullian's writings on breast-feeding by noting:

Tertullian utilizes ancient medical theories on the production of breast milk in order to support his arguments in favour of the reality of Christ's flesh and birth. Because, Christ truly took flesh from Mary, she also experienced the ordinary physiological process of pregnancy, including those which changed her menstrual blood into milk. By making reference to this, Tertullian added scientific credibility to his argument.⁹¹

In this context then, if the eucharistic cup is identified with breast milk rather than sacrificial blood, there is a profound implication for all those who receive it. Those who suckled at the same breast were, in ancient cultures, considered to be milk siblings. Indeed:

nursing from the same mother or within the same maternal clan establishes a kinship bond; milk siblings form an alliance with one another against outsiders, and opposite-sex milk siblings enjoy social access to one another that extends into the private and intimate space of their mother's house.⁹²

For the early Christians, who associated the eucharistic chalice with a mother's milk, to share this nourishment from the same breast (or cup) was to forge strong familial bonds and enabled them to look upon one another as true siblings. As early Church communities were organised along the lines of households, this 'brother and sister' sibling language would have been entirely appropriate in the familial community setting in which the early church functioned. Breast milk not only conferred kinship but also characteristics of the mother—the one providing the milk. Therefore in "the ancient Near East and

⁹⁰ Tertullian, "On the Flesh of Christ," trans. Peter Holmes in *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, ed. Alexander Roberts, James Donaldson, and A. Cleveland Coxe (Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Publishing, 1885), chapter 20. Accessed online at <http://newadvent.org/fathers/0315.htm> 08/08/14.

⁹¹ Donna-Marie Cooper, "Was Tertullian a Misogynist? A Re-Examination of This Charge Based on a Rhetorical Analysis of Tertullian's Work" (University of Exeter, 2012), 143.

⁹² Chapman, "'Oh That You Were Like a Brother to Me'," 21.

Jewish world, as well as the world of the Greeks and Romans, it [breastmilk] is also a substance that communicates essential characteristics."⁹³ To drink of the eucharistic cup full of the milk provided through the flesh of Jesus is to consume milk that is full of the essential characteristics of Christ. Just as babies bonded with their nurse or mother through breastfeeding and so were made in her likeness, so too do Christians forge familial bonds with Christ and the Christians around them, through sharing the eucharistic cup, and become more conformed to the likeness of Christ.

The metaphor of (breast) milk is an undeniably powerful one. The provision of spiritual nourishment through the flesh (or breast) of Christ draws striking connections to the Eucharist in an image that is replete with incarnational and eschatological references. With regards to the Eucharist as non-identical repetition of the Annunciation-Incarnation event, the use of milk in both eucharistic liturgical practice and in the writings of the early church, indicates that for some early Christians the Eucharist was not connected to the sacrificial imagery of blood but rather with the generative and incarnational imagery of milk, with all its heated blood and semen connotations. In fact, the use of milk in the place of wine might be thought to be a deliberate attempt to draw away from sacrificial imagery that is now so prevalent in eucharistic theology. This metaphor relies on the connection between the nursing mother and her child and yet it is entirely removed from the feminine world of breastfeeding. The image, as we have seen it presented here, is detached from the lived experience of women and dislocated from their reality. Gail Paterson Corrington points out that "the detachment of the mother from the actual role of nurse seems to enable the metaphor of nursing to be applied to males as

⁹³ Myers, "In the Father's Bosom," 486.

imparters of life and saving knowledge.”⁹⁴ I will explore this concept further in my consideration of the role of the priest in Chapter Four.

Milk, and especially breast feeding, has particular somatic overtones given its natural production by the female body and its universal trait as nourisher of infants. Milk and bodily memory seem to be closely entwined. If (breast) milk is a part of eucharistic theology, what is being remembered on the altar? Are we remembering Christ’s feeding on his Father, as seems to be indicated in the opening of John’s Gospel? Or are we remembering the nourishing of Christ by Mary which is never mentioned in the Gospels? What I would like to propose is that the connection of milk with the Eucharist encourages *both* of these things, and additionally draws attention to the effects of milk on Jesus’ (and our) body. Milk nourishes and strengthens and is necessary throughout life. Rather than remembering, simply, the birth of Christ, or his infancy, the use of milk in the Eucharist encourages us to remember the whole Annunciation-Incarnation event—gestation, birth, growth, life, death, and resurrection. It incorporates the trauma of these events alongside the familiar and the natural.

The Consecratory Epiclesis

As I have already demonstrated, the variety of meaning and repeated memory remembered in the Eucharist is wide. Many of these patterns of non-identical repetition point towards the remembering of an event more aligned with the Annunciation-Incarnation event than with the Pasch of Christ. These patterns can also be identified in the liturgy of the Eucharist. Some of the implications of

⁹⁴ Gail Paterson Corrington, "The Milk of Salvation: Redemption by the Mother in Late Antiquity and Early Christianity," *The Harvard Theological Review* 82, no. 4 (1989), 393-420, at 406.

such patterns of repetition for contemporary eucharistic theology have already been considered but it is also possible to see the epiclesis⁹⁵ in the anaphora as a non-identical repetition of the Annunciation-Incarnation event. I have already explored the consecratory epiclesis in the writings of Ambrose. Whilst helpful in outlining the varying ways in which non-identical repetition was employed by early Christian writers, consideration of Ambrose's approach to the epiclesis is not as fruitful as that of some of his contemporaries. Ambrose makes no mention of the Spirit in his consideration of the moment of consecration. Indeed, Ambrose's epiclesis seems to be entirely Christ focused. And for Ambrose, the transformation of the eucharistic elements takes place in the speaking of the Words of Institution by the priest *in persona Christi*. This is characteristic of an earlier eucharistic theology. I will explore this in more detail in my examination of the eucharistic theology of Cyril in Chapter Three.

Some of the early Church theologians commented on the epiclesis and drew parallels between this moment as, on the one hand, a descent of the Word of God through the power of the Holy Spirit on the eucharistic elements and, on the other, the incarnational activity of the Word of God, forming Himself a body in the womb of Mary as the Holy Spirit overshadowed her. All of these moments are somatic. Described in philosophical or theological terms, they are, at their core, embodied experiences of flesh and blood. It is, therefore, essential to consider the theological significance of such a connection with regard to our investigation of the somatic memory at the core of the Christian faith—that which is repeated in the celebration of the Eucharist.

In the writings of John Damascene the explicit connection made between the Annunciation-Incarnation event and the consecration is clear. John noted:

⁹⁵ The 'epiclesis' is traditionally understood in the contemporary church to be the invocation of the Holy Spirit by the priest upon the eucharistic bread and wine.

[A]nd now you ask, how the bread became Christ's body and the wine and water Christ's blood...it is enough for you to learn that it was through the Holy Spirit, just as the Lord took on Himself flesh that subsisted in Him.⁹⁶

The language that John Damascene uses, in this extract, is significant in itself. John indicates that it is the Word who forms "for Himself" flesh. This seems to be indicative of a *Logos* epiclesis which will be explored further below. However, John also makes it clear that with regard to the Eucharist, it is the Spirit who effects the transformation of the elements. The relationship between the *Logos* and the Spirit in these two events seems unclear. In both cases, the relationship between earthly materials (the bread and wine or the womb of the Virgin) and the Divine is altered by the activity of the Holy Spirit.

Whilst it would seem logical in the modern context to identify the link between the epiclesis and the event of the Annunciation-Incarnation, given our developed understanding of Pneumatology and Trinitarian theology, this was not always the case. In the early church the epiclesis was, at first, not consistently given as an epiclesis of the Spirit. That is to say, rather than calling down the Holy Spirit upon the offerings of bread and wine on the altar, some of these early liturgies included a petition for the *Logos* to come and effect some change on these earthly elements. Earlier in this chapter it was noted that Justin Martyr drew a connection between the Annunciation-Incarnation and the Eucharist. Returning to this quotation we see that he wrote:

⁹⁶ John Damascene, "An Exposition of the Orthodox Faith, Book 4," trans. E. W. Watson and L. Pullan in *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Second Series, Vol. 9*, ed. Philip Schaff and Henry Wace (Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Publishing Co., 1899). Chapter 13. Accessed online at <http://newadvent.org/fathers/33044.htm> on 13/05/14.

but in like manner as Jesus Christ our Saviour, having been *made flesh by the Word of God*, had both flesh and blood for our salvation, so likewise have we been taught that the food which is blessed by the prayer of His word, and from which our blood and flesh by transmutation are nourished, is the flesh and blood of that Jesus who was made flesh.⁹⁷

Justin Martyr's words reveal the emphasis on the action of the *Logos*—the action is his, not that of the Holy Spirit. Just at the time when discussions about the nature and divinity of the Holy Spirit reach their peak (mid fourth century), so we begin to see the decline in *Logos* epiclesis and the rise of appeals to the Holy Spirit. It would seem that as early Christians gained confidence in their understanding of the Trinity and the consubstantial nature of the Holy Spirit, so they seemed more inclined to pray to the Spirit. Kilmartin noted that, subsequent to the middle of the fourth century, "the Holy Spirit is assigned both the role of effecting the incarnation and the transformation of the Eucharistic gifts in Greek theology."⁹⁸

This characterisation of the shift in emphasis from *Logos* to Spirit seems to imply some clear point of transition in thought but the reality of this change is a more gradual movement in thinking. John McKenna offered a more nuanced view of this transition. In his examination of these early epicleses, he concluded that the evidence seems to suggest the consecratory epiclesis of the Holy Spirit that came to popularity in the middle of the fourth century developed out of an earlier epiclesis of sanctification which, McKenna argued, already contained

⁹⁷ Justin Martyr, "Apology 1," trans. Marcus Dods and George Reith in *Ante-Nicene Fathers Vol. 1*, ed. Alexander Roberts, James Donaldson, and A. Cleveland Coxe (Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Publishing Co., 1885). Chapter 66. Accessed online at <http://newadvent.org/fathers/0126.htm> on 13/05/14. Emphasis my own.

⁹⁸ Edward Kilmartin, *Christian Liturgy 1* (Kansas City: Sheed & Ward, 1988), 166. It must be noted that Greek and Latin theologians (and thus the Orthodox and Roman Churches) differ in their belief of the precise moment of consecration. For the Latin theologians this happens with the Words of Institution but for the Greek theologians there is no moment of consecration. Rather the whole eucharistic prayer is considered to be consecratory. The mystery is completed in the 'Amen' of the gathered people. In many eastern rites there are, in fact, two epicleses—one before the Words of Institution and a second after. See Bryan Spinks, *Worship: Prayers from the East* (Washington D. C.: Pastoral Press, 1993).

implicitly an idea of the Spirit's transforming, consecratory action.⁹⁹ Here one can see a transition in doctrine regarding the Spirit—as the understanding of the role of the Spirit in the Incarnation changes so also does the understanding of the role of the Spirit in the Eucharist. As the role of the Spirit is increased and given primacy in the event of the Annunciation-Incarnation, so these early theologians feel the need to revise their understanding of the event of the Eucharist and to clarify the role the Spirit has here too. It would seem clear that these two events were intimately connected together in the minds and the theology of the church fathers.

It is worth turning our attention to the eucharistic theology of Cyril of Alexandria briefly here¹⁰⁰ since his writings indicate he was a very late proponent of a *Logos* epiclesis. Cyril was appointed to his role as Bishop of the Alexandrian See in the period subsequent to this transition from Word to Spirit epiclesis. Ezra Gebremedhin, in his analysis of the theology of Cyril argued that the Spirit epiclesis was *already* an established feature of the liturgy of Cyril's day and that it is surprising that we find little reference to it in his writings. Cyril projected a *Logos* dominated understanding of the Incarnation onto the words of consecration in the Eucharist.¹⁰¹ This is in line with his emphasis on the centrality of the unity of the body in both his understanding of the Annunciation-Incarnation and the Eucharist. For Cyril, the role of the Spirit as consecrator of the elements is overshadowed by that of the *Logos*. This emphasis on the *Logos* is consistent with Cyril's theology. Whilst Cyril stands in isolation as a late proponent of a *Logos* epiclesis, this is driven by his unique understanding of eucharistic theology and thus I argue that Cyril's perspective is not typical of

⁹⁹ John McKenna, *The Eucharistic Epiclesis: A Detailed History from the Patristic to the Modern Era* (Chicago: Hillenbrand Books, Liturgical Training Publications, 2009), 121.

¹⁰⁰ Cyril of Alexandria's theology will be examined in more detail in the next chapter.

¹⁰¹ Ezra Gebremedhin, *Life-Giving Blessing: An Inquiry into the Eucharistic Doctrine of Cyril of Alexandria* (Uppsala: Uppsala University Press, 1977), 61.

his contemporaries. There was, further still, clear division between the Eastern churches and those in the West regarding the epiclesis. This division became solidified in different “moments” of consecration. In the West, the “moment” at which the bread and wine became the flesh and blood of Christ was during the Words of Institution; however, in the East, this “moment” was the whole of the eucharistic prayer, completed with the ‘Amen’ of the people.

With regard to our question of what is being remembered at the altar and the search for the somatic memory at the core of the Christian faith, this analysis of the significance and meaning of the epiclesis offers salient insight. The development of the epiclesis is clearly linked to the development of Pneumatological and Trinitarian doctrine. As understanding of the Spirit’s role in the Incarnation took clearer shape, theologians felt the need to give greater clarity to the Spirit’s role in the Eucharist. Why would they seek to do this if they did not already understand the Eucharist to be intimately intertwined with the Annunciation-Incarnation event?

The Eucharist and the Kollyridians

Much of our consideration of eucharistic theology in this chapter has, thus far, been focused on what can be regarded as reasonably mainstream practice. It is helpful, therefore, to consider eucharistic practice at the fringes of the theological milieu of the writings we have considered. Our search for somatic memory and our exploration of what is being repeated in the celebration of the Eucharist must not be removed from the wide variety of practice found in the early church. We have already explored the practice of a milk cup in eucharistic

celebrations, but most challenging, in the fourth century, is that of the practice of the Kollyridians.

There is a surprising paucity of written analysis of Epiphanius of Salamis' reference in his *Panarion*—his medicine chest of heresies (and, one can speculate, of Epiphanius' preferred remedies for such illnesses)—to the Kollyridian women devoted to Mary. Epiphanius writes of a group of women, first in Thrace, then in Sycthia and on to Arabia, who “decorate a barber’s chair or a square seat, spread a cloth on it, set out bread and offer it in Mary’s name on a certain day of the year, and all partake of the bread.”¹⁰² Epiphanius has two issues with the actions of these women: firstly, they appear to be allowing women to function in liturgical office,¹⁰³ and secondly, they are, in the view of Epiphanius at least, substituting Mary for God.¹⁰⁴

One can, perhaps, account for the lack of scholarly work focused on the Kollyridians by noting some of the attitudes that accompany any such discussion of this part of Epiphanius' text. For example, Averil Cameron, in an essay published in 2004, dismissively noted that “we should probably leave aside the claim made in Epiphanius of Salamis’s list of heresies that there was an obscure group of women, the Collyridians [sic], who particularly venerated her [the Virgin Mary].”¹⁰⁵ And with this, Cameron skips over this text as an invention of Epiphanius—a piece of fiction.

Other scholars appear to discount the account of the Kollyridians as being evidence of ‘popular’ belief and thus not worthy of serious consideration.

¹⁰²Epiphanius, "The Panarion of Epiphanius of Salamis Books 2 and 3," 637.

¹⁰³ Epiphanius objects to this as he notes “never at any time has a woman offered sacrifice to God.” Ibid. 638.

¹⁰⁴ Epiphanius believes that these women are worshipping Mary. “Even though the tree is lovely, it is not for food; and even though Mary is all fair, and is holy and held in honour, she is not to be worshipped.” Ibid. 644.

¹⁰⁵ Averil Cameron, "The Cult of the Virgin in Late Antiquity: Religious Development and Myth-Making," in *The Church and Mary. Papers Read at the 2001 Summer Meeting and the 2002 Winter Meeting of the Ecclesiastical History Society*, ed. R. N. Swanson (Suffolk: The Boydell Press, 2004), 1-21, at 6.

In contrast to Cameron, the historian Stephen Benko did suggest that the Kollyridians were a real group of women. In fact, he seems to give great credence to Epiphanius' account and takes little heed of any potential rhetoric at work in Epiphanius' writing. Benko presented the Kollyridians as a group of probably poorly educated women who were influenced by their local experience of pagan goddess worship and developed a ritual dedicated to Mary as a continuation of this pagan goddess worship they were familiar with in their milieu—a form of syncretism he believes was exceedingly common in the ancient world. He concluded that “[The] Kollyridians were Christians, but they were an extremist fringe and their story soon leads the historian into a blind alley.”¹⁰⁶ Benko dismissed the Kollyridians, not in the same way as Cameron does by implying they are fictional, but rather by suggesting that they are on the edges of ‘orthodox’ Christian worship and thus should be ignored.

There are a number of problems with Benko's argument: it is patronisingly condescending in its regard to early religious practices; deliberately one sided in its choice of texts; and seemingly uncritical in its analysis of primary sources. Furthermore, I am surprised that Benko could see fit to write such an analysis in the light of Peter Brown's seminal work on the cult of the saints¹⁰⁷ published some thirteen years earlier. In his analysis of the rise of veneration of the saints within Latin Christianity, Brown began by pointing out in his first chapter that it had been a tendency of scholars to assume that ‘popular’ beliefs and religion are uniformly unsophisticated and old-fashioned¹⁰⁸ and that such beliefs can only really show themselves in a monotonous

¹⁰⁶ Stephen Benko, *The Virgin Goddess: Studies in the Pagan and Christian Roots of Mariology* (Leiden & Boston: Brill, 1994), 194.

¹⁰⁷ Peter Brown, *The Cult of the Saints: Its Rise and Function in Latin Christianity* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981).

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.* 20.

continuity with older, pagan beliefs.¹⁰⁹ This tendency must, Brown argued, be challenged. With regard to the cult of the saints, and for our concerns, the veneration of the Virgin Mary, Brown concluded:

[Y]et we have seen...that the rise of the cult of saints was sensed by contemporaries, in no uncertain manner, to have broken most of the imaginative boundaries which ancient men had placed between heaven and earth, the divine and the human, the living and the dead, the town and its antithesis.¹¹⁰

We cannot, therefore, suggest that the ritual performed by the Kollyridians was merely a continuation of pagan goddess worship. Brown has made it clear that the development of veneration of the saints was a moment of radical discontinuity with the kind of 'popular' belief that had gone before in the ancient world. To argue, as Benko did, that the kind of ritual action performed by the Kollyridians is nothing more than the continuation of pagan goddess worship is to do a great disservice to the undoubtedly Christian milieu in which the Kollyridians, whomever they were and whatever name they went by, lived and worshipped.

A more nuanced reading of Epiphanius comes from the work of Stephen Shoemaker who has focused on the texts of the earliest Dormition narratives in examining the rise of the Marian cult in the patristic period. Shoemaker agreed with Benko in suggesting that the Kollyridians were a real group (albeit one named by Epiphanius himself!) but he suggested that rather than worshipping Mary as a goddess, "the Kollyridians merely were offering Mary a kind of veneration that during the late fourth century was increasingly directed towards Christian saints."¹¹¹ In his analysis of the text of the Kollyridian 'heresy' in Epiphanius' *Panarion*, Shoemaker indicated that whilst Epiphanius felt that the

¹⁰⁹ Ibid. 19.

¹¹⁰ Ibid. 21.

¹¹¹ S. J. Shoemaker, "Epiphanius of Salamis, the Kollyridians, and the Early Dormition Narratives: The Cult of the Virgin in the Fourth Century," *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 16, no. 3 (2008), 371-401, at 371.

Kollyridians were “worshipping Mary in the place of God, his charge offers no assurance that these opponents...understood their ritual practices this way.”¹¹² Shoemaker demonstrated that other sources, specifically early narratives of the Dormition of Mary, attest to the existence of a remarkably similar ritual enacted three times a year and observed in honour of Mary.¹¹³ He concluded that this understanding of Epiphanius’ comments indicates that there is evidence of cultic veneration of Mary half a century prior to the council of Ephesus—the point at which the cultic veneration of Mary was thought to get its real boost with the affirmation of the title *Theotokos* for Mary.

One is left, after following Shoemaker’s line of thought, with an impression of Epiphanius as a lone voice in criticising this early veneration of the saints. Such veneration was certainly, by the end of the fourth century, becoming more commonplace in the Christian world. The Kollyridians were, perhaps, simply ahead of the game in terms of their veneration and, tellingly, Epiphanius’ attack on their practices is located in a broader critique of the veneration of the saints. After outlining the features of the Kollyridian ritual, Epiphanius goes on to recount all the reasons why women can have no priestly function before drawing comparisons between Mary and Elijah, John and Thecla.¹¹⁴ None of these others are to be worshipped and, thus, neither is Mary. Epiphanius is not merely rejecting the veneration (or, in his mind, the worshipping) of Mary, he is rejecting the emerging cult of the Saints as offering worship to the created rather than the Creator.

What, then, are the implications of this consideration of the Kollyridians for our question? What is the somatic memory being repeated in their

¹¹² Ibid. 374.

¹¹³ "The Cult of the Virgin in the Fourth Century: A Fresh Look at Some Old and New Sources," in *The Origins of the Cult of the Virgin Mary*, ed. Chris Maunder (London Burns & Oates Ltd, 2008), 71-88, at 78.

¹¹⁴ Epiphanius, "The Panarion of Epiphanius of Salamis Books 2 and 3," 641.

celebration of this Marian-focused Eucharist? It is significant that in this earliest of testaments to Marian veneration the Eucharist is intimately involved. Bodily memory recalled in the Eucharist cannot be separated from the Marian body. The Annunciation-Incarnation event depends upon it. The fact that the Dormition narratives recommend the celebration of this 'bread ritual' in the name of Mary in connection with agricultural markers in the course of the year indicates that there is some connection, at least in the minds of believers, between Mary, the Eucharist, and successful generation of crops.¹¹⁵ Is it, perhaps, likely that they were remembering the fecundity of Mary, imaged in the Eucharist and prayed for, analogously, in the harvest? In which case, the Eucharist is, for these so-called Kollyridians, a re-actualisation, a non-identical repetition, of the Annunciation-Incarnation event. The somatic memory in this eucharistic practice is not Cross-focused, but rather focused on the holistic concept of the Incarnation.

The Implications of Non-Identical Repetition and the Search for Somatic Memory

In this chapter I have offered substantial evidence to support the idea that in the early Church the Eucharist was understood to be a non-identical repetition of the Annunciation-Incarnation event in its widest sense, drawing in the whole life (death and resurrection) of Christ. However, this understanding is not one that prevails in the modern church. In the contemporary Church, it is the Eucharist's relationship with the Last Supper and Pasch of Christ that is given primacy. In addition to seeing the Eucharist as the non-identical repetition of the

¹¹⁵ Stephen J. Shoemaker, "Marian Liturgies and Devotion in Early Christianity," in *Mary: The Complete Resource*, ed. Sarah Jane Boss (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 130-45, at 137.

Incarnation, it is also possible to view the Eucharist as a non-identical repetition of the Last Supper event, which is, itself, a non-identical repetition of a Passover meal (which is itself a repetition of *the* Passover). Heaney referred to this as a “retrospectively restructured annual Passover meal.”¹¹⁶ Indeed, Elizabeth Stuart noted that:

[T]he Eucharist is an extended repetition with critical difference of the Last Supper, the critical difference being that in the Eucharist the meal element is caught up in a new reality, the reality of the heavenly liturgy opened up to us by the cross and resurrection. The Last Supper itself was probably an extended repetition...of the Seder meal.¹¹⁷

If, however, we see the Eucharist as a non-identical repetition of the Annunciation-Incarnation event (in the full sense I have proposed here) then we can suggest that in the repeated celebration of this event (both Eucharist and Annunciation-Incarnation), the eucharistic self is formed. The sacrament of the Eucharist is, at its core, a generative experience in which one is born and reborn. The critical difference in this repetition is the life of the *Logos*, first only experienced in one woman, Mary, but now available to all who will receive.

David Ford identified the eucharistic self as “being face to face (in faith and hope) with the one who commands that this be done in memory of him...the baptized self in the routine of being fed and blessed.”¹¹⁸ Ford viewed the Eucharist as creating an expectation of death in its focus on the Last Supper and thus this non-identical repetition celebrates the Lord’s death until he comes. However, if one considers the Eucharist as the non-identical repetition of the Annunciation-Incarnation event we see the thoroughly New Testament declaration of life in abundance.¹¹⁹ In his exegesis of 2 Corinthians 4.16, Ford

¹¹⁶ Heaney, *Beyond the Body*, 98.

¹¹⁷ Elizabeth Stuart, “Sacramental Flesh,” in *Queer Theology*, ed. Gerard Loughlin (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2007), 65-75, at 69.

¹¹⁸ David F. Ford, “What Happens in the Eucharist?,” *Scottish Journal of Theology* 48, no. 3 (1995), 359-81, at 379.

¹¹⁹ John 10:10.

concludes that the Eucharist “is the sacrament of human flourishing.”¹²⁰ Ford himself is focused on the Eucharist as death, but this declaration makes much more sense if the Eucharist is understood in the context of the Annunciation-Incarnation. The Annunciation-Incarnation event *is* the location of the traumatic somatic memory at the core of Christian belief.¹²¹ The somatic memory, even here, is that of the full life of Christ—this is the heart of the Christian faith.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the Eucharist, with its focus on remembering through repeated action, lends itself well to consideration as a form of non-identical repetition. Indeed, it is, according to Milbank and Pickstock, the essential form of non-identical repetition. We have, in this chapter, explored some of the ways in which the Eucharist can be understood as repeating earlier events. We have also searched for the somatic memory at the heart of the Christian faith. The Eucharist can be seen as a non-identical repetition of the Annunciation-Incarnation—the whole incarnation. By examining the use of bread/dough and milk in both eucharistic imagery and eucharistic practice, we have seen how wide an Incarnational perspective these early Eucharists had. The epiclesis in the anaphora can be understood as making a specific connection between the events on the altar and those at the Annunciation. It is clear then, that within Christian thought, there is a strong tradition of viewing the Annunciation-Incarnation event with the same theological imagination that one considers the Eucharist. As an act of non-identical repetition, the Eucharist repeats the events

¹²⁰ Ford, "What Happens in the Eucharist?," 380.

¹²¹ I will develop my exploration of the Annunciation-Incarnation event as a traumatic experience in Chapter Seven when I consider Mary's embodied experience of the Annunciation.

of the Annunciation-Incarnation event but with a critical difference—not becoming present in one, immaculately conceived woman but becoming present in all bodies who receive his flesh.

Bodies and memories come together in the celebration of the Eucharist. For this reason, as I demonstrated at the outset of this chapter, the Eucharist becomes the ideal place to search for the somatic memory at the heart of the Christian faith. Continually repeated and allowed to rupture our identities afresh in each celebration, the somatic memory isn't what we might assume. It is tempting to make an easy connection between the Eucharist and the Pasch of Christ. After all, here is a body suffering trauma and, just the night before, Jesus has asked his followers to engage in collective memorial practice as they think of him. But they cannot be remembering his death at the Last Supper because it hasn't happened yet! Instead, Jesus is instructing them to remember Him. All of Him. His full life from Annunciation to the sharing of this final Passover meal. We can certainly extend the memory to incorporate the trauma of the Pasch and the joy of the resurrection but we should be cautious in *only* remembering those events when we celebrate the Eucharist. The somatic memory that underpins the Christian faith is much bigger than the final weekend of Christ's life.

Chapter Three

Christ is One

The Unity of the Body in the Theology of Cyril of Alexandria

Blessing through the mystery of the Eucharist those who believe in Him, He makes us of the same Body with Himself and with each other. For who could sunder or divide from their natural union with one another those who are knit together through His holy Body, which is one in union with Christ? For if we all partake of the one Bread, we are all made one Body; for Christ cannot suffer severance. Therefore also the Church is become Christ's Body, and we are also individually His members, according to the wisdom of Paul. For we, being all of us united to Christ through His holy Body, inasmuch as we have received Him Who is one and indivisible in our own bodies, owe the service of our members to Him rather than to ourselves.¹

In the previous chapter I proposed that the early Church celebrated the Eucharist as a non-identical repetition of the Annunciation-Incarnation event in a particularly full sense. Having begun to argue that the Eucharist is the place in which somatic memory can be found, I have suggested that the traumatic somatic memory at the heart of the Christian faith is not the Cross but rather the Annunciation-Incarnation event. To demonstrate and more fully establish my argument, more examination from sources within the tradition is necessary. It is to this examination that I now turn.

Cyril of Alexandria's theology is worthy of a deeper consideration for two reasons. Firstly, he was one of the key protagonists in the Nestorian Controversy—a dispute over the somatic memory of the Church which, in my proposed framing of these terms, can be viewed as an episode where bodies, and disagreements over how we remember them, threatened to cause traumatic rupture in the body of the Church itself. Secondly, extended

¹ Cyril of Alexandria, *Commentary on the Gospel According to S. John, 2 Vols., Vol. 2*, trans. T. Randell (London: W. Smith, 1885), 550.

consideration of Cyril provides fruitful insights for my line of investigation, specifically exploring the issues of body and memory in the Church, because, as I will demonstrate, his theology is body-oriented. Indeed, I argue, Cyril's theology is entirely one of the body—in all its senses.

The events of the Nestorian Controversy of the fifth century have been thoroughly explored and reflected upon by theologians and historians alike. There is no doubt that this controversy is one that must be considered through multiple lenses and from a variety of perspectives. Personal dislikes, historical precedents, and powerful personalities all combine in this dispute to form a melting pot of intrigue, discordance, and rhetoric. However, beneath all this well-trodden history, there is a unified theological driving force that seems apparent in the thinking of one of the central figures—Cyril of Alexandria. For Cyril, the body is vital and intimately connected to his understanding of the Eucharist. This chapter will demonstrate that an examination of the Nestorian Controversy through these twin, interconnected lenses of body and Eucharist, reveals a deeper understanding of Cyrillian theology, particularly with regard to the Incarnation. Cyril's theology is inextricably linked to both bodies and memory. He has a holistic approach to theology that centres on the Incarnation and the Eucharist. The bodily memory on which Cyril's eucharistic theology rests is not just the eucharistic body, but the physical, corporate, and feminine bodies also.

In 1928 Eduard Schwartz put forward the now long-accepted interpretation that the Nestorian Controversy rested on motivations that were primarily political. He argued that:

[T]he motive which led Cyril to begin the controversy with Nestorius was not the dogmatic divergence. Nestorius in his sermons put forward no innovations, but the doctrine which had been taught by Diodore of Tarsus and Theodore of Mopsuestia for almost two generations without becoming suspected of heresy.²

Thus it was not, in Schwartz's opinion, dogmatic or doctrinal differences that could account for Cyril's attack on Nestorius; rather, the attack was a politically motivated attack on a rival bishopric. Twenty years later, Henry Chadwick, in his ground-breaking paper on the driving forces behind the Nestorian Controversy, acknowledged that there was much truth in Schwartz's interpretation of the event, but that "the story does not seem capable of quite so simple an interpretation."³ In the seventy years since Chadwick's article, academic consensus on the driving issues of this debate has varied from the political explanation, such as that favoured by Schwartz, to the theological explanation, such as that favoured by Chadwick. With the rise in interest in late antiquity studies, and the recent publication of a plethora of monographs on Byzantium in particular,⁴ the political exploration of this controversy has found itself much in favour. Indeed, in his 1977 thesis on Cyril's eucharistic theology, Gebremedhin noted that:

[A] number of leading German Protestant scholars have however found Cyril vulnerable precisely on the subject of the motives for his involvement in the controversy. F. Loofs, E. Schwartz and A. von Campenhausen are all at one in regarding the theological issues raised by Cyril as a camouflage for attacking Nestorius for receiving some Egyptian monks who had complaints against Cyril, and for starting inquiries into these complaints.⁵

² Eduard Schwartz, *Cyrrill Und Der Monch Viktor* (Vienna: Holder-Pichler-Tempsky, 1928), 208, trans. & cited in Henry Chadwick, "Eucharist and Christology in the Nestorian Controversy," *Journal of Theological Studies* 2, no. 2 (1951), 145-64, at 145.

³ Chadwick, "Eucharist and Christology," 150.

⁴ Averil Cameron notes that there "has been a remarkable upsurge on interest in the topic of Mary in Late Antiquity and in the East" and notes a number of recent publications in Cameron, "The Cult of the Virgin," 1 n.1.

⁵ Gebremedhin, *Life-Giving Blessing*, 23.

Such explanations have never managed, however, to exclude theological considerations completely. It is my contention that Cyril's theological polemic against the Antiochenes is focused on the unity of the body, driven by Cyril's specific understanding of the Eucharist. In this respect, I will demonstrate, the discourse of the Nestorian Controversy is focused on both theological and political issues, but driven by Cyril's theology of the body.

This chapter will, therefore, outline Cyril's understanding of the eucharistic body of Christ,⁶ the historical, physical body of Jesus, the corporate body both in terms of the Church and the Empire, and finally, the feminine body of both the women of Byzantium and the Theotokos. In each case, these bodies will be considered as driving forces behind Cyril's position in the Nestorian Controversy and thus advance my contention that this most significant debate on the Incarnation of Christ ought to be inseparable from eucharistic theology. In proposing that the body is key for Cyril's theology I can argue that the *traumatic* considerations of both somatic memory and the establishment of bodily integrity (as the first stage of the recovery from trauma) are inextricably linked for Cyril and, thus, for the eucharistic theology within the Christian tradition.

The Nestorian Controversy: The Issues at Stake

The Nestorian Controversy, regardless of the variety of opinion of its actual causes, was focused on the understanding of the incarnational union of the Divine and human in the person of Jesus Christ and consequently on the issue of appropriate terminology for his mother, Mary. Nestorius, in 428 C.E., waded

⁶ In this chapter, reference to the 'eucharistic body of Christ' will be understood to refer to the sacramental bread and wine that become, in the Eucharist, the body and blood of Christ.

into an already active debate on whether it was appropriate to refer to Mary as the *Theotokos*—the God-bearer. Arguing this title was not appropriate, Nestorius believed that the title *Theotokos* implied a gestation of God in the womb of Mary. He believed this seemed to indicate that God was changing in some way. John Kelly summarised Nestorius' argument when he noted that:

God cannot have a mother, he [Nestorius] argued (Serm. I: Loofs, 252), and no creature could have engendered the Godhead; Mary bore a man, the vehicle of divinity but not God. The Godhead cannot have been carried for nine months in the woman's womb, or have been wrapped in baby-clothes, or have suffered, died and been buried (Nulla deteria: Loofs, 245ff.). Behind the description of Mary as *Theotokos*, he professed (Loofs, 273) to detect the Arian tenet that the Son was a creature, or the Apollinarian idea that the manhood was incomplete.⁷

Nestorius was not simply attacking one name given to Mary amongst many others. Rather, his argument had implications for both the nature of Christ and the person of Mary. Aloys Grillmeier noted that the development of the use of the term *Theotokos* was a natural part of kerygmatic evolution and already an established part of theological language by the time of the controversy:

[T]he Nestorian criticism of the use of 'Theotokos' was felt by those who knew the tradition of the Church to be an unjust rejection of a legitimate kerygma and a σκάνδαλον οἰκουμενικόν. The faithful were σκανδαλιζόμενοι. In other words, a central feature of the faith and preaching of the Church had been attacked in the sight and hearing of simple believers and their bishops.⁸

Nestorius' attempted prohibition of the title *Theotokos* in Constantinople reached the attention of the Bishop of Alexandria, Cyril, who immediately took the opportunity to write to Nestorius and correct his theology. Cyril claimed that Nestorius' proclamations against the *Theotokos* were a revival of the heretical concept of a union that was entirely, and merely, moral. In the fourth book of his *Five Tomes Against Nestorius*, written around 430 C.E. and roughly

⁷ John Norman Davidson Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines*, 5th ed. (London: A. and C. Black (Publishers) Limited, 1977), 311.

⁸ Aloys Grillmeier, *Christ in Christian Tradition: From the Apostolic Age to Chalcedon (451)*, trans. J. S. Bowden (London: A. R. Mowbray & Co. Ltd., 1965), 370.

contemporaneous with the controversy, Cyril uses the analogy of fire to make his position regarding the unity of Christ clear for Nestorius.

It is the flesh united to him and not someone else's flesh that has the power to endow with life, in the sense that it became the peculiar property of him who has the power to endow all things with life. For if ordinary fire transmits the power of the natural energy inherent within it to the material with which it appears to come into contact, and changes water itself, in spite of its being cold by nature, into something contrary to its nature, and makes it hot, what is strange or somehow impossible to believe about the Word of God the Father who is Life by nature, rendering the flesh united to him capable of endowing with life? For it is his own flesh and not that of another conceived of as separate from him and as the flesh of someone like ourselves. If you detach the life-giving Word of God from the mystical and true union with body and separate them entirely, how can you prove that it is still life-giving?⁹

For Cyril then, Nestorius' attack on the use of the title *Theotokos* seemed to reduce the connection of the Divine and the human in the person of Jesus Christ to simply an external, illusory association. To reduce the Incarnation to such a level undermines the possibility of redemption and deprives the Eucharist of its energising force. The act of taking the Eucharist, if Jesus is just a man, becomes cannibalistic.¹⁰ Again, Grillmeier noted, "[A]ll possible lines were drawn to other heresies of earlier periods (Adoptionism, Judaism). In this way an objective, impersonal picture of heresy was formed, which was then assigned to Nestorius as its originator."¹¹ Eventually, the discord resulted in the calling of the Council of Ephesus in 431 C.E. and the subsequent victory of Cyril's theology over Nestorius and the Antiochene School.

The war of words resulted from a lack of understanding on both sides and it would seem, in retrospect, that the two bishops were likely much closer in their theology than either would have conceded at the time. Indeed, within two years following the Council, Cyril and leading members of the Antiochene

⁹ Cyril of Alexandria, *Five Tomes against Nestorius*, trans. by P. E. Pusey. A Library of the Fathers of the Holy Catholic Church (Oxford: James Parker & Co., 1881). Book IV, 125-152, at 142.

¹⁰ Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines*, 318.

¹¹ Grillmeier, *Christ in Christian Tradition*, 371.

Church had agreed on the Symbol of Union—a statement encapsulating orthodox belief regarding the union of the Divine and the human in the person of Christ. At first glance this statement appears to make major concessions on the part of Cyril towards the Antiochene position. Cyril's favoured terms of 'one nature' and 'hypostatic union' were displaced by Antiochene terms such as 'union of two natures' and 'one *prosopon*'. The title *Theotokos* was admitted but only with safeguards that pleased the Antiochenes. Kelly argued:

[W]hen we look beneath the terminology in which he [Cyril] clothed it to what was really important in his Christology, and recall the victory that he had won in the political field, we can well understand how Cyril could afford to survey the accord reached with a reasonable measure of satisfaction.¹²

It would seem that some of the tenets Cyril had considered to be non-negotiable became, away from the heat of controversy, more open to discussion.

Historical Survey: Incarnation and the Eucharist

Cyril's reaction to Nestorius' attack on the use of the title *Theotokos* is firmly grounded in his theology. In his *Commentary on the Gospel of John*¹³ Cyril demonstrated very clearly what he considered to be important in his Christology. The whole work (and indeed much of his other work) is characterised by a strong eucharistic theology. He noted, for example, when commenting on chapter 6 of the Gospel (the Bread of Life discourse), that when Jesus said "I am the Bread of Life," he meant:

not bodily bread, which cutteth off the suffering from hunger only, and freeth the flesh from the destruction therefrom, but remoulding wholly the whole living being to eternal life, and rendering man who was formed to be forever, superior to death. By these words He points to the life and grace through His Holy Flesh, through which this property of the Only Begotten, i.e., life, is introduced to us.¹⁴

¹² Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines*, 330.

¹³ Cyril of Alexandria, *Commentary on the Gospel According to S. John, 2 Vols., Vol. 1*, trans. P. E. Pusey, (Oxford: James Parker & Co., 1874).

¹⁴ *Ibid.* 373-4.

A number of scholars¹⁵ have considered Cyril of Alexandria's eucharistic theology as a critical motivating factor behind his attack on Nestorius. One must, of course, begin with Chadwick and his 1951 paper on "Eucharist and Christology in the Nestorian Controversy."¹⁶ Chadwick noted that the Eucharist:

is the heart of Cyril's faith, the dynamic which imparted such intense religious fervour to his monophysite monks. Every eucharist is a reincarnation of the Logos who is there πάλιν ἐν σώματι, and whose ἰδία σὰρξ is given to the communicant.¹⁷

Thus Chadwick concluded that "his [Cyril's] doctrine of the union of the natures is proved by the church's eucharistic belief."¹⁸ The mystery by which the bread becomes the body and the wine becomes the blood, is the same mystery as when the *Logos* became the person of Jesus. Every celebration of the Eucharist is, for Cyril, a non-identical repetition of the Annunciation-Incarnation event.

In this interpretation of Cyril's theology one finds the somatic memory of the Annunciation-Incarnation event at the very heart of the Christian faith. The bodily memory of the Incarnation is celebrated and remembered repeatedly in each Eucharist. Not only are the two mysteries (the Incarnation and the Eucharist) linked in their theology but also in the believers' embodied experience of each of them.

¹⁵ See for example, Chadwick, "Eucharist and Christology in the Nestorian Controversy,"; Lawrence Welch, *Christology and Eucharist in the Early Thought of Cyril of Alexandria* (1994); Patrick T. R. Gray, "From Eucharist to Christology: The Life-Giving Body of Christ in Cyril of Alexandria, Eutyches and Julian of Halicarnassus," in *The Eucharist in Theology and Philosophy: Issues of Doctrinal History in East and West from the Patristic Ages to the Reformation*, ed. Istvan Percvel, Reka Forrai, and Gyorgy Gereby (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2005), 23-36; Theresia Hainthaler, "Perspectives on the Eucharist in the Nestorian Controversy," in *The Eucharist in Theology and Philosophy: Issues of Doctrinal History in East and West from the Patristic Age to the Reformation*, ed. Istvan Percvel, Reka Forrai, and Gyorgy Gereby (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2005), 3-22; Ellen Concannon, "The Eucharist as Source of St. Cyril of Alexandria's Christology," *Pro Ecclesia* 18, no. 3 (2009), 318-36.

¹⁶ Chadwick, "Eucharist and Christology."

¹⁷ Ibid.155. 'Every eucharist is a reincarnation of the *Logos* who is there again in body, and whose same flesh is given to the communicant.' Translation of Greek my own.

¹⁸ Ibid. 156-7.

Twenty-five years later, Gebremedhin published his dissertation¹⁹ on the eucharistic doctrine of Cyril of Alexandria and in doing so, began a revival of interest in Cyril and the Eucharist. Gebremedhin's analysis sought to demonstrate that Cyril's eucharistic theology is a consistent application of his Christology to liturgical life. In his detailed analysis of the varying elements of Cyril's eucharistic theology, Gebremedhin considered the manner, mode, effects, and consequences of the Eucharist. Throughout his analysis, the theme of unity in Cyril's writings rings clear. Gebremedhin noted that, for Cyril, Christ is One. He developed this both in the sense of the unity of humanity and divinity in the person of Christ, as well as in the "unabridged unity of God and Man, Spirit and body"²⁰ of the Eucharist. This unity in the person of Christ creates, in the context of the Eucharist, a vertical dynamic of unity between the participating believer and God, as well as a horizontal dynamic of unity between the body of participating believers as they share in the eucharistic flesh and blood of the one Christ.²¹ The believers are one body *because* they all share in one bread. I propose that the bodily integrity of the communal body of Christ is established in the sharing of the Eucharist, even as the reception of the Eucharist, as we shall see in Chapter Seven, causes a rupture in the bodily integrity of the individual believer.

Gebremedhin concluded that "Cyril's Eucharistic theology is an unreduced shadow of his theology of the Incarnation."²² This is a particularly striking conclusion as although Gebremedhin does acknowledge the importance of Cyril's eucharistic theology, he alone of all the scholars considering Cyril's

¹⁹ Gebremedhin, *Life-Giving Blessing*.

²⁰ *Ibid.* 110.

²¹ *Ibid.* 92.

²² *Ibid.* 111.

theology, argued that this eucharistic theology is driven by Cyril's Christology and in particular his understanding of the doctrine of Incarnation.

Patrick Gray took the opposing stance in his analysis of Cyril's understanding of the Eucharist. He began with a pertinent question, raised implicitly in Chadwick's paper. Gray asked whether Christology drives understanding of the Eucharist, whether understanding of the Eucharist drives Christology or whether causality, in this case, follows in both directions. Concluding that, for Cyril, it was worth considering the *lex orandi* of the Eucharist as preceding and driving the *lex credendi* of Christology, Gray made a compelling case for "popular Eucharistic piety [as] a powerful, if hidden, force behind debates that appeared superficially to be entirely Christological."²³

Identifying Cyril's *Commentary on John*, particularly his notes on the life-giving body or flesh of Christ in Chapter Six of the Gospel,²⁴ as being the most likely place to find evidence of the influence of eucharistic belief on Christology, Gray noted a distinct soteriological train of thought to Cyril's comments. Participation in the incarnate Christ through the bread of the Eucharist, is the essential means of salvation.²⁵ The reality of the incarnation, the union of the Word with flesh, serves to make the reception of the body of Christ in eucharistic form life-giving and therefore salvific. He concluded that, for Cyril, "*because* one experiences participation in the life-giving body of Christ [in the Eucharist], *therefore* the life-giving divine Word Himself really must have become incarnate."²⁶ In this logic it is possible to see that for Gray it is the reality of the power of the Eucharist that proves the union of the two natures in

²³ Gray, "From Eucharist to Christology," 24.

²⁴ Interestingly, early accounts of eucharistic practice (such as the *Didache*) rely on John 6 and show a eucharistic liturgy focused on re-experiencing the unity of the incarnation rather than the destruction of the crucifixion.

²⁵ Gray, "From Eucharist to Christology," 25.

²⁶ *Ibid.* 28. Italics Gray's own.

the incarnation. The Eucharist is, in Gray's opinion, the driving force behind Cyril's theology.

Similarly, Susan Wessel noted the primacy of Cyril's understanding of the Eucharist in his theology. She argued that:

Cyril's understanding of the eucharist defined his Christological and soteriological views, for he believed that Christians achieved salvation through participating in the body and blood of Christ. Only the indivisible bond between the human and divine nature of Christ ensured that Christians would receive the share of divinity necessary to make them secure against the forces of death. By dissolving the union of the nature of Christ, Nestorius jeopardized the eucharist, the very foundation of Christian soteriology, for Christians at communion no longer shared in the divine flesh and blood of Christ.²⁷

It seems apparent from Wessel's comments that one cannot disregard the significance of the Eucharist and the theology which stems from it in consideration of the Nestorian Controversy. Her insights mirror Gray's contention that it is the Eucharist which is at the heart of Cyril's theology.

Lawrence Welch also considered the thesis of Gebremedhin,²⁸ who argued that Cyril applied a previously constructed Christology to his theology of the Eucharist, to be lacking.²⁹ Welch argued that Gebremedhin does not take into account the historical development of Cyril's thought and overlooked the fact that Cyril's theology of the Eucharist was firmly in place prior to the events of the Nestorian Controversy. He suggested:

²⁷ Susan Wessel, *Cyril of Alexandria and the Nestorian Controversy: The Making of a Saint and of a Heretic* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 3.

²⁸ Gebremedhin, *Life-Giving Blessing*.

²⁹ Welch, *Christology and Eucharist*, 129. N.51.

it is not accurate to conclude, as Ezra Gebremedhin does, that Cyril's idea of the hypostatic union underlines his understanding of the eucharistic liturgy and that Cyril applied a previously constructed Christology to his theology of worship and eucharist [see Gebremedhin, 12, 69]. Gebremedhin's view of the relationship between Cyril's Christology and theology of the eucharist assumes that Cyril worked out a Christology apart from his understanding of Christian worship. But Cyril no more worked out a Christology apart from his understanding of the eucharistic liturgy anymore than he constructed a Christology apart from his soteriological concerns.³⁰

Regardless of other debates on Cyril's theology it seems clear that scholars can agree that Cyril's understanding of the Eucharist is significant with regard to the rest of his theology. Indeed, I argue that one cannot understand Cyril's theology without first getting to grips with his perspective on the Eucharist.

In her 2009 article on the Eucharist as the source of Cyril's Christology, Ellen Concannon summarised recent developments in this field.

Indeed, all of the recent scholarship seems to follow the basic lines that Chadwick initiated: (1) Cyril's famous Christology is soteriologically motivated; (2) soteriology takes physical shape in the liturgy, the sacraments, and most especially in the Eucharist; (3) therefore, there is an intimate connection between the Eucharist and Christological doctrine. Yet there remain differing perceptions concerning the origin of Cyril's thought, namely whether he begins with Christology (Gebremedhin) or with the Eucharist (Chadwick, Welch).³¹

As the title of her article indicates, Concannon suggested that, through her exploration and analysis of Cyril's doctrine of the Eucharist as seen in three of his later, anti-Nestorian, texts, it is the Eucharist which is the source of Cyril's Christology. She admits that his discussion of the Eucharist is not always explicit, but that it can be detected as an underlying theme in Cyril's Christological thinking. Indeed, the location of Cyril's rare references to the Eucharist makes it clear that it is of foundational and pivotal importance. She can thus propose that "any division of Christ, of the Word from his flesh, leads to the reception of mere lifeless flesh in the Eucharist. This renders the

³⁰ Ibid. 269.

³¹ Concannon, "Eucharist as Source," 319.

Incarnation and the Pasch without fruit and destroys the whole economy of our salvation."³²

In contrast, however, Theresia Hainthaler examined the importance of the Eucharist in the Nestorian Controversy³³ and came to a very different conclusion. Whilst she acknowledged, through her study of Boulnois³⁴, that the Eucharist is a *leitmotif* in Cyril's thinking³⁵ and that both Batiffol³⁶ and Bareille³⁷ suggest that the debate in the controversy was motivated by the question of whether Christ's body and blood were 'life-giving' in the Eucharist, she argued that:

this dispute was on a Christological question; it was no Eucharistic controversy. The Eucharist stood simply to explain something else. Perhaps the Eucharistic doctrine was another motivation for Cyril to insist more on his Christological perspective, rooted in the teaching of Athanasius of Alexandria.³⁸

However, even in seeking to excuse the eucharistic doctrine from the Nestorian Controversy, Hainthaler is not able to do so conclusively. It seems apparent, given the weight of evidence presented here, that Cyril's understanding of the Eucharist and the effects of the eucharistic body of Christ on the believer was significant in Cyril's dispute with Nestorius. It cannot be discounted in exploring the driving forces behind this controversy. The somatic memory of the Annunciation-Incarnation event is so vital in Cyril's theology that it cannot be removed from his understanding of the Eucharist and thus the embodied experience is at the heart of his faith.

³² Ibid. 335.

³³ Hainthaler, "Perspectives".

³⁴ M.-O. Boulnois, "Die Eucharistie, Mysterium Der Einigung Bei Cyrill Von Alexandrien: Die Modelle Der Trinitarischen Und Christologischen Einigung," *Theologische Quartalschrift* 178 (1998), 294-310, at 303.

³⁵ Hainthaler, "Perspectives," 17.

³⁶ Pierre Batiffol, *Etudes D'histoire Et De Theologie Positive* (Paris: V. Lecoffre, 1920).

³⁷ G. Bareille, "Eucharistie, D'apres Les Peres," in *Dictionnaire de theologie catholique Vol. 5* (Paris: Letouzey et Ane, 1913).

³⁸ Hainthaler, "Perspectives," 15.

Having considered Cyril's early writings, with particular reference to his *Commentary on John*, as well as his later, more polemical, texts, it is apparent that his doctrine of the Eucharist is of great significance in understanding Cyril's theology as a whole. This eucharistic doctrine draws an inextricable link with the Annunciation-Incarnation event. The somatic memory, for Cyril, is entirely body focused—not just on the Incarnate body of Christ—but also on the eucharistic body and the physical body of the believer. At every stage Cyril is keen to emphasise the significance of bodily integrity—a key theme in the recovery from trauma. Bodily division and disunity are unacceptable in this theology of wholeness. Indeed, it seems almost impossible to apply modern distinctions of sub-genres of theology to Cyril's thought—each aspect is tightly interwoven with the next. There is, for Cyril, an interpenetrative relationship between all aspects of his theology. Although his doctrine of the Eucharist appears to be a strong driving force in his thinking, one cannot, in the case of Cyril, separate this from any other aspect of his theology.

The Physical Body

Having examined the extent to which Cyril's understanding of the eucharistic body of Christ was a motivating factor in the Nestorian Controversy it is now possible to turn our attention to Cyril's understanding of the physical body of Jesus and the Annunciation-Incarnation event. Cyril felt that Nestorius and the Antiochene School were straining the unity of the person of Christ to its very limits, if not beyond. The Antiochenes could be seen to have made Christ into a dual personality that, in one moment, acted as the *Logos*-Incarnate, and in the

next moment was merely human. This, for Cyril, was unacceptable. Chadwick, ultimately, discounted this interpretation and concluded that:

it does not seem that Cyril's thought began from the psychological angle at all. His fundamental objections to Antiochene doctrine lay rather in the repercussions of such thought upon the doctrines of the Eucharist and the atonement.³⁹

Concern for the eucharistic body of Christ is certainly central to Cyril's rejection of Nestorius' argument. However, I do not believe we can disregard a concern for the human, historical, physical body of Jesus—the *Logos*-Incarnate—quite so easily. After all, for Cyril, it is the union of two natures in the flesh of Christ that provides the life-giving bread and wine of the Eucharist. Without the physical body of Jesus, one cannot be saved. Frances Young argued persuasively for an Alexandrian Christology that, beginning with Athanasius, arose out of continued resistance to the Arian claims of difference⁴⁰ between the *Logos* and God.⁴¹ Similarly, Robert Wilken suggested:

In terms of the controversy between Cyril and Nestorius this situation meant that the immediate background and presupposition of the controversy was not so much a question of Christology, but of the Trinity. Once hostilities began the uniquely Christological question came quickly to the fore; but much of the initial misunderstanding stems from the inability of both parties to even faintly understand their differing approaches to Arius.⁴²

Both Young and Wilken support the suggestion that one cannot disregard the physical Christ in seeking to understand Cyril's theology. Physical bodies, and thus, by implication, somatic memory, can be seen to be integral to Cyril's theological stance.

³⁹ Chadwick, "Eucharist and Christology," 153.

⁴⁰ In the late fourth century, Arius, a presbyter in Alexandria, taught that the indivisible Godhead could not be shared or communicated in any way. Thus, the Son was 'son' in title only. This Son was a created creature with a beginning and without direct knowledge of the Father. Within the Trinity there was no sharing of nature of essence. Kelly concludes that "[T]he net result of this teaching was to reduce the Son to a demigod." Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines*, 230.

⁴¹ Frances Young, *From Nicea to Chalcedon: A Guide to the Literature and Its Background* (London: SCM Press, 1983), 179.

⁴² Robert L. Wilken, "Tradition, Exegesis, and the Christological Controversies," *Church History* 34, no. 2 (1965), 123-45, at 127.

With regard to the body, the dispute can be characterised as, on the part of Nestorius, a denial of the *Logos* as the ultimate subject of the human attributes of Jesus and, simultaneously, a concern to “provide for a clear distinction of the natures in the face of the heretical tendencies of his time”⁴³ that might suggest some sort of altering of the deity of Christ. The argument between the two can be couched in the terms of the Arian debate; Cyril believed that Nestorius’ position made Jesus not Divine, whereas Nestorius was concerned that Cyril was making Jesus into some sort of demi-God. On Cyril’s part, at least until the formula of union, there was a fierce refutation of anything less than one incarnate nature of the Divine *Logos*. He believed that, whilst remaining God, the *Logos* took on and became the subject of human life. For Cyril, humanity belonged so completely to the *Logos* that there was only one subsistent reality in Jesus.⁴⁴ To refuse the title *Theotokos* to the mother of Christ implied, to Cyril at least, that the divinity of the *Logos* and the humanity of Jesus were separated. The soteriological, and thus eucharistic, implications of such a statement were catastrophic. If the body of Jesus is not fully Christ but merely inhabited by the *Logos*, then the somatic memory of the Annunciation-Incarnation event non-identically repeated in the celebration of the Eucharist and received into the physical body of the believer is a sham. Cyril himself noted:

⁴³ Grillmeier, *Christ in Christian Tradition*, 379.

⁴⁴ Richard A. Norris, *The Christological Controversy*, trans. Richard A. Norris (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1980), 26-8.

It was not otherwise possible for man, being of a nature which perishes, to escape death, unless he recovered that ancient grace, and partook once more of God who holds all things together in being and preserves them in life through the Son in the Spirit. Therefore his Only-begotten Word has become a partaker of flesh and blood (Heb. 2:14), that is, he was become man, though being Life by nature, and begotten of the life that is by nature, that is, of God the Father, so that, having united himself with the flesh which perishes according to the law of its own nature... he might restore it to his own Life and render it through himself a partaker of God the Father... And he wears our nature, refashioning it to his own Life. And he himself is also in us, for we have all become partakers of him, and have him in ourselves through the Spirit. For this reason we have become 'partakers of the divine nature' (2 Pet. 1.4), and are reckoned as sons, and so too we have in ourselves the Father himself through the Son.⁴⁵

The physical, historical body (or flesh) of the Divine Son is clearly essential for Cyril. It is through this union of God with humanity's flesh and blood that redemption becomes possible.

But even here one is able to see the fundamental drive of eucharistic doctrine in Cyril's thought. Christ partakes in human flesh and blood and, in imitation of this incarnation, Christians partake in the nature of Christ through participation in the sacrament of the Eucharist. In her analysis of Cyril's letters to Nestorius, Concannon repeatedly noted the significance of the historical, physical flesh of Christ.⁴⁶ But this physical flesh and its significance cannot be separated from Cyril's understanding of the Eucharist, soteriology, liturgy, and eschatology. In all of Cyril's thought there is an emphasis on not considering individual components (of the body in all its contexts) in isolation from each other but rather coming to a holistic understanding of body theology.

As I have noted previously, if the flesh of Jesus is not inextricably united to the divinity of the *Logos*, then it does not give life and therefore it cannot save. If the flesh of Jesus is not inextricably united to the divinity of the *Logos*

⁴⁵ *In Jo.* 14.20. Trans. Thomas G. Weinandy, "Cyril and the Mystery of the Incarnation," in *The Theology of St. Cyril of Alexandria: A Critical Appreciation*, ed. Thomas G. Weinandy and Daniel A. Keating (London & New York: T & T Clark, 2003), 23-54, at 24-5.

⁴⁶ Concannon, "Eucharist as Source," 320-329.

then there is no somatic memory in the Annunciation-Incarnation event and there is, therefore, no non-identical repetition in the celebration of the Eucharist. If Jesus is not both human and Divine then the Annunciation-Incarnation event is traumatic for neither Jesus nor Mary. The trauma theology I propose requires, paradoxically, the bodily integrity of Jesus in order to be able to rupture any other bodily integrities. Weinandy argued that “the Son’s humanity was more than a peripheral or external tool which he artificially employed as an impersonal instrument to manifest his all-powerful divinity.”⁴⁷ For Cyril, the body of Christ, in its incarnate sense, is not incidental, but essential. This body must have its own integrity, it cannot be divided in its essence from the divinity of the *Logos*. The somatic memory of the Annunciation-Incarnation event, and the later non-identical repetition of this event in the Eucharist, thus depends upon the bodily integrity of Jesus Christ.

The Corporate Body

Just as the hermeneutical lens of trauma allowed us to view the Incarnation of Christ in its fullest sense—from the moment of the Annunciation to the Ascension of Christ –so, too, does it require us to consider bodies in the broadest sense. In exploring the somatic memory at the heart of Cyril’s theology and faith we have already considered both the eucharistic and physical bodies of Christ. But other bodies were similarly significant in Cyril’s theological universe and the somatic memory which is the core of Cyril’s Christianity can be seen in these bodies too.

⁴⁷ Weinandy, "Cyril and the Mystery of the Incarnation," 29.

The holistic image of the united body of Jesus, both in terms of the Eucharist and the historical, physical body of the Incarnate Word, is an image that extends beyond these realities and into the realm of symbol for Cyril of Alexandria. The symbol of the body must not be underestimated in its role in the Nestorian Controversy. Nor should one underestimate the extent to which the affairs of the Church were connected with the business of the Imperial family.

Wessel pointed out that:

[T]o warn the emperor of a divisive heresy that separated the humanity and divinity of Christ, Cyril reminded him that Jude had predicted that false teachers would appear at the end of time, and that they would create divisions within the church. The ecclesiastical political implications seemed clear. Just as the unnamed Nestorius claimed that there was division within the person of Christ, so could that division insinuate itself into the social fabric of the church. And a church so divided would threaten the stability of the emperor's reign. Athanasius had similarly invoked the metaphor of a unified Christ when he compared Christ's body, undivided at death, to a unified, orthodox church free from schism.⁴⁸

The significance of the unity and the holistic understanding of the corporate body, both in its Imperial and ecclesial contexts, is another factor in understanding the driving forces of the Nestorian Controversy. There can be no doubt that Cyril's attack on Nestorius and the Antiochene School was, to some extent, driven by intense rivalry between the two bishoprics, both with regard to papal influence, popular support and Imperial favour. Kenneth Holum noted, in his account of the events leading up to the Council of Ephesus in 431, that when it became apparent that Nestorius would appear in the dispute as the champion of Antioch "the longstanding struggle over the primacy of episcopal sees broke out again."⁴⁹

⁴⁸ Wessel, *Cyril of Alexandria and the Nestorian Controversy*, 98.

⁴⁹ Kenneth Holum, *Theodosian Empresses: Women and Imperial Dominion in Late Antiquity* (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, 1982), 152.

Agreement, peace, and unity in the ecclesial and imperial bodies seem, in this sense, to be grounded on “correct” theology. This certainly appears to be the attitude of both Cyril and the Emperor—Theodosius. Perhaps perceiving a rift in the imperial family,⁵⁰ Cyril wrote separate letters stating his case and carefully opposing Nestorius to Emperor Theodosius, as well as to his wife Eudocia and sister Pulcheria and a further letter for the younger princesses.⁵¹

Cyril told the women that:

[I]t is very impious to divide into two sons and two Christs after the inseparable union...for if Christ thus finds your faith is steadfast and pure, he will honour you abundantly with good things from above and you will be fully blessed.⁵²

Cyril draws the connection for the female members of the imperial family clearly. If they support Cyril’s Christology then their family, and thus by extension the Empire, will flourish. If they support Nestorius they will not be blessed. A divided Christ will bring division to the Empire. Wessel noted that in these letters Cyril drew:

a close connection between correct belief in a singular Christ and the fortune of the imperial women: to divide the unity into two Sons and two Christs portended great dangers, for Christ would reward the women of the imperial court with good fortune *only* if they subscribed to Cyril’s view of orthodoxy.⁵³

⁵⁰ Indeed, John McGuckin even suggests that Nestorius deliberately sought to divide the imperial body. Speaking of the Emperor’s sister, he notes “[S]he [Pulcheria] was, in many senses, the real brains behind the administration of Theodosius II, and Nestorius made a fatal gambit in his early time at Constantinople by wishing to ally himself with the emperor in a move designed to put a fracture line between him and his sister.” John McGuckin, “The Paradox of the Virgin Theotokos: Evangelism and Imperial Politics in the Fifth Century Byzantine World,” *Maria* 2 (2001), 8-25, at 18. We can only surmise Cyril’s reaction to such divisive techniques but it would be no real stretch of the imagination to assume that for someone so focused on unity and a holistic view of the body, such actions only made Cyril further determined to correct the theology and influence of Nestorius.

⁵¹ Wessel, *Cyril of Alexandria and the Nestorian Controversy*, 98.

⁵² Cyril of Alexandria, “Cyrilli oratio ad augustas de fide”, *Acta Conciliorum Oecumenicorum* I.1.5. edited by Edward Schwartz. (Berolini: W. de Gruyter, 1927), 26-61, cited and translated by Wessel, *Cyril of Alexandria and the Nestorian Controversy*, 112 n. 84.

⁵³ Wessel, *Cyril of Alexandria and the Nestorian Controversy*, 99. Italics Wessel’s own.

In this respect, Cyril drew on Paul's body theology, particularly as expressed in his letter to the Corinthians.⁵⁴ Dale Martin, in his analysis of Paul's Corinthian body, noted a relationship between the divided church body in the city of Corinth and the celebration of the Eucharist. He argued that:

Paul focuses his argument on the fracturing of the church, the body of Christ. His solution to the problems surrounding the Lord's Supper is a social one: heal the fragmented body and restore unity...The Strong at Corinth, by reinforcing social distinctions in the church, divide the church. They are quite literally, in Paul's view, "killing" Christ by tearing apart his body. They pervert the meal of unity, the "common meal," by making it an occasion for schism and difference.⁵⁵

The corporate body, for Paul, was clearly not distinct from the eucharistic body. And one's actions towards one body had the potential to affect the other bodies too.

Theodosius was clearly influenced by the powerful imperial theology espoused by Cyril. In a letter written to Cyril and the Metropolitan Bishops in November 430 C.E., Theodosius linked the condition of the state to godly piety and the acceptability of the state to God. It was this desire for a peaceful state in the eyes of God that prompted Theodosius to convene a synod in the following year to draw this dispute to a close. Wessel drew the connection between these two bodies to a dramatic conclusion: "[M]ore than a matter of ecclesiastical division, the potential conflict was thought to disrupt the very foundations of Theodosius' imperial reign, which rested on divine sanction."⁵⁶

The issue of bodily unity clearly, for Cyril, stretched beyond the unity of divinity and humanity in the eucharistic and physical body of Christ—*Logos Incarnate*—and into the symbolic bodies of the Church and the Empire. Here, too, unity cannot be divided from correct doctrine and the two seem to have an

⁵⁴ See 1 Corinthians 12.

⁵⁵ Dale B. Martin, *The Corinthian Body* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1995), 194.

⁵⁶ Wessel, *Cyril of Alexandria and the Nestorian Controversy*, 99.

interpenetrative relationship in the thought of Cyril. For Cyril, the eucharistic, Christological, ecclesiological and imperial elements of this bodily unity cannot be easily separated and this desire for unity is driven by Cyril's understanding of the relationship between the Eucharist and the Incarnation. The somatic memory of the institutional body is entirely connected to the Annunciation-Incarnation event. The drive for wholeness and fullness entwined with Cyril's understanding of the importance of unity for all bodies.

The Feminine Body

The Incarnation, as has been described previously, goes beyond the moment of Jesus' becoming human and our understanding of Incarnation stretches far in two directions. In one direction the Incarnation stretches to the Ascension of Christ into heaven and infinite existence in his human body. In the other direction, the Incarnation encompasses the Annunciation and the body of Christ's mother, Mary. The somatic memory at the heart of the Christian faith is not the preserve of the masculine.⁵⁷ What is non-identically repeated in the celebration of the Eucharist is not only significant to the male body. The key players in this controversy so far, both in terms of the participants in the debate and the scholars analysing them, have been, predominantly, male. But it would be a mistake to assume that the Nestorian controversy did not, similarly, stretch beyond these male players.

The feminine body is not absent from the Nestorian Controversy. Indeed, one can observe the influence and significance of the feminine

⁵⁷ I use the distinction of male/female where the authors of texts operate within such a binary. However, I will, in my own constructive theology in this thesis, resist such a gender binary in favour of a more inclusive approach to gender.

throughout the debate. The Nestorian Controversy arose over the use of a title for Mary—*Theotokos*—meaning “god-bearer”. Nestorius argued that this term was inappropriate as it implied some kind of development of God in the womb of Mary. It was heretical to suggest that God was not immutable. It would be a mistake to argue that the Nestorian Controversy was a Mariological issue—it was not. It was, primarily, a long-standing Christological one, that had found its most recent expression in an issue regarding appropriate titles of Mary.

To his [Nestorius'] party slogan: ‘Mary cannot, strictly speaking (*akribos*), be called the God-Mother’, Cyril replied with an inflammatory slogan of his own: ‘If Mary is not, strictly speaking, the Mother of God, then he who is born from her is not, strictly speaking, God.’⁵⁸

Richard Price concluded that “the issue was simply the Christological implications of the title *Theotokos*, and not the dignity of the Virgin herself.”⁵⁹ However, whilst the debate was not, in truth, about Mary, it is not possible to separate out the female body from the male one; the mother’s body from the child’s. The discussions about the way in which the body of Christ was to be remembered and worshipped had direct implications for the body of Mary also.

In her exploration of the significance of the title *Theotokos* within the wider rhetoric of soteriology and eschatology in fifth century Byzantium, Young noted the essential nature of Mary’s physical, feminine flesh for Cyril: “[T]he crucial thing for Cyril is that the Word dwelt in flesh, ‘using as his own particular body the temple that is from the holy Virgin’.”⁶⁰ Acknowledging that it is neither possible nor profitable to attempt to separate Cyril’s Christological position from his understanding of the Eucharist, Young outlined the significance of the flesh of Christ and concluded that there “are many indications that the flesh is vital as

⁵⁸ McGuckin, “The Paradox of the Virgin *Theotokos*,” 15.

⁵⁹ Richard Price, “*Theotokos*: The Title and Its Significance in Doctrine and Devotion,” in *Mary: The Complete Resource*, ed. Sarah Jane Boss (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 56-73, at 58.

⁶⁰ Frances Young, “*Theotokos*: Mary and the Pattern of Fall and Redemption in the Theology of Cyril of Alexandria,” in *The Theology of St. Cyril of Alexandria: A Critical Appreciation*, ed. Thomas G. Weinandy and Daniel A. Keating (London & New York: T & T Clark, 2003), 55-74, at 71.

the medium of this eternal life. So Mary *Theotokos* is essential as the vehicle of the Word's enfleshment."⁶¹ The physical, feminine flesh of Mary cannot be separated from Cyril's Christology, his understanding of the Eucharist or his conception of salvation. Therefore, the feminine flesh of Mary and her participation in the mysteries of the Incarnation (and subsequently the Eucharist if one follows Cyril's understanding of the connectedness of these two mysteries) must be taken seriously in exploring the Nestorian Controversy. For Cyril, I argue, the somatic memory is not a gendered one. It is connected to all bodies. What is non-identically repeated at the altar in the celebration of the Eucharist is, therefore, not only the memory of a masculine body.

If the dispute was not exclusively a Mariological one, the Marian influence, however, can be argued to be at the heart of the actions of principal players in the crisis. The role of Pulcheria, sister of the Emperor Theodosius and virgin Empress, has been much debated in the context of the Nestorian Controversy and the rise of Marian piety in the city of Constantinople. Holum put forward a persuasive and detailed case for the power and influence of Pulcheria in his 1982 monograph *Theodosian Empresses: Women and Imperial Dominion in Late Antiquity*.⁶² He paints a picture of Pulcheria as a Marian impresario who wields her virginity and devotion to Mary as political tools and weapons of power.⁶³ Pulcheria swore an oath of virginity in emulation of the Virgin that not only protected her independence as an imperial woman, but also protected her brother's imperial courts from the external influence of her potential husband. Furthermore, in appealing to the Virgin, Holum argues that Pulcheria, and her

⁶¹ Ibid. 73.

⁶² Holum, *Theodosian Empresses*.

⁶³ Ibid. 93.

sisters, solidified their sacred *basileía*⁶⁴ through their devotion to the Virgin Mary.

Pulcheria appears to have had running clashes with Nestorius from the time of his appointment as Bishop of Constantinople. Nestorius accused her of immorality and adultery, refused to entertain her and her ladies, as had been the custom of the former bishop, and removed her portrait and donations from the altar of the Great Church. The most dramatic encounter occurred on an Easter Sunday, only a few days after Nestorius had been ordained as Bishop of Constantinople.

Pulcheria appeared at the gate to the sanctuary of the Great Church, expecting to take communion within in the presence of the priests and her brother the emperor. The archdeacon Peter informed Nestorius of her custom, and the bishop hurried to bar the way, to prevent the sacrilege of a lay person and woman in the Holy of Holies. Pulcheria demanded entrance, but Nestorius insisted that “only priests may walk here.” She asked: “Why? Have I not given birth to God?” He replied: “You? You have given birth to Satan!” And then Nestorius drove the empress from the sanctuary.⁶⁵

There is some doubt as to whether or not this incident can be treated as historical fact or if it is an apocryphal contribution to the Pulcheria legend that grew in the centuries following her death. Regardless of the veracity of the statement, it is a revealing anecdote. Antonia Atanassova noted that:

⁶⁴ Kate Cooper defines *basileía* as “a form of royal charisma indispensable to the imperial family for mobilizing their subject’s co-operation” in Kate Cooper, “Empress and Theotokos: Gender and Patronage in the Christological Controversy,” in *The Church and Mary. Papers Read at the 2001 Summer Meeting and the 2002 Winter Meeting of the Ecclesiastical History Society.*, ed. R. N. Swanson (Suffolk: The Boydell Press, 2004), 39-51, at 39-40.

⁶⁵ Holum, *Theodosian Emperresses*, 153, citing *Lettre à Cosme* 8 (*PO*, XII, 279).

[I]t is significant...that in order to affirm her right of access to the Holy of Holies, Pulcheria did not refer to her imperial privilege as an Augusta, but to the character of her Christian vocation. As a woman and a Christian virgin she felt entitled to approach a territory that was traditionally reserved for ordained males. The incident is all the more interesting, for it indicates that by identifying with Mary female candidates for sainthood like Pulcheria could succeed in subverting the existing order of powers by appealing to a powerful female figure whose special relationship with God enabled them to plead for what a male-dominated society would ordinarily refuse them (i.e. entering the sanctuary).⁶⁶

In this interpretation of Pulcheria's odd statement ("have I not given birth to God?"), her appeal to her imitation of Mary's virginity appears to furnish her with a power that would otherwise have been inaccessible to a woman, even an imperial one. Maxwell Johnson, on the other hand, interprets this statement as a purely spiritual one. He concluded:

consistent with the Marian theology of Nestorius's predecessor, Atticus of Constantinople (d. 425), who had instructed Pulcheria and her sisters, Arcadia and Marina, that if they imitated the virginity and chastity of Mary they would give birth to God mystically in their souls, Pulcheria's Marian self-identification ("have I not given birth to God?") indicates that such personal or popular devotion to the *Theotokos* could even become a kind of Marian mysticism.⁶⁷

Once again, it would seem to be difficult to distinguish the political realm from the theological one. Indeed, I argue that the true explanation of Pulcheria's self-identification with the figure of Mary is both political and theological; her identification with Mary's virginity gives Pulcheria both political and theological authority. For just as Concannon notes that the "modern systematic distinction between Christology, soteriology, and Eucharist is something completely foreign to the worldview of Cyril and the early church in general,"⁶⁸ so it seems that the

⁶⁶ Antonia Atanassova, "Orthodox Women's Defense of the Theotokos: The Case of Empress Pulcheria and the Council of Ephesus," in *Philanthropy and Social Compassion in Eastern Orthodox Tradition* (New York: The Theotokos Press, 2010), 137-43, at 140.

⁶⁷ Maxwell E. Johnson, "Sub Tuum Praesidium: The Theotokos in Christian Life and Worship before Ephesus," in *The Place of Christ in Liturgical Prayer: Trinity, Christology, and Liturgical Theology*, ed. Bryan D. Spinks (Minnesota: Liturgical Press, 2008), 243-67, at 261.

⁶⁸ Concannon, "Eucharist as Source," 335.

boundaries between the political, familial, and spiritual bodies are blurred, as has been demonstrated throughout this exploration of Cyril's theology.

What is, however, certain is that the two (Nestorius and Pulcheria) did not get off to a good start. This fact was exploited by Cyril who sought to curry favour with Pulcheria directly through letters sent to her and her sisters, vilifying Nestorius and his teachings. Holum contends that when it came to examining the issue of the Theotokos at the Council of Ephesus, Pulcheria intervened even before the Council took place and influenced the arrangements in her favour (and thus, presumably, not in Nestorius' favour). The Council itself took place in Ephesus, an ancient centre of virgin goddess worship which had already devoted itself to the cult of the *Theotokos*, and the meetings themselves took place in a church dedicated to Mary. These arrangements:

placated the enemies of Nestorius, Pulcheria among them. If the bishops gathered in Mary's church, she must have thought, surely with Mary's help and guidance they would punish Nestorius...[her] efforts had guaranteed that the Ephesine synod would be a farce.⁶⁹

The influence of Pulcheria on the arrangements for the Council go some way to demonstrate just how united the imperial body was. Pulcheria clearly had the ear of her brother and was devoted to seeing unity—albeit the unity she had already staked her claim on. Indeed Holum concludes by noting that Pulcheria did not just play a political role in the resolution of this controversy, but that her Marian piety, her devotion to Jesus' mother, had a profound influence on the people of Constantinople and the eventual resolution of the dispute.

⁶⁹ Holum, *Theodosian Empresses*, 164-5.

Pulcheria had a more important function in the *Theotokos* controversy than backstage maneuvering and attempts to exert influence. More than anyone else in Constantinople, she embodied the fullness of Mary piety—in her womanhood, in her spectacular asceticism, and in her claims to Marian dignity. The *voces populi* of July 5 prove that the people of Constantinople responded to her piety, and that this response contributed to their hatred of Nestorius. Thus Mary's victory became her victory as well. In contemporary thinking this victory conferred legitimacy as effectively as any battlefield success. To judge from the *Theotokos* controversy, Pulcheria's sacral *basileía* encompassed resources better emulated than resisted by an imperial person of either sex.⁷⁰

Holum's elucidation of the influence of Pulcheria in the Nestorian controversy has been resolutely challenged by scholars such as Price and Cameron in their explorations of the cult of the Virgin and Marian piety in the fifth century. Price contends that much of the evidence used by Holum is from considerably later sources and that "the Pulcheria legend grew in the telling."⁷¹ Price concluded that the driving forces behind the Nestorian Controversy were Christological rather than Mariological and that the influence of the feminine in the events leading up the council should be minimised. Cameron also rejected the influence of the feminine in accounting for the causes of the Nestorian controversy, but, in contrast to Price, she concluded that the events at Ephesus are driven by the rivalry between the two sees of Antioch and Alexandria.⁷² She went on to note:

⁷⁰ Ibid. 174.

⁷¹ Richard Price, "Marian Piety and the Nestorian Controversy," in *The Church and Mary. Papers Read at the 2001 Summer Meeting and the 2002 Winter Meeting of the Ecclesiastical History Society*, ed. R. N. Swanson (Suffolk: The Boydell Press, 2004), 31-38, at 32.

⁷² Kate Cooper, "Empress and Theotokos," 49.

[A]s for Pulcheria and the events surrounding the Council of Ephesus, Kate Cooper and Elizabeth James had also pointed out how much of a standard trope it is in texts of this period to personalize, and to put the responsibility for events good and bad onto a woman, especially an empress. Pulcheria is a victim of this tendency. It is clear that Pulcheria's support was highly desirable, and...Cyril, manifestly went to considerable lengths to claim that [he] had it. An imperial ally was a much sought-after commodity, and as a dedicated virgin Pulcheria was too precious an asset not to try and use her in the course of a contest over the status of Mary. What she thought herself is another matter. We may reasonably believe that she was an enthusiast for the Cyrillian position against Nestorius...Insofar as we can discover her personal role, Pulcheria is a classic example of someone who was carried along by other contemporary forces.⁷³

It is important to note that this analysis of Pulcheria and her role in the Nestorian Controversy cannot be separated out from the significant Pulcherian legend that grew up around her in the years following her death. It is perhaps impossible to know historically whether she did behave in the way she has been portrayed or said the words that we have recorded. Even if one assumes that none of these events are true and they are all later inventions of rhetoricians and historians, the foundation for such stories must have been laid in truth. It is likely that, even if Pulcheria did not claim to have given birth to God, even if she did not self-identify with the *Theotokos*, even if the crowds did not cry out to her as their hero after the Council of Ephesus, these actions are not beyond the realm of historical imagination. To posit these stories into history, there must have been a basis of reality on which they could lie. They cannot be so far removed from reality as to make them implausible. Our interest is not in Pulcheria herself, *per se*, but rather in the theology and mythology that surrounds her and these actions.

Pulcheria was not the only woman of significance in Constantinople in the time of the Nestorian controversy. John McGuckin suggested that much of Pulcheria's power and influence stemmed from her "extensive relations of

⁷³ Averil Cameron, "The Cult of the Virgin in Late Antiquity," 12-13.

patronage in and through the church” and that she “presided over an important network of aristocratic women.”⁷⁴ It seems likely that these women were equally distressed at the actions and proclamations of Nestorius in Constantinople. As well as denouncing the title *Theotokos* and publicly snubbing Pulcheria, Nestorius subjected all the women of the city to a curfew suggesting that no respectable woman should be out in the city after dark. This curtailed these women’s habit of attending vespers. McGuckin concluded:

[T]he assault on the validity of the *Theotokos* title could only have been interpreted by these powerful women (particularly the virgins and deaconesses among them) in the light of their own mimesis of the fertile and sacral virginity of the Mother of God. It seemed abundantly clear to them that Nestorius’s assault on the honour of the Virgin went hand in hand with his attack on their own sources of honour and patronage, their own derived sacral *basileia* that reflected the glory of the Mother of God...It is probably no exaggeration to think that this party of aristocratic women gathered around Pulcheria was primarily responsible for the downfall of Nestorius.⁷⁵

I propose that understanding the actions of Nestorius on the women of Constantinople at this time as an “assault” can be read, in hindsight, as a traumatic experience. The women experience the rupture of their identities as Nestorius attacked their (already limited) power through his assault on the *Theotokos*. The downfall of Nestorius and the preservation of the title *Theotokos* is, perhaps, the establishment of the integrity of the feminine body in Constantinople—the first stage of their recovery from the trauma from this assault. The significance of the feminine body in Constantinople during this period is not to be underestimated. Regardless of whether one attributes to the feminine a primary role in the Nestorian controversy, it is clear that this body of women within the city and the person of Mary from whom they took their

⁷⁴ McGuckin, "The Paradox of the Virgin Theotokos," 19.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.* 20.

inspiration must be considered in a holistic interpretation of the events of this period.

Furthermore, if, as Cyril believed, the Incarnation and the Eucharist are intimately connected, then it would seem that these feminine bodies, acting in imitation of Mary, who cannot be discounted from the Annunciation-Incarnation event, are intimately connected to Cyril's eucharistic theology too. A holistic view of the Incarnation inevitably leads to a holistic view of theology as well. The somatic memory of these female bodies and their own experience of trauma is part of the fuller bodily memory repeated non-identically at the altar in the celebration of the Eucharist. With the defeat of Nestorius and the victory of Cyril's orthodoxy, the somatic memory at the core of the Christian faith, given form in the eucharistic bread and wine, is stretched wider to encompass bodies of all genders.

Conclusion

It would seem apparent that the body is vital for understanding the theology of Cyril of Alexandria and his motivation during the events of the fifth century. Thus Cyril's theology is worthy of a deeper exploration in the context of the search for the somatic memory at the heart of the Christian faith. I have already established in the previous chapter why I propose this somatic memory is connected to the Annunciation-Incarnation event and the Eucharist—both concepts reflected in the bodily focus of Cyril's theology.

Of primary importance, and, I argue, at the root of all of Cyril's theology, is his understanding of the Eucharist and its soteriological effects. Since the humanity and divinity of Christ were so intimately united in both the Incarnation

and the Eucharist, so the corporate body of the Church, of which Christ is the head, must be united. There is, in this understanding of the body, no room for schism. Similarly, the imperial body must be united in its influence over the Empire in order to ensure the favour of God. Furthermore, differently gendered bodies must not be isolated from one another, either within the imperial family or within the holy family. Pulcheria's virgin flesh is essential to the successful rule of Theodosius, just as Mary's virgin flesh is essential to the Incarnation of the *Logos*. This emphasis on the unity of the body indicates that Cyril's belief in the salvific effect of the eucharistic bread and wine upon the believer meant that there must be only one incarnate nature of the Divine *Logos* in the flesh of Christ⁷⁶ or else none would be saved. However, obsessing about which direction the causation (Eucharist→Christology or Christology→Eucharist) goes, does Cyril a disservice and is too narrow a focus. His range of theological concerns was much wider. For Cyril, the Eucharist is inseparable from all other theology. Therefore, in Cyril's case it really was a case of *lex orandi, lex credendi*.

Significantly then, understanding the Eucharist as a non-identical repetition of the Annunciation-Incarnation event provides a great impetus for exploring the surrounding theological issues of unity and salvation. The Eucharist remembers the life of Christ including, but not solely focused on, his Passion, death, and resurrection. The somatic memory repeatedly enacted is one of Jesus' life—his whole life. Understanding the unity of the eucharistic body provides, for both Cyril and for the contemporary reader, the key to understanding bodily unity and integrity in all its forms. Cyril would have agreed with the later assessment of Ford when Ford concluded that the Eucharist “is

⁷⁶ Norris, *The Christological Controversy*, 27.

the sacrament of human flourishing."⁷⁷ It is in the Eucharist that bodies flourish. Understanding the (eucharistic, physical, historical) bodily integrity of Christ becomes a model for all Christian understanding of bodily integrity. For Cyril, therefore, there is an overriding theme of bodily unity and a holistic approach to objective reality that would appear to be a distinct motivating factor in his dispute with Nestorius—driven by eucharistic, soteriological, Christological and ecclesiological concerns, it is imperative, for Cyril, that the body, in all its manifestations, is one.

⁷⁷ Ford, "What Happens in the Eucharist?," 380.

Chapter Four

Out of Rupture Come Forth New Narratives: Priesthood through the Hermeneutical Lens of Trauma.

Introduction

In the previous chapters I have established that, when one is considering the Christian faith through the lens of trauma and trauma theory, one must begin by locating the somatic memory that is at the heart of any understanding of trauma. I demonstrated that the place in which bodies and memories come together across the Christian faith is in the celebration of the Eucharist. The Eucharist is a repeated ritual that continually re-enacts a memory through the consumption of a body, by a body. Here then, I argued, can we find the somatic memory repeated and remembered at the core of Christianity. It is not, as one might expect, the memory of the trauma of the death and resurrection of Jesus, but rather, I propose, the Annunciation-Incarnation event. This event cannot be temporally located in one particular day but rather runs the whole span of Christ's life, including his death and resurrection, from the moment his conception is announced to his mother to the present day as he is living and resurrected in glory.

Having thus established that the Annunciation-Incarnation event is at the heart of Christian somatic memory, non-identically repeated daily around the world in the celebration of the Eucharist, I will, in line with my second research question, examine the implications of such a somatic memory. In this chapter, and the two subsequent chapters, I will explore the implications of somatic memory on the foundational theological narratives of the Eucharist—priesthood, sacrifice, and Real Presence. One such implication, I propose, is the need for a fresh understanding of priesthood, an understanding that takes bodies (of both

the priest and the communal body of the Church) and memory seriously. The memory, in this context is the eucharistic celebration—the re-membering of Jesus with the bread and the wine as he instructed his followers to do. This is *the* memory. A second implication, addressed in the subsequent chapter, of placing the Annunciation-Incarnation event at the heart of Christian somatic memory is the need for a new understanding of sacrifice. Indeed, understandings of priesthood and sacrifice are linked so strongly in eucharistic theology that re-addressing one necessitates the re-addressing of another. Both of these new narratives—priesthood and sacrifice—inform the construction of a third fresh narrative concerned with Real Presence and materiality in the Eucharist (Chapter Six).

This chapter, and the two subsequent chapters, perform the construction of new theological narratives and in this sense they contribute to the second stage of trauma recovery, demonstrating the potential for post-traumatic growth and the necessity of re-envisioning traditional narratives in the light of traumatic experiences. With this in mind I will now examine the traditional theological narrative of priesthood, inextricably linked to the celebration of the Eucharist in the Catholic tradition, in the light of the somatic memory of the Annunciation-Incarnation non-identically repeated in each celebration.

What is a Priest?

In the Hebrew Bible, the priests of the Temple had a two-fold function. Primarily, they acted as intermediaries. Broadly speaking, one can conceive of the priesthood at this time as:

[a] bridge from God to the people through teaching, judging, mediating, and conferring the priestly blessing. It also serves as a bridge from the people to God through participation in the Temple service and wearing garments inscribed with the names of the twelve tribes.¹

Much of this fluidity and twofold nature is transferred into the contemporary understanding of the priest, particularly with regard to their function in the eucharistic celebration. Indeed, one can still consider the role of the priest today to be one of mediation. For example, Rowan Williams noted that the fundamental task of priesthood is to mediate between the orders of reality (the Divine order and the human order).² He writes, poignantly, that the priesthood is:

crucially to do with the service of the space cleared by God; with the holding open of a door into a place where a damaged and confused humanity is able to move slowly into the room made available, and understand that it is accompanied and heard in all its variety and unmanageability, and emotional turmoil and spiritual uncertainty.³

The role of a priest is to mediate between God and the Church. The power of mediation lies in the fact that it is God who has cleared the space, not in the power of the priest. In this sense, the role and function of a priest is fluid. When one observes a eucharistic celebration taking place one can become attuned to these subtle shifts in role. At one point the priest acts on behalf of the congregation towards God. A moment later, the priest is repeating the actions of Christ towards the congregation. These shifts are powerful. Sarah Coakley argued that these shifts are inseparably connected to gender and that by moving from one role to the other, as indeed it is natural for the priest to do, the:

¹ Hayyim Angel, "Ezekiel: Priest-Prophet," *Jewish Bible Quarterly* 39, no. 1 (2011), 35-45, at 35-6.

² Rowan Williams, "Epilogue," in *Praying for England: Priestly Presence in Contemporary Culture*, ed. Samuel Wells and Sarah Coakley (London and New York: Continuum, 2008), 171-82, at 176.

³ *Ibid.* 179.

priest is in an inherently fluid gender role as beater of the liminal bounds between the divine and the human. But in representing *both* 'Christ' and 'church'...the priest is not simply divine/'masculine' in the first over human/'feminine' in the other, but *both* in *both*.⁴

At first glance it looks as though the liturgy reinforces gender binaries but the net effect of this fluidity and movement is, Coakley argued, to destabilise and undermine stereotypical gender associations.⁵

This contemplation of the fluidity and transitional nature of the priestly role exemplifies, to some extent, the contemporary understanding of priesthood. But the history of priesthood is a complex one. By the beginning of the third century, those who presided over eucharistic worship within the early church were beginning to be considered to be priestly ministers, having previously been thought of more as community leaders.⁶ For example, Origen referred to bishops as priests and believed that the presbyters exercise an inferior form of priesthood.⁷ It was the bishops who celebrated the Eucharist, whereas the presbyters were those who led the communities. Similarly, Cyprian writes of a high notion of priesthood:

For if Jesus Christ, our Lord and God, is Himself the chief priest of God the Father, and has first offered Himself a sacrifice to the Father, and has commanded this to be done in commemoration of Himself, certainly that priest truly discharges the office of Christ, who imitates that which Christ did; and he then offers a true and full sacrifice in the church to God the Father, when he proceeds to offer it according to what he sees Christ Himself to have offered.⁸

⁴ Sarah Coakley, "The Woman at the Altar: Cosmological Disturbance or Gender Subversion?," *The Anglican Theological Review* 86, no. 1 (2004), 75-93, at 76.

⁵ Ibid. 76-77.

⁶ Joseph Martos, *Doors to the Sacred: A Historical Introduction to Sacraments in the Catholic Church* (Missouri: Liguori Publications, 1991), 400.

⁷ See for example Origen, "Homily 6," trans. Gary Wayne Barkley in *Homilies on Leviticus 1-16* (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1990), 116-128.

⁸ Cyprian, "Epistle 62" trans. Robert Ernest Wallis in *Ante-Nicene Christian Library: Translations of The Writings of the Fathers Down to AD 325. Vol VIII. The Writings of Cyprian, Bishop of Carthage, Part 1 of 2*, ed. Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1868), paragraph 14. Accessed online at <http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/050662.htm> on 09/03/16.

The history of ordained ministry and the changes it has undergone cannot be separated out from the histories of other sacraments, but most especially the sacrament of the Eucharist. As one considers the changes in the early Church's understanding of the Eucharist so one can similarly see the way in which their understanding of the role of the priest also changed. As the Eucharist came to be understood more specifically as a sacrificial act, so the status and purity of the one presiding over this act became more significant. Indeed, by the early Middle Ages, the role of the priest was almost entirely focused on the priest's power to consecrate and to offer the Eucharist.⁹

The history of the sacraments in the later Middle Ages is marked by significant change in the understanding of the priesthood, as seen particularly in the evolution of the sacerdotal rites for ordination, the attention to ministry in the turn to Scholasticism, and, especially, the influence of Thomas Aquinas. Aquinas argued that the priestly character conferred upon ordination was the character of Christ the high priest who instituted the Eucharist at the Last Supper and sacrificed himself upon the Cross. For Aquinas, this sacramental conferring of character is considered to be an eternal imprinting of the sacramental seal.¹⁰ This Christ was a perfect mediator between humankind and God, just as the priest was to be. Those who made the Eucharist present in the Church brought God to humanity and humanity to God, just as Christ did.¹¹ Aquinas wrote "[T]he office proper to a priest is to be a mediator between God and the people."¹² Christ does this par excellence, but all priests subsequently function as mediators. This idea, whilst considered authoritative, was not static. Indeed, Joseph Martos noted that marginally later scholars such as Duns

⁹ Martos, *Doors to the Sacred*, 431.

¹⁰ Thomas Aquinas, *The Summa Theologica* trans. Fathers of the English Dominican Province (London: Burns, Oates and Washbourne Ltd., 1920), IV. Q. 35, A.2.

¹¹ Martos, *Doors to the Sacred*, 434.

¹² Aquinas, *The Summa Theologica*, III, Q. 22, A. 1.

Scotus and William of Ockham believed that “the essential power of the priest was to change the bread and wine into the body and blood...They preferred to limit the priestly function to offering sacrifice and to speak of the other duties as ministerial functions.”¹³

It is possible to see this intimate connection between the understanding of the Eucharist and the role of the priest further still when one considers the changes wrought in the wake of the Protestant Reformation. Both Luther and Calvin rejected the theology of the Eucharist as a sacrifice. Arguing that “the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all”¹⁴ was sufficient and no further sacrificial acts were necessary, Luther strongly advocated a “priesthood of all believers” (1 Pet 2:5). Luther wrote:

[T]he third captivity of this sacrament [the Eucharist] is by far the most wicked abuse of all, in consequence of which there is no opinion more generally held or more firmly believed in the church today than this, that the mass is a good work and a sacrifice... Now there is yet a second stumbling block that must be removed, and this is much greater and the most dangerous of all. It is the common belief that the mass is a sacrifice which is offered to God.¹⁵

Whilst Luther did believe in the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist there was, in his opinion, no need to repeat the sacrifice of the Cross in the celebration of the Eucharist. Indeed, it was impossible to repeat this sacrifice and any attempt to do so was in vain. As such, for Luther, and in contrast to official Roman Catholic theologies of priesthood of that time, ordained clergy had no power that did not belong to all Christians, but rather a calling and commissioning to certain functions within the church community.

¹³ Martos, *Doors to the Sacred*, 436.

¹⁴ With reference to Hebrews 10:10.

¹⁵ Martin Luther, *The Babylonian Captivity of the Church*, ed. Helmut Lehmann, vol. 36, Luther's Works (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1520), 11-126, at 35, 51.

Calvin, rejecting the concept of Real Presence in the Eucharist, went further than Luther in arguing that the celebration of the Eucharist was not a sacrificial act but an act of memorial. Calvin posited:

[I]t is a most wicked infamy and unbearable blasphemy, both against Christ and against the sacrifice which he made for us through his death on the cross, for anyone to suppose that by repeating the oblation he obtains pardon for sins, appeases God, and acquires righteousness.¹⁶

Whilst accepting an ordained priesthood, Calvin felt that only those who were called by God should be ordained to serve within the church. On the surface, this seems to be a statement Aquinas would agree with, but the difference between the two men is apparent when one considers the nature of this service. For Aquinas, the ordained priest is called to offer the eucharistic sacrifice.¹⁷ For Calvin, the priest (or pastor-teacher) is ordained to preach, teach, and administer the sacraments, having been called to advance the kingdom of God.¹⁸ Both Luther and Calvin rejected the notion of the Eucharist as a sacrificial act, and in both cases this rejection was matched by a change in their understanding of the role and function of the priest.

The Catholic response to the Reformation—the Council of Trent—upheld that the Eucharist was a sacrifice initiated by Christ and that the Christian priesthood replaced the priesthood of the Old Testament. In the twenty second session of the Council of Trent held in September 1562, the Council decreed:

¹⁶ John Calvin, *Calvin: Institutes of the Christian Religion, Vol. 2*, trans. Ford Lewis Battles, ed. John T. McNeill, (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1960), 1442.

¹⁷ Aquinas, *The Summa Theologica*, III. Q. 82, ad. 1.

¹⁸ See for example Calvin's argument in Part 4, Chapter 3 of "Institutes of the Christian Religion," in *Institutes of the Christian Religion, 1536 Edition* (Grand Rapids, MI.: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1995).

[T]hat the Sacrifice of the Mass is propitiatory both for the living and the dead. And forasmuch as, in this divine sacrifice which is celebrated in the mass, that same Christ is contained and immolated in an unbloody manner, who once offered Himself in a bloody manner on the altar of the cross; the holy Synod teaches, that this sacrifice is truly propitiatory and that by means thereof this is effected, that we obtain mercy, and find grace in seasonable aid, if we draw nigh unto God, contrite and penitent, with a sincere heart and upright faith, with fear and reverence. For the Lord, appeased by the oblation thereof, and granting the grace and gift of penitence, forgives even heinous crimes and sins. For the victim is one and the same, the same now offering by the ministry of priests, who then offered Himself on the cross, the manner alone of offering being different.¹⁹

Edward Schillebeeckx noted, in his reflections on these statements of the Council of Trent, that they should not be taken as an accurate barometer of the Catholic Church's perspective on priesthood at that time, or indeed at any time. Such statements were written in express response and opposition to the specific challenges of the Reformers and as such were not broad in their outlook or comprehensive in their summary of extant doctrine on the topic. He argued that:

in its canons on the sacrament of ordination this Council connects the ministry of the church ('priesthood', as what presbyters and bishops have in common) almost exclusively with presiding at the eucharist (the power of consecrating and performing other sacramental actions), whereas on the other hand in the reforming decrees (which were concerned more with reforming the clergy than directly challenging the Reformation) pastoral direction and proclamation were seen as the primary task of the priestly episcopate.²⁰

Nevertheless, the proclamations of Trent became authoritative and set the pattern for understanding ordained ministry thereafter. The priesthood and its relationship to the Eucharist remained unchanged for the following five hundred years. It was only with the convening of the Second Vatican Council in the

¹⁹ J. Waterworth, *The Canons and Decrees of the Sacred and Œcumenical Council of Trent* (London: C. Dolman, 1848), 154-55.

²⁰ Edward Schillebeeckx, *The Church with a Human Face: A New and Expanded Theology of Ministry* (London: SCM Press Ltd, 1985), 198.

1960s that the door was opened for a change in the conception of the priesthood as the liturgical reform of the years following the Council took shape.

Historical research conducted in the early part of the twentieth century began to raise questions regarding the priesthood and the nature of priestly ordination. For example, in 1947 Pope Pius XII called for the reinstatement of the laying on of hands as an essential part of the ordination of priests, due to the discovery that the handing over of liturgical instruments upon ordination was a Medieval innovation to the sacrament of ordination.²¹

Twentieth century theologians and historians have demonstrated that the meaning of ordination changed dramatically in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. For example, Vinzenz Fuchs in 1963²² and Pierre-Marie Gy in 1979²³ both made clear the significant change that ordination undertook in the time period. As Gary Macy summarised:

[B]efore that period, ordination was fundamentally a dedication to a particular role or ministry, not the granting of a special power linked to the liturgy of the altar. Furthermore, the terms *ordination*, *benediction*, and *consecration* were used nearly interchangeably, and only after the change did theologians and canonists distinguish between nonsacramental consecration reserved, for instance, for religious women and sacramental ordination reserved exclusively for priests and deacons.²⁴

Prior to this shift in meaning, ordination (a surprisingly loose term) was of a man or a woman to a particular role in a particular church. The shift in meaning to a Eucharist-presiding concentration coincided with a more general development of emphasis on the Eucharist in Catholic thinking. Yves Congar identified such a change in meaning in his research on the terms “ordain” and “ordination”.

²¹ Pope Pius XII, "Sacramentum ordinis,"

http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/pius_xii/apost_constitutions/documents/hf_p-xii_apc_19471130_sacramentum-ordinis_lt.html. Accessed 21/11/2014.

²² Vinzenz Fuchs, *Der Ordinationstitel Von Seiner Entstehung Bis Auf Innozenz III* (Amsterdam: P. Shippers, 1968).

²³ Pierre-Marie Gy, "Ancient Ordination Prayers," *Studia Liturgica* 13 (1979), 70-93.

²⁴ Gary Macy, *The Hidden History of Women's Ordination: Female Clergy in the Medieval West* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 30.

When the treatment of the sacrament of orders was developed in the second half of the twelfth century, then formulated in the works of the great scholastics of the thirteenth century, it was dominated by reference to the Eucharist, by the power of consecrating it, *potestas conficiendi* (power of confecting [the Eucharist]). This power was given by an indelible and personally possessed character.²⁵

The twentieth century was also a period in which established understandings of the Eucharist and its accompanying terminology were revised and reinterpreted. This was accompanied by an increased recognition of the diverse nature of ministries and liturgies in the early church. Twentieth century scholars considered anew the liturgies of the early church and the writings of Church fathers and mothers in an attempt to understand the origins and the development of the Eucharist in particular.

Schillebeeckx, one such theologian who undertook this task and drawing on the works of historians such as Fuchs and Gy, noted that prior to the Middle Ages a minister had to be ordained in order to preside over a church community (*corpus verum*), but in the Middle Ages this shifted, and a minister was now ordained to preside over the *corpus mysticum*. Schillebeeckx felt that this indicated that ordination became less about leading the church community and more about power to celebrate the Eucharist.²⁶ Thirty five years previously, Henri de Lubac had suggested that the terminology of the *corpus mysticum* had itself shifted. De Lubac suggested that the phrase *corpus mysticum* had originally, in the early church, referred to Christ's eucharistic body and that it was only in the early Middle Ages that the phrase came to be associated with the ecclesial body of the church. In this frame, the eucharistic language of the church came to act as a theological black hole which encompasses everything. All theology came to be understood through this eucharistic lens.

²⁵ Yves Congar, "Note Sur Une Valeur Des Termes <<Ordinare, Ordinatio>>," *Revue des sciences religieuses* 58 (1984), 7-14, 13, trans. and cited in Macy, *The Hidden History of Women's Ordination*, 31.

²⁶ Edward Schillebeeckx, *Ministry: A Case for Change* (London: SCM Press, 1980), 57.

From the beginning of Christianity, the Eucharist had always been considered in relation to the Church. The 'communion of the body of Christ' of which St. Paul spoke to the faithful of Corinth [1 Cor. 10. 17-8] was their mysterious union with the community, by virtue of the sacrament: it was the mystery of one Body formed by all those who shared in the 'one Bread'. In the same way, from that time on the Church had never ceased to appear linked to the Eucharist.²⁷

Both Schillebeeckx and de Lubac sought to correct what they believed to be interpretative mistakes made in the Middle Ages, and to return to a more 'authentic' understanding of the relationship between the Eucharist and the Church. Both demonstrated the rise of the importance and significance of the Eucharist in relationship to the priestly ministry and the Church. This turn to reception history is a marked feature of twentieth century approaches to the Eucharist.

The Second Vatican Council's documents on ordained ministries present a more pastoral than doctrinal tone. The Council did little more than to restate a fairly traditional role of the parish priest such that the impression one is left with is that:

[T]heir function as priests was first and foremost the celebration of the eucharistic liturgy, but the administration of the other sacraments was also important, and they were to lead the faithful by their preaching and example as well.²⁸

However, the broader effect of the Council was felt in the years following when, combined with the socially conscious climate of the late 1960s and 70s, many lay Catholic men and women moved into new roles outside the walls of churches and convents. The Council encouraged the fostering of Christian community within parishes. The practical outworking of this meant that lay Catholic men and women became active in communities, often on behalf of the poor and oppressed. It is no coincidence that, in the years following the council,

²⁷ Henri de Lubac, *Corpus Mysticum: The Eucharist and the Church in the Middle Ages*, trans. Gemma Simmonds, Richard Price, and Christopher Stephens (London: University of Notre Dame Press, 2006), 248.

²⁸ Martos, *Doors to the Sacred*, 447.

Liberation Theology became a significant force within the Catholic Church as concern for the poor and justice within communities became increasingly important. Furthermore, the encouragement for the laity to actively participate in the celebration of the liturgy served to decrease the sense of uniqueness and isolation of the priest-celebrant. The Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity²⁹ emphasised the importance of active participation in the life of the Church. This was accomplished by the regular receiving of communion by the laity, the revitalisation and formation of lay societies such as Pax Christi and the Apostolate for Family Consecration, and the establishment of the permanent diaconate. The priest no longer performed a service that was his alone, but rather a service on behalf of, and in union with, the congregation.

In line with this shift in understanding came the decline of the private Mass. Foley noted that there was “[E]vidence of priests saying Mass without a congregation from as early as the seventh century.”³⁰ In 1963 Pope Paul VI decreed in *Sacrosanctum concilium* that:

It is to be stressed that wherever rites, according to their specific nature, make provision for communal celebration involving the presence and active participation of the faithful, this way of celebrating them is to be preferred, so far as possible, to a celebration that is individual and quasi-private.³¹

The strong counsel to proceed via communal celebrations and to avoid where possible individual ones further emphasises the change in perception of the role of the priest and their relationship to the Eucharist.

²⁹ Pope Paul VI, "Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity," Vatican, http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_decree_19651118_apostolicam-actuositatem_en.html. Accessed 24/11/15.

³⁰ Foley, *From Age to Age*, 157.

³¹ Second Vatican Council, "Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy," http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_const_19631204_sacrosanctum-concilium_en.html. Accessed on 02/02/16.

A Changed Understanding of the Eucharist

Having previously demonstrated that the somatic memory of Christianity as exemplified in the core ritual of the Eucharist, and the event(s) which it non-identically repeats, are not as fixed on the traumatic Paschal experience of Christ as one might imagine (certainly not in the early church), I will now investigate how our understanding of the role of the priest might change when one takes such interpretations of the Eucharist into account. What happens, for example, when one considers the Eucharist to be a non-identical repetition of the generative action of the Annunciation-Incarnation event rather than a non-identical repetition of the violence of the sacrificial Cross? And as understanding of the Eucharist moves away from the bloody sacrifice of the death of Christ, are there other, less violent, understandings of sacrifice that can take its place?

Firstly, if the Eucharist is a non-identical repetition of the Annunciation-Incarnation event, as has previously been suggested, then what role does the priest play? At the beginning of the Annunciation-Incarnation event it is Mary who first offers up the bodily elements that will become the flesh and blood of Christ and it is Mary who gives her *fiat* in agreement with the work of God. The somatic memory of this offering is non-identically repeated through Jesus' own table practices, at the Last Supper when Jesus offers his body and blood to his disciples, and again at each subsequent eucharistic celebration. To follow the logic through, in enacting the Eucharist as a non-identical repetition of the Annunciation-Incarnation event, the priest still represents the congregation to God, but more significantly, the priest acts in the role of Mary (as well as in the role of Christ) before the congregation and before God. The Church is the Bride of Christ³² and traditionally referred to as feminine. To return to Coakley's priest

³² See for example Ephesians 5: 25-27 and Revelation 21:2.

in a “fluid gender role,”³³ the priest who represents the congregation in the celebration of the Eucharist as a non-identical repetition of the Annunciation-Incarnation event, is thus both the feminine Church and the feminine Mary.

Secondly, if the Eucharist is a non-identical repetition of the Nativity, as some early Church theologians implied, then what role is the priest playing in such a celebration? In this non-identical repetition, Christ must already be particularly present in the bread and wine, just as he was already particularly present in the womb of Mary. The epiclesis, then, is not the transformation of the elements into something else (from the human to the Divine), but rather the revelation of something already present. In this understanding of the Eucharist, the priest births the elements as Mary birthed Christ. Once again, it is possible to see Mary as providing the role model for the activities of the priest. Whilst the priest does not contain the eucharistic elements within him as Mary did, this perspective on the Eucharist suggests that we should understand the priest as participating, with the Spirit, in the particular revelation of Christ, already present in the elements, as the Divine is present in all things.

Thirdly, if the Eucharist is intimately associated with milk, and specifically breast milk, then what can one infer about the role of the priest? If the Eucharist is that which nourishes the congregation, as milk nourishes those who drink it, then the priest, who dispenses the eucharistic bread and wine to the church, is a breast-feeding mother, passing on to the church the nourishment of the Son, received from the Father, through the activity of the Holy Spirit. Or perhaps it is possible to argue that the priest is more like a wet nurse feeding us in place of the actual mother? In contrast, one might suggest the image of bottle-feeding as more theologically productive. The milk still comes from God, but believers

³³ Coakley, “The Woman at the Altar,” 76.

receive it via someone else—not necessarily our mother. The imagery is strikingly maternal and would indicate that our understanding of the priestly role is a maternal one.³⁴

What conclusion, then, can we draw? Taking these elements of eucharistic meaning and symbolism together as a whole, in line with a full and extended understanding of the Annunciation-Incarnation event, rather than considering them disparately, one is left with the conclusion that Mary is integral. If one considers a multivalent understanding of the Eucharist and takes into account some of the other legitimate interpretations of the Eucharist in the early church, one comes to the conclusion that, in some aspects of non-identical eucharistic repetition, the priest is acting as a woman, specifically as Mary. A consequence, then, of considering the Annunciation-Incarnation event to be at the core of Christian somatic memory is that one must look to Mary to offer a new interpretation of the concept of priesthood. The exploration of the consequence of the destabilising effect of the hermeneutical lens of trauma inevitably leads to the construction of a new narrative.

Mary As Typological Model for Priesthood

Of course, Mary was not a priest. Not in the Old Testament sense of the word, nor in the early Church understanding of the role of presbyter. However, I propose that there are strong typological connections between Mary and the role of the priest that give an insight into how the priest can be re-envisioned in the light of our consideration of somatic memory. As mother of Jesus, Mary is intimately bound up in both body and memory and as a key character in the

³⁴ Emma Percy has attended to maternal image of the priest in *Mothering as a Metaphor for Ministry* (Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate, 2014). See 27-8 for her reflection on breastfeeding and ministry.

beginning of the Annunciation-Incarnation event, she is central to our consideration of priesthood.

Typological associations for Mary are rarely masculine. She is conceived of as a type of Eve³⁵ or as a type of many of her ancestral matriarchs (for example as Sarah or as Hannah). Mary is also understood to have a typological connection to the Temple.³⁶ When it comes to understanding Mary's relationship to priesthood, however, it is legitimate to follow in the lines of some early Christian writers and consider Mary as a type of some of the masculine figures in the Hebrew Bible, or rather to consider them prefigurative Marian types. I will investigate three priest-Marian typologies and consider the ways in which they were used by early Church theologians in order to examine the ways in which Mary can be considered to be a priest.

A Type of Melchizedek

The essential model for the priesthood—the person on whom Jesus' own priestly ministry is modelled—is Melchizedek. He is first mentioned in chapter 14 of Genesis:

And King Melchizedek of Salem brought out bread and wine; he was priest of God Most High. He blessed him [Abram] and said, 'Blessed be Abram by God Most High, maker of heaven and earth; and blessed be God Most High, who has delivered your enemies into your hand!'³⁷

He is mentioned again in Psalm 110:4: "The Lord has sworn and will not change his mind, 'You are a priest for ever according to the order of Melchizedek.'" The final occurrence of Melchizedek is in the New Testament Letter to the Hebrews. In chapter seven of the Letter the writer tells us

³⁵ "Eve and Mary" in Michael O'Carroll (ed.), *Theotokos - a Theological Encyclopedia of the Blessed Virgin Mary* (Collegeville, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 1982), 139-141.

³⁶ See Gary Anderson, "Mary in the Old Testament," *Pro Ecclesia* 16 (2004), 33-55.

³⁷ Genesis 14: 18-20.

[H]is name, in the first place, means 'king of righteousness'; next he is king of Salem, that is, 'king of peace'. Without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but resembling the Son of God, he remains a priest for ever.³⁸

The writer goes on to show how Jesus supersedes even Melchizedek and retains his priesthood for all eternity.

The connection between Melchizedek and Jesus is well documented and accepted but I suggest that Mary is also a type of Melchizedek. The account of Abram's meeting with Melchizedek notes that he brought out earthly elements—bread and wine—as part of his priestly function. These earthly elements are offered in the same manner that Mary offers her womb and her flesh for the blessing of God's people.

Furthermore, the account of Melchizedek's priesthood in the Letter to the Hebrews bears a number of typological associations with Mary. Firstly, Melchizedek is described as being without father and without mother. Of course, Mary does have parents; however, the way in which she is described in relation to her wider family is significant. The apocryphal text of the *Protevangelium of James*, a Marian infancy narrative, tells the reader a great deal about the circumstances of Mary's birth and offers information supplementary to the gospel birth narratives about Mary, her birth, and her family. We know who Mary's parents are. However, Mary Foskett noted that, throughout the whole of the *Protevangelium*, Mary is never referred to as *thygatēr* (daughter) nor is she referred to as *gynē* (wife).³⁹ She, like Melchizedek, is primarily conceived of through her relationship with God, and not through her lineage. This isolation from familial lines, both as daughter and

³⁸ Hebrew 7: 2b-3.

³⁹ Mary Foskett, *A Virgin Conceived: Mary and Classical Representations of Virginity* (Bloomington & Indianapolis: Indiana University Press 2002), 157.

as wife, allows Mary a mode of agency that might otherwise be denied to her had she been submitted to a masculine earthly authority.

Whilst this is certainly a positive reading of the *Protevangelium*, it would seem to be a reading that ignores some of the difficulties of the text. Mary might appear to be granted a mode of independent agency within the text but in the case of the *Protevangelium of James*, this mode of agency comes at the expense of her own voice. Over the course of the narrative Mary rarely speaks, she is primarily conceived of in regard to her body and its purity. She is less of an active player in the narrative as “[T]he apocryphal ‘virgin of the Lord’ loses her prophetic voice even as she wins unsurpassed praise and vindication of an unequivocal purity.”⁴⁰ Therefore, I argue that, whilst the *Protevangelium of James* gives us opportunity to typologically identify Mary positively with Melchizedek, it does not offer us a model of a Marian priest with independent agency.

Finally, the writer of the letter to the Hebrews asserts that Melchizedek has “neither beginning of days nor end of life, but resembling the Son of God, he remains a priest for ever.” Here, once again, I propose it is possible to see Mary as a type of Melchizedek. Mary has no end of life in the way that human life usually ends. In the 1950 encyclical ‘Munificentissimus Deus’, Pope Pius XII confirmed the Marian Dogma of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Despite the relatively late date for the confirmation of this dogma, dormition narratives regarding the ending of Mary’s life on earth had been in circulation since the early sixth century⁴¹ in their written form, and probably earlier still in

⁴⁰ Mary Foskett, “Virginité as Purity in the *Protevangelium of James* ” in *A Feminist Companion to Mariology* ed. Amy-Jill Levine and Maria Mayo Robbins (London: Continuum International Publishing Group Ltd., 2005), 67-76, at 76.

⁴¹ S. J. Shoemaker, *Ancient Traditions of the Virgin Mary's Dormition and Assumption*, Oxford Early Christian Studies (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 5.

their oral form. The dogma, as espoused by the Roman Catholic Church, indicates that Mary:

by an entirely unique privilege, completely overcame sin by her immaculate conception, and as a result she was not subject to the law of remaining in the corruption of the grace, and she did not have to wait until the end of time for the redemption of the body.⁴²

Like Melchizedek, Mary had no end of life. She retains her status as *Theotokos* into eternity and remains able to intercede (a notably priestly function) for the faithful before her Son.

Furthermore like Melchizedek, Mary has no beginning of days either. By virtue of her Immaculate Conception, Mary is chosen from all eternity to be the mother of Christ. She is predestined to be *Theotokos*. It is this, argued Karl Rahner, which is the essential activity of Mary's Immaculate Conception. He concluded that:

she is different from us not merely through her having become the graced one at a temporally earlier point in her existence. The mystery that really gives the temporal difference between her and us in the mystery of her immaculate conception its proper meaning is, rather, the mystery of her predestination.⁴³

Rahner suggested that the Immaculate Conception does not simply place Mary in the same state of grace that all baptised believers received, but earlier. This would be too insignificant a difference in order to justify her status. Rather, the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception indicates Mary's predestination (since the beginning of time) to be the Mother of God.

Such a typology is reflected in Andrew of Crete's first homily on the Nativity. In this homily, Andrew wrote "[T]oday from Judah and David comes the young virgin, presenting the face of royalty and of the priesthood of Aaron, who

⁴² Pius XII, 'Munificentissimus Deus', Papal Constitution of 1950, quoted in *ibid.* 9.

⁴³ Karl Rahner, "The Immaculate Conception," in *Theological Investigations Volume 1* (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1954), 210-11.

exercised the functions of the priest according to the order of Melchizedek.”⁴⁴

The word Andrew uses here is προσωπον meaning ‘face’ or ‘mask’ and has its origins in Greek theatre where the actors would wear masks to reveal to the audience their character via their emotional states. This revelation of character is expressive rather than deceptive. In this sense, Mary is wearing the ‘face’ of royalty and of Aaronic priesthood as an expression of her true character. In his commentary on this passage in Genesis, Gerhard Von Rad noted that the character of Melchizedek appears as a “prototype and precursor of the Davidic dynasty,” particularly when this encounter is read in conjunction with the Psalmist’s reference to Melchizedek in Psalm 110.⁴⁵ In the same manner by which Melchizedek brought together the role of both priest and royalty, so too does Mary.

In her analysis of Mary’s relationship to the priesthood, Cleo McNelly Kearns thus concluded that Mary is not quite a priest, but, rather, represents a “transumption of the priestly role.”⁴⁶ Mary ‘rectifies’ the error of the old Hebraic priesthood. Kearns is not incorrect in this assertion; however, I argue that it is possible to go further than Kearns has done. If Mary is a type of Melchizedek then it follows that she is a type of him as High Priest, informing the priestly ministry of her Son and functioning as a priest in her own right. Mary is not rectifying an error of the old Hebraic priesthood, but rather opening up new ways of serving God within the new covenant in opposition to the Levitical order of priesthood.

Melchizedek is *the* model for Christ’s own priestly ministry, and thus to make such a strong typological connection between Melchizedek and Mary is to

⁴⁴Andrew of Crete, “Sermon 1 on the Nativity,” PG XCVI, 812 BC cited by Cleo McNelly Kearns, *The Virgin Mary, Monotheism and Sacrifice* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 220.

⁴⁵Gerhard Von Rad, *Genesis: A Commentary*, trans. John H. Marks (London: SCM Press, 1963), 175.

⁴⁶Kearns, *The Virgin Mary, Monotheism and Sacrifice*, 235.

bring the priestly elements of Mary to the fore. In considering Mary, due to her significance in the Annunciation-Incarnational re-visioning of the Eucharist, to be typologically associated with the priestly figure of Melchizedek, I argue that Mary must be considered to be the model of priestliness.

A Type of Abraham

Whilst Mary is often understood to be typologically following in the line of Sarah, the wife of Abraham, she can also be considered to be a type of Abraham herself. For example, Mary's *fiat* is an echo of Abraham's response to God in Genesis 22:1 ("Here I am"⁴⁷) and her *Magnificat* invokes the promise made to Abraham by God.⁴⁸ Kearns likened Mary to Abraham in her obedience, her promptness of service, her presence at the sacrificial death of her son, and as a founding figure in cultic and sacrificial discourse.⁴⁹ Kearns went further in her analysis of the inter-relationship between Abraham and Mary in that she identified an Abrahamic concept of hospitality which is then repeated by Mary. In comparing Abraham's welcoming of the three heavenly visitors in Genesis 18 and Mary's activity at the Wedding at Cana in John 2, Kearns noted the same reciprocal relationship between guest and host. Both of these events are considered to foreshadow the Last Supper and the subsequent eucharistic celebration of the church. Mary's instigation of her son's transformation of water into wine echoes Abraham's hospitality to the other in Genesis.⁵⁰ Mary's *fiat* extends this hospitality further to encompass her maternity and a different kind of sacrifice.

⁴⁷ Abraham's response to God – "here I am" – comes in the context of his preparation to sacrifice his son, Isaac, on Moriah and exemplifies Abraham's obedience to God.

⁴⁸ See Luke 1:55. Mary links her pregnancy to God's promise to Abraham.

⁴⁹ Kearns, *The Virgin Mary, Monotheism and Sacrifice*, 146.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.* 166.

René Laurentin noted a strong correlation between Abraham and Mary and suggests that in them “a double progress was accomplished, in the order of moral purity and in the order of faith.”⁵¹ In Mary the purification of God’s chosen lineage, which began with Abraham, reaches its peak “so that Christ can be born without being touched by sin.”⁵² Furthermore, Mary’s faith, which allows her to offer her *fiat* at the Annunciation-Incarnation event, is the perfection and completion of Abraham’s faith and the “long preparation for the coming of the Messiah.”⁵³ Indeed, Pope John Paul II compared Mary’s faith to Abraham’s when he noted that “Abraham’s faith constitutes the beginning of the Old Covenant; Mary’s faith at the Annunciation inaugurates the New Covenant.”⁵⁴

Given the extent of this typological relationship between Abraham and Mary, and Abraham’s significance in the establishment of the priestly lineage,⁵⁵ it is not unreasonable to propose that as Abraham was important for the priests of the Old Testament, so might Mary be considered important for the priests of the New Testament (and indeed beyond). Marian theology in the exegesis of the early church was matched by a simultaneous development of Talmudic and Midrashic exegesis that intimately connected Abraham with the priesthood, through the character of Melchizedek, of Israel.⁵⁶

⁵¹ René Laurentin, *A Short Treatise on the Virgin Mary*, trans. Charles Neumann (Washington, New Jersey: AMI Press, 1991), 183.

⁵² *Ibid.* 183.

⁵³ *Ibid.* 184.

⁵⁴ Pope John Paul II, “Redemptoris mater” accessed online at http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_25031987_redemptoris-mater.html on 09/03/16. Paragraph 14.

⁵⁵ Joseph Blenkinsopp proposes Abraham as the paradigm for the role of the priest and priestly activity in the Hebrew Bible. See Joseph Blenkinsopp, “Abraham as Paradigm in the Priestly History in Genesis,” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 128, no. 2 (2009), 225-41. Furthermore, Martha Himmelfarb describes the significance of both Abraham and Noah in the establishment of Israel’s priesthood in Martha Himmelfarb, ““A Kingdom of Priests”: The Democratization of the Priesthood in the Literature of Second Temple Judaism,” *The Journal of Jewish Thought and Philosophy* 6 (1997), 89-104, at 91.

⁵⁶ Emmanouela Grypeou and Helen Spurling, *The Book of Genesis in Late Antiquity: Encounters between Jewish and Christian Exegesis* (Leiden & Boston: Brill, 2013), 200-206.

A Type of Samuel

Mary has been typologically linked to Hannah, the mother of Samuel. Both conceive sons who will be dedicated to the Lord and influential in the shaping of the Hebrew world. Samuel has been considered to be a type of Jesus.⁵⁷ However, I propose one can view Hannah as a type of Mary's own mother, Anna, and, through a reading of the infancy narrative provided in the *Protevangelium of James*,⁵⁸ to see Samuel as a Marian type. Beginning with Hannah and Anna one can see remarkable similarities in the stories of the two women. Both are older, childless women who weep for a child (1 Sam 1: 10-11 and PJ 2: 1). Both make a vow to dedicate a future child to the service of the Lord (1 Sam 1: 11 and PJ 4:2). Both praise God when they are miraculously blessed with a child (1 Sam 2: 1-10 and PJ 6: 11-13). Both take their children to reside in the temple at a young age. In the case of Samuel, this is simply when he has been weaned (1 Sam 1: 23-4). In Mary's case the narrative specifically indicates that Mary is three years old when she enters the Temple (PJ 7:4).

With regard to their children, both Samuel and Mary respond with an Abrahamic "Here I am" when the Lord calls them into his active service (1 Sam 3: 10 and PJ 11:9). As Samuel operates in a time before the kingdom of Israel and is given the power to anoint the king the people of Israel want (1 Sam 8:22), so too does Mary. She operates in a time before the full inauguration of the kingdom of God and, as Samuel ushers in the earthly kingdom, so Mary ushers in the kingdom of God as she gives birth to Jesus. Samuel's power to anoint a king is significant. It is clear from the narrative in 1 Samuel chapter 9 that the

⁵⁷ Cyprian, "To Quirinius: Testimonies against the Jews," 1.20, trans. Robert Ernest Wallis in *Ante-Nicene Fathers Vol. 5*, ed. Alexander Roberts, James Donaldson and A. Cleveland Coxe (Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Publishing Co., 1886). Accessed online at <http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/050712a.htm> on 01/03/16.

⁵⁸ Ronald F. Hock, *The Infancy Gospels of James and Thomas*, The Scholars Bible (Santa Rosa, California: Polebridge Press, 1995), All references to the *Protevangelium of James* (PJ) are taken from this translation.

king—Saul—is not chosen by Samuel but rather by God. Samuel recognises and responds to God’s choice and imparts upon Saul the kingship of Israel through the anointing with oil. Similarly, Mary recognises the character of her child as she names him “Jesus” as she was instructed to do by the angel.⁵⁹

As I have already demonstrated with regards to Abraham and Melchizedek, the typological relationship between Samuel and Mary is strongly indicative of priestly role or function. Of particular significance here is the experience of being a priest at the beginning of a new period. As I noted previously, as Samuel ushers in the earthly kingdom, so Mary, in her priestly function, ushers in the kingdom of God. She is clearly not a priest as we understand the word today but, given the typological associations, Mary can still be considered to be priestly.

Proclus’ Typology in Marian Homilies

Whilst many of the Christian writers of the early Church used typology within their discourses, Proclus of Constantinople provides an excellent example of the way in which typologies were often bundled together and used extensively to further the development of an idea and give it legitimacy in the biblical text. In the fifth century, Proclus presented a Mariology through his homilies that was rich in both typology and theology. In his fourth homily, on *The Theotokos*, Proclus’ language is laden with priesthood tropes and types and he makes particular use of Marian Temple typology. Proclus is worthy of deeper consideration in the context of this thesis due to his role in the Nestorian

⁵⁹ In Luke 1:31 Mary is told by the angel: “you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus.” In Luke 2:21 the writer of the Gospel of Luke confirms that the child “was called Jesus, the name given by the angel before he was conceived in the womb.”

Controversy considered in the previous chapter. Proclus was one of those in Constantinople who preached Mary as *Theotokos* and to whom Nestorius objected so strongly.

The typological connection between the Temple and Mary was well established by the time of Proclus' writing, although he is unusual to make such extended, explicit use of it. The author of Luke's Gospel draws the typological connection between the two when he uses the word "overshadow" to indicate the way in which Mary became pregnant. This word is the same word used in the Septuagint to describe the cloud of God's glory over the Tabernacle in the desert (Ex. 40.35; Num. 9. 18, 22) and the winged cherubim who overshadowed the Ark of the Covenant (Ex. 25.20; 1 Chron. 28.18). These references were almost certainly intended to make the reader call to mind these Old Testament passages and to understand that the overshadowing that Mary experiences fills her womb with the physical presence of God, just as the clouds and the cherubim had filled those places with the spiritual presence of God. As the Ark of the Old Covenant had contained the word of God—his Laws—so the Ark of the New Covenant, Mary, contained the Word of God incarnate.

Subsequent writers made use of the typology and it is no surprise that this typological connection appears to develop in line with Marian doctrine and theology. Prior to the Nestorian controversy the Temple type is used interchangeably for both Christ and Mary. In the Antiochene School, particularly in the writings of Theodore of Mopsuestia, the Temple type is predominantly used in connection with Christ.⁶⁰ Athanasius, representative of the Alexandrian school, tended to use the Temple type with reference to Mary. He writes, *In*

⁶⁰ Gary Anderson summarises Theodore of Mopsuestia's Temple typology by suggesting that the "indwelling of God in Jesus's body, like a temple, is a *wholly extrinsic* affair. There was no intrinsic relationship between the temple and the deity that resided within." Gary Anderson, "Mary in the Old Testament," 47.

Praise of the Blessed Virgin, “O [Ark of the New] Covenant, clothed with purity instead of gold! You are the Ark in which is found the golden vessel containing the true manna, that is, the flesh in which divinity resides.”⁶¹

Whilst certain theological schools did tend to lean towards one particular use of the Temple type, this was not always the case. For example, Gregory Nazianzen, an Alexandrian, uses the typological connection interchangeably within the same text.

[T]hey are not few in number who say that the God-man was born from the Virgin’s womb, which the Spirit of the great God formed, constructing a pure temple to house the Temple. For the Mother is the temple of Christ, while Christ is the Temple of the Word.⁶²

With the development of the first established doctrine of Mary—that of her Perpetual Virginity—it is possible to see the way in which the Temple type is used as support for doctrinal development. Jerome, in the early fifth century, considers the reference to the closed gate of the Temple in Ezekiel chapter forty four and applies this to Mary. He wrote that

[O]nly Christ opened the closed doors of the virginal womb, which continued to remain closed, however. This is the closed eastern gate, through which only the high priest may enter and exit and which nevertheless is always closed.⁶³

Proclus’ homily, written at a time when he was embroiled in the Nestorian controversy, and in reaction to Nestorius’ minimalist Christology, “weaves together themes of Incarnation, Eucharist, priesthood, temple, and virginity in a shimmering web of metaphors, tropes, allusions, and precise doctrinal formulations.”⁶⁴ For example, Proclus drew heavily on the Marian Temple type,

⁶¹Athanasius, “In Praise of the Blessed Virgin,” cited in Luigi Gambero, *Mary and the Fathers of the Church: The Blessed Virgin Mary in Patristic Thought*, trans. Thomas Buffer (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1999), 106.

⁶² Ibid. 161.

⁶³ Jerome, “Against the Pelagians 2, 4; PL 23, 563,” cited in Luigi Gambero, *Mary and the Fathers of the Church: The Blessed Virgin Mary in Patristic Thought*, trans. Thomas Buffer (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1999), 211.

⁶⁴ Kearns, *The Virgin Mary, Monotheism and Sacrifice*, 247.

presenting Mary as the Temple of Solomon, the seven branched lamp stand within the Temple and, not merely the Daughter of Zion but also the Mother of God who, like Melchizedek, has no lineage. She is the closed sanctuary and the living temple.⁶⁵ As Temple, Mary is connected to the priestly realm. Kearns concluded her analysis of this hymn of praise to Mary by noting that:

[I]n this encomium, Mary becomes the temple, enclosing a new kind of priesthood for which she has in a sense woven the garment. It is a priesthood of unique persons, one not without either Old Testament precedents or New Testament warrants, but one specifically abjuring ethnic identity, kinship, genealogical descent, spilled blood, and perhaps even gender as the necessary basis for the sacrificial discourse that carries forth the spiritual patrimony of Israel.⁶⁶

Of course, Proclus offers only one example of a style of Marian homilies. Not all commentators used this typology, nor did they all make an association between Mary and priesthood. However, it is significant that this character in the Nestorian Controversy should so strongly offer a typological association between Mary and the role of the priest. In a debate focused on the nature of Christ, it is clear that Proclus, at least, understood the outcome to have implications, not just for understanding Mary, but for understanding the Eucharist and the priesthood as well.

Taken altogether, the typological representations I have drawn here indicate that Mary can be considered to have functioned in a priestly role. As Melchizedek, Abraham, and Samuel were all, in a sense, priests of God, so is Mary. Not ordained by any Bishop, but rather anointed in her vocation by the overshadowing of God himself. One of the consequences of considering the Annunciation-Incarnation event to be at the core of Christian somatic memory is to acknowledge the role Mary has to play in offering a new vision of priesthood.

⁶⁵ Proclus, 'Homily 1: Encomium on the all-holy Mary, Birthgiver of God,' in J. H. Barkhuizen, *Proclus, Bishop of Constantinople. Homilies on the Life of Christ* (Brisbane, Australia: Centre for Early Christian Studies, 2001), 63-70.

⁶⁶ Kearns, *The Virgin Mary, Monotheism and Sacrifice*, 249.

This vision, formed in the construction of a new narrative, is not bound by gender, or by the violence of the Cross.

Queering the Types

Mary's typological priestly ministry inaugurates that priesthood of Christ who, by becoming incarnate, bridged the gap between God and humanity. As Mediatrix, this is a function Mary still undertakes on behalf of humanity, but as priest of the new covenant, she has opened the way for a new kind of priesthood. It is this kind of re-visioning of priesthood that is facilitated by placing the Annunciation-Incarnation event at the core of Christian somatic memory. The narrative of masculine priest is destabilised and the rupture caused by the hermeneutical lens of trauma allows for the development of a new narrative.

Biblical typologies of people are, traditionally, drawn between members of the same sex. So, for example, Adam, Jonah, Noah, Abraham, Moses, and David (amongst many others) are considered to be prefigurative types of Christ. Eve, Sarah, Hannah, Rachel, and Leah are considered to be prefigurative types of Mary. Rarely (if ever) are typological comparisons drawn across gender lines. One of the consequences of considering the Annunciation-Incarnation event to be at the core of Christian somatic memory is the opportunity to queer these typologies and the way in which we understand "priest". Such a queering allows for the development of new understandings of the priestly role. Mary, in emulating these patriarchal, priestly figures, opens up a notion of service of and devotion to God. The shifting from masculine to feminine, from the paternal to the maternal, throws into sharp relief questions of gender and indeed questions of parenthood.

Whilst the patriarchal lineage of the priesthood is strongly associated with the Israelite priesthood, the ecclesial body of the Church is always feminine; a contrast made even more complex and compelling when one recalls that the Temple of the Hebrews is, in the literature of the early church, considered to be a prefigurative Marian type. Mary is the Temple of Temples and in the person of Mary the understanding of the Temple reaches its fulfilment. Furthermore, it is to the example and faith of Mary that the Church, as the corporate body of Christ, looks.

In the New Covenant, of which Mary is the fulcrum, I propose that gender is no prohibition to priestly service. Mary's typologically priestly actions throughout her lifetime indicate that the masculine priesthood, who had previously acted in a mediatory capacity between God and humankind, has been split open to allow for a different kind of mediation. This mediation is dependent on love, both of God and of fellow creatures, rather than on crucifixion and death.

Mary, the Virgin Priest

One consequence of considering the Annunciation-Incarnation event at the core of Christian somatic memory is, as I have already suggested, to place Mary centre-stage in our understanding of priesthood. Whilst the typological connections between Mary and priesthood are evident and reasonably well attested, there is little evidence of Marian priesthood in the history of the Church. In 1873, Pope Pius IX said of Mary "[S]he was so closely united to the sacrifice of her divine Son, from the virginal conception of Jesus Christ to his sorrowful Passion, that she was called by some Fathers of the Church the

Virgin Priest.”⁶⁷ Laurentin’s analysis of Marian doctrine and devotion indicates that this is simply not true. There is no evidence to suggest an ancient title of “Virgin Priest” was ever ascribed to Mary. Laurentin generously suggests that Pope Pius IX may have drawn this from “poetic allusions used by the Greek homilists.”⁶⁸ He concludes that if Mary is to be understood as a priest it is not in a sacramental sense but rather as an active part of the priesthood of all believers. He rejects a Marian priesthood on two grounds: “1) Mary did not receive the sacrament of orders because she was a woman. 2) She is superior to sacramental priests.”⁶⁹

However, despite the assertions of Laurentin, there is a strong visual tradition of closely associating Mary with the priesthood. Ancient and Medieval Marian paintings often reflected this theology as the work of Barbara Lane⁷⁰ and Carol Purtle⁷¹ has demonstrated—“Mary is priest because it is she who offers to ordinary mortals the saving flesh of God, which comes more regularly and predictably in the mass.”⁷² I will offer four examples of such imagery.

Art work depicting Mary as a priest has been found from as early as the sixth century. She is often described as the Virgin Orant indicating that Mary is depicted, in these early art works, in a manner of prayerful intercession. Maurice Vloberg noted:

[T]he orant figure is common example of this type [images that would have been immediately comprehensible to the initiated]. A Christian transposition of a Hellenistic creation, it combines the naturalistic and the

⁶⁷ Cited in Michael O’Carroll, *Theotokos*, 293.

⁶⁸ Tina Beattie, “Mary, the Virgin Priest?,” *The Month*, (December 1996). Accessed online at <http://www.womenpriests.org/mrpriest/beattie.asp> on 09/03/16.

⁶⁹ René Laurentin, *Marie, L’église Et Le Sacerdoce*, 2 vols., vol. 2 (Paris: Nouvelles Editions Latines, 1953), 37. Cited in and trans. by Beattie, “Mary, the Virgin Priest?”

⁷⁰ Barbara Lane, *The Altar and the Altarpiece: Sacramental Themes in Early Netherlandish Painting* (New York: Harper & Row, 1984).

⁷¹ Carol J. Purtle, *The Marian Paintings of Jan Van Eyck* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992).

⁷² Caroline Walker Bynum, *Fragmentation and Redemption: Essays on Gender and the Human Body in Medieval Religion* (New York: Zone Books, 1992), 101.

figurative in order to express either the act or the idea of prayer, *oratio*, and is admirably suited to depict the fervour of the union between Mary and God.⁷³

In many of these early art works Mary is specifically designated through textual additions and is clearly seen to be wearing garments that would have indicated to the viewers that she was acting in a priestly role as she prayed. For example, in the eleventh century mosaic found in Ravenna (figure 1), Mary is depicted in a priestly manner. This mosaic hangs over the altar in the archbishop's chapel in Ravenna. Mary is depicted with her hands raised in a position of priestly intercession and mediation. Her garments include a white pallium under a dark chasuble—part of the traditional clothing of a priest and representative of authority to perform sacraments. The pallium, itself, is an indicator of great priestly authority. “In those days the pallium was the distinctive mark of episcopal authority in full exercise;”—the pallium was worn by the Pope or by archbishops to signify their union with Rome.⁷⁴ Mary is not simply depicted in a priestly role. It is clear from the addition of the pallium that the artist is indicating that Mary's sacerdotal authority is of the very highest order.

Approximately one hundred years after the creation of the Ravenna mosaic, one of the most striking examples of Mary the Priest was illustrated. This image, of Mary at the Annunciation, can be found in the Evangelistery of the Benedictine Monastery of Gengenbach in what is now present-day Germany. Dating from approximately 1150 AD, the image depicts the Virgin Mary wearing priestly eucharistic vestments, her hands outstretched in the *orans* position of prayer, listening to the angel Gabriel, as the Spirit descends upon her (figure 2). Berger, in her analysis of this image, notes that “[T]he

⁷³ Maurice Vloberg, "The Iconographic Types of the Virgin in Western Art," in *Mary: The Complete Resource*, ed. Sarah Jane Boss (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 537-585, at 542.

⁷⁴ Anon., "The Pallium," *The Catholic Historical Review* 8, no. 1 (April 1922), 64-71 at 65.

Blessed Virgin, with the angel next to her, is clearly styled analogously to the priest at the moment of consecration”.⁷⁵ An allusion appears to be drawn between Mary’s actions in agreeing to the Incarnation of Jesus within her body, and the priest’s actions in consecrating the bread and wine to become the body and blood of Christ—offered to believers in the reception of the Eucharist.

⁷⁵ Berger, *Gender Differences*, 152.



Figure 1



Figure 2

This theme of the Marian Priest continued to inspire artists in the subsequent centuries. In the fifteenth century (c. 1437) a French panel painting commissioned from the Amiens School (now on display at the Louvre) entitled *Sacerdoce de la Vierge* or *The Priesthood of the Virgin* (figure 3) clearly depicts Mary as a priest. Purtle, in her study of the Marian paintings of Van Eyck, considers this painting to be the exemplar par excellence of the Marian Priest genre of religious artwork.⁷⁶ Cardile described the image vividly:

She is dressed in an elaborate sacerdotal costume, which appears to be based on the type of vestments described in the twenty eighth chapter of Exodus as belonging to the High Priest Aaron. Her undergarment is a white tunic or alb, over which is a recreation of Aaron's sacerdotal overgarment, the ephod, and from beneath it projects the ends of a stole. The ephod is made from a richly figured brocade and is jewelled along its borders. As described in Exodus, small bells hang from its hem. Over her breast attached by gold chains suspended from the ephod's two shoulderpieces, the Breastplate of Judgement with the twelve stones for the Tribes of Israel may be seen and around Mary's waist hangs a long sash which probably refers to the biblical ephod...The papal tiara and jewelled cross are references, I believe, to Mary's New Covenant priesthood.⁷⁷

In the painting Mary is shown standing in front of the altar. She holds in her right hand a paten, apparently ready to distribute the eucharistic host to those awaiting the sacrament, and with her left she holds the hand of the child Jesus, who, in turn, reaches out to touch her robe. Lane notes, as Cardile does, that Mary is depicted:

in the garb of the high priest of the Old Testament, as described in Exodus 28: 1-35. The liturgically vested Virgin prefigures the New Testament priest, Christ, just as the figures of Abel, Abraham, and Melchizedek on the altarpiece behind her foreshadow his inevitable sacrifice. She holds the hand of the youthful Christ as if to encourage his participation in the Mass, in the nave of a church that may portray Amiens Cathedral itself.⁷⁸

⁷⁶ Purtle, *Marian Paintings*, 12.

⁷⁷ Paul Y. Cardile, "Mary as Priest: Mary's Sacerdotal Position in the Visual Arts," *Arte Cristiana* 72 (1984), 199-208, at 199.

⁷⁸ Lane, *The Altar and the Altarpiece*, 71.



Figure 3

The final image to be examined in this chapter comes from the nineteenth century and is a series of images rather than just one, variously entitled *The Virgin with the Host*, *The Virgin of the Host*, or, infrequently, *The Virgin Adoring the Host*. In 1841, French painter Jean Auguste Dominique Ingres was commissioned by the Russian Tsar to paint the first of these images—*The Virgin with the Host*. Ingres lamented the fact this painting had been lost from France to Russia and proceeded to replicate it in a number of different versions in the subsequent years.⁷⁹ A small version of the same painting was created in 1852 for the wife of Ingres' lifelong friend—Charles Marcotte. In this version the saints surrounding the Virgin are changed from the Russian Saints Alexander and Nicholas, to Saints Helen and Louis—more appropriate for a French nineteenth century gentlewoman.⁸⁰

A further image in this series (figure 4) shows Mary standing behind an altar on which rests a eucharistic Chalice with a eucharistic host suspended above it. Her hands are clasped in prayer and she is flanked on either side by angels appearing to tend the lamps on the altar. The depiction is strikingly priestly. Paintings depicting the *adoration* of the Blessed Sacrament tend to depict the host in a monstrance with adores kneeling before the altar. The placement of the Virgin Mary behind the altar and of the host rising from the Chalice indicate a priestly, rather adorational, role. A subsequent version of this image appears in 1866. This image is similar to the preceding image with angels surrounding Mary rather than Saints, but in this image Mary clasps her hands to her chest, as if over her heart.

⁷⁹ "Jean Auguste Dominique Ingre: The Virgin Adoring the Host (2005.186)," in *Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History*, ed. The Metropolitan Museum of Art (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000-, 2014).

⁸⁰ Gary Tinterow, "The Virgin and Child Appearing to Saints Anthony of Padua and Leopold of Corinthia, 1855," in *A Private Passion: Nineteenth Century Paintings and Drawings from the Grenville L. Winthrop Collection*, Harvard University, ed. Stephan Wolohojian and Anna Tahinci (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Yale University Press, 2003). 196-7, at 196.



Figure 4.

Conclusion

I began this chapter with a quotation from Rowan Williams. It is helpful to return to those words now as I consider the relationship between Mary and the priesthood. Williams argued that priesthood was:

crucially to do with the service of the space cleared by God; with the holding open of a door into a place where a damaged and confused humanity is able to move slowly into the room made available, and understand that it is accompanied and heard in all its variety and unmanageability, and emotional turmoil and spiritual uncertainty.⁸¹

Having examined the nature and history of priesthood in terms of its connections to the celebration of the Eucharist, I have demonstrated that a consequence of considering the Annunciation-Incarnation event as the core of Christian somatic memory is a rupture in the traditional narrative of priesthood. The new narrative that arises from this rupture looks to Mary as a model of priesthood.

Whilst none of the typological or artistic examples I have examined here were designed to prove that Mary was an ordained priest in the ecclesial conventions surrounding that term, they do attest to a tradition within the church which understood her actions to be both sacerdotal and providing a model of priesthood. If a priest is one who, as Williams suggests, serves in the space cleared by God, holding open a door for humanity, then, I argue, Mary is a priest. Mary's embodied experience of the Annunciation-Incarnation event, and the subsequent raising of her child, is service in the space cleared by God (in the first instance, in her very body). Her *fiat* holds open the door to humanity. Connected to her obedience, offering, and generative role within the Annunciation-Incarnation event, I conclude that the implication of placing this

⁸¹ Williams, "Epilogue," 176.

event at the centre of Christian somatic memory is to allow Mary to be our model for this new vision of priesthood. The memory of Mary's embodied experience has not escaped the memory of the Church.

Chapter Five

Out of Rupture Comes Forth New Narratives: Sacrifice Through the Hermeneutical Lens of Trauma

The Priestly Sacrifice and the Eucharist

In the previous chapter I established that one of the consequences of considering the Annunciation-Incarnation event to be at the core of Christian somatic memory is a new understanding of priesthood in line with the re-interpretation of the Eucharist. I demonstrated that the lens of trauma destabilises traditional narratives. This destabilisation ruptures the narrative and allows the development of a new narrative. When the traditional narrative of priesthood is ruptured, it is Mary who provides the model for a new narrative of priesthood. In this chapter I will examine a second consequence of considering the Annunciation-Incarnation event to be at the core of Christian somatic memory. Having already destabilised the traditional narrative of priesthood, I argue that a further consequence of the somatic memory of the Annunciation-Incarnation event is the destabilisation of the narrative of sacrifice. The rupture such a destabilisation creates clears the theological space for the construction of a new narrative.

Sacrifice has featured, and continues to feature, prominently in some areas of Church eucharistic discourse. In the Catholic and Orthodox Church, the bread and wine are believed to be the body and blood of Christ. Similarly, in high Anglican churches there is an understanding of Real Presence. I argue that the celebration of the Eucharist is a memorial, even as it is a re-enactment. All non-identical repetition is, at its very essence, memory. This Real Presence of Christ in the eucharistic elements has led to an understanding of eucharistic

celebration as sacrifice either in memory of Christ's death on the Cross, or in some confidence that the Eucharist is itself a sacrificing of Jesus' body and blood.

In order to explore the Christian notion of sacrifice and its relationship to the Eucharist, it is first important to turn our attention to the current situation. Kilmartin presented a summary of what he calls the 'modern average Catholic theology of the Eucharist' when he wrote:

[I]n the Western tradition, the words of Christ spoken over the bread and wine are [also] understood to be the essential form of the sacrament. These words thus constitute the moment when the sacrament is realized, namely, when the bread and wine are converted into the body and blood of Christ. Thus, while the words are spoken by the presiding minister, they are understood as being spoken by Christ through his minister. This act is one accomplished only by the minister acting *in persona Christi* in the midst of the prayer of faith of the Church...The representation of the death of Christ occurs with the act of conversion of the elements. The somatic presence of Christ and the representation of the sacrifice of Christ are simultaneously achieved in the act of the consecration of the elements...Nowadays the average Catholic theology of the Mass...affirms that the representation of the sacrifice of the cross is a sacramental reactualization of the once-for-all historical engagement of Jesus on the cross. The idea that in the act of consecration a sacramental representation of the sacrifice of the cross is realized in the sense that the historical sacrifice is re-presented or reactualized also seems to be favored by official Catholic theology today.¹

This 'average' theology of the Eucharist bases an understanding of the Mass on a traditional, Old Testament notion of sacrifice. By elevating the presiding minister to a role in which they are acting in the place of Christ, (re)performing the sacrifice of his body and blood, the Old Testament ideas of ritual priestly purity, necessary for the acceptability of sacrifice, become applicable in the modern Church.

This concept of sacrifice holds that sacrifice involves the death of a victim in order to placate a higher power. In the Hebrew Temple the priests performed

¹ Edward J. Kilmartin, *The Eucharist in the West: History and Theology* (Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical Press, 1998), 294-5.

a variety of sacrifices. William Gilders identifies five different types of sacrifices performed in the Temple: the burnt offering, the grain offering, the sacrifice of well-being or fellowship offering, the sin or purification offering, and the guilt offering.² The average theology of the Eucharist that Kilmartin highlights above, however, draws specifically on the sin or purification sacrifice to the apparent exclusion of the other types of offerings. So, in the Hebrew temple, the priests perform sacrifices that involve the death of an animal in order to achieve purity in the eyes of Yahweh or to atone for sins and this is what is referenced in this understanding of the celebration of the Eucharist.

Nancy Jay considered these tropes of ritual sacrifice in her work on sacrifice and religion and in specific reference to the Catholic celebration of the Eucharist. Here she argued that the regular practice of the sacrifice of the Eucharist is intimately entwined with the hierarchical structure of the Catholic Church. The priest acts sacrificially and supernaturally in the person of Christ and thus the “exclusive power to sacrifice”³ becomes the basis for priestly authority. The power to sacrifice—to enact the central ritual of the Catholic faith—is passed from ‘father’ to ‘son’ through the bishop’s consecration of priests. This conflation of maternity and priesthood is developed further by Jay. She suggested:

[B]ecause it identifies social and religious descent, rather than biological descent, sacrificing can identify membership in groups with no presumption of actual family descent. This is the case with the sacrifice of the Mass, offered by members of a formally institutionalized “lineage,” the apostolic succession of the clergy in the Roman Church. This social organization is a truly perfect “eternal line of descent,” in which authority descends from father to father, through the one “Son made perfect forever,” in a line no longer directly dependent on women’s reproductive powers for continuity.⁴

² William K. Gilders, “Sacrifice in Ancient Israel”. Accessed online at www.sbl-site.org/assets/pdfs/TBv2i5_Gilders2.pdf on 22/04/16.

³ Nancy Jay, *Throughout Your Generations Forever: Sacrifice, Religion, and Paternity* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), 113.

⁴ *Ibid.* 37.

Jay argued that the masculine priesthood, by bestowing the power to sacrifice through the ordination of male priests by male bishops, circumvents the natural feminine maternity necessary for the creation of lineage. In this sense, the conflation of priesthood with a spiritual maternity serves to further exclude women from the priesthood.

This created perpetual line of masculine authority is entirely separate from women and feminine reproduction. Jay argued that where there is a stronger, blood-sacrificial, material, and actual understanding of the presence of Christ in the Eucharist, there is a requirement for a priestly hierarchy with emphasis on ritual practice and the legitimacy of continuity from 'father' to 'son'. Where the understanding of the presence of Christ in the Eucharist is 'weaker,' more symbolic or commemorative, one will often find a more egalitarian structure with more relaxed views of ritual purity.⁵ If one wants an egalitarian structure, the implication is that one will have to forgo Real Presence in order to achieve it.

Beattie, in her analysis of Laurentin's thesis on the title Virgin Priest that we considered in the previous chapter, noted that Laurentin "rejects the term 'Virgin Priest' in favour of a more nuanced understanding of Mary's maternal role." Beattie suggests that, for Laurentin, "[T]he conflation of maternity with priesthood obscures the balance between the unique calling of men to the sacramental priesthood, and the unique calling of women to motherhood."⁶

Beattie goes on to criticise Laurentin's argument as "deeply flawed"⁷ and challenges his identification of God with man and creature with woman. Laurentin draws a distinction between the priesthood of all believers, of which

⁵ Ibid. 112-125.

⁶ Beattie, "Mary, the Virgin Priest?" 4.

⁷ Ibid. 5

Mary is the preeminent example and the ordained priesthood which depends on Christ as its example. So he wrote “[I]f one can rigorously affirm that the hierarchical priesthood is by nature manly, the femininity of the communal priesthood calls for a more nuanced approach. While women are excluded from the hierarchical priesthood, men enter into the ranks of the communal priesthood.”⁸ Thus Beattie argued that “we find the maleness of Jesus elevated to an ontological status that by its very nature excludes women from participation in the priesthood.”⁹ I argue that if these distinctions are pressed too far, then one is left with a masculine saviour who has only saved males since that which has not been assumed cannot be redeemed and a characterisation of all other genders as not made in the image of God.¹⁰

I propose that Real Presence is essential to somatic memory. As I have demonstrated in Chapter Three where I considered the theology of Cyril of Alexandria, the unity of the body is imperative to an understanding of the Eucharist. It is, therefore, important that the body offered to us in the Eucharist is a body of unity and not a body that is atomised into disparate parts. The eucharistic body is actual body—not representation of body. The material and actual understanding of the Eucharist is central to a theology that is informed by embodied traumatic experience. The embodied nature matters.¹¹ However, the egalitarian structure with more relaxed views of ritual purity is essential also. Such an approach to the ecclesial body of Christ calls us to love all bodies. It does not condemn some bodies as being ritually unclean, or spiritually inferior, to others. Rather such an egalitarian structure welcomes all bodies and affirms

⁸ Laurentin, *Marie, L'église Et Le Sacerdoce*, 2, 75.

⁹ Beattie, "Mary, the Virgin Priest?." 5.

¹⁰ For a fuller account of this argument see Rosemary Radford Ruether, *To Change the World: Christology and Cultural Criticism* (New York: Crossroad, 1981).

¹¹ I will develop this exploration of Real Presence and its significance for somatic memory further in Chapter Six.

all have equal roles to play. I will demonstrate, in the subsequent section of this chapter, how one can have such an egalitarian approach without relinquishing the material, actual Real Presence of the Eucharist.

A New Understanding of Christian Sacrifice

It is my contention, in line with sacrificial theory presented by Kilmartin and Daly, that in looking to the Hebrew Bible or to the sacrificial practices in other cultures to explain the Christian Eucharist, one is in error. To seek to understand Christian sacrifice from any starting point other than from its own faith and practice, is to do Christian sacrifice a disservice.

Philosophical and anthropological studies on sacrifice typically begin by tracing the development of sacrifice and sacrificial acts throughout time and across cultures.¹² In this sense they are seeking similarities in diverse acts that might help to explain what sacrifice is about. However, looking externally to understand the internal working of a faith or a community is a mistake. It is more helpful to ask what a community thinks it is doing rather than to impose meaning from the outside. Better instead to look inside the community performing the sacrifice and seek to find the meaning there.

To understand the Christian concept of sacrifice we must, I propose, begin with the core of somatic memory in the Christian faith—the Annunciation-Incarnation event. If this event is at the core of somatic memory in Christianity, and thus at the core of each celebration of the Eucharist, then it is also the event which is key to understanding Christian sacrifice. In the Annunciation-

¹² For example, Henri Hubert and Marcel Mauss drew on many different cultures and perspectives in producing their work *Sacrifice: Its Nature and Functions*. Henri Herbert and Marcel Mauss, *Sacrifice: Its Nature and Functions* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981). Furthermore, Nancy Jay compared Hawaiian sacrifice, Ashanti sacrifice, and Jewish sacrifice in order to draw her conclusions about the Eucharist.

Incarnation event it becomes clear that sacrifice is fundamentally Trinitarian as well as Incarnational. Traditional Catholic and other high eucharistic theology insists that the Eucharist must be in continuity with the Christ-event. The Christ-event in this reference is usually considered to be the crucifixion but, as has already been demonstrated, to limit the interpretation and understanding of the Eucharist to only the suffering, death, and resurrection of Christ is too small a vision of Christianity. The fuller understanding is found in the Annunciation-Incarnation event. Therefore it is the Annunciation-Incarnation event that should provide the reference point for our understanding of Christian sacrifice. In this sense, the Girardian concept of mimetic desire can rightly be considered to be at the basis of sacrifice but, I argue, it is rendered obsolete in the understanding of sacrifice I propose—mutual self-offering of the Trinity. This self-offering is entirely at odds with the competitive desire that Girard posited and thus opens up the concept of sacrifice to a new interpretation.

Gordon Lathrop, in his work on liturgical theology has also sought to re-conceptualise Christian understanding of sacrifice in relation to the Eucharist. Lathrop suggested that words such as ‘sacrifice’, ‘offering’, and ‘priest’ are the wrong words to use when talking about the Eucharist but that they become the right words when we allow their meaning to be transformed.

For us to newly criticize the pervasive language of sacrifice, requiring its transformation, will be for us to newly open ourselves to transformations in the meanings of Christian worship, of the death of Christ, of Christian ethics, and of the human relationship with the created world.¹³

Such a fresh, critical approach to the Eucharist is, I argue, entirely necessary and I agree with Lathrop’s argument that Christian sacrifice cannot be understood with reference to any other type of sacrifice (except in antithesis). Whilst Lathrop does positively connect this Christian sacrifice to the meal of

¹³ Gordon W. Lathrop, *Holy Things: A Liturgical Theology* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1998), 156.

thanksgiving we call the Eucharist, he does not remove it from the Cross. For Lathrop, the meaning of the meal comes from the Cross and for this very reason my own argument moves beyond Lathrop's.¹⁴

Kilmartin and Daly,¹⁵ like Lathrop, recognised a need to consider afresh the Christian understanding of sacrifice. In contrast to Lathrop, however, they present a notion of sacrifice that doesn't begin by looking at other religions to see how sacrifice is done there and what it means there. In contrast they begin with a Trinitarian understanding of the Annunciation-Incarnation event. By understanding that in this Christ-event, sacrifice, in the 'history of religions' sense of the word, is made obsolete, Kilmartin and Daly argue for an understanding of sacrifice based on personal relationship, evidenced par excellence in the Annunciation-Incarnation event. Daly summarised this as the "three 'moments' of Trinitarian Christian sacrifice: the self-offering of the Father; the 'response' of the Son, and the responding self-offering of the believers [enabled by the Holy Spirit]."¹⁶ Coakley outlined this enabling activity of the Spirit as "the primary means of incorporation into the trinitarian life of God, and as constantly and 'reflexively' at work in believers in the circle of response to the Father's call."¹⁷

This understanding of sacrifice does not depend on the immolation of the victim. It is not inextricably linked to violence and suffering; in fact these are rejected as key paradigms for considering sacrifice and instead we are offered a

¹⁴ Ibid. 154.

¹⁵ Robert Daly became the executor of Edward Kilmartin's unpublished theological works upon his death. It is from these unpublished documents that Daly edited Kilmartin's *Eucharist in the West* and it is in this work that Daly begins to uncover the concept of a Trinitarian understanding of sacrifice. This work is then more fully developed in Daly's later book *Sacrifice Unveiled* in which he acknowledges the influence of Kilmartin on his theology.

¹⁶ Robert Daly, *Sacrifice Unveiled: The True Meaning of Christian Sacrifice* (London & New York: T & T Clark, 2009), 10.

¹⁷ Sarah Coakley, *God, Sexuality, and the Self: An Essay 'On The Trinity'* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 111.

paradigm of love. When one considers the purpose of the Eucharist this becomes abundantly clear. If the Eucharist is celebrated in order to bring about the deep and ongoing transformation of the community of believers who receive it, this transformation is facilitated by the transformation of the bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ. In this sense, the transformation of the eucharistic elements is subordinate to the transformation of the community of believers. Not a subordination of superiority but rather of temporality—the transformation of the eucharistic elements happens prior to the transformation of the community; it happens so that the community transformation might occur. This transformation is not one of violence and suffering but one of love; love of God and love of each other.

I propose that to understand the Eucharist as a mutual, Trinitarian, self-offering is to release the Eucharist from its focus on the death of Christ as the key paradigm for sacrifice, and instead offer a eucharistic understanding of sacrifice that places the Annunciation-Incarnation event at the centre of this new narrative. This, then, is a consequence of considering the Annunciation-Incarnation event to be at the heart of Christian somatic memory. As our understanding of the Eucharist is re-visioned with regard to the Incarnation in its fullest sense, so are our understandings of priesthood and sacrifice.

Whilst this shift in focus serves to highlight loving self-offering over and above violence and death, it does not detract from the Real Presence at the altar. In contrast to Jay's conclusion that suggested when one removed the destructive, sacrificial dimension of the Eucharist one was left with a weak notion of the Eucharist that reflected a memorial, symbolic offering only, I argue that the removal of this dimension of the Eucharist actually makes way for the Incarnational dimension. The dead body of Christ is replaced with the living

one—the Incarnate Christ—in all its fullness (which includes the death of Christ). Through this understanding of sacrifice Christ is even more Really Present at the altar. The transformation of the elements into the Real Presence is a re-actualisation of the Trinitarian self-offering glimpsed in the Annunciation-Incarnation event.

Placing the Annunciation-Incarnation event at the heart of Christian somatic memory allows for an understanding of the Eucharist that embodies the person of Christ at the altar but does not impose unobtainable ritual purity on either the celebrant or the congregation. The trauma of the Cross is relinquished for an equally traumatic, but life focused, Incarnational, event. The priest is not re-sacrificing Christ on the altar, but rather re-birthing (or even remembering) the Body of Christ in the celebration of the Eucharist. It is, I propose, in the celebration of the Eucharist, that one is born again anew with each participation in the sacrament.

The ritual of the Eucharist is based on a meal that itself is a non-identical repetition of a religious sacrifice—the Passover. However, the Eucharist is not only a backwards looking remembrance of the Last Supper. To suggest this is to imply that the Last Supper is the model for all subsequent eucharistic celebrations and thus the priest inevitably comes to represent Christ. This meal is not only backwards looking but also forward looking. The meal of the Eucharist is celebrated and shared in anticipation of the heavenly banquet in the eschaton. This banquet, characterised as a wedding feast, appears in Matthew 22:1-14 and in Luke 14: 15-24. In this sense, the Eucharist is eschatologically focused. Here we receive a morsel and a sip, but in the future we will receive a banqueting table—the full and continued presence of Christ.

To understand the celebration of contemporary Eucharists in this manner is to draw them in line with the full understanding of the Annunciation-Incarnation event proposed within this thesis. Just as with the Incarnation I propose we do not look back to one specific temporal moment to find our point of reference, so too with the Eucharist. To look back to the Last Supper as the only point of reference is to miss the many meals Jesus shared before this final meal and to allow the centuries of eucharistic celebration that have happened since then to go unacknowledged in our understanding. Furthermore, to only look backwards deprives us of a future hope for the meal that is to come.

In this model of the eucharistic sacrifice, the priest does not act in the person of Christ but rather fully and completely as a representative of the Church. The presider does not consecrate but rather the Holy Spirit does. The eucharistic anaphora should be recognised as petitionary prayers rather than performative ones. Both transformations—that of the bread and wine into the body and blood and also the transformation of the gathered congregation into one corporate body—are accomplished by the work of the Holy Spirit not by the actions of the priest. The first epiclesis, spoken before the Words of Institution, petitions God to “[M]ake holy, therefore, these gifts, we pray, by sending down your spirit upon them like the dewfall, so that they may become for us the Body and Blood of our Lord, Jesus Christ.”¹⁸ Similarly, the second epiclesis, spoken after the Words of Institution, petitions God that by “partaking of the Body and Blood of Christ, we may be gathered into one by the Holy Spirit.”¹⁹ In both cases these prayers, and indeed the whole of the eucharistic liturgy, is spoken in the corporate ‘we’ and both are petitionary, rather than performative. It is the

¹⁸ “Eucharistic Prayer II,” The Roman Missal, <http://catholic-resources.org/ChurchDocs/RM3-EP1-4.htm>. Accessed 15/02/16.

¹⁹ *Ibid.* Accessed 15/02/16.

Holy Spirit who accomplishes the transformation of the bread and wine, which in turn accomplishes and facilitates, in the power of the Holy Spirit, the transformation of the self-offered community that receives it. The priest acts as representative of the gathered believers, but has no ontological power to effect any change in the eucharistic elements. Rather, the priest has the authority to call upon the Holy Spirit to effect such change.

I noted in Chapter Two, when considering the eucharistic theology of Ambrose of Milan, the power of human language that reaches its supra-fulfilment in the speaking of the Words of Institution. I argue, however, that these words have a power that is not dependent on the priest acting *in persona Christi*. Returning to Williams' definition of priesthood as one who serves in the space cleared by God,²⁰ it is Christ at the Last Supper who clears the space for humanity to enter into communion with him, rather than the power of the priest to accomplish anything. The Words of Institution have become limited to a particular vision of priesthood. As our understanding of the nature of Christian sacrifice shifts, when considered through the lens of trauma, so, I argue, is there a shift in emphasis from the Words of Institution to the inclusion of the epiclesis as the significant words of eucharistic consecration.

A consequence of considering the Annunciation-Incarnation event to lie at the core of Christian somatic memory is a re-envisioning of what is taking place on the altar in a eucharistic celebration. When we view the priest as participating in a non-identical repetition of the Annunciation-Incarnation event, having already established that Mary must be centre-stage in our understanding of priesthood, one can view the priest as a representative of the congregation, calling on the Holy Spirit to overshadow these gifts as Mary was overshadowed

²⁰ Williams, "Epilogue," 176.

by the Spirit. Bodily memory of this event is, therefore, central to celebration of the Eucharist, and thus to our understanding of sacrifice.

The Marian Sacrifice

If Mary is our model of priesthood what, then, does this understanding of eucharistic sacrifice mean for Mary? I argue that this model of sacrifice, based on mutual self-offering and love, is highly significant for our understanding of Mary and her relationship both to the Incarnate Christ and the Eucharist. Mary takes part in this sacrificial self-offering in her *fiat* and is responsive in her obedience to the call of God. She models this eucharistic understanding of sacrifice in her participation in the Annunciation-Incarnation event—she is at the heart of Christian somatic memory.

Mary's sacrifice in this sense is both ontological and epistemological. It is ontological in that her sacrificial self-offering makes the sacrificial self-offering of the Father and the self-giving response of the Son really present in her womb. It is at this moment, and through her agreement, that the Incarnate Christ becomes particularly present in the world. Thus her role is also essential in a soteriological sense – through Mary's *fiat* salvation is made available to humankind.

However, Mary's sacrificial self-offering, her self-giving response, is also epistemological. In this sense it reveals to us the Trinitarian model of self-offering that is the intrinsic hinge of Christian sacrifice. Furthermore, it reveals to us the Incarnate Christ. Mary's sacrificial self-offering can, therefore, be considered to be sacramental. Her self-offering makes visible and present the mutual, sacrificial self-giving that is at work within the Trinity.

Mary's participation in this intrinsic revelation of the Trinitarian model of sacrifice, the very model which will become the basis for understanding what happens in the celebration of the Eucharist, is significant for our re-visioning of sacrifice in the light of an Annunciation-Incarnational understanding of the Eucharist. Her specific involvement in this revelation of the Trinity offers her as the priest par excellence. Mary, as type of the Church and as the first Christian, offers the earthly element, her body, as the place in which Christ will be revealed to the world and made particularly present. This *fiat* is sacramental and, as such, makes visible the invisible Trinitarian self-offering—she makes visible the foundation of Christian sacrifice and thus the somatic memory at the core of Christian faith. The memory of Mary's body, in all its fullness, becomes key. It is these actions that the priest at the altar undertakes. The priest offers the earthly elements of bread and wine as the loci of the revelation of Christ to the world, made particularly present in this celebration of the Mass. Here the self-offering of the Father and the mutually self-giving response of the Son are made manifest. The Eucharist re-members the somatic memory at the heart of the Christian faith—it is a non-identical repetition of the Annunciation-Incarnation event. Through the activity of the Holy Spirit what was invisible is transformed into the visible and the congregation is transformed in their response. Here, the truly Christian idea of sacrifice is enacted, drawing its reference and meaning internally, rather than externally.

The Value of the Mutual Self-Offering Sacrifice

This construction of a new narrative of Eucharist, priesthood, and sacrifice is a consequence of considering the Annunciation-Incarnation event to be at the

core of Christian somatic memory. Such a narrative has value and currency in contemporary Christian discourse. It matters for a number of reasons. Firstly, it offers a move away from violence and the glorification of suffering. Secondly, it offers a move away from a triumphalistic perspective on the resurrection. Thirdly, it proposes an understanding of sacrifice unique to Christianity. Fourthly, it takes seriously the *lex orandi, lex credendi* understanding of doctrine. And finally, fifthly, it offers real potential in furthering feminist theological discourse by positing Mary as a model of priestly sacrifice.

Firstly, from the perspective of one attempting to engage with trauma theory from a theological perspective and exploring the implications of the Annunciation-Incarnation event lying at the centre of Christian faith, there is tremendous value in understanding Christian sacrifice from the perspective of Trinitarian mutual self-offering. When one takes the Crucifixion as the baseline for Christian sacrifice, one inevitably implies that Christian sacrifice is inextricably connected to violence and suffering. The somatic memory at the heart of Christianity becomes, then, the suffering and death of Christ. From this perspective, the Incarnation is merely a lengthy prologue to the Crucifixion. Rather, when one considers Christian sacrifice from the perspective of mutual self-offering, one posits love as the key paradigm for sacrifice. Indeed, it is love at the root of the Annunciation-Incarnation event—maternal love and Divine love—from these all things flow. Not immolatory, destructive love, but rather mutual, interdependent, self-giving love. As the writer of the Gospel of Matthew says:

“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.” This is the first and greatest commandment. And a second is like it: “You shall love your neighbour as yourself.” On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.²¹

²¹ Matthew 22: 37-40

I propose that this mutual, interdependent, self-giving love as the key paradigm for understanding sacrifice is a radical departure from the violent, destructive understanding of sacrifice that has played such a prominent part in shaping perceptions of the Eucharist and has been at the core of the trauma of Christianity for centuries. In line with the teachings of Jesus, this loving sacrifice is one of life, not death. This destructive sacrificial love has often been used to give legitimacy to suffering and to encourage believers to remain in suffering.

Secondly, a focus on the Cross as the paradigm for sacrifice can lead to a triumphalistic perspective on the resurrection and can “operate in such a way as to promise a radically new beginning to those who have experienced a devastating event.”²² Rambo characterised the potential pitfalls of such a reading of sacrifice as she states that it can “gloss over the realities of pain and loss, glorify suffering, and justify violence.”²³ For Rambo this is evidence in support of her argument for a theology of ‘remaining.’ Rambo argued that when love becomes linked exclusively to the Cross event, it can easily reinforce violent ideas of sacrifice.²⁴ The solution, then, is to find a new rhetoric of love in the pneumatology of Holy Saturday.²⁵ Love, Rambo suggested, remains in a mode of witnessing in the place between life and death. Whilst I consider that Rambo’s argument still rests almost entirely on the Crucifixion event, albeit in an interpretation that is broadened to include Holy Saturday and the

²² Rambo, *Spirit and Trauma*, 143.

²³ *Ibid.* 143.

²⁴ *Ibid.* 131

²⁵ Rambo’s theology of remaining is informed by her analysis of the work of Hans Urs Von Balthasar and his presentation of the visions of Adrienne von Speyr. She acknowledges their influence when she notes “I explore this question [reading a narrative of death and life from the middle] by engaging the theology of Holy Saturday in the writings of Hans Urs von Balthasar and Adrienne von Speyr. Together, they provide an account of redemption beyond the death on the cross and before resurrection. They examine the middle territory that finds expression in the account of Jesus’ descent into hell. Holy Saturday reveals a distinct landscape of suffering that cannot be understood exclusively in terms of the passion; neither can it be interpreted in relationship to resurrection. Instead, the experience of God in hell is an experience of death extending beyond its conceivable boundaries.” *Ibid.* 46.

resurrection of Easter Sunday, I do agree that to see love as exclusively linked to the Cross event ultimately results in a glorification of suffering and a justification of violence.

Thirdly, it is my contention that understanding the somatic memory of Christian sacrifice (and thus the Eucharist) from the starting point of the Annunciation-Incarnation event, through the activity of the Trinity, is far more helpful than trying to find points of comparison in vastly differing ritual systems and sacrificial acts across cultures and across timeframes. This comparative approach has its value and is useful when considering anthropological and psychological perspectives on sacrifice. But this comparative approach is no position from which to construct or explore doctrine. Christian doctrine, particularly for something as intrinsic as the Eucharist, the very place where bodies and memories meet, must begin from the perspective of the Trinitarian God made known to humanity through the revelatory event of the Annunciation-Incarnation.

Fourthly, to attempt to understand Christian sacrifice from the perspective of the mutual self-giving evidenced within the Trinity takes seriously the concept of *lex orandi, lex credendi*. In this context, the nature of the eucharistic prayers, drawn from ancient, but varied, sources, offers to the theologian a useful glimpse into the purpose of the Eucharist. Taking seriously the petitionary nature of these prayers reveals that the power to consecrate does not lie with the priest, but with the Holy Spirit as the activity of the Trinitarian God. Furthermore, considering the corporate nature of these prayers reveals that the priest does not act *in persona Christi* but rather *ut repraesentativus Ecclesiae*. Heaney noted:

The worshipping community speaks in the person of the celebrant; it can only speak as an assemblage derivatively. Thus in the Eucharistic liturgy

each and every one of those present worships, rather than merely participating in worship, the real point of the “priesthood of all believers”.²⁶

When the Words of Institution are included in the eucharistic liturgy the priest is not playing the role of Christ, but is rather, I argue, narrating the account of the Last Supper. This is not the Last Supper as the first eucharistic celebration upon which all subsequent eucharistic celebrations are modelled, but rather the Last Supper as one meal amongst many, albeit the most significant meal. The non-identical repetition of the Last Supper in the eucharistic celebrations of the Church bridges the gap between the table practices of Jesus and the future heavenly banquet, offering a taste of the kingdom of God to those who believe.

Finally, what then is the value of this understanding of sacrifice with regard to our discussion of Mary as priestly in the previous chapter? As I have demonstrated, when one considers the Annunciation-Incarnation event to be at the core of somatic memory and thus at the heart of Christian sacrifice, then one cannot separate out Mary from Christian sacrifice, just as one cannot conceive of the Annunciation-Incarnation event without her involvement. Both ontologically and epistemologically, Mary becomes essential to our understanding of what sacrifice means in this new Christian context. In this event, Mary acts as priest par excellence. She is *ut repraesentativus Ecclesiae*, as indeed are all priests who celebrate the Eucharist. Thus we see that Mary performs a sacrifice of mutual self-giving, responsive love. She is both type of the Church and archetypal Christian.

²⁶ Heaney, *Beyond the Body*, 71.

Conclusion

In this chapter I set out to explore what the theological consequences of some of the conclusions I had drawn in previous chapters might be. I had previously argued that if one turns the lens of trauma theory onto Christian doctrine one must begin by searching out the somatic memory (so essential to our understanding of trauma) at the heart of the Christian faith. The place, I proposed, where bodies and memories meet is in the Eucharist and so I began by exploring what the somatic memory at the heart of eucharistic celebration is. I concluded that it was the Annunciation-Incarnation event—the Incarnation, life, death, resurrection, and eternal life of Jesus. In this chapter I have examined and interrogated some of the implications of such an assertion.

If one considers the Annunciation-Incarnation event to be at the core of Christian somatic memory then one must, necessarily, re-envision our understanding of sacrifice. The hermeneutical lens of trauma destabilises traditional narratives and creates a rupture from which a new narrative can be constructed. This narrative challenges both the traditional focus on the suffering and violence of the Cross and the exclusion of women from the priestly function of eucharistic celebration—both traumatic in their own rights. Such a new narrative places Mary centre-stage in both our understanding of priesthood and in our conception of sacrifice. Mary becomes the role model for the priest of the new covenant—representing the people rather than acting in the person of Christ. Mary's self-offering becomes integral to our understanding of sacrifice—drawn, as she is, into the Trinitarian mutual self-offering of the Annunciation-Incarnation event.²⁷ Thus the destructive, violent, sacrificial Eucharist celebrated by a male priest acting *in persona Christi* can be transformed into an

²⁷ Mary's experience of trauma in the Annunciation-Incarnation event will be dealt with more fully in Chapter Seven – Rupture, Repetition, and Recovery: Sacrament and Trauma.

act of mutual self-offering, still full of Real Presence, but an act that can now be undertaken by an ordained celebrant of any gender acting *ut repraesentativus Ecclesiae*. A consequence of placing the Annunciation-Incarnation event at the heart of Christian somatic memory is to flood the Ecclesial body of Christ with generative and life-giving ritual, focused on nourishment and life rather than suffering and death.

Chapter Six

Out of Rupture Come Forth New Narratives: The Materiality of the Eucharist

He [the Lord] suffered for us, He left us in this Sacrament His Body and Blood, which He made even as He made us, also. For we have become His Body, and through His mercy we are what we receive.¹

Introduction

In Chapters Two and Three I concluded that the Annunciation-Incarnation event is *the* traumatic Christian somatic memory repeated in the celebration of the Eucharist—the location in which bodies and memories profoundly meet in the Christian faith. The consequences of this conclusion lead one to a re-visioning of both the foundational eucharistic narratives of priesthood and sacrifice (Chapters Four and Five). I will now turn my attention to the similarly foundational eucharistic narrative of Real Presence. In this chapter I will focus the hermeneutical lens of the traumatic somatic memory of the Annunciation-Incarnation event on the presence of Christ in the embodied Eucharist. Allowing such a focus destabilises the traditional narrative of the doctrine of the Eucharist and from this destabilisation fresh narratives may arise.

In this chapter I will examine the Eucharist and its relationship with somatic memory in the context of its materiality. I will consider how the physicality of the Eucharist and its place as a material substance might be understood. Beginning with a brief tracing of the understanding of the issue of “presence” in the Eucharist, this chapter posits that bodies matter and examines in detail *how* they matter for a sufficient contemporary account of the Eucharist.

An essential precursor to the examination of notions of materiality is an

¹ Augustine, “Sermon 229” trans. Sister Mary Sarah Muldowney in *Saint Augustine: Sermons on the Liturgical Seasons* (New York: Fathers of the Church, Inc., 1959). Accessed online at https://archive.org/stream/fathersofthechur009512mbp/fathersofthechur009512mbp_djvu.txt 01/03/16.

exploration of the concept of *perichorēsis*. This chapter will investigate the concept that the embodied experience of the Eucharist matters and that the feminine body matters in terms of mysticism, motherhood, and miscarriage. Throughout this chapter, the twin themes of body and memory will be examined with regards to the materiality of the Eucharist—its celebration and reception.

History of Real Presence

The doctrine of Real Presence I will propose in this chapter, stems from an understanding of the Eucharist informed by the Annunciation-Incarnation event. This Real Presence is a real body not a metaphysical abstract. With that in mind, it is important to understand the way in which belief in eucharistic presence has developed. Any examination of the materiality of the Eucharist must take into account the various ways in which memory interacts with the Body of Christ in Christian understanding of the presence of God in the Eucharist. By the end of the first century, Christians were beginning to relate the presence of Christ in the Lord's Supper to the bread and wine used in the celebration of the ritual meal.² This understanding was developed in the second century and a number of early Christian theologians began to speak in language that is recognisably used with reference to the Real Presence of Christ. For example, Ignatius claimed that "[T]hey abstain from the Eucharist and from prayer, because they confess not the Eucharist to be the flesh of our saviour Jesus Christ."³ Similarly, Justin Martyr noted:

² Martos, *Doors to the Sacred*, 211.

³ Ignatius, "Letter to the Smyrnaens," trans. Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson in *Anti-Nicene Fathers, Vol. 1*, ed. Alexander Roberts, James Donaldson, and A. Cleveland Coxe (Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Publishing Co., 1885.). Chapter 7. Accessed online at <http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/0109.htm> 01/03/16.

the food which is blessed by the prayer of His word from which our blood and flesh by transmutation are nourished, is the flesh and blood of that Jesus who was made flesh.⁴

There was a general acceptance, in the diverse and complex forms of Christianity that existed up until the early medieval period, that, by mysterious power and process, the bread and wine consecrated by the celebrant on the altar were, in truth, the body and blood of Christ. With one or two notable exceptions,⁵ it is not until the eleventh century that these loose eucharistic formulations become codified and set out clearly as doctrine. Indeed, a precise eucharistic theology and, in particular, the term *transubstantiation*, appear to be one of the lasting influences of Scholastic theologians on the contemporary Church.

The significant earlier discussions of eucharistic theology and Real Presence occur in the writings of the ninth century abbot—Paschasius Radbertus. Radbertus argued that the very (true) body of Christ was present in the Eucharist through the operation of the priest's words:⁶

Imagine, then, whether indeed any corporeal thing could be worthier than the substance of the bread and wine for the purpose of changing internally and in fact into Christ's flesh and blood, so that following the consecration Christ's real flesh and blood is truly created.⁷

Radbertus' clarification of the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist is closely linked to his understanding of the Eucharist as a sacrifice. If the bread and wine is not truly the flesh and blood of Christ then the sacrifice of the Eucharist is insufficient and ineffective. I have demonstrated, in Chapter Five, the ways in

⁴ Martyr, "Apology 1," trans. Marcus Dods and George Reith in *Anti-Nicene Fathers. Vol 1*, ed. Alexander Roberts, James Donaldson, and A. Cleveland Coxe (Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Publishing Co., 1885.). Paragraph 66. Accessed online at <http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/0126.htm> on 01/03/16.

⁵ For example, the eucharistic theology of Paschasius Radbertus and the later heresy of Berengar of Tours.

⁶ Miri Rubin, *Corpus Christi: The Eucharist in Late Medieval Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 15.

⁷ Paschasius Radbertus, "*De corpore et sanguine domini*," lib. 8, 42-3, cited in and trans. Miri Rubin, *Corpus Christi*, 15.

which an understanding of sacrifice can be shaped in terms of a Trinitarian mutual, loving self-giving rather than in terms of the immolation of a victim that Radbertus clearly had in mind. But in both understandings of sacrifice (Radbertus' and the understanding suggested in this thesis) the Real Presence of Christ in the eucharistic elements is important.

The heresy of Berengar of Tours in the early eleventh century led to a prescriptive and closely defined formula of eucharistic faith replacing the loosely identified eucharistic beliefs that had previously held sway. Berengar believed in a spiritual presence of Christ in the Eucharist rather than a physical presence.

For Berengar, the physical and spiritual realms were quite distinctive, and there was an unbridgeable gap between them. This basic philosophical stance could not allow Berengar to believe that there was anything of the historical Christ or the 'body born of Mary' present in the Eucharist.⁸

For Berengar, the eucharistic bread and wine must be a *sign* of Christ's body and blood, not identical with it. This rift between the physical and spiritual realms meant that Berengar believed that bread continued to be bread as well as the presence of Christ after the consecration (impanation). Berengar wrote: "[T]hrough the consecration at the altar bread and wine become the Sacrament of faith, not by ceasing to be what they were but by remaining what they were and being changed into something else."⁹ Similarly, this rift between the physical and the spiritual did not allow Christ to be physically present in the Eucharist, but only spiritually present. Berengar argued: "[A] portion of the flesh of Christ cannot be present on the altar...unless the body of Christ in heaven is cut up and a particle that has been cut off from it is sent down to the Altar."¹⁰

⁸ Foley, *From Age to Age*, 175.

⁹ Berengar, "Opusculum," in Jaroslav Pelikan, *The Christian Tradition: A History of the Development of Doctrine. Vol. 4, Reformation of Church and Dogma (1300-1700)* (Chicago & London: The University of Chicago Press, 1984), 198.

¹⁰ Berengar, *On the Holy Supper* 37, in *ibid.* 194.

It is no surprise that Berengar's work was considered an assault on eucharistic theology. Instructed to recant, Berengar was made to sign a statement of true belief that would become the building block for the formulation of eucharistic theology in the Middle Ages. The oath stated:

the bread and wine which are placed on the altar after the consecration are not only the sacrament but also the true body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, and that they are palpably handled and broken by the hands of the priest and torn by the teeth of the faithful, not simply as a sacrament but as a true fact.¹¹

This specific statement led to an increased sense of realism in the eucharistic elements and also paved the way for the Scholastic development of distinctions between sacrament and reality—*sacramentum et res*—which would shape the next nine hundred years of eucharistic theology.

Arising from the Scholastic explorations of the Eucharist, it is the concept of *transubstantiation* that has had the most influence in Catholic eucharistic theology. First used by Hildebert of Tours in the early thirteenth century,¹² *transubstantiation* is a term that seeks to give some element of understanding as to how the reality (or substance) of the elements of the eucharistic bread and wine could be changed whilst their appearances remained that of bread and of wine. The most significant development and detailed exploration of the term is given by Aquinas. He stated:

Christ's body is not in this sacrament in the same way as a body is in a place, which by its dimensions is commensurate with the place; but in a special manner which is proper to this sacrament. Hence we say that Christ's body is upon many altars, not as in different places, but "sacramentally": and thereby we do not understand that Christ is there only as in a sign, although a sacrament is a kind of sign; but that Christ's body is here after a fashion proper to this sacrament, as stated above.¹³

¹¹ Cited in & trans. Martos, *Doors to the Sacred*, 237.

¹² *Ibid.* 235.

¹³ Aquinas, *The Summa Theologica* III, q.75, a. 1, ad. 3.

Understanding the Eucharist in this manner led Aquinas to propose that the manner in which Christ's body became present in the eucharistic bread must be described with a name of its own—this conversion was unlike any other.

Therefore He can work not only formal conversion, so that diverse forms succeed each other in the same subject; but also the change of all being, so that, to wit, the whole substance of one thing be changed into the whole substance of another. And this is done by Divine power in this sacrament; for the whole substance of the bread is changed into the whole substance of Christ's body, and the whole substance of the wine into the whole substance of Christ's blood. Hence this is not a formal, but a substantial conversion; nor is it a kind of natural movement: but, with a name of its own, it can be called 'transubstantiation.'¹⁴

Transubstantiation became established as doctrine in the Catholic Church in the thirteenth century.¹⁵ However, Macy has clearly demonstrated that the meaning of the term transubstantiation in the Middle Ages was not fixed. Theologians held a variety of positions regarding how any change in substance took place, and what substance was present on the altar post-consecration.¹⁶

[t]here was not common understanding of the category of substance, much less agreement on either the use of the term transubstantiation or on what the term might have meant when used. In fact, theologians at the time of the Fourth Lateran Council [1215] fell roughly into three camps in regard to the eucharistic change. 1) Some believed that bread and wine remained present along with the Body and Blood of the Lord; 2) others felt that the substance of the bread and the wine were annihilated, the substance of the Body and Blood alone remaining. Finally, 3) a third group argued that the substance of the bread and wine was changed into the substance of the Body and Blood at the words of consecration. Modern terminology would categorize the first theory as 'consubstantiation,' the second as 'annihilation' or 'succession' theory, and the third as 'transubstantiation.'¹⁷

Nevertheless, the doctrine of *transubstantiation* was later reinforced by the Tridentine pronouncements. The Council of Trent produced three documents on the Eucharist: one on the Blessed Sacrament (1551), one on the reception of

¹⁴ Aquinas, *The Summa Theologica* III, q. 75, a. 4, ad. 3.

¹⁵ For example, the term is used in the pronouncements of the Fourth Lateran Council in 1215 and appears with frequency in contemporaneous writers such as William of Auxerre, Alanus of Lille, Alexander of Hales, and, of course, Thomas Aquinas. Kilmartin, *The Eucharist in the West*, 148.

¹⁶ Foley, *From Age to Age*, 230.

¹⁷ Gary Macy, *Treasures from the Storeroom: Medieval Religion and the Eucharist* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1999), 82-3.

communion (1562), and one of the Mass as a sacrifice (1562). “The teachings in these documents were mainly those of scholastic theology, and the result was that the scholastic approach to the eucharist came to be regarded as definitive and final.”¹⁸ This concept of the consecrated Eucharist as transubstantiated elements and thus the invisible, spiritual presence of Christ was the dominant understanding of the Eucharist until the late twentieth century.

The twentieth century has seen further development of the concept of Real Presence. Rediscovery of ancient sources and the contribution of the Second Vatican Council have led to the consideration of the Eucharist in the wider context of the Mass and Liturgy. The rediscovery of texts from this era indicated that for over a thousand years, Christians had been able to talk eloquently and theologically about the Real Presence of Christ in the eucharistic elements without the need for the term *transubstantiation*.

Heaney, in his anti-theology of the Eucharist, challenges us to a broader understanding of the concept of Real Presence, rejecting the metaphysics that had become so attached to discussions of presence in the Eucharist. In his analysis of the notion of presence, Heaney notes that “[T]o be present is to be recognized as being able to be counted or characterized by an observer at a particular moment and in a particular place.”¹⁹ He goes on to conclude:

presence is neither an activity, especially an ongoing one, nor is it any state other than that which allows that which is present to be counted as such. “Presenting” oneself does not make one any more present than was already the case by reason of being there. References to “presence” in the Eucharist that imply a state, characterized as “real”, or an activity of being there fall well short on formal terms of telling us anything more than this.²⁰

¹⁸ Martos, *Doors to the Sacred*, 251.

¹⁹ Heaney, *Beyond the Body*, 125.

²⁰ *Ibid.* 126.

Heaney's critique of Real Presence is useful in encouraging a broader notion of 'presence'; however, I would not want to discard the modifier 'Real' from my narrative of Real Presence in the Eucharist. The real-ness—the materiality—of such a presence is, I argue, essential.

In the late twentieth century, examination of the concept of presence has moved out of the Church and into a more secular contemplation. For example, George Steiner subtitled his 1989 work *Real Presences* with the question “[I]s there anything *in* what we say?”²¹ This subtitle reveals Steiner's desire for immanence. “For Steiner, God is the premise upon which speech is based, and the wager on meaning and understanding—which we all undertake in experiencing art—is in fact a wager on transcendence.”²² Indeed, Steiner opens his examination of presence with the statement that:

[This essay] proposes that any coherent understanding of what language is and how language performs, that any coherent account of the capacity of human speech to communicate meaning and feeling is, in the final analysis, underwritten by the assumption of God's presence. I will put forward the argument that the experience of aesthetic meaning in particular, that of literature, of the arts, of musical form, infers the necessary possibility of this “real presence”.²³

Steiner moves the discussion of presence away from its importance at the altar and instead posits a world in which the presence of God is necessary in all aspects. God's presence does not just give meaning to the celebration of the Eucharist, but also to language itself.

Similarly, the performance artist Marina Abramović moved the exploration of presence away from Church, although, I argue that, like Steiner, it is significant that even a seemingly secular contemplation of presence is not irreligious. Abramović invited members of the public to sit opposite her for as

²¹ George Steiner, *Real Presences: Is There Anything in What We Say?* (London & Boston: Faber and Faber, 1989).

²² Wendy Steiner, "Silence," *London Review of Books* 11, no. 11 (1989), 10-11, at 10.

²³ Steiner, *Real Presences*, 3.

long as they liked and hold her gaze. Entitled *The Artist is Present*, this piece of art was performed over a period of three months at New York's Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) in 2010.²⁴ Julie Hamilton reflects on this performance as she notes its relationship with the celebration of the Eucharist:

[D]ressed in flowing gowns resembling priestly vestments, her performance in MoMA is liturgical, symbolically akin to the Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. Merleau-Ponty's sacramentality of the flesh is quite vivid in this artistic instance with regards to Eucharistic dimensions of her venerated human flesh, adored as people assemble within the museum, keeping vigil. Masses wait in line to receive the same "wafer" of her presence, a clear analogy to the Real Presence within the Eucharistic Monstrance.²⁵

Abramović's exploration and reflection on the power of presence has distinctly sacramental overtones and even the videos of her performance are exceptionally powerful. This piece of artwork, along with Steiner's identification of the presence of God as that which gives meaning, demonstrate the significance of Real Presence both within Christianity, as well as in the (so-called) secular world. Both Steiner and Abramović explore an understanding of 'presence' that is far bigger than the narrow, metaphysical focus of Aquinas. They challenge us to paint our concept of presence on a big canvas.

The last forty years have seen a move away from the Scholastic insistence on *transubstantiation* and the Mass as a sacrifice in favour of other, equally Catholic, less Scholastic interpretations of the Eucharist.²⁶ Indeed, Martos concluded that the reach of the Second Vatican Council with regard to the Eucharist should not be underestimated.

²⁴ Marina Abramović, *The Artist Is Present*, 2010. Museum of Modern Art.

²⁵ Julie Hamilton, "Praktognosia and Performance: Phenomenological Epistemology in the Performance Art of Marina Abramović and Lia Chavez," http://civa.org/sitecontent/wp-content/uploads/CIVA-Between-Two-Worlds-2-Hamilton_Praktognosia-Phenomenological-Epistemology-and-Performance-Art_FINAL.pdf. Accessed 15/12/2015.

²⁶ Martos, *Doors to the Sacred*, 261.

The council broadened the notion of Christ's presence to include not only his sacramental presence in the bread and wine but also his presence as the Word of God in the scripture readings of the mass, and indeed his presence as the risen Lord in the assembly of believers.²⁷

I suggest that exploring the way in which it is possible to understand this presence of Christ in both the bread and wine and in the assembly of believers, through thinking about the Annunciation-Incarnation event, is essential to understanding the materiality of the Eucharist. An emphasis on the physicality and materiality of the Eucharist is one of the implications of considering the Eucharist through the lens of the traumatic somatic memory. When read in the light of the Annunciation-Incarnation event, the Eucharist is not simply a sacrifice, but an exaltation of the material world. Seeing Real Presence through the lens of Annunciation-Incarnation event leads us to an exploration of mutual, indwelling relationship—*perichorēsis*.

Perichorēsis: The Indwelling of God

It might seem counter-intuitive to begin an exploration of the significance of the materiality of the Eucharist with a reflection on the distinctly immaterial concept of the indwelling of God. I propose, however, that it is only by understanding the relationship between the three Persons of the Trinity that it is possible to understand the way in which the two natures of Christ (human and Divine) are related within his body. Understanding the Trinity and the nature of Christ in this way allows an exploration of the relationship between material elements and the presence of God in the Eucharist. The way in which this indwelling takes place within the Triune God, the person of Christ, and the eucharistic elements provides a model for understanding what happens when believers consume the

²⁷ Ibid. 263.

Eucharist. The memories of indwelling in each of these bodies become the constituent memory celebrated and received in the Eucharist.

The key to understanding all of these relationships, I argue, is the concept of *perichorēsis*—the mutual interpenetration of the three Persons of the Trinity.²⁸ Through this concept of indwelling, it becomes impossible to conceive of the Divine Persons as separate from each other.²⁹ It is *because* the Divine Persons of the Trinity are different from each other that it becomes possible to understand their relationship as being one of *perichorēsis*. Precisely because they are different from each other, they are able to be in relationship with each other. The difference within the Trinity is what enables communion and relationship. As Moltmann noted:

[T]he doctrine of perichoresis links together in a brilliant way the threeness and the unity, without reducing the threeness to the unity, or dissolving the unity in the threeness. The unity of the triunity lies in the eternal perichoresis of the trinitarian persons. Interpreted perichoretically, the trinitarian persons form their own unity by themselves in the circulation of the divine life.³⁰

Without relinquishing either unity or difference, the doctrine of *perichorēsis* allows an insight into how multiplicity can exist in oneness. The term *perichorēsis* was first used by Gregory Nazianzus as a way of encapsulating the relationship between the human and Divine in the person of Christ. In his first letter to Cledonius, Gregory used the verb *perichōréō* to address the nature of the hypostasis of Christ. So Gregory wrote “Just as the natures are blended [*perichōréō*] so too are the titles which mutually transfer by the principle of their

²⁸ Paul S. Fiddes, *Participating in God: A Pastoral Doctrine of the Trinity* (London: Darton, Longman and Todd Ltd, 2000), 47.

²⁹ Janet Soskice, "Trinity and 'the Feminine Other'," *New Blackfriars* 75, no. 878 (1994), 2-17, at 13.

³⁰ Jürgen Moltmann, *The Trinity and the Kingdom of God*, trans. Margaret Kohl (London: SCM Press, 1981), 175.

natural togetherness.”³¹ This image of reciprocity and exchange between the two natures of Christ carries with it the qualities of mutuality, equality, and exchange that the doctrine of *perichorēsis* offers in an understanding of the Trinity. Indeed, whilst Gregory was writing about a Christological issue, he was doing so in a Trinitarian context. The letter to Cleodnius clearly set the Apollinarian heresy³² against the back drop of an orthodox understanding of the Trinity.³³

Understanding the way in which neither unity nor difference are relinquished in the multiplicity of the Trinity and the nature of Christ, offers in turn a model for understanding the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist. Just as both the human and Divine natures of Christ mutually indwell, becoming inseparable and yet not less distinct, so it becomes possible to understand the Real Presence in the Eucharist in these terms.

The presence of Christ indwells the eucharistic elements fully without negating their materiality and without diminishing the divinity of this Real Presence. Thus, the model of mutual indwelling that is outlined in relation to the Trinity and the person of Christ is the same mutual indwelling in the consecrated eucharistic elements. The two early discussions of the Eucharist—Radbertus’ stressing of the corporality of the presence of Christ in the elements and Berengar’s heretical insistence on a spiritual presence only—are brought

³¹ Saint Gregory of Nazianzus, "Letter 101," in *On God and Christ: The Five Theological Orations and Two Letters to Cleodnius*, ed. Lionel Wickham (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2002). Paragraph 5. 158.

³² Apollinaris argued that Jesus could not have had a human mind, rather that Jesus had a human body and a lower soul with a Divine mind. Kelly characterises Apollinaris’ thought in arguing that “the divine Word was substituted for the normal human psychology in Christ.” Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines*, 292.

³³ It is not until the eighth century that one finds the term applied to the Trinity specifically when John Damascene uses the term *περιχώρησις* in his notion of coinherence in chapter 8 of *On the Orthodox Faith*. He uses the term to demonstrate that the persons of the Trinity are wholly in one another and that “their distinct individuality is conceptual, in reality there is no separate individuality, but a complete coinherence between the persons of the Trinity.” Andrew Louth, "Late Patristic Developments in the East," in *The Oxford Handbook of the Trinity*, ed. Gilles Emery O.P. and Matthew Levering (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 138-53, at 148.

together in this understanding of the Eucharist. Through the model of *perichorēsis*, so richly displayed with regard to the Trinity and the Person of Christ, I argue that the eucharistic elements are indwelt by Christ without relinquishing either unity or difference. They retain their fully material status as bread and wine even as they are indwelt by the Real Presence of Christ that makes them His body and blood.

If one is to take the concept of *perichorēsis* seriously, one cannot separate out the Divine Persons of the Trinity, and thus it is the presence of God, not just Christ alone, that indwells these eucharistic elements. It is the presence of God that is found in the eucharistic elements but not the presence of the First Person in isolation. The Second Person of the Trinity is present in the Eucharist along with the First and Third Persons, but the First and Third Persons are not present apart from the presence of God.

These three models of indwelling (the Trinity, the hypostasis of Christ, and the Real Presence in the Eucharist) provide a model for understanding the effects of receiving the Eucharist on the believer. Each body is informed by the memory of the bodies that have gone before it. Just as it is possible to understand the Trinity as a relationship of *perichoretic* mutual interpenetration between the three Divine Persons, so is it possible to understand the hypostasis as a mutual interpenetration of humanity and divinity in Christ. Furthermore, it is possible to understand the Real Presence of Christ in the eucharistic elements as a mutual interpenetration of the body and blood of Christ with the bread and wine. If the *perichorēsis* of the Trinity and the Person of Christ provide a model for understanding the Real Presence in the Eucharist, then the indwelling is not one way. The material elements become part of Christ, even as Christ becomes part of the material. The goodness of the material world is affirmed as the

material elements are drawn into mutual indwelling with the presence of Christ. Indeed, Coakley noted, in her exploration of the 'prayer-based' model of the Trinity, that: "the 'mystic'/church vision of the Trinity haunted the celebration of the eucharistic mysteries from relatively early years: the *lex orandi* as 'incorporation' was ever on offer to the faithful."³⁴ She reads the Spirit as the transforming agent of both the eucharistic elements and the people of God. Being 'incorporated' into the Body of Christ (the Church) is the activity of the Spirit in the Eucharist.

More recent teachings of the Catholic Church have moved away from a focus on Christ's Real Presence in the eucharistic elements alone and stressed the presence of Christ in the whole celebration of the Eucharist.³⁵ In this sense, then, the *perichorēsis* at the Eucharist is not just the indwelling of Christ in the elements, but rather the mutual interpenetration between God and the believers gathered in celebration.

Sacraments, then, whilst being intimately connected to bodies, as I shall explore further in this chapter, are access points into this *perichorēsis*. The memory of each *perichorēsis* informs the body of the next *perichoretic* experience. Through participation in the sacraments, believers come to experience and be experienced in this indwelling, for it is through the reception of the sacraments that the believer is drawn into the Body of Christ and known by other believers in that same unity. Paul Fiddes noted:

[W]e share in death as we share in the broken body of the bread and in the extravagantly poured out wine, and as we are covered with the threat of hostile waters. We share in life as we come out from under the waters (whether immersed in them or affused by them), to take our place in the new community of the body of Christ, and to be filled with the new wine of the Spirit.³⁶

³⁴ Coakley, *God, Sexuality, and the Self*, 133.

³⁵ Martos, *Doors to the Sacred*, 267.

³⁶ Fiddes, *Participating in God*, 281.

This understanding of the concept of relationship in unity and difference enables an exploration of the materiality of the Eucharist and the experiences that are incumbent upon this materiality.

Bodies Matter—Embodied Experience

Whilst the early Christians actively participated in a frequent eucharistic service, the history of active lay participation in the Eucharist is not a consistent one. In the Middle Ages an increasing understanding of the eucharistic elements as Christ's presence, combined with an increasingly disembodied identification of Christ with God, led to a decline in the reception of communion.³⁷ Fewer Christians felt worthy or willing to risk such direct contact with God³⁸ and the manipulations of an increasingly clericalised clergy ensured that this sense of inadequacy was keenly felt. The role of the laity in the liturgy changed from one of active participation to passive inspiration and adoration, predominantly of the consecrated host—the 'Blessed Sacrament.' What was once a communal prayer and celebration had become a clerical ritual separated from the congregation by barriers of language, architecture, and worthiness. Clerics discouraged the laity from receiving communion lest it bring damnation rather than salvation to their souls.³⁹ Removed from the body, and thus from the somatic memory, communion was distorted. It was no longer an embodied experience, no longer *perichoretic* in a physical sense.

³⁷ Kilmartin, *The Eucharist in the West*, 115.

³⁸ Martos, *Doors to the Sacred*, 237.

³⁹ Rubin, *Corpus Christi*, 66.

By the thirteenth century, almost all lay people abstained from communion.⁴⁰ The experience of the Eucharist was no longer, for most, an embodied one. Rather it was an observed encounter. The Consecration and Elevation of the Host came to be regarded as the high points of the liturgy observed by the congregation. As the Mass was regarded as a sacrifice (performed by the priest, *in persona Christi*, on behalf of the people) the efficacy of the Mass was not dependent on the participation of the people. If present, the laity had only to observe and “participate by reason of their spiritual devotion.”⁴¹ The Eucharist was a sacrifice performed by the priest on behalf of the people—they had no active role to play. A personal sense of unworthiness (the result of deliberate manipulation on the part of the Church to advance its power) combined with clerical anxiety about a host breaking and dropping to the floor, or a drop of wine spilling from the chalice, made reception of the eucharistic elements by the laity a rare event. Where the Eucharist was received by laity it was in wafer form only. Only the priests drank from the chalice.

However, it is possible to see at this time an intense desire, particularly amongst women mystics, to receive an embodied experience of Christ in the Eucharist. Caroline Walker Bynum noted that “[M]ystics (especially women mystics) who were denied access to the cup at mass repeatedly experienced both the flooding of ecstasy through their limbs and the taste of the water in their mouths as blood.”⁴² For example, Catherine of Siena (d. 1380) reported two miracles in which Christ fed her directly in a vision because she was denied the Eucharist by servers or celebrants.⁴³ Furthermore, as she was denied the

⁴⁰ Martos, *Doors to the Sacred*, 232.

⁴¹ Kilmartin, *The Eucharist in the West*, 114.

⁴² Caroline Walker Bynum, *Wonderful Blood: Theology and Practice in Late Medieval Northern Germany and Beyond* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007), 4.

⁴³ Caroline Walker Bynum, *Holy Feast and Holy Fast: The Religious Significance of Food to Medieval Women* (Berkeley, LA & London: University of California Press, 1987), 174.

chalice, Catherine experienced blood in her mouth or pouring from it, although what she had actually received was the bread.⁴⁴ Similarly, Beatrice of Nazareth (d. 1268) was overwhelmed with the experience of Christ's blood when she received the wafer.⁴⁵

This desire for a physical element to the embodied experience of Christ in the reception of the Eucharist, for some women mystics, went beyond images of food. For example, the thirteenth century mystic, Hadewijch expressed her desire for Christ in the Eucharist to be a physical union. To consume the Eucharist meant, in some instances, to become pregnant with Christ, to have Christ growing within her.⁴⁶ One is reminded, in this startling image, of the equally startling declaration made, some eight hundred years previously, by Pulcheria who vindicated her presence at the altar with the words "Have I not given birth to Christ?"⁴⁷ Hadewijch used the language of *perichorēsis* to explain the knowing and experiencing of God. She writes "[T]hey [the receiver of the Eucharist and Christ] penetrate each other in such a way that neither of the two distinguishes himself from the other. But they abide in one another in fruition, mouth in mouth, heart in heart, body in body, soul in soul."⁴⁸ This mutual interpenetration and dwelling within one another is the mark of the reception of the Eucharist for Hadewijch.

Concerns about the frequency of the reception of communion for the laity are a recurring theme in the pronouncements of the Church Councils. For example, in canon 21 of the Fourth Lateran Council (1215), the Church decreed:

⁴⁴ Ibid. 177. Bynum notes that, of course, the bread received in the Eucharist is interpreted, through the doctrine of concomitance, as being both body and blood.

⁴⁵ *Wonderful Blood*, 4.

⁴⁶ *Holy Feast*, 154.

⁴⁷ Holum, *Theodosian Empresses*, 153.

⁴⁸ Hadewijch, "Letter 9," in *Hadewijch: Works*, ed. Columba Hart (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press). II. 7-11, 66.

[A]ll the faithful of either sex, after they have reached the age of discernment, should individually confess all their sins in a faithful manner to their own priest at least once a year, and let them take care to do what they can to perform the penance imposed on them. Let them reverently receive the sacrament of the eucharist at least at Easter unless they think, for a good reason and on the advice of their own priest, that they should abstain from receiving it for a time.⁴⁹

Similarly, the documents of the Council of Trent, some three hundred years later, indicate that the issues surrounding the reception of the Eucharist had not abated. Thus, in Canon XIII, the Council declared:

[I]f any one denieth, that all and each of Christ's faithful of both sexes are bound, when they have attained to years of discretion, to communicate every year, at least at Easter, in accordance with the precept of holy Mother Church; let him be anathema.⁵⁰

It is indicative that, three hundred years after the Lateran Council, the Council of Trent felt the need to reaffirm regular (yearly) reception of the Eucharist. Perhaps reception of the Eucharist had become even less frequent. The little change in Canon law, the Tridentine Mass, and parochial practice in the subsequent five hundred years indicates that the obligation of one reception of the Eucharist per year had become not the minimum, but the norm. It is important to note that this annual reception of the Eucharist was intimately connected to the practice of penance and can, itself, be seen as the culmination of the period of shricing—Lent.⁵¹ This focus on sin and unworthiness dominated the understanding of the Eucharist, certainly in the minds of those articulating the rubrics of its practice.

It was only with the rise of the Liturgical Movement in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century and its eventual contribution to the Second Vatican Council, that the laity's assigned role of predominantly passive observation of

⁴⁹ H. J. Schroeder, *Disciplinary Decrees of the General Councils: Text, Translation and Commentary* (St. Louis: B. Herder, 1937), 236-296.

⁵⁰ J. Waterworth, *The Canons and Decrees of the Sacred and Œcumenical Council of Trent*, trans. J. Waterworth (London: Dolman, 1848), 83.

⁵¹ Rubin, *Corpus Christi*, 73.

the Mass returned to active participation in the Mass. Papal approval had been given in 1903 for the more frequent reception of communion, and the reception of a person's first communion, aged about seven years, became an important ceremonial occasion from this time onwards.⁵² But the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy⁵³ in 1963 went much further, establishing the celebration of Mass in the vernacular, allowing congregations to understand all the words of the service. Furthermore, it paved the way for lay readers and eucharistic ministers to assist in the duties of the Mass. The congregation was expected to hear the Mass and to join in with the appropriate responses. Just as significantly, the priest celebrating the Eucharist now faced the congregation—the laity were now able to see, hear, and taste the celebration of the Eucharist. The engagement of the senses in communion served to make it an embodied experience, one in which the body and the bodily memory of the Christian faith played an active role.

The tracing of this history of active participation in the Eucharist is significant in that it indicates that merely watching the celebration of a Mass, just adoring the Blessed Sacrament, is insufficient as a reception of the Eucharist. An embodied participation in the celebration of the Eucharist is vital. The reading of the Eucharist through the traumatic lens of the somatic memory of the Annunciation-Incarnation event not only makes Christ Really Present in the Eucharist but demands the real active, embodied presence and participation of the people in the Eucharist. If Christ is Really Present, so must we be.

Whilst the high medieval Church was convinced of the vitality of the Eucharist, the adoration of the Blessed Sacrament was considered to be an appropriate substitute for bodily reception which could only be received once a

⁵² Martos, *Doors to the Sacred*, 256.

⁵³ Second Vatican Council, "Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy". Accessed 23/01/15.

year. It is the idea of a weekly, if not daily reception of the Eucharist, recovered in the late nineteenth century and developed throughout the twentieth century, which has shaped the significant liturgical changes seen in the Catholic Church. The implication, then, of considering the Eucharist through the lens of traumatic somatic memory of the Annunciation-Incarnation event is that Real Presence understood through the paradigm of *perichorēsis* demands our real presence in response. One can conclude, therefore, that bodies—the eucharistic body and blood of Christ in the bread and wine and the active, embodied participation of the believer—matter. As becomes evident from considering the relationship of bodies to the Eucharist throughout history, as I have done here, it is only through our bodies that the Eucharist is experienced. Furthermore, the way in which our bodies are taught or encouraged to engage with the Eucharist can profoundly influence the way in which we perceive of ourselves. The sinner who dare not receive the bread, let alone the wine, for fear of the presence of God is unlikely to have the most positive of self-images.

Somatic Memory in the Sacramental Body

Bodies are profoundly linked to sacraments. Indeed, the body is the site of all sacramental encounters. As David Power noted “[P]eople enter into sacrament first through their bodies.”⁵⁴ We enter into the sacraments through our embodied experience of them. Sacraments do not exist, except in the doing of them, the celebrating of them.⁵⁵ Sacramentality, and in particular the sacrament

⁵⁴ David Power, *Sacrament: The Language of God's Giving* (New York: Crossroad, 1999), 149.

⁵⁵ Kenan Osborne, *Christian Sacraments in a Postmodern World: A Theology for the Third Millennium* (New Jersey: Paulist Press, 2000), 12.

of the Eucharist, must be deeply woven into an understanding of materiality and the materiality of the body. As Brannon Hancock, in his anatomy of the sacrament, indicated: the Eucharist is a body, given to bodies, creating a Body.⁵⁶ It should be unsurprising, therefore, to see that the earliest Christians celebrated their belief in the Incarnation of God, his resurrection, and their own future bodily resurrections with the very material sharing of a meal. It is this eucharistic meal that shapes the eucharistic community that shares it, and food is at the heart of the material. Indeed food constitutes the material. It is absorbed into our bodies and becomes a very part of us. As the early Christians ate their eucharistic meal, that which they ate came to constitute who they were.

This eucharistic gift in material substance, in a form that can be consumed by each member of a congregation, reaffirms the goodness of the material world. The Incarnation of Jesus reveals, again, the goodness of materiality—that Christ was fully material and corporeal reveals the positive nature of the material world. He did not scorn the material nature of humanity. The Eucharist, in its non-identical repetition of the Annunciation-Incarnation event, affirms the goodness of the body and its senses.⁵⁷ The embodied experience of sacraments, their irreducible materiality, helps to right one's perspective on the material world and the uses to which humankind puts material goods. This is echoed in the *Didache's* account of an early eucharistic celebration. The prayer given for the celebration includes the words “[E]ven as this broken bread was scattered over the hills, and was gathered together and became one, so let Your Church be gathered together from the ends of the

⁵⁶ Brannon Hancock, *The Scandal of Sacramentality: The Eucharist in Literary and Theological Perspectives* (Eugene, OR.: Wipf and Stock, 2014), 65.

⁵⁷ Angel F. Méndez-Montoya, *The Theology of Food: Eating and the Eucharist* (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012), 148.

earth into Your kingdom.”⁵⁸ This emphasis on the goodness of the material in the celebration of the Eucharist is central from the earliest accounts.

It appears to have been customary, until the Middle Ages at least, for the congregation gathered to celebrate the Eucharist to bring with them their own offerings to be made as part of the celebration. For example, writing the early second century, Justin Martyr writes “[A]t the conclusion of the prayers we greet one another with a kiss (1 Pt 5. 14). Then bread and a cup containing wine and water are presented to the one presiding over the brothers.”⁵⁹ The word used for ‘presented’ here is προσφέρεται (offered) seeming to indicate that something is brought to the celebrant or offered to him. That it follows a kiss of peace⁶⁰ seems to reflect the teaching in Matthew 5:23-4 regarding making peace with a fellow believer before making an offering at the altar. This kiss of peace further indicates the kinship felt by early Christians who exchanged kisses to demonstrate their familial status within the early Christian communities:

Early Christians constructed the ritual kiss not only as a means to “talk” about being a family, but also as a way to act it out. The adoption and modification of a typical familiar gesture into a decidedly Christian ritual helped early Christians redefine the concept of family. With the kiss’s assistance, Christian communities became families united by faith.⁶¹

Significantly, the kiss exchanged between these Christians is not a kiss on the cheek but rather a more intimate kiss on the lips—a merging of bodies at the mouth that echoes the interpenetration of *perichorēsis*.⁶² The kiss, in this context, is not only a sign of peace but also a radical rejection of the cultural

⁵⁸ "Didache," translated by M. B. Riddle in *Ante-Nicene Fathers Vol. 7*, ed. Alexander Roberts, James Donaldson, and A. Cleveland Coxe (Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Publishing Co., 1886). Chapter 9. Accessed online at <http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/0714.htm> on 09/02/2015.

⁵⁹ Justin Martyr, "Apology 1," Chapter 65.

⁶⁰ In Chapter Two the relationship between those nursed at the same breast was explored in the context of the sharing of the Eucharist and the familial relationships in early Christian communities.

⁶¹ Michael Philip Penn, *Kissing Christians: Ritual and Community in the Late Ancient Church*, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005), 31.

⁶² See my examination of the *perichoretic* kiss in Chapter Eight.

norms that dictated the propriety of relationships between men and women and a ritual reinforcing of a group's strength, unity, and cohesion.⁶³

It is with Justin Martyr that a reference to the ritual act of offering as part of the eucharistic celebration first appears.⁶⁴ There are similar contemporary references to the congregation presenting an offering as part of the Eucharist. For example, the *Apostolic Tradition* includes reference to catechumens celebrating their first Eucharist and bringing with them the gifts for the celebration as their offering.⁶⁵ Thus, Joseph Jungmann can note that:

[S]ince the third century, then, it very quickly became a fixed rule that the faithful should offer their gifts at a common Eucharistic celebration, but because of the close connection with the performance of the sacred mystery it was from the very start recognised as a right restricted to those who were full members of the Church, just like the reception of the Sacrament...[and] the gifts of all who openly lived in sin were to be refused.⁶⁶

This offering of gifts by the faithful became almost obsolete by the beginning of the sixteenth century. As ordinary bread began to be replaced with unleavened bread in the early ninth century, people could no longer bring their own bread for use in the celebration.⁶⁷ Combined with the increasing clericalism of the Church and the increasing distancing of the laity from the rite of Communion, the offertory reached its lowest point in the Tridentine Mass of 1570 where the Deacon handed the Priest the paten with the Host if it was a solemn Mass. In the case of a private Mass, the Priest merely took the paten with the Host himself—neither are actions that could adequately be termed an 'offering.' It was not until the reforms of the Second Vatican Council that the Offertory would

⁶³ Penn, *Kissing Christians*, 37.

⁶⁴ Michael McGuckian, *The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass: A Search for an Acceptable Notion of Sacrifice* (Herefordshire, UK & Chicago: Gracewing Publishing & Liturgy Training Publications, 2005), 62.

⁶⁵ Hippolytus, "The Apostolic Tradition," trans. Burton Scott Easton in *The Apostolic Tradition of Hippolytus*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1934). Chapter 20, at 45.

⁶⁶ Joseph Jungmann, *The Mass of the Roman Rite: Its Origins and Development*, 2 vols., vol. 2 (New York: Benziger, 1955), 19f.

⁶⁷ McGuckian, *Holy Sacrifice*, 67.

be restored to its former importance within the celebration of the Eucharist.

Pope Paul VI noted at this time of reform that:

[T]he offertory seems lacking, because the faithful are not allowed any part in it (even though it should be the part of the Mass in which their activity is more direct and obvious)...The offertory should be given a special prominence so that the faithful (or their representatives) may exercise their special role as offerers.⁶⁸

It should not, perhaps, be surprising that, during a period of time when the material, the physical, was despised as sinful and worthy of disdain, there should be little emphasis on the goodness of the material world and thus a corresponding decline in the offering of material goods as part of the celebration of the Eucharist. This offering of the material serves as a reminder at once of the goodness of creation, but also human abuse of this goodness. It is not possible to overlook the corrupted way in which the material world is put to use, when it is seen in the light of sacramental materiality.

The church uses physical things to convey God's grace, and this use has a significance for the way Christians look on the natural world. They cannot ignore the fact that the water that is used to incorporate people into the church is the same water that human beings pollute; that bread is denied to many in the world while others are overfed; that countries go to war over oil while Christians use it to anoint.⁶⁹

The eucharistic meal exposes our own corrupted eating practices even as it reaffirms the goodness of the body.

The embodied experience of the Eucharist is an exposé of difference – both positive and negative. Thus Angel Méndez-Montoya argued:

[S]elf and other, human and divine, spiritual and material, the individual parts and the whole, do not collapse into one another, but, rather, they co-exist or mutually indwell in and through this *metaxu*, the in-betweenness that is the [ecclesial and eucharistic] Body of Christ. Difference is not eliminated but is brought into a new harmonious and excessive unity (Christ's Body) that opens up an infinite space for relations of affinity, mutual care (mutual nurturing), and reciprocity.⁷⁰

⁶⁸ Annibale Bugnini, *The Reform of the Liturgy 1948-1975* (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1990), 364.

⁶⁹ Ben Quash and Samuel Wells, *Introducing Christian Ethics* (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010), 354.

⁷⁰ Méndez-Montoya, *Theology of Food*, 140.

This understanding of the Eucharist as the place in which difference is not eliminated but brought into unity is significant. I propose that it is possible to understand this unity of difference in the Body of Christ with regard to gender. If one considers the doctrine of *perichorēsis* as offering a model of understanding the way in which difference and unity indwell together, then just as in the Eucharist “human and divine, spiritual and material”⁷¹ do not eliminate each other, neither do the divisive categories of gender.

In the sense of the eucharistic elements, difference is not eliminated but mutually indwells in the inbetween-ness that is Christ. The eucharistic elements remain fully material even as they are fully indwelled by the presence of Christ, the presence of Christ remains fully Christic even as it fully indwells the materiality of the bread and wine, the gathered congregation. Difference is not eliminated for the sake of unity just as unity is not despised in the honouring of difference. Christ’s body is in between. In the Eucharist it is both material and divine. As Linn Tonstad noted: “Christ’s body moves past even sexual difference and joins itself to the materiality of the whole world.”⁷² As the Church—the Body of Christ—it is similarly both material and divine, existing as a place of both unity and difference.

The implication of considering the Eucharist through the lens of the traumatic somatic memory is to conclude that all genders mutually indwell in the Body of Christ. The Body of Christ can be a place in which unity and difference do not have to eliminate each other, but rather is a place where difference, inbetween-ness, is valued. It matters, therefore, that people of all genders serve the Body of Christ. No body is more or less Christ-like than the other but both

⁷¹ Ibid. 140.

⁷² Linn Tonstad, *God and Difference: The Trinity, Sexuality, and the Transformation of Finitude* (New York & London: Routledge, 2016), 248.

adequately and inadequately represent and are represented by the inbetweenness of the Body of Christ.

This *perichoretic* language of 'indwelling' has significance not just for an understanding of sexual difference in the Body of Christ and the Eucharist, but also for an understanding of the Trinity and the relationship between the Triune God and humankind. Janet Soskice gives the following account of the Trinity:

The First person, as Unoriginate Origin, begets the Son (and is thus named 'Father' or we could say equally 'Mother'), and from these two proceeds the Spirit. The Son, by being Son, is the one who makes God Father/Mother. The Son gives birth to the Church in the Spirit, represented figuratively in the high tradition of western religious art by the water and the blood flowing from Christ's pierced side on the Cross.⁷³

Soskice herself characterises this account of the economy of the Trinity as one of a *perichoretic* outpouring of love and birth⁷⁴ and thus the language of indwelling seems entirely appropriate. As each member of the Trinity is connected by birth to the other, mutually indwelling, so too do the two natures of Christ indwell within him; so do people of all genders find their indwelling in the Body of Christ; so does the presence of Christ, indeed the presence of God, indwell in the eucharistic elements; so does Christ dwell within believers and believers within Him in their reception of the Eucharist.

The embodied experience of the Eucharist matters, then, as it affirms the goodness of the materiality into which Christ was incarnated whilst simultaneously affirming the goodness of the bodies who receive him. This is a further implication of considering the Eucharist through the lens of the traumatic somatic memory. Looking at the Eucharist through the hermeneutical lens of the Annunciation-Incarnation event—the somatic memory—one recognises that the embodied experience of the Eucharist is vital. The Real Presence of Christ in

⁷³ Soskice, "Trinity," 11.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.* 12.

the eucharistic elements is made paramount by viewing the Eucharist in the light of the Annunciation-Incarnation event. The presence of Christ is material and physical and therefore it matters that the experience of the Eucharist is a physical act. The embodied experience of the Eucharist helps to create a eucharistic perspective on the natural world in which sacramental materials reflect, in their ritual use, the broken practices of the world. When considered through the hermeneutical lens of the traumatic somatic memory, the Eucharist demonstrates, in material form, the ideal relationship between the material and the divine. As the bread is distributed to all who come to receive it, so Christians are urged to take action on hunger.⁷⁵ As the same cup of wine is lifted to each pair of lips, Christians are reminded of what it really means to love those different from us. As within the Eucharist, as in the Incarnate body of Christ, two natures, human and divine, exist side by side, without eliminating each other and without holding one in preference to the other, so it is possible to see a model for priesthood that does not exclude participation based on difference—whether gender or sexual orientation.

The Body Matters

This chapter could be subtitled ‘we are what we eat’ in reference to Augustine’s comment on the effect of the Eucharist upon Christians. Augustine’s understanding of the Eucharist is not without ambiguity. However, so powerful is this declaration (‘we are what we receive’) that it is worth examining his

⁷⁵ For example, Monika Hellwig noted “[T]he important and urgent question with which every eucharistic celebration confronts us is whether we are entitled to discount the earthly, physical, historical dimensions of human suffering which Jesus recalled in explaining the meaning of his mission and of his death, while we claim to be heirs to a ‘more spiritual’ understanding of our biblical heritage.” Monika Hellwig, *The Eucharist and the Hunger of the World*, 2nd ed. (Oxford & Lanham, MD.: Sheed & Ward, 1992), 19.

understanding of the Eucharist in detail. Whilst some have suggested⁷⁶ that Augustine believed the eucharistic elements to be only representative of the body and blood of Christ, I propose that it is possible to demonstrate that Augustine did believe in the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist and that his understandings of the implications of this Real Presence have significant consequences for an exploration of the materiality of the Eucharist.

For Augustine, Christian sacraments contained what they signified. As visible elements they bear a certain similarity to those things of which they are sacrament. There is a distinction to be made between the reality (the *res*) and the power (the *virtus*) of the sacrament. The reality and power don't exist apart from the sacrament (*sacramentum*).⁷⁷ For example, when considering the Eucharist, the *res* is the image and likeness of Christ in the material elements. However, the *virtus* of the Eucharist is almost always connected by Augustine to grace.⁷⁸

Therefore Augustine could declare that “[T]hat Bread which you see on the altar, consecrated by the word of God, is the Body of Christ. That chalice, or rather, what the chalice holds, consecrated by the word of God, is the Blood of Christ.”⁷⁹ Furthermore, that “[H]e took earth from earth, because flesh is from the earth, and he took Flesh of the flesh of Mary. He walked on earth in that same Flesh, and gave that same Flesh to us to be eaten for our salvation.”⁸⁰ It seems clear that the physicality of the Eucharist mattered to Augustine. Jesus is

⁷⁶ See, for example, the discussion in James T. O'Connor, *The Hidden Manna: A Theology of the Eucharist* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2005), 51-2.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.* 54-55.

⁷⁸ Kilmartin, *The Eucharist in the West*, 51.

⁷⁹ Augustine, “Sermon 227: On Easter Sunday,” trans. Sister Mary Sarah Muldowney in *Saint Augustine: Sermons on the Liturgical Seasons* (New York: Fathers of the Church, Inc., 1959). 96.

⁸⁰ Augustine, “Exposition on Psalm 98,” trans. J. E. Tweed in *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers Vol. 8*, ed. Philip Schaff (Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Publishing Co., 1888). Chapter 8. Accessed online at <http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/1801099.htm> on 01/03/16.

truly Flesh, and the consecrated elements offered to believers are truly his Flesh.

The truth of this physicality and materiality is borne out in the effects of the consumption of the consecrated elements on those who receive them. The sacrament of the Eucharist is that which produces and symbolises the unity of the Church as the Body of Christ. The Eucharist produces a transformation in those faithful who receive it. Augustine wrote:

so if it's you that are the body of Christ and its members, it's the mystery meaning you that has been placed on the Lord's table; what you receive is the mystery that means you...Be what you can see and receive what you are.⁸¹

Most significantly, he argued that “[H]e who suffered for us has entrusted to us in this sacrament his Body and Blood, which indeed he has even made us. For we have been made his Body, and, by his mercy, we are that which we receive.”⁸²

‘We are that which we receive’ or, to put it another way, ‘we are what we eat.’ If we are the body of Christ, then we are present on the altar in the eucharistic elements. We are what we eat and we become what we receive. In this respect, the materiality and Real Presence of Christ matters not just to Augustine and the early church but to the contemporary Church as well. If the presence of Christ is only *represented* in the Eucharist, then those who consume the Eucharist will only *represent* Body of Christ in the world. If, however, the presence of Christ in the Eucharist *is* spiritual, symbolic, real, fleshly, physical, and material, then this is what those who consume the eucharistic bread and wine will become. Not merely representatives of the presence of Christ in the World but real members of the Body of Christ who *are*

⁸¹ Augustine, “Sermon 272” in *Sermons, Part 3, Vol. 7*, trans. Edmund Hill (New Rochelle, NY: New City Press, 1993), 300-301.

⁸² Augustine, “Sermon 229”.

spiritually Christ in the world as well as physically Christ in the world. When it comes to extending this eucharistic presence beyond the doorways of the Church, then the physical, fleshly presence matters. It is this physical, fleshly presence that has real effect on the world. It is the Real Presence of Christ in Christians that rolls up its sleeves and gets its hands dirty in the filth of poverty, death, and disease.

That Christ instructs those who believe to consume his body as food is significant. After all, humankind can be filled with the presence of God in other ways besides eating. For example, Jesus can say that “[T]his is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, because he abides with you, and he will be in you.”⁸³ Similarly Paul can write “you are in the Spirit, since the Spirit of God dwells in you.”⁸⁴ In his first letter to the church at Corinth Paul also notes that it is through Baptism that believers are incorporated into the Body. He writes “[F]or in the one Spirit we are all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and we are all made to drink of one Spirit.”⁸⁵ No eating is required in order to be filled with the third person of the Triune God or to be made part of the Body of Christ. But eating matters because bodies matter, and The Body matters pre-eminently. Food is a material sign of relationality, interdependence, and sharing in the life eternal.⁸⁶ Eating is a primordial function of humankind. And indeed, it is through eating that God makes himself known. Not all can hear the Gospel, not all will understand it, but all can receive the presence of God in the bread and wine. The need for food motivates human action in the form of

⁸³ John 14: 17.

⁸⁴ Romans 8: 9.

⁸⁵ 1 Corinthians 12:13.

⁸⁶ Méndez-Montoya, *Theology of Food*, 144.

labour. So, in the Eucharist, the urgency of hunger and the satisfaction of eating forcefully combine in the reception of eucharistic food.⁸⁷

Throughout scripture God repeatedly calls people into relationship and community with him by the sharing of food and drink. Thus God provides manna for the Hebrews throughout their time in the desert. Jesus establishes his solidarity with the outcast of society through his radical table practices.⁸⁸ He eats with the disciples in his resurrection body, both on the road to Emmaus and subsequently with them in Jerusalem. In each case those who share in this eating are brought into closer relationship with the Divine. Méndez-Montoya imagines Divine sharing as the spatial and temporal locus of 'holy communion' with one another and with God. He suggests that "[T]he political dimension of divine sharing speaks about alimentation as incorporation into Christ's Body."⁸⁹

Graham Ward offered an image of 'co-abiding' in which the Father co-abides with the Spirit in the Son, Christ co-abides in the eucharistic elements and in the partaker, and the material elements as well as the partakers co-abide in Christ and the Holy Spirit.⁹⁰ This co-abiding bears marked similarities with the understanding of sacrifice as a mutual self-giving that I outlined in Chapter Five. I proposed that we should seek to understand Christian sacrifice with reference to the Annunciation-Incarnation event and that such understanding of sacrifice was, necessarily, based on personal relationship. This mutual, Trinitarian, self-offering offers a profound basis for understanding the mutual reciprocity in the Triune God. For Ward, then, in his reflection on the Johannine Bread of Life discourse, co-abiding between Christ and humanity and the notion of mutual reciprocity, become the essential elements of the Eucharist and thus the

⁸⁷ Rubin, *Corpus Christi*, 29.

⁸⁸ See Mitchell's discussion of table practices in Mitchell, *Eucharist as Sacrament of Initiation*.

⁸⁹ Méndez-Montoya, *Theology of Food*, 114.

⁹⁰ See Graham Ward, *Christ and Culture* (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2005).

constitution of the ecclesia.⁹¹ Thus, the *perichoretic* principle outlined at the start of this chapter takes its full form in the flesh of Christ. How we understand the material of Christ's offer of his flesh to eat matters. Drawing on the co-abiding imagery developed by Ward, Méndez-Montoya argued that:

[W]hat is suggested by this corporal feeding is not simply absorption, and this is significant. There is an 'abiding' *in* Christ, but there is also an abiding *of* Christ (in the one who eats). This co-abiding is complex and richly suggestive. It is, I suggest, the chiasmic heart of an *ekklesia* performed and constituted through the eucharist. Why chiasmic? Because observe the curious manner of the reciprocal relation. I eat the flesh of Christ. I take his body into my own. Yet in this act I place myself *in* Christ – rather than simply placing Christ within me. I consume but do not absorb Christ without being absorbed into Christ.⁹²

This placing of the self within Christ draws on the concept of mutual interpenetration that lies at the heart of *perichoretic* imagery and echoes Paul's words to the Colossians in which he wrote:

[S]o if you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your mind on things that are above, not on things that are on earth, for you have died, and *your life is hidden with Christ in God*. When Christ who is your life is revealed, then you also will be revealed with him in glory.⁹³

Through faith the believer is called to place themselves in God. This placing of the self within God can itself be the cause of faith. For example, Thomas placed himself in Christ when he touched His wounds and believed in the resurrection.⁹⁴ Similarly Salome has to touch the virgin flesh of Mary in order to believe that 'a virgin has given birth.'⁹⁵ Her hand is destroyed because of her lack of faith, but restored when she cradled the infant Jesus in her arms. The embodied experience of Christ is powerful.

⁹¹ Ibid. 105.

⁹² Méndez-Montoya, *Theology of Food*, 133.

⁹³ Col 3:1-4. Italics my own.

⁹⁴ John 20: 24-8.

⁹⁵ Protevangelium 19:19 in Hock, *The Infancy Gospels of James and Thomas*, 69.

This gift of food is broken apart by one's teeth, consumed, and taken into one's very flesh. Dale Martin noted, with respect to Paul's discourse on the Corinthian body that:

when they [Christians] share in the table of the Lord, the Eucharist, they are integrated into the being of Christ ([Cor. 1] 10: 14-22). The bodily ingestion of idol-meat could mean the dangerous ingestion of the daimonic realm; the parallel with the Eucharist is simply assumed by Paul: normally it would constitute the ingestion of the body of Christ, which would of course be positive, even soteriological.⁹⁶

Once part of the flesh, this food is further transformed into energy, word, and activity. Thus, the recipient becomes the Real Body of Christ in our presence in the world. We are what we eat. This Real Body of Christ is, as has already been established, a location in which difference is celebrated and brought into unity. The theological implication of considering the Eucharist through the lens of the traumatic somatic memory of the Annunciation-Incarnation event is one of profound (re)connection with society. If Christians are to be in the world what they have received in the Eucharist, then the Church cannot be a place where difference is rejected. This acceptance of difference has a profound effect when it comes to the acceptance of difference of opinion within the Church. To accept and celebrate difference within the Church is not to draw any distinction in difference. To truly become what one has received is to accept difference in all its forms.

Female body matters: Motherhood and Miscarriage

With regard to the Eucharist it is the *difference* of the female body that has historically posed the most difficulties for the theologian. The relationship between the female body and the Eucharist is a complex one. The female body

⁹⁶ Martin, *Corinthian Body*, 191.

defies easy classification and frequently circumvents proscribed authority. Whilst officially prohibited from the altar, women have often been intimately connected to the Eucharist in ways that men have not necessarily been. Furthermore, understanding the relationship of the female body to the materiality of the Eucharist is a fruitful avenue for the exploration of eucharistic theology.

Exploring the biological materiality of the Eucharist and its relationship to the female body is a reflective exercise in theology. The biological or scientific processes of the Annunciation-Incarnation event are as mysterious to the contemporary theologian as they were to the Gospel writers of the first century. However, this section of the chapter will engage in reflections on natural science and the ways in which they resonate with Christian theology. One implication of considering the Eucharist through the lens of the traumatic somatic memory of the Annunciation-Incarnation event, is that it allows one to speculate on *how* Jesus became Incarnate. What actually happened at the moment of Incarnation? For example, in the beginning of the fourth Gospel, John declared that

In the beginning was the Word,
and the Word was with God,
and the Word was God.
He was in the beginning with God.⁹⁷

Later in that same Gospel, Jesus echoes this declaration of his eternal nature when he tells the Jews in Jerusalem “I tell you, before Abraham was, I am.”⁹⁸ The creeds reflect this concept when they declare that Jesus is “true God from true God, begotten, not made.”⁹⁹ All this seems to support the idea that Mary served as a surrogate mother. These pronouncements of Jesus and the

⁹⁷ John 1: 1-2.

⁹⁸ John 8: 58.

⁹⁹ “The Order of Mass,” in *Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales*, ed. Liturgy Office England and Wales.

theology of the early creed seem to imply that Christ is not formed within the womb of Mary but rather that he already existed. It seems logical to conclude, therefore, that Jesus is implanted as a fully formed foetus in her womb, nourished by her placenta—"the fully divine cell made fully human through the gestation process, and then nurtured by Mary's human milk."¹⁰⁰

However, I suggest that it is wrong to think of the Annunciation-Incarnation event as a surrogacy experience. If one does take the surrogacy approach then one is left with a Christ figure who is not like us, a Christ who bears no relation to humanity except in appearance. Such an approach edges towards a form of Docetism, which is precisely why, historically, the Church was so quick to reject Docetism. It is essential to Christian theology that Christ was fully human as well as being fully divine. Indeed, the writer of the Letter to the Hebrews points out that "he had to become like his brothers and sisters in every respect, so that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make a sacrifice of atonement for the sins of the people."¹⁰¹ A surrogate "fully divine cell" made human only through the food of Mary's breast milk is not "like his brothers and sisters in every respect".

A further consequence of this contemplation of the Eucharist is that this very Real Presence also offers a rich reflection on the issue of miscarriage. As I noted in the opening chapter of this thesis, Jones has written a beautiful and powerful theological contemplation on the issues of stillbirth, infertility, and miscarriage.¹⁰² In it, she reflected that, whilst there is no explanation of such loss to offer a grieving woman, there is an image of divine support. Jones indicated that:

¹⁰⁰ Mary Lee Wile, "Surrogacy or Human DNA: What Happened When Mary Said Yes?," *Daughters of Sarah* 18, no. 4 (1992), 14-15, at 14.

¹⁰¹ Hebrews 2: 17.

¹⁰² Jones, "Hope Deferred".

[I]n contemporary as well as classical discussions of the Trinity, theologians have been hard pressed to give an account of what happens in the Godhead when Christ, as part of this Godhead, dies. What transpires in the Godhead when one of its members bleeds away? Theologians like Moltmann and Luther have urged us to affirm that on the cross, God takes this death into the depths of Godself. The Trinity thus holds it. First person holds the Second, in its death, united with it by the power of the Spirit ... what we find in this space of silence is the image of the woman who, in the grips of a stillbirth [or miscarriage] has death inside her, and yet does not die ... because the God who bears this loss will not turn away from God's people, God is in a sense rendered helpless in the face of this dying. God cannot stop it; and yet by letting it happen, God also bears the guilt for it. In this dying, the borders of divine identity are also confused and made fluid as the One who is the source of life eternal bears now the stamp of complete, full death ... this is a death that happens deep within God, not outside of God but in the very heart – perhaps the womb – of God.¹⁰³

Jones draws on both Luther and Moltmann in constructing her theology. Luther is one of the few theologians to have written theologically about miscarriage with his *Comfort for Women who have had a Miscarriage*¹⁰⁴ although it is not that text that Jones points us. Luther assumed the concept of *perichorēsis*—he preached on it in his Sermon on John 14 given in 1538 with particular reference to verse 11 “[B]elieve me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me...”¹⁰⁵ For Luther, then, “[I]f God is in Christ, then whatever God the Son suffers becomes the suffering of God by the union of the Persons of the Trinity.”¹⁰⁶ Indeed, Luther’s Trinitarian theology was such that both the Incarnation and the death of Christ are not merely additions to the Trinity but are ontologically constitutive of the Triune God.¹⁰⁷

In *The Crucified God* Moltmann, drawing on Luther’s theology in exploring the passibility of God and the relationship of God to suffering,

¹⁰³ Ibid. 16.

¹⁰⁴ Martin Luther, "Comfort for Women Who Have Had a Miscarriage, 1542," in *Luther's Works*, ed. Jaroslav Pelikan and Helmut T. Lehmann (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1958-86), 243-50.

¹⁰⁵ John Calvin, *Commentary on John*, trans. William Pringle. 2 vols. Vol. 1, (Grand Rapids, MI: Christian Classics Ethereal Library, 1847). John 14. 11. WA 45, 549.

¹⁰⁶ Dennis Ngien, "Trinity and Divine Passibility in Martin Luther's '*Theologia Crucis*,'" *Scottish Bulletin of Evangelical Theology* 19, no. 1 (2001), 31-64, at 51.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid. 51.

suggested that “He [God] humbles himself and takes upon himself the eternal death of the godless and the godforsaken, so that all the godless and the godforsaken can experience communion with him.”¹⁰⁸ This taking within the Godself the eternal death of human experience¹⁰⁹ through the person of Christ places God firmly on the side of the abandoned and the desolate. Such abandonment and desolation are irrevocably drawn into the life of the Trinity.¹¹⁰

Both Moltmann and Jones paint an extraordinary picture of death in the very heart of the Trinitarian God. Wisely, Jones doesn’t attempt to offer a theological explanation of miscarriage and stillbirth—what explanation can there be? Instead she offers the image of a God who is familiar not just with the experience of the loss of a child in the death of his Son on the Cross, but also with the wrenching helplessness and responsibility of miscarriage. This image is one of comfort. There is also a sense of solidarity in this image. A sense in which God is Emmanuel—God with us.

Jones’ theological reflection on the issue of miscarriage and stillbirth opens the way for a eucharistic reflection on the issues. I propose that when one takes the Body of Christ within oneself in the reception of the consecrated elements of bread and wine, one takes within the whole Incarnation of Christ.¹¹¹ That is to say, we consume his Real Presence which encompasses his birth, his living body, his dead body, and his resurrected body. All bodies then become paradoxical loci of both life and death. The living, resurrected Christ,

¹⁰⁸ Moltmann, *The Crucified God*, 276.

¹⁰⁹ Taking into the Godself the eternal death of human experience in the person of Christ refers to the concept that with the death of the Second Person of the Trinity, death becomes and remains part of the Trinity. Whilst the person of Christ is resurrected and lives, death has become a part of God.

¹¹⁰ Ryan A. Neal, *Theology as Hope: On the Ground and Implications of Jürgen Moltmann's Doctrine of Hope*, Princeton Theological Monograph Series (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2008), 82.

¹¹¹ In this sense the doctrine of concomitance refers not simply to the whole of Christ (body and blood) being present in each crumb of wafer and drop of wine, but to a greater extent encapsulates the whole Incarnation of Christ – living, dead, and resurrected. If Christ is indivisible, then the whole of Christ’s being is received in the Eucharist.

inseparable from the Christ who died (indeed, how can one be resurrected without first having lived and died?), is consumed in the nourishment of the communion.

Women's bodies, uniquely, have the capacities to bear life within them but they are also uniquely placed to bear death within them. The experiences of miscarriage and stillbirth are intimately connected to pain: the physical pain of unexpected and sudden bleeding, of invasive treatments, of giving birth; the emotional and psychological pain of the loss of a child, of having to give birth to a baby that is already dead, of feeling the hopes and dreams of a pregnancy disappear. Those who study pain are struck by its inexpressibility and its incommunicability. Those in great pain are reduced to inarticulate screams and moans.¹¹² Elaine Scarry, in her study of the body and its relationship to pain noted "[P]hysical pain does not simply resist language but actively destroys it, bringing about an immediate reversion to a state anterior to language, to sounds and cries a human being makes before language is learned."¹¹³ Pain destroys language and in doing so destroys the world of the sufferer, for it is through language that a person's world is constructed. It has a temporal dimension as well. In the case of miscarriage and stillbirth, the temporal destruction experienced through pain is crucial. Past attachments and future hopes are destroyed by the immediacy of the pain experienced.¹¹⁴ This inability to articulate combined with a destruction of a personal world and temporal dislocation are, unsurprisingly, features of trauma as well as features of pain.

The pain of a miscarriage is indescribable and incomprehensible to those outside of the pain. Grief combines and intensifies with a physical pain that is

¹¹² William T. Cavanaugh, *Torture and Eucharist* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 1998), 34.

¹¹³ Elaine Scarry, *The Body in Pain: The Making and Unmaking of the World* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), 3.

¹¹⁴ Cavanaugh, *Torture*, 36-7.

exacerbated by the feeling of death slipping between the thighs. Language fails. But this experience of the Eucharist as a locus of life and death offers an intensely intimate communion with the Triune God, in whom death dwells, at a time when words fail. It is not just, as Jones so descriptively portrayed, a comforting image, but rather, for the miscarrying woman, the embodied experience of the God of life and death within her. It is affirmation that her embodied experience, of miscarriage and of communion, matters. The paradox of life and death, the pain and grief she experiences, the silence of her language are all profoundly part of who the Triune God is and what it means to receive and be part of the Body of Christ.

If one is to take women's embodied experiences seriously, then there is an awful, tragic, and wrenching sense in which, through miscarriage, women's bodies become revelatory of the Triune God. As women made in the image of God they have the profound ability to image within their own bodies the death experienced at the very heart of the Trinity. The grief of the miscarrying woman offers a glimpse into the grief of God at the Cross. Whilst she will eventually shed all the tissue that had once formed a child, her body will remain forever the (often only) grave site of the baby. She may go on to bear new life within her, but as a site of memory and mourning, her body remains a grave. If one draws on the image of the indwelling, mutually interpenetrative, Trinitarian God posited earlier then just as each Person of the Trinity indwells in the birthing action of the Incarnation, so too does each Person of the Trinity indwell the death of the Second Person. When searching for an image that enables theologians to begin to comprehend what happens within the Triune God when the Second Person of the Trinity dies, the image of the miscarrying mother is a powerful one. If the image of woman-with-child can enable theologians to understanding something

of *perichoretic* indwelling, then equally the image of woman-losing-child can enable theologians to understand something of *perichoretic* indwelling and relationship within the Trinity and what occurs within the Trinity at the Cross.

I do not suggest that there is any spiritual value in losing a child. The death of a baby, longed for or not, cannot be a good thing. Nor do I wish to promote a triumphalist image of resurrection—not all situations are redeemed and not all women who experience miscarriage or stillbirth will go on to have a healthy child of their own. There is no ‘but’ at the end of the sentence. Like Jones, I cannot offer a theology of miscarriage that makes sense of the experience; I can only argue that a consequence of considering the Eucharist through the hermeneutical lens of the traumatic somatic memory of the Annunciation-Incarnation event is that such consideration reveals the experience of the miscarrying woman as part and revelatory of the Triune God and that in the reception of the Eucharist there is a sense of comfort from Emmanuel—God truly with us.

When it comes to the Eucharist, and indeed to the theology and faith in general, I propose that women’s bodies matter a lot. Not because they are superior to other bodies, but precisely because they have, for so long, been considered to be inferior and subsequently marginalised. This marginalisation has been not only the denial of priestly ordination to women, but also the historical denial of the Eucharist to birthing and bleeding women. The natural functions of the female body have traditionally been an obstacle for receiving the Body. Women’s bodies matter as I seek to offer a vision of the Eucharist, and indeed theology, which is truly holistic and inclusive.

Conclusion: B/body Matters

This chapter has demonstrated that there are two consequences that arise when considering the Eucharist through the lens of the traumatic somatic memory of the Annunciation-Incarnation event. Such a consideration gives emphasis to the physicality of the Eucharist and the variety of ways in which the significance of the materiality of the Eucharist can be understood. As I demonstrated at the outset of this chapter, an exploration of the concept of *perichorēsis* is an essential precursor to examining the notions of materiality embedded in the Eucharist and in eucharistic ritual.

Firstly, by demonstrating that the embodied experience of participation in the celebration of the Eucharist is an essential part of the Eucharist, I argue that the materiality of the Eucharist holds within it a model for priesthood that welcomes all genders. The very in-between-ness of Christ's body, in which difference is not eliminated but mutually co-abides, is the *exemplar par excellence* of the ecclesial Body. The Church has, as its model, a place in which difference is welcomed and celebrated. I suggest that the physicality of the eucharistic body matters. We are what we eat and thus the Church must be a place in which difference, gender and all other differences, do not discount people. To become what we have received in the Eucharist is to become a Church that does not discount anyone, including women, from priesthood on the grounds of their 'differentness.' As I suggested in the Chapter Four, in celebrating the Eucharist the priest does not act *in persona Christi* but rather *ut repraesentativus Ecclesiae*. Thus, as representative of the Church the priesthood is a model of the Church—welcoming of difference and celebrating it in the celebration of the Eucharist. An implication of seeing the Eucharist through the lens of somatic memory is that the difference within Christ's body

becomes our model for valuing diversity, both within the priesthood and within the wider ecclesial body.

Secondly, I propose that a consequence of considering the Eucharist through the lens of the traumatic somatic memory of the Annunciation-Incarnation event is the highlighting of the special significance the Incarnate Christ has for women. The exploration of a hypothetical biology of the Annunciation-Incarnation event reveals the significance of Mary's biological contribution to the Incarnate body of Christ—she is more than simply a surrogate mother. Furthermore, an understanding of the eucharistic body as fully Incarnate, fully living, fully dead, and fully resurrected, again reflecting the inbetween-ness of Christ's body, provides us with a powerful reflection on miscarriage and stillbirth. Women's bodies matter when it comes to the Eucharist and thus it matters that, behind the altar, difference is not eliminated but brought into excessive harmony and unity.

Chapter Seven

Rupture, Repetition, and Recovery: Trauma and Sacrament

Introduction

Reading the Eucharist through the traumatic lens of somatic memory locates Mary's body, as we have seen, in a place of significance in Christian theology. The emphasis of the Eucharist rests, in this reading, on the Annunciation-Incarnation event and, in particular, on Mary's experience of it. I have, in previous chapters, demonstrated the way in which trauma acts as a destabilising lens when applied to the foundational eucharistic narratives of priesthood, sacrifice, and presence. This destabilising lens has caused ruptures from which new narratives can be constructed. Having drawn the traumatic connections clearly between the Annunciation-Incarnation event and the Eucharist in the previous chapters, I will now read the Annunciation-Incarnation event itself through the lens of trauma and examine the implications for the celebration of the Eucharist, our understanding of Mary, and our own recovery from trauma.

The Annunciation-Incarnation Event as Trauma

What, then, are the implications of considering the Eucharist through the lens of the traumatic somatic memory of the Annunciation-Incarnation event? As I outlined in Chapter One, with regards to rupture of body or identity, the traumatic event is one that causes threat to bodily integrity or a threat to life.¹

Mardi Horowitz defined traumatic events as "those that cannot be assimilated

¹ Herman, *Trauma and Recovery*, 33.

with the victim's "inner schemata" of the self in relation to the world."² As well as, perhaps, posing a physical threat to the body, a traumatic event can be one that shatters the previously held identity of the victim, something which evokes a need for redefinition of self in the aftermath of their experience and throughout their recovery. The Annunciation-Incarnation is, with regard to this characteristic, a traumatic event. With the sudden, miraculous conception of a baby, Mary's bodily integrity is threatened. She appears to give consent to the pregnancy in Luke 1:38 "[T]hen Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word." Nevertheless, the enfleshing of the Divine Son in Mary's womb is a physical rupturing of her flesh to make way for the flesh of God. Furthermore, this is an event which cannot be easily assimilated with Mary's own sense of self in relation to the world. Mary's sense of self requires rebuilding to encompass this new 'self'. We will see this later in the words of her Magnificat. Mary processes the trauma of the Annunciation-Incarnation event and creates a new concept of self-identity as one who will be called blessed because of what God has done in her (Luke 1:48-9).

The second characteristic of traumatic events is that of a rupture in time. A traumatic event is one in which the empirical notions of time are disrupted by an event or encounter (with death) that is missed.³ Caruth goes further in identifying trauma as an 'overwhelming experience of sudden, or catastrophic events, in which the response to the event occurs in the often delayed, and uncontrolled repetitive occurrence of hallucinations and other intrusive phenomena.'⁴ This rupturing of time is also seen in the elements of repetition inherent in trauma. This repetition expresses itself in variety of different ways. In

² Ibid. 33.

³ Lange, *Trauma Recalled*, 8.

⁴ Caruth, "Unclaimed Experience," 181.

victims of PTSD such a characteristic might commonly reveal itself as recurring nightmares or hallucinations. In victims of other types of trauma, it might manifest itself as consciously or subconsciously designed ritual actions, repeated as the trauma is relived, in an effort to find meaning and peace.

The Annunciation-Incarnation event is a disruption in the empirical notion of time—the angel appears to Mary from out of nowhere and informs her of God’s plan for her. The eternal enters into time. Conception of a child usually follows an act of sexual intercourse—the one precedes the other. Yet in this case the linear notion of time, of expected connections between cause and event, are subverted. Mary is *suddenly* a pregnant woman with all the attendant responsibilities and requirements of pregnancy and motherhood. Mary’s flesh is ruptured, in particular, by this Incarnation, but the very fabric of time and the substance of humanity are ruptured by the embodiment of the Divine Son in this human woman. Pound read Søren Kierkegaard as suggesting that the eternal manifests as a trauma within time: the eternal constitutes a dramatic break or disturbance in the temporal order—eternity is qualitatively different from time. This break, initiated by the Incarnation of the Divine Son, leads to an impotency of language—a place where words fail.⁵ Beattie characterised the Annunciation-Incarnation event as “a moment of radical discontinuity in the history of humankind.”⁶ Fundamentally, this event is a rupture in time.

The final characteristic of a traumatic event is connected to this failing of words and impotency of language identified by Pound. I have classified this characteristic as being connected to cognition. Lange suggested that a

⁵ Pound, "The Assumption of Desire," 73. I will develop this rupture language and cognition further in my analysis of the third rupture caused by the Annunciation-Incarnation event.

⁶ Tina Beattie, *Rediscovering Mary: Insights from the Gospels* (Tunbridge Wells, Kent: Burns & Oates, 1995), 28.

traumatic event is one that escapes accessibility.⁷ The Annunciation-Incarnation event is inaccessible to knowledge. Mary asks the question herself – “[H]ow can this be?” in Luke 1:34, as she is perplexed by the news she has received. Jones notes that “Mary is immediately “perplexed” and for good reason. What could an angel want with her, a poor girl with nothing to offer?”⁸ Indeed it is only later, when she visits her cousin Elizabeth, that we see Mary attempt any access into the meaning of the Annunciation-Incarnation event, both for herself and for humanity.

The Annunciation-Incarnation event *is* traumatic for Mary. Whether one considers her to have given her consent to that which happens to her or not, Mary suffers the three classic ruptures of trauma in this experience. If the Eucharist is the non-identical repetition of the Annunciation-Incarnation event then the Eucharist must be traumatic also. Considering the Eucharist through the destabilising lens of the traumatic somatic memory of the Annunciation-Incarnation event results in the need for a new vision of the Eucharist and eucharistic theology.

A New Vision of the Eucharist

Understanding the Annunciation-Incarnation as inseparably and inextricably linked, as well as seeing them as parts of the same traumatic event focused on the figure of Mary, opens the door for a reinterpretation of the Eucharist through the lens of this trauma theory. Some trauma theorists suggest that ritual action (or reliving of memory) associated with those suffering from PTSD is not

⁷ Lange, *Trauma Recalled*, 8.

⁸ Jones, *Trauma and Grace*, 115.

repeating the traumatic event itself, but rather repeating that which made the event traumatic in the first place—the fact of having missed something, or the shock of survival.⁹ In contrast, however, I argue that by understanding the Eucharist not in terms of the Cross-event, or even specifically the Last-Supper-event, but in terms of the Christ-event—the Annunciation-Incarnation, as I have previously demonstrated, one can see this liturgical celebration of sacrament as a ritual repeating of *the* traumatic event. Pound noted that “the Eucharist repeats the trauma of the Incarnation”¹⁰ in which the eternal ruptures time and enters into that which is human and earthly. Pound went further in noting that “[T]he point of transubstantiation amounts to the traumatic intervention of the *real*, which shatters existing symbolic determinates and makes time matter in new ways.”¹¹ This is witnessed in the eucharistic celebration as the continual return of something not understood. The Annunciation-Incarnation event is part of the divine mystery and thus beyond the accessibility of humanity.

Much of the recent discussion about sacraments in general and the Eucharist in particular has focused on the connection between sacrament and the death of Christ on the Cross. As I noted in Chapter Five, Kilmartin highlighted an analysis of an average modern Catholic understanding of the Eucharist that centres on its connection with the death of Christ.¹² The Cross has become the pervasive meaning of the Eucharist. As we shall see below, the moment of Incarnation, one aspect of the traumatic Annunciation-Incarnation event, was at the forefront of the minds of the early Christians in their liturgical celebrations of the Eucharist. Indeed, the sacrifice of Christ does not appear to become a *dominant* interpretation of the Eucharist until the early ninth century

⁹ Lange, *Trauma Recalled*, 8. See also Caruth, *Unclaimed Experience*, 57-72.

¹⁰ Pound, "The Assumption of Desire," 75.

¹¹ Pound, "Eucharist and Trauma," 193. Italics Pound's own.

¹² Kilmartin, *The Eucharist in the West*, 294-5.

when Amalarius of Metz developed an allegorical interpretation of the liturgy based on the Pasch of Christ,¹³ although the idea had been present in the Church from its earliest days.¹⁴ Theological discourse does not, I argue, have to begin at Easter. Theological discourse begins prior to Easter, prior even to the Annunciation-Incarnation. Theological discourse begins with the creative act of God in the Genesis accounts. God's relationship with humanity is fundamentally one of creative transformation, not one of suffering and death.

In considering the sacraments, Chauvet wrote: “[T]o theologially affirm sacramental grace is to affirm, in faith, that the risen Christ continues to take flesh in the world and in history and that God continues to come into human corporality.”¹⁵ As I will demonstrate in Chapter Eight, for Chauvet, this statement supports his understanding of the Pasch of Christ as the fundamental event in theological discourse. But if one takes a close look at what he has affirmed here, one can see that it is not a statement about death or about the Cross, but rather it is a statement about life. To affirm that, in sacrament, “God continues to come into human corporality” is to place repetition of the Annunciation-Incarnation event, God's original coming into human corporality, at the heart of sacraments. It is an affirmation of the creative, transformative power of God at the heart of God's revelation and relation to humankind. This returns us to the second account of the creation of humankind in Genesis 2. It is here that we see God creatively transforming matter (the dust of the ground, Gen. 2:7) by filling it with the Divine breath. This is model for God's interaction with humanity—creative transformation of corporality, re-affirmed in the Annunciation-Incarnation and re-enacted in the liturgy of the Eucharist. This

¹³ Enrico Mazza, *The Celebration of the Eucharist: The Origin of the Rite and the Development of Its Interpretation* (Collegeville, Minnesota: A Pueblo Book by Liturgical Press, 1999).

¹⁴ Martos, *Doors to the Sacred*, 212.

¹⁵ Chauvet, *Symbol and Sacrament*, 490.

offers a much more positive image of unity with the divine than that brutal suffering and cruelty of the Pasch of Christ.

Rambo has sought to challenge the dominant redemptive metaphor of Christ's work on the Cross. In her work on trauma and the Spirit, she attempted to "move us away from a language of redemptive suffering narrated from the site of the cross to the language of remaining narrated from the middle."¹⁶ She argued persuasively for a love not focused on the Cross and notions of sacrifice but shifted to the middle and re-shaped in terms of witnessing and remaining. But Rambo's work is still death focused and continues to view suffering as part of the primary mode of redemption. She is still focused on the Cross as traumatic event, even if her concern has become the 'middle' between death and life. What would redemption look like if one took the Annunciation-Incarnation event as traumatic event? Perhaps one would conclude that to be Christ-like, to be Christian, is not to be subsumed into the death and resurrection (for Rambo rightly points out herself, not all events are redeemed). Rather, to be Christ-like is to be born again (and again) in the celebration of the Eucharist as God's mode of revelation and relation to humankind. As the material, the corporeal, is brought into communication with the Divine, so sacrament is connected to action. This becoming Christ-like, through the repetition of the trauma of the Annunciation-Incarnation event in the celebration of the Eucharist, will affect the lifestyle and mission of the believer. Thus we can posit the notion of sacrament directing and releasing believers to mission as a recovery from trauma. This is entirely in line with the process of trauma recovery I outlined in Chapter One, of which reconnecting with society is the third and final element of recovery.

¹⁶ Rambo, *Spirit and Trauma*, 145.

Whose Trauma?

Considering the Eucharist through the lens of the traumatic somatic memory of the Annunciation-Incarnation event implies that celebration of the Eucharist itself is a traumatic undertaking. The trauma being repeated in the Eucharist is not the trauma of the Cross but of the Annunciation-Incarnation—the embodiment of Christ in the flesh of Mary. For whom is this event traumatic? In the particular, it is traumatic for the historical person of Mary but in general it is traumatic for Mary as the archetypal Christian—it is traumatic for all of us.

Pound argued:

Christ's body is present in the bread as trauma, distinct and yet inextricably joined. Christ's body is the traumatic kernel of the bread as his blood is of the wine...[we are] confronted by the traumatic presence of the eternal in time.¹⁷

It is our own trauma that perpetuates the repeating of the ritual action of the Eucharist. As I will demonstrate more fully in Chapter Eight, in my analysis of Chauvet, all sacraments cause ruptures and thus all sacraments, including the Eucharist, are traumatic events. When we partake in the sacrament of the Eucharist, we offer the sacramental earthly materials of the bread and wine in the same way that Mary offered her body. In these earthly materials, the Divine Son is enfleshed and embodied. We, then, share in Mary's traumatic experience as we take the body of Christ within us—rupturing our own bodily integrity. This consumption disrupts time and shatters our conception of self. The bearing of God within us is not something that can, to recall Horowitz's terms, be assimilated with our "inner schemata" of self in relation to the world, but rather, requires a reassembly of self and a reorientation of person in line with the divine. The Eucharist is, then, a traumatic experience as a repeat of a

¹⁷ Pound, "The Assumption of Desire," 76.

traumatic experience. The Eucharist is a rupture in both a physical and temporal sense, an event demanding repetition, and it is an inaccessible mystery that defies cognition.

Mary's Recovery from Trauma

Scripture shows us that Mary undergoes her own recovery from the trauma she has experienced. After the Annunciation-Incarnation event of Luke 1: 26-38 in which the angel of the Lord appears to Mary and tells her she is to conceive and bear a son, the author of the text goes on to give us a further insight into Mary and her response to these events. Luke concludes this chapter by narrating the account of Mary's visit to her cousin Elizabeth's home, Mary's song of praise—the Magnificat, and the birth of John the Baptist to Zechariah and Elizabeth.

The Infancy Narrative in Luke is peculiar in both style and diction as compared to the prologue in 1.1-4 and the rest of the Gospel. There are a number of suggestions as to why this might be. The chapters may be a translation of an earlier Semitic document¹⁸ that the Lukan author has incorporated into his Gospel as one of his many sources or perhaps the chapters are a pure Lukan creation. Arguably, the most likely answer to this problem lies somewhere in the middle ground. After analysing Luke's method in the first chapter of his Gospel, Raymond Brown concluded that:

¹⁸ Stephen Farris, "On Discerning Semitic Sources in Luke 1-2," in *Gospel Perspectives: Studies of History and Tradition in the Four Gospels*, ed. R. T. France and D. Wenham (Sheffield: Continuum International Publishing Group, 1981).

[I]n composing chapter 1 Luke had some items that came to him from tradition e.g. the names of JBap's [John the Baptist's] parents and that they were of priestly origin; the songs of an early Jewish Christian community (at Jerusalem?) now adapted as the *Benedictus* and the *Magnificat*; the tendency to compare the conception of Jesus to the conception of OT salvific figures by the use of an annunciation pattern; the ideal of a virginal conception. He combined and fleshed out these traditions with a Christian creedal formula about Jesus as the Son of God... The two chapters of the infancy narrative were meant by Luke to provide a bridge from the OT to the gospel story of Jesus.¹⁹

Herman, in her work on trauma and recovery, noted that recovery "is based on the empowerment of the survivor and the creation of new connections. Recovery can take place only within the context of relationships; it cannot occur in isolation."²⁰ Herman synthesises the processes of trauma recovery outlined in the last hundred years of psychotherapy into three of her own. Stage one in the recovery from trauma is concerned with safety. Stage two is focused on remembrance and mourning. Finally, stage three is entitled reconnection.²¹ She summarises this analysis by suggesting that "in the course of a successful recovery, it should be possible to recognize a gradual shift from unpredictable danger to reliable safety, from dissociated trauma to acknowledged memory, and from stigmatized isolation to restored social connection."²²

With this summary of trauma recovery in mind, we can turn our attention to the account of Mary's first few months of pregnancy as retold by the Lukan author. Here we can clearly see the elements of Mary's recovery from the trauma of the Annunciation-Incarnation event. To begin with, Mary establishes her own safety. She goes 'with haste' to her cousin's Elizabeth's house and stays with her for about three months. It is easy to read this visit as an escape

¹⁹Raymond Edward Brown, "Luke's Method in the Annunciation Narratives of Chapter 1," in *Perspectives on Luke-Acts*, ed. Charles H. Talbert (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1978), 126-138, at 138.

²⁰Herman, *Trauma and Recovery: From Domestic Abuse to Political Terror*, 133.

²¹Ibid. 156. See Chapter One for a more detailed examination of the processes of trauma recovery.

²²Ibid. 155.

to a place of safety, perhaps where she can deal with the early symptoms of pregnancy away from prying eyes and with the comfort of a sympathetic friend.

Beattie describes her imagining of the visitation:

I imagine Mary setting out with wings on her heels to seek the companionship of the one person in all the world who would understand the uniqueness of her situation, and who would share in the delight of her pregnancy. In going to stay with Elizabeth, she found refuge away from the gossiping women of Nazareth in the presence of a woman who was in every sense her soulmate.²³

Furthermore, Mary establishes a place of bodily integrity and safety. Jones, in her analysis of Mary in relation to sin, creativity, and the Christian life, offered a number of observations that make this aspect of trauma recovery clear in Mary's story. Jones noted that "[A]s a creative agent in relation to the incarnational event, Mary claims permission to be someone she has not been socialized to be, someone who is not a victim in relationship to the systems that claim her."²⁴

This is an image of Mary establishing her own bodily integrity—refusing to be a victim but being transformed into a new person. Jones noted further:

[S]cripture encourages us to imagine that Mary emerges from that encounter a changed woman. She is pregnant with new life, and she begins making traveling plans. She envisions a new world in which sinful power structures have been overturned. And she who was voiceless lifts high her eyes, fills her lungs tight with air, and opens her mouth to proclaim this great, redeeming reversal.²⁵

In undertaking her recovery from trauma, Mary establishes for herself an environment of safety which will allow her to journey through the subsequent stages of trauma recovery successfully.

In terms of the second stage of recovery, deemed 'remembrance and mourning' by Herman, a fundamental element is the reconstruction of the

²³ Beattie, *Rediscovering Mary*, 43.

²⁴ Jones, *Trauma and Grace*, 117-8.

²⁵ *Ibid.* 116.

trauma narrative. This reconstruction includes a “systematic review of the meaning of the event”²⁶—an activity we can clearly see taking place in Mary’s words of praise in the Magnificat. In reviewing the meaning of the traumatic Annunciation-Incarnation event, Mary comes to understand the event as one in which God has shown her favour and for which she should give thanks. She restructures her own identity as one whom future generations will call “blessed” and thus comes to “reconstruct a system of belief that makes sense”²⁷ in the light of her traumatic experience. Mary discovers her voice and makes her confession—she “identifies the situation for what it is, in all its complexity.”²⁸

Agger and Jensen, in their work with political refugees and survivors of political persecution recount that in the telling of the story, the making of the meaning, the story of the trauma becomes a testimony. They note:

the universality of testimony as a ritual of healing. Testimony has both a private dimension, which is confessional and spiritual and a public aspect, which is political and judicial. The use of the word testimony links both meanings, giving a new and larger dimension to the patient’s individual experience.²⁹

Mary’s Magnificat begins with this spiritual, confessional testimony in which she worships God, acknowledges his greatness and how she has been favoured by Him. It is part of her healing from this traumatic event. The second part of the Magnificat, however, has the political and judicial flavour of this more public aspect of testimony.

The second portion of the Magnificat is focused on the justice of God being made known in the world. Joel Green outlined a powerful summary of this aspect of the Magnificat when he indicated:

²⁶ Herman, *Trauma and Recovery: From Domestic Abuse to Political Terror*, 178.

²⁷ *Ibid.* 178.

²⁸ Jones, *Trauma and Grace*, 178.

²⁹ Herman, *Trauma and Recovery: From Domestic Abuse to Political Terror*, 181.

[I]t is difficult to imagine a more powerful reflection on the significance of the coming of Jesus than Mary's prophetic words in Luke 1:46-55, the Magnificat or Mary's Song. Images of the divine warrior and gracious God coalesce in this celebration of the advent of salvation in Jesus. Here, Mary identifies the shape of Israel's restoration as it will be narrated in the words and deeds of Jesus in subsequent chapters, and invites others, her audience in- and outside the narrative, to make their home in this redemptive vision.³⁰

This shaping of Israel's restoration is the program of God's coming action in the world. Ivone Gebara and Maria Clara Bingemer note that the purpose of the Magnificat is to "shed light on the historic and spiritual meaning of the advent of the incarnation of the Word."³¹ Thus the meaning of this traumatic event is reframed into public, political and judicial terms. Gebara and Bingemer go on to suggest:

[T]he decisive event of the incarnation of the Word of God is both paradoxical and subversive. Occurring in the body and life of Mary of Nazareth, woman and symbol of the whole people [Israel], this event is filled with social, ethical, and religious implications, despite what is exceptional and unique about it.³²

We can clearly see the public dimension to Mary's review of the meaning of the story and her testimony which sits in both the private, confessional sphere as well as the public, political realm. Beattie concluded that:

[T]he *Magnificat* is astonishing in its scope. It is the realization of Mary's role as Mother of God and mother of the poor. It is a hymn that soars up to heaven and extends to the ends of the earth.³³

The third and final stage of recovery from trauma is the stage in which the "survivor reclaims her world"³⁴ and reconnects with the wider environment

³⁰ Joel B. Green, "Blessed Is She Who Believed: Mary, Curious Exemplar in Luke's Narrative," in *Blessed One: Protestant Perspectives on Mary*, ed. Beverly Roberts Gaventa and Cynthia L. Rigby (Louisville, Kentucky: John Knox Press, 2002), 9-20, at 16.

³¹ Ivone Gebara and Maria Clara Bingemer, *Mary, Mother of God, Mother of the Poor*, trans. Phillip Berryman (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1989), 165.

³² Ibid. 167.

³³ Beattie, *Rediscovering Mary*, 44.

³⁴ Herman, *Trauma and Recovery: From Domestic Abuse to Political Terror*, 196.

around her. Herman notes that many of those who recover from trauma feel called in some way to engage in the wider world:

[the trauma survivor] recognize[s] a political or religious dimension in their misfortune and discover[s] that they can transform the meaning of their personal tragedy by making it the basis for social action. While there is no way to compensate for an atrocity, there is a way to transcend it, by making it a gift to others. The trauma is redeemed only when it becomes the source of a survivor mission.³⁵

This survivor mission is revealed both in the immediate words of the Magnificat, but also in the longer term action of Mary. Mary recognises the political and religious dimension of the trauma of the Annunciation-Incarnation event and establishes the meaning of her own experience of this event as the basis for social action. In this way the trauma of her experience is transcended and made into a gift for others. Her 'survivor mission' is one in which she makes a gift of the consequence of this trauma—in this case her child—to the whole world. Mary "contributes integrally to the shaping of a new world"³⁶ through the gift of her son. Mary's recognition of her own lowly condition "prepares her for receipt of the gift of renewal."³⁷ This "gift of renewal" that Mary receives in her womb, is the same gift of renewal that all believers receive in the celebration of the Eucharist. Thus Mary experiences the trauma of the Annunciation-Incarnation event but does not remain in this trauma. After her period of trauma recovery, Mary returns home, reconnecting with her world and the society she was a part of.

Considering Mary's visit to Elizabeth and the accompanying Magnificat in this way reveals how Mary recovers from the trauma of the Annunciation-Incarnation event. Even this brief account shows the integral elements of safety,

³⁵ Ibid. 207.

³⁶ Jones, *Trauma and Grace*, 118.

³⁷ Ibid. 117.

acknowledged memory, and restored social connection as key to recovering from trauma. Mary's testimony in the Magnificat acts as a ritual of healing and functions on both the personal, spiritual level as well as on the public level with regard to social justice.

Mary as Mode of Recovery

Considering the Annunciation-Incarnation event in the wider context of salvation history it is possible, also, to see Mary herself as being a mode of recovery from trauma. Whilst in one sense Mary's trauma is non-identically repeated in each Christian's reception of the Eucharist, there is another way in which trauma can be understood to be at the heart of the human condition. As I suggested at the outset of this thesis the trauma of the human condition consists, I argue, of two ruptures. Firstly, there is a gulf between the human and the Divine. One could, if one wished, call this sin, but I prefer to regard this gulf as a rupture of natures. The consumption of the Divine in the celebration of the Eucharist, the absorption of the Divine into our bodies, serves to promote healing from this rupture. The second trauma causing rupture is that caused by the theological abstraction of the body. I've touched on this rupture in previous chapters, most significantly in Chapter Six. Theologies and theologians often abstract bodies and then refuse to acknowledge their bodily sources. Theology comes from bodies in material contexts and therefore "assuming a disembodied theology threatens violence against the bodies that have to be excised in order to name the disembodied God."³⁸

³⁸ Meredith Minister, *Trinitarian Theology and Power Relations: God Embodied* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 3.

This thesis is a project of trauma recovery (as I outlined in Chapter One) as an attempt to promote the healing of these traumas, amongst others. This project brings us into an even more intimate communion with the Divine through our reading of the Eucharist informed by the hermeneutical lens of trauma theory. Secondly, it calls our attention to the ever-present reality of bodies and materiality thereby promoting the healing of the second rupture.

The embodied person of Mary provides for our healing from these ruptures. In our consideration of Mary's role as mother of God, we can go beyond the Annunciation-Incarnation event to Mary's own Immaculate Conception. Through her Immaculate Conception, God creates, in Mary, a place of safety and bodily integrity for the Incarnation of the Divine Son. Thus, Mary's participation in salvation history was determined prior to the Annunciation. Scotus argued that the Incarnation would have taken place regardless of the fall of Adam and Eve. He saw it as an event planned from the beginning of time in order to glorify human nature and thus Mary's human nature was ordered primarily to her role as the mother of God.³⁹

Rahner developed this concept further when he suggested that the distinctiveness of Mary's redemption and sanctification followed from her predestination to be the mother of God from eternity. This predestination puts her in the exceptional state of grace that allowed her to give her consent to the Incarnation and therefore the Immaculate Conception had a direct bearing on her motherhood.⁴⁰

³⁹ Sarah Jane Boss, "The Development of the Doctrine of Mary's Immaculate Conception" in ed. Sarah Jane Boss, *Mary: The Complete Resource* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 207-235, at 221.

⁴⁰ Karl Rahner, "The Immaculate Conception," in *Theological Investigations* (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1974), 201-13.

Upon reflection, it is apparent that all four of the traditional Catholic doctrines regarding Mary are concerned with the establishment and maintenance of Mary's bodily integrity. As Theotokos, she is Mother of God. This establishes Mary as truly bearing the flesh of God as a baby within her womb, even as it establishes the truly human bodily integrity of the Christ-child. As Perpetual Virgin her bodily integrity is maintained throughout her life. Assumed into heaven, Mary's body is preserved for all eternity from the decay of death—her bodily integrity remains assured.

The second stage in our schema is that of the construction of a trauma narrative. Again, this can be seen in the person of Mary. Following the Jewish tradition of matrilineal descent, as I examined in Chapter Six when I considered the materiality of the Eucharist, it is through Mary that Jesus is Jewish (which seems logical given the insignificance of Joseph with regards to the conception of Jesus). Thus, it is through Mary that construction of a narrative takes place allowing one to draw on the narrative of the Hebrew Scriptures to provide context and significance for this trauma narrative. This trauma narrative is like Mary—at once particular to a given geographical and temporal location, whilst at the same time being universal and representing the whole of humanity.

Finally, in line with the third aspect of the process of trauma recovery, the trauma narrative constructed through Mary's earthly life becomes a gift to the world through her continued actions as mediator and intercessor on behalf of humanity to Christ, her Son. Evidenced in the words of Mary's Magnificat, and in the development of Marian piety, Mary has long enjoyed a place of devotion in the Christian faith. The mainstream use with Catholic, Anglo-Catholic, and

Eastern traditions of the 'Hail Mary' prayer attest to this as the prayer invites petitioners to seek the prayers of Mary herself before God.⁴¹

Trauma Recovery and Sacramental Liturgy

With the stages of trauma recovery understood and identified in the person of Mary, our attention can now turn to our own trauma recovery. The liturgy of the Mass provides a recovery from the two ruptures of our own trauma (the rupture between divine and human and the rupture of the body from theology), even as it re-enacts and remembers the trauma of the Annunciation-Incarnation event in the Eucharist. As I explored in Chapter Two, the Annunciation-Incarnation event is an expression of these ruptures. In this event we see, paradoxically, the unity and rupture of the Divine and human as the fully human and Divine Christ is ruptured in his Incarnation. This Incarnation ruptures the body of Mary. The Annunciation-Incarnation event makes it clear that we cannot rupture the body from theology. We can see the recovery from trauma in the format of the liturgical celebration of the Mass. Beginning with the Introductory Rites, the congregation is welcomed into the Church as a place of safety, and through the Act of Repentance they establish their bodily integrity as they are absolved from their sins. The liturgies of the Word and of the Eucharist follow these Introductory Rites, in which a trauma narrative is constructed from Scripture and through the actions of the celebrant in the non-identical repetition of the trauma of the Annunciation-Incarnation event. Finally, the congregation is dismissed out into the world, called to go forth in peace and share the good news of Jesus

⁴¹ The text of the prayer reads 'Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou amongst women and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen.'

Accessed online at <http://www.liturgyoffice.org.uk/Prayer/Traditional/Prayers.shtml> on 29/02/16.

with those around them. The liturgy is, itself, a recovery from the trauma of the rupture of the Divine and human nature as it draws the two natures back into intimate union through the consumption of the Eucharist. Furthermore, the liturgy is an embodied act. As I noted in Chapter Six when I examined the materiality of the Eucharist, our bodies are integral to, not just the Eucharist, but all sacraments. Participation in the celebration of the Eucharist serves to refuse the abstraction of the body from theology and thus to highlight the embodied nature of any thinking done regarding the Divine.

As I have noted previously, Pound's work on Eucharist and trauma has drawn a correlation between the Incarnation and the Eucharist. He suggests that "trauma is not merely a useful metaphor for transubstantiation; rather, Christ's incarnation and subsequent identity with the Eucharist is the paradigm for trauma" and finally concludes that the Eucharist is the "very place of dramatic and traumatic confrontation—because the Eucharist only works if God breaks into time, every time, and it is not simply celebrated as an act of remembrance."⁴² Trauma is essential to the Eucharist, even as the liturgical celebration of the Eucharist, and thus the non-identical repetition of Annunciation-Incarnation event, provides a recovery from that trauma.

Whilst I concur with Pound as he draws the correlation between Incarnation, Eucharist, and trauma, as I noted in Chapter One, Pound's theology is, I argue, too disembodied and abstract. I go beyond Pound in suggesting that the relationship between the Annunciation-Incarnation event, the Eucharist, and trauma is entirely dependent upon somatic memory, that is, on bodies and memories. One cannot speak of the Annunciation-Incarnation event without reference to Mary's body and Christ's body. The Eucharist

⁴² Pound, "Eucharist and Trauma," 193-4.

cannot, as I demonstrated in Chapter Six, be considered without reference to the physical, material body of Christ made bodily available to believers in the embodied experience of the reception of the eucharistic elements. Trauma is, fundamentally, a bodily experience concerned with bodily integrity and bodily memory. The body must not, I contend, be abstracted from theology.

Trauma and the Eucharist

The consequence of considering the Eucharist through the lens of the traumatic somatic memory of the Annunciation-Incarnation event is the revelation of the trauma at the heart of the human condition, at the heart of Christianity. The two ruptures that cause trauma for humans (the separation of the divine and the human, and the abstraction of the body from theology) are redeemed through the Annunciation-Incarnation event and its non-identical repetition in the celebration of the Eucharist.

What, then, can trauma theory offer to a re-envisioning of eucharistic celebration? Through seeing the Eucharist as focused on the Annunciation-Incarnation event of the Divine Son becoming enfleshed in earthly materials and understanding the Eucharist as a ritual repeating of this traumatic event, Mary is placed at the centre of the Eucharist celebration. As prototype Christian she offers the first earthly materials, her own womb, for the enfleshing of God. She does not do this only on behalf of women, she does it on behalf of all humankind. It would be tempting to suggest that, because of the significance of Mary in the origin of this trauma, all those offering eucharistic celebrations must be women, but this is hardly in line with the commensality of Jesus' table practices as I demonstrated in my consideration of priesthood in Chapter Four.

Thus, to truly re-enact this traumatic event, in the spirit of the unity of the sacrament so prevalent in the minds of the first Christians, the gender of the priest should be insignificant, in the sense that an ordained Christian of any gender can symbolically represent humanity in the offering of the earthly things to God.⁴³ The Annunciation-Incarnation event remembered and re-enacted in the Eucharist is intimately connected with the feminine body of Mary as well as with the masculine body of Christ and thus priesthood cannot be confined to the masculine body only.

Furthermore, one can argue that a sacramental liturgy can have many meanings which are given substance in the minds of those enacting the liturgy. The Eucharist can be a remembrance of Jesus' final meal, a sacrificial ritual or a re-enactment of the enfleshing of the Divine Son in earthly material. To place one meaning over and above another is to make that meaning an idol. For example, Elizabeth Johnson, in her discussion of the theological effects of the patriarchal symbol of God, noted:

[W]henver one image or concept of God expands to the horizon thus shutting out others, and whenever this exclusive symbol becomes literalized so that the distance between it and divine reality is collapsed, there an idol comes into being... Divine mystery is cramped into a fixed, petrified image.⁴⁴

The understanding of the Eucharist as sacrificial ritual has consistently been prioritised and idolised. It has given rise to an idolising of suffering and a pattern that insists on suffering as part of the Christian life, before redemption is achieved. Such an understanding of suffering does not promote a healthy psychological relation to pain, and not all situations are redeemed. A more positive understanding of the Eucharist is to see it as embodied non-identical

⁴³ See my more detailed analysis of this point in Chapter Four.

⁴⁴ Elizabeth A. Johnson, *She Who Is: The Mystery of God in Feminist Theological Discourse* (New York: The Crossroad Publishing Company, 1992), 39.

repetition of trauma and the perpetual uniting of humanity to Divinity. In this sense the celebration of the Eucharist is the way in which we recover from our trauma.

By shifting the focus from the traumatic event that is remembered in the Eucharist from the Cross to the event of the Annunciation-Incarnation, allows the opportunity to challenge the orthodoxy and validity of particular types of atonement theory, so often prescribed only for the weak, voiceless and powerless in society to maintain unjust social structures. We have already explored the idolisation of suffering, 'expected' redemption, and the damage such a singular emphasis can cause. Rather than continuing to see the body within the trauma of the Cross, the body must be relocated as the fundamental component of God's mode of interacting with humanity—the body is both the revelation of God through the flesh and blood of Jesus and his mother Mary, as well as being the way in which God relates to humankind—through body—ours and His. Whilst not wishing to remove the celebration of the Eucharist entirely from the death of Christ, the original traumatic event is, I argue, the one that ought to take precedence in our understanding and interpretation of the Eucharist. The origin event is not the violence of the Cross indicating that to be Christ-like one must suffer, but rather the Annunciation-Incarnation event indicating that to be Christ-like is to be reborn in the flesh of one's embodied experience and in the unity of the Spirit.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have examined the implications of considering the Eucharist through the lens of the traumatic somatic memory at the core of the Christian

faith. I have previously identified the Annunciation-Incarnation event as being the event at the heart of the Eucharist, non-identically repeated in each celebration of the sacrament. In this chapter I identified the way in which the Annunciation-Incarnation event, specifically Mary's experience, corresponds to the three ruptures of trauma. Having demonstrated that Mary's experience of the Annunciation-Incarnation event is traumatic and that embodied experience is key to sacraments, it follows that if the Eucharist is a non-identical repetition of the Annunciation-Incarnation event, then our embodied experience of the Eucharist must, itself, be traumatic. In this reading of the Eucharist, the Christ-event is not considered to be the Cross but rather the creative transformation of corporality evident in the Annunciation-Incarnation event. The earliest accounts of eucharistic celebration, such as that of the *Didache*, make no reference to the Cross, but abundant reference to the transforming power of God.

Having established that the Annunciation-Incarnation event is traumatic, I considered the way in which Mary can be understood as the archetype of all Christians and thus her trauma becomes our trauma. Mary, fortunately, recovers from her trauma, as I demonstrated in my analysis of her visit to Elizabeth and the words of her Magnificat. Mary is, I argue, not only a recovered trauma survivor but also part of our mode of recovery. I identified the two ruptures experienced by humanity: 1) the separation of the human and the divine; and 2) the theological abstraction of the body. Mary is a mode of recovery from these ruptures for us. Mary as mode of trauma recovery is aided by the trauma recovery evident in the liturgy drawing us through the establishment of bodily integrity, the construction of a trauma narrative, before reconnecting us with the wider society.

The implications of considering the Eucharist through the lens of the traumatic somatic memory at the core of the Christian faith is, as we have previously seen, to place Mary centre stage. Furthermore, such a reading of the Eucharist queries the prohibition of all but the masculine at the altar. Liturgies can have many meanings but central to all liturgies is the body, not merely the abstract body of the observing congregation, but the embodied participation of the individual believer who sings, kneels, prays, eats, drinks, shakes hands, and celebrates the Eucharist.

Chapter Eight

Beyond Chauvet: Reading Chauvet through the Hermeneutical Lens of Trauma

Introduction

In the preceding chapters I have demonstrated where and what the somatic memory at the heart of Christianity is—the traumatic memory of the Annunciation-Incarnation event. I have argued that it is this memory that is non-identically repeated in each celebration of the Eucharist. I have then explored the implications of connecting this memory to the celebration of the Eucharist. Destabilising the traditional narratives of priesthood, sacrifice, and Real Presence, the rupturing nature of trauma has created space for fresh narratives to come forth. These form the narrative foundations for the eucharistic theology I am proposing. Having considered, in Chapter Seven, the relationship between the Eucharist, trauma and Mary—one of the principal actors in the drama of the Annunciation-Incarnation event—I will, in this chapter, demonstrate the contribution this understanding of trauma and somatic memory can make to sacramental theology. Engaging with one of the most influential Catholic sacramental theologians of the twentieth Century—Louis-Marie Chauvet—I will show how trauma theology, and in particular my contribution of theological somatic memory, can open up new and fruitful pathways in sacramental theology.

The sacramental theology of the late twentieth century is marked by a move away from the metaphysical approach of the Scholastic tradition that has dominated the last millennium of sacramental thinking. These modern

sacramentalists take the physical experience of the sacraments seriously and seek to construct their theology from the starting point of embodied experience. Whilst very little research has been done on the relationship between trauma and sacrament,¹ the turn to the body is a move echoed by sacramental theologians. No contemporary Catholic theologian has done this more powerfully and remarkably than Louis-Marie Chauvet. Born in the devoutly Catholic region of the Vendée, France during the Second World War,² Chauvet was ordained in 1966 and “came of theological age in the context of post-conciliar thought.”³ Structuring his theology from the intersection of psychology and linguistics, Chauvet approached the task of re-imagining sacramental theology “from the perspective of the cultural mediations of ritual and symbol, rather than from the perspective of classical metaphysics.”⁴ As a result, Chauvet’s work has become the single-most important intervention of the last fifty years in the field of sacramental theology. Even those who see it as controversial recognise its value as an articulation of the limits of extant sacramental theology in expressing the sacramentality of the whole of the created order for the post-modern age.⁵

In this chapter I will seek to engage in a dialogue with Chauvet around some of the key themes of this thesis. With specific reference to my second research question, I will examine the consequences of considering the Annunciation-Incarnation event to be at the core of Christian somatic memory

¹ Exceptionally, see, for example, the work done by Pound, "Eucharist and Trauma," *Theology, Psychoanalysis, and Trauma*, and "The Assumption of Desire".

² Philippe Bordeyne, "Louis-Marie Chauvet: A Short Biography," in *Sacraments—Revelation of the Humanity of God: Engaging the Fundamental Theology of Louis-Marie Chauvet*, ed. Philippe Bordeyne and Bruce T. Morrill (Collegeville, Minnesota: A Pueblo Book, Liturgical Press, 2008), IX-XIV, IX.

³ Rhodora E. Beaton, *Embodied Words, Spoken Signs: Sacramentality and the Word in Rahner and Chauvet* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2014), 143.

⁴ *Ibid.* 144.

⁵ See, for example, the response of theologians to Chauvet’s work in Philippe Bordeyne and Bruce T. Morrill S. J., eds., *Sacraments: Revelation of the Humanity of God: Engaging the Fundamental Theology of Louis-Marie Chauvet* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical, 2008).

with a focus on the sacraments of the Church. Chauvet is a fruitful theologian to with whom to engage with regards to my project. His concept and understanding of the sacraments opens up to a critical reading of trauma and the relationship between body and memory. My reading of Chauvet will focus on his two most significant monographs. In 1986, Chauvet defended his dissertation in theology⁶ and it is this thesis that would be later published as *Symbole et sacrement. Une relecture sacramentelle de l'existence chrétienne*.⁷ Later, at the urging of Henri-Jérôme Gagey, Chauvet's successor in Sacramental Theology at the Institut Catholique in Paris, Chauvet published *The Sacraments: The Word of God at the Mercy of the Body*,⁸ a much shorter text designed to make his sacramental theology more widely accessible to the general public.⁹ This reflects Chauvet's ongoing pastoral concerns—he has never prioritised academic theology over his pastoral responsibility as a priest. These two texts encapsulate the bulk of Chauvet's thinking on sacramental theology with particular reference to the body and embodied experience.

I will engage with Chauvet's theology in two distinct ways. In the first part of this chapter I will seek to perform a parallel reading of Chauvet alongside some of the key themes of this thesis; in this sense I will be reading Chauvet through a wide lens. Such a reading will enable a consideration of Chauvet alongside trauma theology, and thus issues of gender and priesthood, and bodily memory. My second reading of Chauvet will refocus the lens to the horizon beyond his work. Here I will explore the shift in theological starting

⁶ Bordeyne, "Biography," XII.

⁷ Louis-Marie Chauvet, *Symbole Et Sacrement. Une Relecture Sacramentelle De L'existence Chrétienne* (Paris: Cerf, 1987). Translated into English as *Symbol and Sacrament: A Sacramental Reinterpretation of Christian Existence*.

⁸ *The Sacraments: The Word of God at the Mercy of the Body* (Bangalore, India: Claretian Publications, 2002). First published in French as *Les Sacrements: Parole De Dieu Au Risque Du Corps* (Paris Éditions Ouvrières, 1993).

⁹ Bordeyne, "Biography," XIII, n. 12.

points that Chauvet proposes from Incarnation to Pasch. Finally, I will go beyond Chauvet's Trinitarian theology of Pneumatology and Christology as I propose a different kind of Trinitarian sacramental theology. This movement beyond the boundaries of Chauvet's theology will enable an examination of the consequences of considering the Annunciation-Incarnation event to be at the core of Christian somatic memory.

The previous chapters of this thesis have been particularly focused on the Eucharist. In this chapter I will, as Chauvet does, take the Eucharist as my main point of exploration, but will also consider sacraments in general in relation to bodies, memories, and the experience of trauma.

PART ONE: A PARALLEL READING OF CHAUVET

Reading Chauvet's Sacramental Theology through the Hermeneutical Lens of Trauma

Chauvet was writing in a time before trauma theory had been applied to theology and he makes no mention of trauma, in the way in which it is developed in this thesis, in his work. He does, however, use the word trauma to refer to historical ecclesial events. For example, he characterised the eucharistic theological dispute of the "Berengar affair" as "[A] serious trauma in the conscience of the Church".¹⁰ Chauvet used the term in the pre-theory sense of a distressing or disturbing experience. However, if one reads *Symbol and Sacrament* with the principles of trauma theology in mind, one can see a remarkable sense in which trauma, in the theory sense of the term, is never far from the theology of Chauvet.

¹⁰ Chauvet, *Symbol and Sacrament*, 294.

Chauvet affirmed that symbolic death and regeneration are at work in all rites of initiation.¹¹ It is only through a breach (we could easily substitute in the word “rupture” here) that a subject comes to birth. Trauma, therefore, is constitutive of being. It is a necessary feature of sacraments. This is easy to see in the sacrament of Baptism as the initiate is baptised into the death and resurrection of Christ. In full immersion Baptism the believer descends below the water into their grave before being raised to new life in Christ. But, I suggest, this rupture is visible in other sacraments too.

I contend that all sacraments are traumatic in the sense that experiencing any of them causes a rupture within the individual recipient—they cause a breach or disturbance in the individual’s concept of ‘self’. Our inability to explain what happens in a sacrament (and thus the reliance on faith to know it has been accomplished) is testimony to the rupture in cognition and impotency of language that all sacraments cause. This rupture in cognition is inherent in all sacraments and, therefore, as I outline the traumatic nature of sacraments below, it should be taken as read that each sacrament causes a rupture in understanding and that the sacrament itself is fundamentally inexplicable. As events which both rupture identity and help to reconstruct identity, the sacraments (and here I am referring to the seven sacraments acknowledged by the Catholic and Orthodox Churches) also cause ruptures—breaches or disturbances—in time. So far, I have particularly focused on the Eucharist. This sacrament is still my (and Chauvet’s) primary focus because of its theological centrality in Vatican II’s articulation of the life of faith for the Christian, but I will, in this chapter, briefly demonstrate how all the sacraments of the Church can be viewed through the hermeneutical lens of trauma.

¹¹ Ibid. 98.

In the experience of Baptism the believer is called to share in the death and resurrection of Christ, marking them out as Christian and constituting them as part of the Body of Christ. An indelible sacramental character is conferred in Baptism and therefore it is a sacrament that needs only to be received once. Baptism has long been associated with death. For example, Robin Jensen, in her analysis of baptismal imagery in early Christianity noted that:

[M]any freestanding baptisteries were centralized and vaulted structures, often built as round or octagonal buildings. From the outside they would have looked like mausolea or martyrs' shrines. In addition to the mausoleum-like appearance of some of the baptistery buildings, many fonts were made to look like tombs or crosses.¹²

Jensen goes on to conclude that both baptisteries and mausolea were “shelters for a transitional ritual: one that moved from death to the afterlife.”¹³ In a full immersion Baptism the person being baptised is laid down in the grave, going under the ground, before they are physically raised up out of the death they have experienced by their fellow believers. They are raised up out of the water to new life, sharing in the resurrection of Christ. The baptised person is considered to ‘be’ something new when they are raised out of the water and thus the rupture in identity is clear. Time is also ruptured in the experiencing of death within the timescape of life as opposed to at the end of life. The future is brought into the present.

The sacrament of Confirmation also confers upon the recipient an indelible sacramental character and thus it, too, is only experienced once. The catechism of the Catholic Church indicates that Confirmation “imprints on the soul an *indelible spiritual mark*, the “character,” which is the sign that Jesus

¹² Robin Jensen, *Baptismal Imagery in Early Christianity: Ritual, Visual, and Theological Dimensions* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Academic, 2012), 160-1.

¹³ *Ibid.* 161.

Christ has marked a Christian with the seal of his Spirit.”¹⁴ Once again, this conferring of character—the character of Christ himself—causes a rupture in the sacramental recipient. They are, now, marked out as a Christian in a way they were not marked out before; their identity has been ruptured, breached, or disturbed.

The Eucharist is, I suggest, the most traumatic of sacraments. It is the only sacrament in which the believer’s body is physically ruptured by the consumption of the body and blood of Christ. In the reception of the Eucharist the believer experiences all three of the ruptures characteristic of trauma (body, cognition, and time). In consuming the Real Presence of Christ in the bread and wine the believer’s physical body is ruptured by the Body of Christ.¹⁵ Participation in the Eucharist constitutes the Body of Christ and thus the recipient is drawn into a new identity—that of Christ. The sharing of the sacramental meal is a foretaste of the eschatological banquet to be shared by all in heaven and thus time is ruptured as the future is brought into being in the present. As with all sacraments, the Eucharist defies understanding and the believer has to rely on faith to be assured on the effects of their participation. Cognition is ruptured.

For example, in an Annunciation-Incarnation reading of the Eucharist, the traumatic rupture is in the reception of the Body of Christ within the believer both physically and spiritually. The believer’s body is ruptured through their consumption of the Body and Blood of Christ—Christ is now present within them. The believer also suffers the trauma of the rupture of their own identity in

¹⁴ *Catechism of the Catholic Church with Modifications from the Editio Typica*, (New York: Doubleday, 1995), 364. Italics in the original text.

¹⁵ See my argument in Chapter Six regarding the Real Presence of Christ and Chapter Seven regarding the rupturing nature of the consumption of the eucharistic elements.

the reception of the Eucharist even as the receiving of the Eucharist helps to reform and reshape their identity at each new reception.

In this reading of the sacrament, the Eucharist becomes a ritual in which the believer is made new in each reception of the bread and wine. The event that is remembered in the embodied experience of the Eucharist is, as I demonstrated in Chapter Two, the Annunciation-Incarnation event. Rather than being focused solely on the Paschal death and resurrection of Christ, this non-identical repetition encompasses the whole of the Incarnation. The celebration of the Eucharist, therefore, is a generative, life-giving experience. This repeated regeneration constructs or re-members the ecclesial Body of Christ at each Eucharist. The ecclesial body is different each time because the bodies that join in the celebration and reception are different each time. Even if exactly the same group of people meet daily to celebrate the Eucharist, the ecclesial body they form each time is new. Their own bodies are changed from the day before—older, sicker, healthier. They are different because of what has been consumed and experienced in the interim. The ecclesial body of Christ, formed in the reception of the Body and Blood of Christ, is new at each celebration.

In the sacrament of Reconciliation, the penitent is at once the accuser, the accused, and the witness. The experience of this sacrament is traumatic in all three senses of rupture. The catechism indicates that in the experience of the sacrament God brings about a ‘spiritual resurrection’—once again death/life imagery is essential to understanding a sacrament. This imagery is reinforced in catechism through the suggestion that “in converting to Christ through penance and faith, the sinner passes from death to life.”¹⁶ It is clear that there is a need for a reconstruction of identity after a rupture of self in this sacrament. Unlike

¹⁶ *Catechism*, 410.

other sacraments, the sacrament of Reconciliation is not usually received in a corporate setting but rather has a vertical (God → person) dimension that results in horizontal (person → Church) outworking.

However, the vertical nature of this sacrament has been challenged in the development of whole-congregation rites. For example, Ladislav Orsy described a powerful and entirely genuine example of a whole congregation experience of the sacrament of Reconciliation in his consideration of general absolution.¹⁷ Reconciliation, therefore, has implications for the corporate Body of Christ. Furthermore, the sacrament of Reconciliation causes a rupture in time. The sacrament anticipates the judgement which all will face at the end of their earthly lives and brings a taste of that judgement into present day as the penitent repents and is forgiven for their sins. The empirical notion of time is ruptured as the future is brought into the present.

The concept of memory plays an important role in the sacrament of Reconciliation. It is the memory of an event or action that triggers the believer's realisation of their need for the sacrament. The confession of the believer forms the construction of a trauma narrative that includes the reliving of the trauma¹⁸ and enables a modification of memory. Not to forget—forgetting sin is not the point of the sacrament—but to put the memory into its right perspective, one that will allow the penitent to move forward. The memory of the event collides with the sacramental memory of the ecclesial body; the believer must choose the life offered by Christ over the destructive memory of sin.

The sacrament of Marriage is a traumatic rupturing of identity that sees two individuals become one new unit. They, as a couple, must seek to

¹⁷ Ladislav Orsy, "General Absolution: New Law, Old Traditions, Some Questions," *Theological Studies* 45 (1984), 676-89, at 687-88.

¹⁸ O'Donnell, "Help for Heroes: PTSD, Warrior Recovery, and the Liturgy," 2395.

reconfigure their identity after the experience of this rupture. Very often a celebration of the sacrament of marriage will include reference to the verse from Genesis: "Therefore a man leaves his father and his mother and clings to his wife, and they become one flesh."¹⁹ As a man and woman "become one flesh" so do they construct a new identity out of the rupturing of their old identities. This sacrament serves to reinforce the idea that trauma does not necessarily have to be couched in solely negative terms. Some traumatic ruptures may not be experienced as negative events and even some of those that are experienced negatively at first might come to have positive effects in the aftermath of recovery—a process known as post-traumatic growth.²⁰

The sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick is difficult to couch in terms of a traumatic theme. Like the sacrament of Reconciliation, it has more of a vertical nature than a corporate one, but again, like Reconciliation, the effects and outworkings of the sacrament seem to extend beyond the individual's relationship with God and into the corporate Body of Christ. The Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy affirms that all liturgical services, including the administration of the sacraments, are corporate in nature.²¹ This has "led to public liturgies of anointing for many sick people in the presence of a full congregation; often now practised for example during parish visitations by diocesan bishops."²² Indeed, Bruce Morrill, in his work on Pastoral Care of the Sick repeatedly noted the communal dimension of this sacrament, arguing that it affects those who are committed to the sick person, and the church community as a whole when it is celebrated. He concluded:

¹⁹ Genesis 2:24.

²⁰ See, for example, S. J. Lepore and T.A. Revenson, "Resilience and Posttraumatic Growth: Recovery, Resistance, and Reconfiguration," in *Handbook of Posttraumatic Growth: Research and Practice*, ed. L.G. Calhoun and R. G. Tedeschi (Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum, 2006), 24-36.

²¹ Second Vatican Council, "Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy". Paragraphs 26-7.

²² Archbishops' Council, *A Time to Heal: A Contribution Towards the Ministry of Healing* (London: Church House Publishing, 2000), 66.

[T]he rite...is also capable of gracing (transforming) the community with greater faith through their interaction with the sick and suffering, who become living witnesses for them of a crucial dimension of the Gospel, namely, that in the raising up of the lowly God's reign is known.²³

This sacrament seems to be designed entirely to bring relief from trauma rather than to effect trauma in some way. However, the sacrament of the Anointing of the sick, at least as it is understood within the Catholic Church, unites the sick person with the suffering of Christ, specifically with his Passion:

By the grace of this sacrament the sick person receives strength and the gift of uniting himself more closely to Christ's Passion: in a certain way he is *consecrated* to bear fruit by configuration to the Savior's redemptive Passion.²⁴

Such uniting with Christ serves again to rupture the identity of the sick person receiving the sacrament as well as rupturing the experience of time. In this case the past event of Christ's Passion is made present in the suffering of the sick person. The notion of time is ruptured further when the sacrament is conferred in anticipation of the person's death, bringing the future judgement of that person into their present reality.

The sacrament of Ordination is one of the three sacraments (alongside Baptism and Confirmation) that confers an indelible sacramental character and thus does not need to be received more than once. Once again, this sacrament is a rupture in identity. The recipient has a new identity as a member of a Holy Order after this sacrament. They have to reconfigure their sense of self in the aftermath of this traumatic sacrament. I will explore this notion of a new identity in the priesthood when I consider Chauvet's understanding of ordained ministry and its relationship to gender later in this chapter.

²³ Bruce T. Morrill, *Divine Worship and Human Healing: Liturgical Theology at the Margins of Life and Death* (Collegeville, Minnesota: Liturgical Press, 2009), 181.

²⁴ *Catechism*, 422. Italics in the original text.

Thus we can see that all the ecclesial sacraments are traumatic when considered through the hermeneutical lens of trauma. They rupture the ontological identity of the recipient. The recipient must reconstruct their identity in the aftermath of their sacramental experience. The sacraments of Baptism, Reconciliation, and Ordination confer upon the recipient an indelible spiritual character—the character of Christ. Sacraments both require and facilitate the reconstruction of identity as one who is a member of the Body of Christ. This identity construction is ongoing as each formation of the Body of Christ is newly constituted and different in each experience of the sacrament. Furthermore, all sacraments are traumatic in that they constitute a rupture of cognition and lead to an impotency of language because they are mysterious by their very nature. All sacraments are understood and experienced through faith. The effect of the outward signs point towards an inward experience that the believer is confident in through their faith.

Sacramental Rupture

If one considers the Annunciation-Incarnation event to be paradigmatic of all sacraments (as I will go on to argue later in this chapter), then the rupture in Mary's created being, the ontological rupture, becomes both paradigmatic and constitutive of all the sacramental ruptures experienced by the believer. As I demonstrated in Chapter Seven when considering trauma and the Eucharist, Mary's experience of the Annunciation-Incarnation event is a traumatic experience in which she must reconstruct her own sense of identity as one called and chosen by God even as she becomes part of the mediation between

God and humanity—she becomes part of the sacrament. Mary’s ontological rupture becomes our own ontological rupture when we receive the sacraments.

Rupture is required by mystery.²⁵ In order for a sacrament to mediate between mystery and cognition, there must be a rupture in which truth is allowed to breach and make itself known.²⁶ The bread of the Eucharist has to be broken in order to be shared.²⁷ Chauvet encourages us to conceive of theology from the starting point of the rupture.²⁸

All sacraments are ruptures, but Chauvet developed this further and declared that “[A] ritual always involves a symbolic rupture with the everyday, the ephemeral, the ordinary.”²⁹ He goes on to outline the liminal and borderline nature of ritual and the variety of ruptures it entails—ruptures in place, time, objects or materials, ritual agents, and language.³⁰ It is impossible to separate out this fundamentally traumatic experience of rupture from any of the sacraments—they are, after all, all rituals.

Chauvet unwittingly prefigured the key features of trauma theology when he noted that the subject only exists in a permanent becoming [repetition] and has to learn to be bereaved of its umbilical attachment to the Same [rupture]. Its task is to consent to be in truth by accepting the difference [recovery].³¹ For Chauvet, this is the consequence of reassigning humans to the symbolic order or to the mediation of language. But I have previously demonstrated that when humans become part of this order the trauma of rupture, and its repetitive nature, become essential elements of experience on the journey to recovery.

²⁵ Chauvet, *Symbol and Sacrament*, 399.

²⁶ This understanding of sacrament bears a striking resemblance to the methodology employed by trauma theologians who allow the rupture of trauma to become a constructive space for ‘doing’ theology.

²⁷ Chauvet, *Symbol and Sacrament*, 406.

²⁸ *Ibid.* 445.

²⁹ *Ibid.* 330.

³⁰ *Ibid.* 331.

³¹ *Ibid.* 99.

A rupture in cognition is the third of three ruptures that I have identified as being key to the experience of trauma (alongside ruptures in identity and in spacial-temporal location). For Chauvet, the Eucharist, as symbol, is drawn into a discourse of cognition.³² Cognition is ruptured in the experience of trauma and, I propose, the experience of the Eucharist is a traumatic experience. The Eucharist, then, is drawn into this ruptured cognition. The receiver ‘knows’ that they don’t ‘know’ what they are receiving. By faith they believe it to be the Body and Blood of Christ but it is a mysterious experience. The Eucharist, then, as symbol, is a mediation across this ruptured cognition, even as it serves to rupture the believer’s cognition as they receive the eucharistic elements. It indicates to the receiver that God is absent even as He is present in the bread and wine.³³ For Chauvet, the “symbol is an agent of alliance *through* being a revealer of identity.”³⁴ The rupturing of identity is the first identified effect of trauma on the trauma sufferer. If the celebration of the Eucharist is traumatic even as it provides healing from trauma,³⁵ then the symbol of the Eucharist helps to bridge the rupture in cognition and identity as it reveals the identity of God and of the believer in the context of the Church. The Eucharist reveals God as being one who is inscribed into corporality—Chauvet asked:

where is it more suitable than in these ritual activities called “sacraments” that God should enter into corporality, that God should ask to be inscribed somewhere in humanity, that God’s very glory should demand to be given flesh in the world?³⁶

The sacramental grace at work in the reception of the Eucharist, and indeed in the experience of all the sacraments, is the sacramental grace of symbolic efficacy. This grace brings forth the subject in relation to others in a common

³² Ibid. 127.

³³ Ibid. 405.

³⁴ Ibid. 130. Italics Chauvet’s own.

³⁵ For a more detailed explanation of this concept of the Eucharist causing trauma even as it heals trauma see Chapter Seven.

³⁶ Chauvet, *Symbol and Sacrament*, 491.

world.³⁷ To recover from trauma, one must find a way to reconnect with the society from which one has been distanced by trauma. Chauvet noted of this grace:

[W]e must say, then, that “sacramental grace’ is an *extra-linguistic* reality, but with this distinction, in its Christian form it is comprehensible only on the (intra-linguistic) model of the filial and brotherly and sisterly alliance established, *outside of us (extra nos)*, in Christ. Despite grammar, which should never be taken at face value, “grace” designates not an object we receive, but rather a symbolic work of *receiving oneself*: a work of “perlaboration” in the Spirit by which subjects receive themselves from God in Christ as sons and daughters, brothers and sisters.³⁸

This restoration of self and reconnection with others are distinctive features of trauma recovery and so whilst Chauvet is not writing a theology of trauma, it is clear that the effect of participation in sacraments has a part to play in the recovery from trauma.

Chauvet argued that understanding the corporality of sacraments is essential to understanding sacramental theology. Chauvet developed this theme in various ways, but significantly he posits that “the human being does not have a body, but is body.”³⁹ This body is unique and unrepeatable and is the place of “living words.”⁴⁰ Chauvet continued “[A]nd so, this unique body is “speaking” only because it is already spoken by a culture, because it is the recipient of a tradition and is tightly bonded with a world.”⁴¹ Here we have the image of the body with integrity, one that speaks and is spoken to, and is part of a world—tightly bonded. For Chauvet this status of the body is the natural state, but for the trauma survivor, this is the process of recovery back to the whole state. A trauma survivor needs to establish their bodily integrity and with it their sense of identity, alongside constructing a trauma narrative—speaking and

³⁷ Ibid. 140.

³⁸ Ibid. 140. Italics Chauvet’s own.

³⁹ Ibid. 149

⁴⁰ Ibid. 149 quoting C. Castoriadis, *Les carrefours du labyrinthe*, 36.

⁴¹ Ibid. 149-150.

being spoken—in the presence of a witnessing community, with the ultimate aim of reconnecting with society.

In this sense, trauma theology disrupts what is meant by natural. Healing from trauma is not defined through notions of health or otherwise.⁴² Healing from trauma is characterised by one's ability to reconnect with society and live as part of a community. We might regard this as being healthy in a more holistic sense. Here it is possible to draw, as Susannah Cornwall has done in her work on intersex bodies,⁴³ on Augustine's notion of the peaceable kingdom. Augustine's focus in his vision of the heavenly kingdom is of each believer functioning as part of the Body of Christ. He illustrates this idea as he explains:

[A]ll members and organs of the incorruptible body, which we now see to be suited to various necessary uses, shall contribute to the praises of God; for in that life necessity shall have no place, but full, certain, secure, everlasting felicity.⁴⁴

The recovery outlined in trauma theory and visible in the theology of Chauvet is an echo of Augustine's vision of the heavenly city. Wholeness, or healed-ness, is the recovery of each member of society of their ability to function within the wider social body.

The Christian identity is, for Chauvet, closely linked to text. He suggested that the corporate, social body of the Church experiences the text (in this case the Bible) as exemplary of its identity.⁴⁵ To be Christian is to relive the founding journey of Jesus (and through him the journey of the Hebrews) in "accordance with the scriptures."⁴⁶ Here we see the twin themes of trauma recovery—

⁴² The drive towards wholeness, health, and perfection is challenged in Sharon Betcher, *Spirit and the Politics of Disablement* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2007), 46f.

⁴³ Susannah Cornwall, *Sex and Uncertainty in the Body of Christ: Intersex Conditions and Christian Theology* (Oakville, CT: Equinox, 2010), 175-192.

⁴⁴ Augustine, "City of God," trans. Marcus Dods in *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers Vol. 2*, ed. Philip Schaff (Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Publishing Co., 1887). 22.30. Accessed online at <http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/120122.htm> on 01/03/16.

⁴⁵ Chauvet, *Symbol and Sacrament*, 208.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.* 204.

establishment of identity and integrity alongside the construction of narrative—identity and text, body and memory, are closely linked.

The third element of trauma recovery is reconnection with society and, very often, includes the trauma survivor making the trauma experienced into a gift to the world. For Chauvet, this is the process of “*becoming eucharist*”⁴⁷—a process which incorporates all of the aspects of Christian identity. In Chauvet’s schema, what begins in the Scriptures, is experienced in the Sacraments, then culminates in Ethics. The Eucharist, for example, draws the believer through the liturgy of the word, into the reception of the sacrament, in order that the believers might be dismissed to reconnect with the world. Christian identity is indistinguishable from trauma recovery.

Sacraments are, therefore, a rupture in time. They are experienced in the present as they are both a memorial of past events and infused with an eschatological hope for the future. They are witnesses of a God who is never finished with coming.⁴⁸ Is it possible, then, to read Chauvet’s perspective on the Eucharist as being paradigmatic of trauma? I think his work on the Eucharist provides us with a model of both trauma experience and trauma recovery. In this sense, one of the consequences of considering the Annunciation-Incarnation event to be at the core of Christian somatic memory, is not simply to place the emphasis on bodies and memories when one considers sacraments, but furthermore to acknowledge that, for Chauvet’s sacramental theology, at least, trauma is the unwitting paradigm of the sacraments. If sacraments are, in their very nature, ruptures, then our experience of the sacraments must also be rupturing, and therefore traumatic. This exploration of the relationship between

⁴⁷ Ibid. 280. Italics Chauvet’s own.

⁴⁸ Ibid. 555.

sacrament and rupture constitutes a significant element in the construction of a trauma narrative, indeed it shapes how we remember such experiences.

Bio-Theology: Chauvet and the Fleshliness of the Annunciation-Incarnation Event

Chauvet proves to be an unexpected ally in my argument for considering the Annunciation-Incarnation event from the starting point of the flesh.⁴⁹ Here, once again, bodies and memories come together as the relationship between the eucharistic Body of Christ and the physical first century body of Jesus is examined. For example, the history of Jesus (not the 'Historical Jesus') and his connection to the Hebrew people, a connection which is both spiritual and material, is significant for Chauvet. He wrote that:

[F]or them [Christians], to live is to relive the founding journey of Jesus, their Lord, (and through him of the people of Israel because this journey has a Christian meaning only as accomplished "according to the Scriptures").⁵⁰

Christians today are connected, through Jesus, to the people of Israel and the history of the Hebrews. This is accomplished through his own connection to the people of Israel through his mother, Mary.

Chauvet developed the significance of history further in noting that grace is finally expressed in the "*historical and henceforth glorious body of Christ*."⁵¹ It is not then, primarily, our own history for which we give thanks in the Eucharist, but rather "for a history that is radically other and past; but in relating this during the ritual anamnesis, we show that we recognize this apparently other history to be our very own."⁵² In celebrating the Eucharist, we are grafted into a history

⁴⁹ For the full development of this argument see Chapter Six.

⁵⁰ Chauvet, *Symbol and Sacrament*, 204.

⁵¹ *Ibid.* 279. Italics Chauvet's own.

⁵² *Ibid.* 279.

that is not ours, and yet becomes ours, through our participation in the sharing of one bread and one cup. The action of sharing these elements makes the recipients into the one body of Christ, but furthermore, the act of sharing in the Body of Christ, draws the recipients into a bodily connection that extends right back through humanity.

In a post-holocaustic turn, this creation of genealogical unity and bodily memory through the celebration of the Eucharist, draws Christians into an intense solidarity with Israel. The people of Israel, as a nation-body, suffered a traumatic experience in the events of the Holocaust. This body of Israel is, through the Marian body, our body too—without ceasing to be the body it is, in and of itself. Understanding the radical unity offered by the consideration of this bodily connection allows a re-envisioning of body Israel, and the memory of this body, which is not ours, becomes ours through the sharing of the one bread and one cup, the drawing into the memories of both the Christic and Marian bodies.

For Chauvet, bodies and the corporate body are important. Faith cannot be lived “outside the body, outside the group, outside tradition.”⁵³ When one consents to faith, one is consenting to more than just the individual body; the social body of the Church, with all its history and memory, is part of what it means to be a person of faith. Chauvet argued that the fact that there are sacraments:

tells us that the body, which is the whole word of humankind, is the unavoidable mediation where the Word of a God involved in the most human dimension of our humanity demands to be inscribed in order to make itself understood. Thus, it tells us that faith requires a *consent to the body*, to history, to the world which makes it a fully human reality.⁵⁴

I suggest that faith, through and in participation in the sacraments, does not just affirm the significance of the individual body as it both receives and becomes

⁵³ Ibid. 376.

⁵⁴ Ibid. 376.

the Body of Christ. Faith also draws us into a memory and a world. The memory into which it draws us is the memory of God's involvement with humankind through the Jewish people, culminating in the person of Christ. It is both a spiritual and a genetic memory that believers are drawn into by faith.

Chauvet asserted that the concrete history of Jesus "seen as similar to and different from the understanding that his brothers and sisters in nation, culture, and religion had of God and of the relation of humankind to God"⁵⁵ is essential to understanding Jesus' death and resurrection. I suggest that this concrete history, of which fleshly relationship is only one aspect, is essential to understanding the Annunciation-Incarnation event just as much as understanding the death and resurrection events. Chauvet indicated:

[I]f it is in concrete historical existence, with its excess of evil, that such a scandal [the death of Christ] is above all embodied, in return, it is in the sacramental celebrations that it finds its major symbolic expression. For, being ritualistic activities, they stage human corporality as such through its numerous expressive possibilities: postures; gestures; voice either speaking or singing, beseeching or rejoicing. And in this way, they "epiphanize" the threefold body—social, historical, and cosmic—which dwells in the believing subject: the Church-as-body (consider the constant "we" of the liturgies and the signification of this "we" as a particular but integral realization of the universal Church); the body of this Church's history and tradition (consider the words and actions repeated and passed down from generation to generation and interpreted as coming from the apostolic tradition); and finally the body of the universe as creation (consider the symbolic representation of the latter through several of its elements such as bread and wine, water, oil, light, and so forth).⁵⁶

As I demonstrated in Chapter Six, one of the benefits of considering the Annunciation-Incarnation event from the perspective of materiality is that it clearly reveals the effects of receiving the Eucharist—that it intimately integrates the recipient into the whole of human history. Is this not very like Chauvet's threefold body that is, of course, individual even as it is social, historical, and

⁵⁵ Ibid. 488.

⁵⁶ Ibid. 491.

cosmic? It is in the reception of the Eucharist that this threefold body comes into being. As such, we see that when the Annunciation-Incarnation event is placed at the core of Christian somatic memory the individual who receives the Eucharist in non-identical repetition of this original event is transformed into a new body with a new memory. It is in the reception of the Eucharist, therefore, that we are born again.

Gender: What about the Priest?

One of the more striking observations about Chauvet's work is that throughout *Symbol and Sacrament* he actually has relatively little to say about ordained ministry. He clearly believes ordained ministry to be important but seeks to balance its significance against his own understanding of the priesthood of all believers. In one of the first references to priesthood (which occurs almost half way through the book) he suggests that if one applies the term 'priesthood' to Christ then one cannot apply it anywhere else—there is no point of comparison to be drawn. He notes: "Christians have no other Temple than the glorified body of Jesus, no other altar than his cross, no other priest and sacrifice than his very person: *Christ is their only possible liturgy.*"⁵⁷

Concerned with ensuring that we do not fall into the error of understanding the Eucharist to be a sacrifice (in Old Testament terms), Chauvet is similarly concerned that we do not think of priests as mediators between humankind and God as they were in the Hebrew Temple.⁵⁸ It is important that we keep in mind the radical transformation of priesthood that the writer of the Letter to the Hebrews outlines for the early church. Chauvet, therefore, asserts

⁵⁷ Ibid. 250. Italics Chauvet's own.

⁵⁸ Ibid. 308. See Chapter Four for the development of my own argument for developing an understanding of the role of priests independent from their Old Testament counterparts.

that a “minister is the “sacramental” expression of the identity of the Church as a community where the unique and exclusive priestly activity of Christ takes flesh.”⁵⁹ Although Chauvet does go on later to speak briefly of the priest’s role as *in persona Christi*⁶⁰ this is not the prominent image of ordained ministry that he asserts within the text.

To conceive of the ordained priest as the sacramental expression of the identity of the Church as a community, as Chauvet does, is to see the primary role of the priest as a representative of the church community. This is precisely the image of priesthood I posited in Chapter Four. By choosing this understanding of priesthood, Chauvet has opened the way for the ordination of people who are other than male. Indeed, throughout the whole text Chauvet never refers to gender in relation to the priesthood or issues of ordination at all. By emphasising the distance between the Eucharist and the priests of the Christian Church from the sacrifices and priests of the Hebrew Temple, I propose that Chauvet has minimised (or even eliminated) the prohibitions of purity and tradition that would have traditionally prevented women from being ordained. If, as Chauvet has posited, the priest’s primary role is to act as representative of the Church then, I suggest, any ordained person, male, female, transgender, intersex, married, single, straight or homosexual can perform this role. The priest must also act, on occasion, *in persona Christi*, but thanks to Chauvet’s succinct distancing of the Eucharist from the sacrifice of the Old Testament, one cannot prohibit women (and other excluded groups) on the grounds of impurity or tradition. The Eucharist is not, therefore a sacrifice in this sense. It is, I argue, the non-identical repetition of the Annunciation-Incarnation

⁵⁹ *Ibid.* 308.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.* 471.

event, the oblation of the Church, given in mutuality, and as such can be offered by any and all, ordained, bodies.

It is possible to conceive of Chauvet's lack of discussion of issues of gender as being a limitation of his text, but I argue that it can also be conceived of as a gift. Chauvet has succeeded in presenting a vision of the Eucharist, of sacraments in general, and of the priesthood, as being removed from issues of gender. Not because the issues are not important, but rather because the celebration of the sacraments is so important that one must seek to celebrate them fully, corporately, and corporally. This is what is important—not the gender of the celebrant.

Whilst this is a gift to the contemporary church, it is also a limitation of his project. For Chauvet, the bodies who perform the sacramental rites of the Church don't really appear to be embodied. These bodies are speaking bodies, but they don't seem to be living bodies, real bodies. Indeed, it seems as if the vision of a body offered to us by Chauvet, far from being welcoming of all genders, is actually a form of androgyny in disguise. For example, Sigridur Gudmarsdottir's criticism of apophatic theology would be easy to appropriate to Chauvet's theology when she outlined that:

[F]or feminist theology, *via negativa* with its endless spirals of language is a tricky road. For women who are rising as speaking subjects in language after ages of silence and repression, such a disclosure of the vulnerability and wiles of language may feel profoundly disheartening.⁶¹

The silence on gender that Chauvet offered is unexpected for a theologian who seeks to take the embodied experience of sacraments seriously. On the one hand it seems inexcusable, particularly from a feminist perspective. But, on the other hand, I maintain that it is possible to see this unspeaking of gender on

⁶¹ Sigridur Gudmarsdottir, "Feminist Theology and the Sensible Unsayings of Mysticism," in *Apophatic Bodies: Negative Theology, Incarnation, and Relationality*, ed. Chris Boesel and Catherine Keller (New York: Fordham University Press, 2010), 273-85, at 283. Italics Gudmarsdottir's own.

Chauvet's behalf as a gift. The priest is the representative of the church first and foremost. The gender of that priest is not set in stone, nor in text. This, I propose, is a consequence of considering the Annunciation-Incarnation event to be at the core of Christian somatic memory. In liberating the Eucharist from its monolithic focus on the Cross of Christ, so are the limits on who is able to celebrate this sacrament lifted. Chauvet's unspeaking allows the construction of a narrative of trauma that has the potential for post-traumatic growth. The prohibition of the ordination of women can be removed as the new narrative, the new way of remembering, allows for a new way of celebration the Eucharist.

PART TWO: BEYOND CHAUVET – REFOCUSING THE LENS

In this second section of my examination of Chauvet's approach to sacraments through the hermeneutical lens of trauma, I will demonstrate that a traumatic approach to the sacraments, in particular the Eucharist, results in a Trinitarian, holistic sacramental theology. This, I propose, is the kind of theology Chauvet was seeking to put forth but, I argue, his rejection of the Thomistic focus on the hypostatic union in favour of a focus on the Pasch of Christ as the paradigm for the Eucharist, results in an atomised approach to the sacraments. The consequence of considering the Annunciation-Incarnation event to be the trauma at the heart of Christian somatic memory results in a sacramental theology full of Trinitarian life.

Pasch vs Incarnation: an [A]Thomistic Error?

The central aspect of Chauvet's thesis is his attempt to distance himself from what he perceives to be the erroneous starting part of Scholastic sacramental

theology. Chauvet re-reads the sacramental theology of Aquinas and rejects Aquinas' approach to the sacraments. Chauvet understands Aquinas as proposing the sacraments as "the prolongation down to us of the "holy humanity" of Christ."⁶² The questions about the hypostatic union and the sacraments became, therefore, methodological ones:

The presupposition was that one knew in advance all about God and one applied this representation to Christ through the concept of his divine nature. Thus, once the question of the hypostatic union was elucidated, the question of the sacraments, which are the prolongation of the redeeming incarnation, was solved.⁶³

Aquinas' beginning point of the hypostatic union to understand the sacrament of the Eucharist is, for Chauvet, simply the wrong place to start. The beginning point of theology, which is, after all, human attempts to understand God, cannot be the Scholastic metaphysical concept of the hypostatic union. For Chauvet the remedy is to move this starting point to the Pasch of Christ. Chauvet attempts to show that in order to read the corporality of the sacraments into theology one must begin from the suffering, death, and resurrection of Christ. However, the whole of *Symbol and Sacrament* is infused with the language of the Annunciation-Incarnation event. Chauvet couches this language in resurrection overtones, but, I argue, is not wholly successful in showing the pre-eminence of a claim to the Pasch over the Incarnation as the focal point of the Eucharist.

Chauvet is, of course, right. The abstract and lifeless concept of the Scholastic, metaphysical hypostatic union given by Aquinas doesn't offer the kind of resources for a theology of corporality that Chauvet believes are necessary. But, I propose, a reading of the hypostatic union as part of the full Annunciation-Incarnation event offers the space for bodies that Chauvet is

⁶² Chauvet, *The Sacraments*, 155.

⁶³ *Ibid.* 156.

seeking. Such a reading locates the hypostatic union as only one aspect of the full sense of the Incarnate Christ, profoundly connecting body and memory. This is the starting point of theology.

Chauvet believes that by taking the Pasch of Christ as the beginning point of sacramental theology, rather than the Incarnation (or hypostatic union), he is able to offer a sacramental theology that avoids the pitfall of an over-emphasis on Christology at the expense of consideration of the Trinity. By moving away from this Scholastic, metaphysical, Thomistic Incarnational departure point, Chauvet argues that a Paschal approach to sacramental theology reveals the sacraments as “the major expression...of the embodiment (historical/eschatological) of the risen One in the world through the Spirit, embodiment whose “fundamental sacrament” is the church visibly born at Pentecost.”⁶⁴ Chauvet does suggest that the Pasch should read in its full extension (taking the Annunciation-Incarnation event and the life of Jesus into consideration as well), but the result is predominantly a focus on the Easter events. For example, Chauvet writes:

when one speaks of the paschal mystery of Jesus, the Christ, one must not isolate either his death or his resurrection like mere separate moments. The scope of his death can be understood theologically only if it is taken as the totality of his life: he “died-for” because he unceasingly “lived-for.”⁶⁵

Whilst not wanting to isolate the death of Christ from his resurrection, Chauvet’s approach to sacramental theology results in an isolation of the Incarnation and the life of Christ from the Pasch. The scope of Christ’s death can only be understood theologically if it is taken in the context of not only his earthly life but also his Trinitarian life. The death of Christ and his subsequent resurrection is without its full significance if it is not understood in the context of the

⁶⁴ Ibid.160.

⁶⁵ Ibid. 159.

perichoretic sacrifice that was the Annunciation-Incarnation event.⁶⁶ Chauvet is right that ‘he “died-for” because he unceasingly “lived-for”’ but we can go beyond Chauvet and suggest that he “lived-for” because he, in his Trinitarian relationship, first and foremost “gave-himself-for” in the Annunciation-Incarnation event.

Chauvet proposes that this Pasch-oriented move is what allows a more fully developed Pneumatology to be realised in relation to sacramental theology. For Chauvet, the focus on the Incarnation as the starting point of sacramental thinking, prioritises the historic moment of the Incarnation and the historical Jesus, to the detriment of the Spirit. By beginning with the Pasch, we allow, Chauvet argues, our focus to be drawn to the resurrection and the ascension—the living Christ who gifts the Spirit to the infant Church. Our focus is on the active presence of the risen Christ.⁶⁷ Rhodora Beaton, in her analysis of Chauvet’s sacramental departure point, argued that this leads to a more thorough Trinitarian understanding of the sacraments. She outlined Chauvet’s conclusions when she noted:

[T]o understand the sacrament as “living memorial” that affects the present, God’s continuous action is required. This action is the Spirit, “the personal name traditionally given to what, *of God*, gives present and future vigor to such a memorial of the past.” The living memorial is the paschal mystery, which, for Chauvet, includes the incarnation, the historical life of Jesus, Jesus’ death and resurrection, the ascension, Pentecost, the time of the church, the sacraments, and the Parousia.⁶⁸

Beaton asserts that the paschal mystery, for Chauvet, stretches wide across the life of Christ both historically and in his resurrection.

However, I argue that in practice, Chauvet is almost entirely focused on the Pasch alone. For example, Chauvet argued that “[I]n the liturgy, the Spirit

⁶⁶ I examined the concept of *perichoretic* sacrifice in detail in Chapters Five and Six.

⁶⁷ Chauvet, *The Sacraments*, 162.

⁶⁸ Beaton, *Embodied Words*, 157. Quoting from Chauvet, *Symbol and Sacrament*, 510. Italics Chauvet’s own.

clearly appears as the *agent of the Word's burial in the flesh*.⁶⁹ The moment at which the Word was buried into flesh, into the body, is a key moment of the Annunciation-Incarnation event. To argue such would be entirely logical within this phase of Chauvet's exploration of the role of the Spirit within the sacraments. But Chauvet is Pasch focused and so the original burial of the Word in flesh is passed over for a more paschal moment and so he goes on to write "more precisely, after Easter as the agent of the *disappearance* of the Risen One into the flesh, which is thus sacramental, of humanity and the world."⁷⁰

The value, for Chauvet, of the move from the Scholastic focus on the hypostatic union to an emphasis on the paschal mystery is that it "allows him to shift his sacramental focus from the historical particularity of the word proclaimed in the past to the historical particularity of the word active in the present."⁷¹ Chauvet does this, perhaps, in search for a common perspective on the Eucharist that is acceptable to all those involved in ecumenical dialogue. The Pasch becomes, therefore, the paradigmatic Pneumatological mediation. I disagree with this characterisation. The Pasch is an historical event, but I propose that the Pasch is not paradigmatic but rather symptomatic of mediation between divinity and humanity. I argue that the moment of "living memorial" is the whole of the Annunciation-Incarnation event in which the action and relationship of the Triune God can be perceived and from which all subsequent events flow.

I propose that Chauvet's sacramental theology does not fully realise its move towards the Trinity. Chauvet's sacramental theology is firstly

⁶⁹ Chauvet, *Symbol and Sacrament*, 526. Italics Chauvet's own.

⁷⁰ Ibid. 526. Italics Chauvet's own.

⁷¹ Beaton, *Embodied Words*, 159.

Christological and secondly Pneumatological. But the two are not brought into dialogue with each other, nor does Chauvet attempt to present a cohesive Trinitarian theology that draws all three divine persons together—in fact, I argue, his theology atomises the Trinitarian body. Furthermore, his isolation of the Pasch from the Annunciation-Incarnation event atomises his sacramental theology. Similarly, in critiquing the Christo-centric approaches of other theologians, Chauvet suggested that one consider the Spirit as well. He offered an analysis of *The Son and the Father*⁷² followed by an exploration of *Sacramental Discourse and Pneumatological Discourse*⁷³ but the two are not drawn together. The Pneumatological approach is laid alongside the Christological one. But I suggest that adding Pneumatology to Christology, whilst a welcome manoeuvre, does not allow Chauvet to present a fully Trinitarian sacramental theology.

This atomistic approach is evident throughout Chauvet's sacramental theology and, indeed, at its very heart. Chauvet offers a symbolic model of understanding the sacraments that relies heavily on the sacraments as language acts. Kimberley Belcher summarised his approach:

Chauvet uses a symbolic model to explain sacramental efficacy: human beings attain their identities through symbolic behaviour, that is, through language. Therefore, sacramental efficacy is a special case of the efficacy of language; in sacraments, God speaks a grace-filled word to human beings.⁷⁴

A crucial element to Chauvet's argument is his analysis of the second Eucharistic Prayer (henceforth EPII). This analysis "establishes the dynamic of sacramental communion between God and human persons, then accepted as

⁷² Chauvet, *The Sacraments*, 162. Italics Chauvet's own.

⁷³ Ibid. 164. Italics Chauvet's own.

⁷⁴ Kimberly Hope Belcher, *Efficacious Engagement: Sacramental Participation in the Trinitarian Mystery* (Collegeville, Minnesota: A Michael Glazier Book, Liturgical Press, 2011), 34.

characteristic of all sacrament.”⁷⁵ However, as Belcher notes in her critique of Chauvet’s language act model, Chauvet’s analysis of EPII effectively isolates it from its ritual and performative context and removes it from the body.⁷⁶ She concluded:

[T]he language act model reinscribes the neoscholastic, Western hierarchy that privileges the word or form, the intelligible part of the sacramental ritual, above the embodied material and behavioral parts. Sacramental “meaning” then seems intellectual and obscure, accessible only to the knowledgeable elite. The model tends to suppress the exterior, material, and bodily parts of the rite in favor of a sacramental reading based solely on the text, like Chauvet’s interpretation of EPII. This minimizes the performative nature of the rite and jeopardizes our appreciation of the ritual experience.⁷⁷

Whilst I would suggest that Chauvet has a more positive approach to bodies and embodied experience than Belcher allows him in her critique, the atomisation of text from rite is problematic, particularly for a theologian seeking to distance himself and his theology from the Scholastic, metaphysical schools of sacramental thought. In contrast to this atomistic approach, I argue that it is helpful to begin with Chauvet’s embodied sacramental theology before going beyond his work into a holistic consideration of Trinitarian sacramental theology.

Perhaps a more Trinitarian approach to language and consecration in the celebration of the Eucharist would prioritise the epiclesis over the Words of Institution? In recognising the transformative power of the Spirit in the consecration of the elements at the moment of the petitionary prayers of the priest rather than in the *in persona Christi* words of the celebrant, one would simultaneously attribute the essential activity of the Eucharist to the Spirit whilst

⁷⁵ Ibid. 37. See Chauvet, *Symbol and Sacrament*, 280-1.

⁷⁶ Belcher, *Efficacious Engagement*, 37.

⁷⁷ Ibid. 43.

also challenging the language act models that privileges word over embodied experience.⁷⁸

Such a holistic consideration would take the Pasch to be one aspect of the embodied, lived experience of Christ—the Annunciation-Incarnation event. If bodies matter, both ours and Christ’s, then His embodied experience cannot be negated, nor can it be reduced to merely the last few hours of His life—no more than any of our own lives can be reduced to one event or experience. So when Jesus instructs his disciples to ‘do this in memory of me’ the memory of Jesus is not just his actions at the last supper, nor the yet-to-come death on the Cross, but rather in memory of a whole life lived. Thus, the Body of Christ is not only His resurrection body, but also His dead body, His living body, His infant body, His adult body, His Marian body.⁷⁹

The holistic approach to theology that I recommend, in particular sacramental theology, bears much in common with the approach of Cyril of Alexandria that I presented in Chapter Three. Here I suggested that, for Cyril, the body is of primary significance. His theology shows an overriding theme of bodily unity and a holistic approach to objective reality. For both Cyril and Chauvet, bodies matter. For Cyril though, the significance of the body leads to a drive towards holistic unity both in terms of the various bodies involved, not only in the Nestorian controversy, but also in his theology. The issue of the Incarnation, for Cyril, cannot be considered outside of a holistic consideration of theology. The Incarnation is not separate from the Eucharist, or Soteriology, or Pneumatology. The body of theology is, in Cyrillian thought, united. This is why,

⁷⁸ I discussed the relationship between the Words of Institution, the epiclesis, and the consecration of the eucharistic elements in Chapter Two.

⁷⁹ I explored the relationship between the Marian body and the body of Christ fully in Chapter Six.

I argue, a sacramental theology that begins with Cyril's embodied holistic theology is more helpful than the hypostatic union proposed by Aquinas.

It is this same holistic approach that I propose we employ as we seek to go beyond Chauvet, through the gateway opened up by his embodied sacramental theology, in our consideration of sacraments. This is the consequence of considering the Annunciation-Incarnation event to be at the core of Christian somatic memory. The Pasch is not removed from the body of experience that makes the person of Christ. The Eucharist is not a reminder only of the last few hours of Jesus' life. The sacraments are not Christo-centric but rather let us see them holistically as Trinitarian.

A Trinitarian Approach to Sacramentality

In his later, shorter treatise on the sacraments, Chauvet posits that the sacraments are “the ecclesial mediations of the exchange between humanity and God.”⁸⁰ Having outlined his theory of symbolic exchange, Chauvet is able to suggest that the sacraments are the language of the church; they function as language does in mediating between the body speaking and the body spoken to. In this sense, the sacraments are an exchange between two subjects—between divinity and humanity.

In Chapter Five I posited a new notion of sacrifice, that of a reciprocal self-offering. I argued that this is the understanding of sacrifice demonstrated to us in the Triune God and seen, paradigmatically, in the Annunciation-Incarnation event. In Chapter Six I proposed that we can understand the Trinity in terms of *perichorēsis*—mutual, indwelling interrelationship. I will draw both of

⁸⁰ Chauvet, *The Sacraments*, p. 123.

these ideas together in contemplation of the sacraments and offer a Trinitarian sacramental theology that goes beyond Chauvet's "mediations of the exchange between humanity and God."

If sacrifice is, in the model I have offered, a reciprocal self-offering, fundamentally Trinitarian in its nature, then we can view all sacrifice through the paradigm of *the* Trinitarian sacrifice. This is not the death of Christ on the Cross but rather the Annunciation-Incarnation event. As Kilmartin noted:

sacrifice is not, in the first place, an activity of human beings directed to God and, in the second place, something that reaches its goal in the response of divine acceptance and bestowal of divine blessing on the cultic community. Rather, sacrifice in the New Testament understanding—and thus in its Christian understanding—is, in the first place, the self-offering of the Father in the gift of his Son, and in the second place the unique response of the Son in his humanity to the Father, and in the third place, the self-offering of believers in union with Christ [through the power of the Holy Spirit] by which they share in his covenant relation with the Father.⁸¹

This connection between Trinity, Incarnation, and sacrifice is drawn more sharply still in the work of Kathryn Tanner. Tanner, in her short systematic theology, notes that one should not associate the Incarnation with only one moment of Jesus' life—his birth. Rather, the Incarnation is "the underlying given that makes all that Jesus does and suffers purifying, healing and elevating."⁸² She follows, as I do, the thinking of Cyril of Alexandria when she concludes that the sacrifice of the Cross is "a sacrifice of incarnation."⁸³ Her subsequent analysis of the relationship between the three Persons of the Trinity indicates that this action, this death of Christ, is, as all Trinitarian actions are, the action of the three Persons together.⁸⁴

⁸¹ Kilmartin, *The Eucharist in the West*, 381-2.

⁸² Kathryn Tanner, *Jesus, Humanity and the Trinity: A Brief Systematic Theology* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2001), 28.

⁸³ *Ibid.* 29. Referencing Cyril of Alexandria, "On the Unity of Christ," 58.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.* 40.

This paradigm of Trinitarian sacrifice then becomes the model for understanding the interrelationship present within the Trinity as well as the way in which the Triune God is in relationship with humanity. It becomes the paradigm for understanding the sacraments. A *perichoretic* approach to sacramental theology cannot be separated from the concept of mutual and reciprocal self-offering at the heart of the Trinity.

Sacraments are, as Chauvet has proposed, an exchange between divinity and humanity—we see this exchange modelled in the Trinity, beginning first with the Annunciation-Incarnation event. Here we see a *perichoretic*, self-offering, reciprocal, loving sacrifice. It is this event that allows us to understand the Pasch—Christ offers himself as the Father has done, in the power of the Spirit—made possible only because of the Trinitarian sacrifice of the Annunciation-Incarnation event. Our response, made available to us (mediated) through the sacraments, is to give ourselves back to the Triune God—a reciprocal self-offering modelled on the paradigmatic Trinitarian sacrifice. Just as in the Annunciation-Incarnation event, bodies are the modes of mediation—both Mary’s and Christ’s as the Incarnate Word—so too in sacraments are our bodies mediatory. Our bodies are the only way of experiencing, participating in, and receiving the sacraments. It is in our bodies that memory occurs. The offering we make back to the Triune God is of our own embodied being. The language of the sacraments is, therefore, always Trinitarian, couched in this understanding of sacrifice. If sacraments are an exchange between humanity and Divinity, then they are both the places where we lose ourselves and where we find ourselves—they are sites of both trauma and trauma recovery.

In the initiatory sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist, we are united with Jesus Christ and incorporated into the very life of God.⁸⁵ In these sacraments we are drawn into the *perichoretic* relationship of the Trinity. Baptised in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, confirmed by God in the Body of Christ through the power of the Spirit, participating in the eucharistic self-offering of Christ, through the Spirit, to the Father, our experience of these sacraments is, at its very heart, Trinitarian. These sacraments are not Christological experiences to which the Spirit is added on as an optional extra. By their very nature, these sacraments are embodied. We can have no experience of the Triune God that is not mediated through our own bodies.

I propose that all the sacraments can be understood as fluid movements of mutual self-offering. All sacraments are Spirit enabled self-offering responses to the self-offering of the Triune God. As “ecclesial mediations of the exchange between humanity and God”⁸⁶ we can use the metaphor of a kiss to understand the embodied nature of sacraments more fully. A kiss is driven by the desire each participant has for the other. Initiated by one lover, the kiss draws the other in. The kiss is mutual—it flows back and forth between the two lovers, each responding to the other, each offering themselves within the kiss, each penetrating the other. The kiss, in this sense, is both a celebration of love and a declaration of love. It is both giving and receiving. So, too, is the sacrament. Initiated by the Lover God, it draws us into intimate union but we cannot be passive. We must celebrate this sacrament and be actively responsive. As we receive the gift of the Triune God, so we must offer ourselves back in reciprocal,

⁸⁵ Catherine Mowry LaCugna, *God for Us: The Trinity and Christian Life* (San Francisco: Harper, 1991), 297.

⁸⁶ Chauvet, *The Sacraments*, 123.

mutual giving. To be 'sealed with a kiss,' then, is to be sealed in the mutual interpenetration, participating in the exchange between humanity and the Triune God.

What, then, is the value of such a Trinitarian sacramental theology? The consequence of considering the Annunciation-Incarnation event to be at the core of Christian somatic memory is to open up a Trinitarian, holistic approach to sacramental theology. I have shown that, by going beyond Chauvet's somewhat atomistic approach to sacramentality, we arrive at a sacramental theology that is holistic in its approach to both the human and the Divine bodies. Such an approach is truly Trinitarian in that it understands the relationship and mediation within the Trinitarian life to be paradigmatic for all relationships and mediations both horizontal and vertical. More than making the welcome move of allowing space for the Spirit alongside Christ, such a theology takes the expression of relationship within the persons of the Triune God, exemplified in the Annunciation-Incarnation event, as the model for understanding *how* the sacraments are mediations between God and humanity.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have demonstrated that the work of Chauvet in sacramental theology parallels the trauma-focused reading of the sacraments performed in this thesis, even as it opens up further avenues for dialogue in moving beyond Chauvet. With regard to the parallel nature of Chauvet's sacramental theology, his emphasis on rupture as key to sacramentality is similarly essential in a trauma-focused reading of the sacraments. Through Chauvet we can see the

sacraments as constitutive of trauma event, even as they are restorative for trauma survivors.

Chauvet's emphasis on the material and historical significance of Jesus is similarly helpful. Noting the way in which participants in the traumatic sacrament of the Eucharist are drawn into the history of Jesus, I suggest we can see the unity created through the sharing in the Eucharist writ large. We are grafted into a history and a materiality that is not our own but becomes our own. I argue, as Chauvet does, that bodies really do matter. Bodies are vital in facilitating memory.

Surprisingly, Chauvet has little to say on either gender or ordained ministry, but this, too, is helpful. Preferring to emphasise the ministry of all believers and the active participation of the laity in the celebration of the Eucharist alongside the ordained minister, Chauvet's apparent omission becomes a gift. Here our parallel reading takes a step beyond Chauvet to suggest that his writings open the way for a theology of priesthood that would allow the ordination of women.

Continuing this move beyond Chauvet, I conclude that one can consider Chauvet's sacramental theology to be somewhat atomistic. He separates, in practice, the Pasch from the Annunciation-Incarnation event, Christology from Pneumatology, the text from the embodied practice of the rite. What Chauvet offers is not a Trinitarian sacramental theology, but rather a Christological sacramental theology that has the welcome addition of the Holy Spirit. Moving beyond Chauvet into a holistic, Trinitarian understanding of the sacraments, allows us to understand the sacraments as a loving expression of relationship and mediation of the *perichoretic*, interpenetrative, mutually self-giving Triune God with humankind. Drawing believers in as the Lover draws the beloved into

a kiss, sacraments are, therefore, both a declaration and celebration of Divine love.

Chapter Nine

Body: A Love Story

The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not a sharing in the blood of Christ? The bread that we break, is it not a sharing in the body of Christ? Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread.¹

We thank Thee, our Father, for the life and knowledge which You made known to us through Jesus Thy Servant; to Thee be glory for ever. Even as this broken bread was scattered over the hills, and was gathered together and became one, so let Thy Church be gathered together from the ends of the earth into Thy kingdom; for Thine is the glory and the power through Jesus Christ for ever.²

Hating My Body

I hated my body. It fundamentally let me down. The trauma of miscarriage, reproductive loss, and infertility changed who I was, changed my whole life, and I blamed my body. My body had failed to do the one thing I felt, as a woman, it ought to be able to do. Months after my last ectopic pregnancy, one that cost me a fallopian tube and almost cost me my life, I lay, face down, on the cold wooden floor of the hallway of my marital home and screamed. I beat my fists on the floor, I bashed my knees. I made inhuman and unearthly noises. I threw things at my husband. I was so incredibly angry. Not at him. But at my body. I hated my body. It had let me down.

As I calmed down, I felt numb. I felt disconnected from my horrible body. I felt disconnected from the ecclesial body that had asked me repeatedly when I was going to have a baby. I felt disconnected from the ecclesial body that had prophesied over me, telling me I would have a living baby in my arms by next Mother's Day. I felt disconnected from the ecclesial body that could stand up

¹ 1 Corinthians 14: 16-17.

² "Didache." Chapter 9.

and sing: You give and take away, my heart will choose to say—blessed be your name.³ I hated that body too.

I withdrew from this ecclesial body. I could not attend Church services without crying and I could not bear hearing about any more pregnant women. I avoided them. I could not bear the pressure to reproduce and the incomprehension from this body that my body could not do so. I lost my faith. Why did God let this happen to me? The theology I knew gave me no answers.

I can see, now, that my experience of repeated reproductive loss was traumatic. In hindsight I can see that the last few years have been a process of trauma recovery. I had to establish who I was. The collapse of my future—the dreamt of and longed for family, the collapse of my marriage, and the collapse of my faith meant I was no longer the same person. Far from a gradual, natural process of growing up, this trauma ruptured my identity in an unexpected and unnatural way. I mourned. I mourned the loss of my babies, I mourned the loss of my marriage, and I mourned the loss of my younger self.

This period of mourning gave me space to think about what had happened. I began to construct my narrative. This new narrative said that it was okay to not be okay. It said that healing and recovery did not mean a drive to unrealistic perfection but a coming to terms with reality. It said that the theology I knew was lacking in the language of trauma. This narrative knew that theology was still working out what to do with women's bodies. This narrative wondered about the relationship between bodies, memory, and trauma. This narrative recognised that Christian liturgy holds within it an unclaimed memory and experience of trauma, and an instinct for trauma recovery. This narrative took

³ Matt Redman, "Blessed Be Your Name," on *Where Angels Fear to Tread* (Survivor, 2002).

the Annunciation-Incarnation event as its beginning point and paradigm—recognising it as a traumatic event and wondering what that might mean.

This thesis is my reconnection with society. It is my survivor's gift that is offered as both a comfort and a challenge. It has been the place in which I worked out the beginnings of my trauma narrative and it is offered as a gift not only to trauma survivors, but to all those who have encountered and will encounter trauma; it is my gift to the Church. It is, I propose, a contribution to the theological language of trauma. It is a contribution to the understanding of the relationship between trauma and theology. It is an exploration of the unexamined traumatic somatic memory at the centre of the Christian faith. More than anything, it is a call to love the body.

Learning to Love the Re-Membered Body

This research has been a lesson in learning to love the re-membered body. What do I mean by the oddly-hyphenated 're-membered' body? I mean the body of Christ—the Church—that is assembled afresh in each celebration of the Eucharist. I mean the body that is constituted when believers share in one bread to become one body. I mean the body that is brought into presence and to mind with each celebration of the Eucharist. This body is the bodies of both Mary and Christ remembered in the Annunciation-Incarnation event. Learning to love the re-membered body is learning to love the bodies of the Annunciation-Incarnation event. Loving these bodies is taking them into oneself in the reception of the Eucharist.

Learning to love this re-membered body has meant acknowledging that this body has not always been absent from our celebrations of the Eucharist.

Justin Martyr used flesh and blood language in his mid-second century accounts of the Eucharist that indicated:

it is seemingly not Christ's dead body, his sacrificed body, that is in mind but his incarnate body, his living body; the bread and cup become the flesh and blood of the incarnate Jesus in order to feed and transform the flesh and blood of believers. His life enables their new life. Whilst it is true...that Christ's suffering is one of the things in remembrance of which Justin believes the eucharistic sacrifice is to be offered, no greater emphasis seems to be placed on that than on thanksgiving for creation or Christ's incarnation.⁴

Loving the re-membered body has meant affirming that in the early church there was a multivalent understanding of the meaning of the Eucharist⁵ and that the loss of this multiplicity has led to the rise in a type of eucharistic theology that seemed to glorify suffering and death. It has meant recognising that in the early church the celebration of the Eucharist was as much a celebration of unity (both vertical and horizontal) as it was about the memory of Christ's death on the Cross.

The re-membered body is the body that is re-constituted in each new celebration of the Eucharist. As Hancock suggested in his anatomy of the sacrament, the Eucharist is a body given to bodies that creates a Body.⁶ Made up of those believers present who receive the Incarnate body of Christ in their consumption of the bread and wine, re-membering the Annunciation-Incarnation event that draws in both Mary and Christ's body, this re-membered body is born again in each new eucharistic celebration. Learning to love it has meant learning to see it for what it really is and be challenged to allow a new narrative to form the framework for this re-membering.

⁴ Bradshaw and Johnson, *The Eucharistic Liturgies*, 46.

⁵ Paul Bradshaw, *Eucharistic Origins* (London: SPCK, 2004), 32.

⁶ Hancock, *Scandal*, 65.

Learning to Love the Whole Body

This research has been a lesson in learning to love the whole body. It has been a call for unity and wholeness in our approach to bodies. Recognising the way in which theologians sometimes abstract the body from its context offers a challenge to love the contextualised body in its fullness.⁷ Learning to love the whole body has meant examining what happens to our theology when we atomise the body. When we view the Eucharist as a Christ-focused sacrament we forget the wholeness of the Triune God. Understanding the Eucharist as an event focused only on the Pasch of Christ atomises the life and person of Jesus Christ. Similarly, love, when exclusively focused on the event of the Cross, can easily reinforce notions of sacrifice and violence.⁸ Learning to love the whole body has meant allowing the fullness of the Annunciation-Incarnation event to come to the forefront of our theology, bringing with it not only the Annunciation and the Incarnation, but the whole life of Jesus, as our somatic memory, our referent point in the celebration of the Eucharist. Learning to love the whole body has meant bringing whole bodies—the whole Trinitarian body, the whole embodied life of Christ—into places of prominence within our theology. It has meant acknowledging that our celebration of the Eucharist is about how Jesus lived his whole life rather than just being about how he suffered, died, and was resurrected.

Learning to love the whole body has meant re-examining the relationship between the Incarnate and eucharistic body of Christ. It has meant understanding, along with Cyril of Alexandria, that Christ is One. There is precise unity of humanity and Divinity in the person of Christ—“unabridged unity

⁷ Minister, *Trinitarian Theology*, 3.

⁸ Rambo, *Spirit and Trauma*, 131.

of God and Man, Spirit and body.”⁹ Learning to love the whole body is to recognise that this whole, eucharistic body of Christ creates both vertical and horizontal unity in the believers who celebrate the Eucharist. Receiving the whole body of Christ, always *perichoretically* united to the Triune God, is to be drawn into a vertical unity with the Divine, even as the sharing of this one bread, one body, draws believers into a horizontal unity with each other. This body is re-membered in the celebration of the Eucharist.

Learning to love the whole body has meant seeing the Trinitarian body as a whole. It has meant recognising that the sacrament of the Eucharist is a holistic sacrament of unity with the Triune God. It has meant recognising that Christ’s body is never out of unity or relationship with the Trinity. Even in Christ’s suffering and death on the Cross he is always within the wholeness and unity of the Trinity. The death of Christ puts death within the Trinity; the death of Christ does not put the dead Christ outside or beyond the Triune God. It is, as Jones reflects: “a death that happens deep within God, not outside of God but in the very heart—perhaps the very womb—of God. It is a death that consumes God, that God holds, making a grave of the Trinity.”¹⁰ Learning to love the whole body has meant not shying away from this difficult image and instead acknowledging that the body of the miscarrying woman is uniquely placed to reveal the Trinity at this moment. Learning to love the whole body has meant learning to love the miscarrying womb as revelatory of the death of Christ within the Trinity. There is no theological value in a miscarriage. A miscarriage does, in all its horror and sadness, however, reveal what it means to hold a place of death within oneself, even as one lives. To love the whole body is to

⁹ Gebremedhin, *Life-Giving Blessing*, 110.

¹⁰ Jones, *Trauma and Grace*, 148.

love even those parts of it that cause us pain and sorrow—even those parts can reveal something of the nature of the Divine.

Learning to Love the Priestly Body

Learning to love the priestly body has meant allowing the lens of trauma to trouble the narrative of priesthood. Such troubling of narrative has allowed the ruptured space for the construction of a new narrative of priesthood to arise. Learning to love the priestly body has meant thinking again about what it means to be priest. Taking Williams' description of the priest as the one who holds open the door for humanity to enter into the space cleared by God,¹¹ learning to love this body has meant recognising that it is Mary who provides the model for priesthood in this new narrative. Recognising that understanding Mary as priest is neither a new nor even "vaguely feminist"¹² turn, learning to love this body has meant exploring the historical, typological, and artistic traditions that depict Mary as a priest.

In acknowledging the Annunciation-Incarnation event to be at the heart of Christian somatic memory, one cannot escape the consequences—Mary and her role in this event become paradigmatic for theology, and in this case, specifically for the theology of priesthood. Allowing the Annunciation-Incarnation event to shape our understanding of the Eucharist and the body that is remembered in this celebration has consequences for our understanding of the actions of the priest at the altar. To love the priestly body is to recognise that it is not a body that must be exclusively male but rather it is a body that must

¹¹ Williams, "Epilogue," 176.

¹² Anne L. Clark, "The Priesthood of the Virgin Mary: Gender Trouble in the Twelfth Century," *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion* 18, no. 1 (2002), 5-24, at 5.

model itself on the Annunciation-Incarnation event; the priestly body must be an inclusive one.

Learning to Love the Sacrificial Body

This thesis has been a lesson in learning to love the sacrificial body. Learning to love this body has meant learning anew the meaning of sacrifice from a Christian perspective. It has meant allowing the lens of trauma to unsettle the traditional Christian narrative of sacrifice. From the rupture such an unsettlement caused has sprung forth a new narrative of sacrifice.

Traditional narratives of sacrifice saw the eucharistic body as a sacrifice, in the Old Testament sense, (re)performed in the celebration of the Mass.¹³ Such a perspective on sacrifice brought with it a particular approach to the body, particularly the female body. Jay argued that “[R]itual purity, as distinct from moral purity, became [by the early Middle Ages] crucial for priests, and the reproductive powers of women were specifically polluting.”¹⁴ The one who performed a sacrifice in this paradigm must be pure in the way prescribed for the Hebrew priests—this sacrificial actor must be male.

Learning to love the sacrificial body has meant coming to realise that Christian sacrifice is best understood from the core of somatic memory—the Annunciation-Incarnation event. This sacrifice is mutual, Trinitarian, and self-offering. It is not based on the breaking open of a body in death but rather in the generative opening of a body in life. This sacrificial body is removed from the violence of the Cross but does not detract from the Real Presence of Christ in the eucharistic body. In the celebration of the Eucharist, the broken, dead body of Christ is replaced with the Incarnate Christ in all his embodied fullness.

¹³ Kilmartin, *The Eucharist in the West*, 294-5.

¹⁴ Jay, *Generations*, 117.

Learning to love this body means offering oneself to be made new in each celebration of the Eucharist. It means recognising the true nature of sacrifice based on a personal relationship, evidenced par excellence in the Annunciation-Incarnation event; the “three ‘moments’ of Trinitarian Christian sacrifice: the self-offering of the Father; the ‘response’ of the Son, and the responding self-offering of the believers [enabled by the Holy Spirit].”¹⁵ It means loving the living body of Christ. It means recognising that none of us are more or less worthy to offer ourselves to God. It means recognising that the priest holds no mystical power but rather opens the door for humanity to enter into the space already cleared by the living God.¹⁶

Learning to Love the Material Body

This research has been a process of learning to love the material body. Loving the material body is, I have argued, a consequence of learning to love the remembered, whole, priestly, and sacrificial body. Learning to love the material body has meant affirming the Real Presence of the Divine in the eucharistic elements. It has meant recognising the goodness of the material world and the goodness of the body and its senses.¹⁷ Loving the material body is learning to love difference. It means recognising that in the materiality of the Eucharist difference and unity exist together, neither one eliminating the other. Tonstad goes even further in arguing that: “Christ’s body moves past even sexual difference and joins itself to the materiality of the whole world.”¹⁸ For Tonstad,

¹⁵ Daly, *Sacrifice Unveiled*, 10.

¹⁶ Williams, "Epilogue," 176.

¹⁷ Méndez-Montoya, *Theology of Food*, 148.

¹⁸ Tonstad, *God and Difference*, 248.

the materiality of Christ's body is more significant than any sexual difference it may embody. Loving this material body is acknowledging that:

self and other, human and divine, spiritual and material, the individual parts and the whole, do not collapse into one another, but, rather, they co-exist or mutually indwell in and through this *metaxu*, the in-betweenness that is the Body of Christ. Difference is not eliminated but is brought into a new harmonious and excessive unity (Christ's Body) that opens up an infinite space for relations of affinity, mutual care (mutual nurturing), and reciprocity.¹⁹

Learning to love the material body is recognising that the materiality of the Eucharist offers us a model of how to negotiate unity and difference within the body.

Learning to love the material body has meant exploring the physicality and materiality of the eucharistic body. It has meant learning to love the female body. Recognising that it is the body of Mary that unites Jesus to humanity. Loving the material body means the Real Presence of Christ in the eucharistic bread and wine is very real indeed. Such Real Presence makes us, the recipients of the Eucharist, not merely representatives of the Body of Christ, but the actual Body of Christ in our communities.

Learning to love Mary's body

Did the woman say,
When she held him for the first time in the dark of a stable,
After the pain and the bleeding and the crying,
"This is my body, this is my blood"?

Did the woman say,
When she held him for the last time in the dark rain on a hilltop,
After the pain and the bleeding and the dying,
"This is my body, this is my blood"?

¹⁹ Méndez-Montoya, *Theology of Food*, 140.

Well that she said it to him then,
For dry old men,
Brocaded robes belying barrenness,
Ordain that she not say it for him now.

*Frances Croake Franke*²⁰

This research has been a process of learning to love Mary's body. I was raised Roman Catholic, and so one could be forgiven for thinking that I began this thesis in a position of loving Mary's body already. I didn't. I began in a position of venerating her, of idealising her, and of abstracting her beyond all recognition. As Marina Warner noted of her own attitude to Mary in her youth, I was untroubled by questions about Mary's personality, what her life had been like, what she had been like.²¹ I had very little regard for the physical, traumatised body of Mary, even as the abstract Mary Mediatrix, my intercessor, was present in my prayers. Learning to love Mary's body meant not relegating her to a walk-on part in the nativity²² or the role of silent, weeping mother at the Cross.²³ It meant learning to love her as a woman in the fullness of her embodied experience. Learning to love Mary's body in this way is a lesson in learning to love the bodies of all women as women—bleeding, birthing, infertile, erotic women. Learning to love the bodies of women in the fullness of their embodied experiences.

Learning to love Mary's body meant recognising that her body was traumatised even as, and indeed because, her body bore the presence, the

²⁰ This poem is unpublished but is quoted in Susan Ross, "God's Embodiment and Women: Sacraments," in *Freeing Theology: The Essentials of Theology in Feminist Perspective*, ed. Catherine LaCugna (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 1993), 185-210, at 185-6.

²¹ Marina Warner, *Alone of All Her Sex: The Myth and Cult of the Virgin Mary* (London: Pan Books, 1976), XX.

²² David Carter, "Mary in Ecumenical Dialogue and Exchange," in *Mary: The Complete Resource*, ed. Sarah Jane Boss (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 340-60, at 341.

²³ John Angell James, "Woman's Mission," in *Evangelicals, Women and Community in Nineteenth Century Britain*, ed. J. Wolffe (Milton Keynes: Open University, 1996), 89-104, at 98-9.

physical materiality, of the Triune God. Learning to love Mary's body meant recognising that acknowledging her material, biological connection to Christ's eucharistic body did not detract from the Eucharist but rather opened up a beautiful, generative, historically embodied experience of the Eucharist. Exploring the biological connection between the body of Mary and the body of Christ revealed that, through Mary, Jesus' body held within it the whole biological history of women. Mary's body made Jesus entirely human even as her *perichoretic* relationship with the Triune God—her *fiat*—made him entirely Divine.

Learning to love Mary's body was, again, a lesson in loving the whole body. Here the challenge is to love Mary's body as *Theotokos*; a body that remains God-bearing even after the birth of Christ. Mary's body, from Annunciation to Assumption is the first body to enter into the *perichoretic* relationship with the Triune God that is made available to all bodies through the non-identical repetition of the somatic memory of the Annunciation-Incarnation event in the celebration of the Eucharist. This *perichoretic* relationship with the Triune God is not something that makes the Trinity less, or makes Mary more. Loving the whole body of Christ, the whole of the body of the Triune God means learning to love Mary's body too.

Learning to love Mary's body has meant learning anew how to value the body of Mary and Mary's embodied experience within the narrative of theology. It has meant thinking physically and materially about her experience. It has meant naming her experience "trauma". To become suddenly and unexpectedly pregnant as Mary did was surely a traumatic experience—frightening and puzzling.²⁴ To name such an event as "trauma" does not imply that this was

²⁴ Jones, *Trauma and Grace*, 115.

rape. Rather, to name Mary's experience as trauma is to recognise the somatic effect of her experience, even as one acknowledges the positive nature of this experience for future believers. To love Mary's body is to respect it and to not de-humanise it in our attempt to preserve the goodness of God.

Learning to Love the Sacramental Body

The sacramental body is the body that reveals God. Learning to love the body includes a recognition that all bodies reveal God. I have demonstrated that the eucharistic body reveals Christ in relationship with the Triune God, and that Mary's body reveals this *perichoretic* relationship in communion with humanity. I have gone further still to suggest that the bodies of those who receive the Eucharist are drawn into this relationship and thus become the body (presence) of God within their communities. I argue that all bodies are sacramental; all bodies reveal the Divine. Chauvet indicated:

The body is henceforth, through the Spirit, the *living letter* where the risen Christ eschatologically takes on flesh and manifests himself to all people. The place of God's revelation is the existence of humankind as the place where the letter of the Book is inscribed—the letter, the very last one, of the cross—through the Spirit: “You yourselves are our letter, written on our hearts, to be known and read by all; and you show that you are a letter of Christ, prepared by us, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts” (2 Cor 3.2-3).

We have shown previously that the proclamation of the Book in the celebrating *ecclesia* is the sacramental manifestation of the Book's very essence. We can appreciate now more clearly the implications of this statement: it is the essential connection between the Book and the social body of the Church, where it seeks to be inscribed, that is symbolically represented and (at the same time, taking account of the nature of “symbolic expression”) effects in the liturgy. The element “*Sacrament*” is thus *the symbolic place of the on-going transition between Scripture and Ethics, from the letter to the body*. The liturgy is *the powerful pedagogy where we learn to consent to the presence of the absence of God, who obliges us to give him a body in the world*, thereby giving the sacraments their plenitude in the “liturgy of the neighbour” and giving the ritual memory of Jesus Christ its plenitude in our existential memory.²⁵

For Chauvet, the presence of God (or rather the presence of the absence of God) is present in the social body; the ecclesial body of the Church is sacramental. In the liturgy and the celebration of sacrament we learn to love the sacramental body as it reveals to us the Triune God. For Chauvet, the sacramental body is the social body of the Church. I go beyond Chauvet and argue that to love the sacramental body is to acknowledge that all bodies reveal the Triune God. The God who creates and sustains all bodies is revealed through all that is created and sustained by the Divine. The sacramental body is therefore as traumatised and imperfect as the bodies that constitute it.

Learning to Love All Bodies: The Future

This research has begun to explore what it means to love all bodies equally.

This thesis is offered as my survivor's gift but it is both a comfort and a

²⁵ Chauvet, *Symbol and Sacrament*, 264-5. Italics Chauvet's own.

challenge. I have shown that loving all bodies means rejoicing that any ordained body—regardless of gender, sex, sexual orientation, physical ability—can celebrate the Eucharist. All bodies are gathered into the One Body in the sharing of the Eucharist, thus all bodies can represent the ecclesial body of which they are a member.

There is much still to be examined in considering what it means to love all bodies. What does it mean to love all bodies when issues of class, race, and global location are considered? What happens when one considers the power dynamics at play in both corporate and individual bodies? How are these bodies to be loved? I have reflected on trauma and the body from the perspective of my own dysfunctional, but not, in my opinion, disabled, body. What does it mean to love one's body if that body is disabled? What does it mean to love the disabled bodies of others? If the ecclesial body is traumatised because the bodies that constitute it are traumatised then is the ecclesial body also disabled, also gay, also intersex? When we learn to love the body, we love the whole body and resist the temptation to atomise these members as 'only' individual parts. If the narrative of trauma theology I have offered here is a call to love the body, there is much still to be considered in the outworking of such love.

Having established the somatic memory at the heart of Christian faith—the Annunciation-Incarnation event—what now? Bodies are traumatised in very different ways. Some are traumatised through their experience of warfare, some through their experience of violence, some through their experience of loss. Considering these experiences of trauma through the somatic memory of the Annunciation-Incarnation event—the trauma at the heart of the Christian faith—will yield practical, pastoral outworkings of such a conclusion. Recognising the somatic memory that is being repeated in our embodied experience of 'being

Christian' opens up new pathways for considering what it means to be healed, to be redeemed, to be saved.

I have referred, in Chapter Seven to the two ruptures I argue are common to all human kind—a rupture between the divine and the human and a rupture between body and theology caused by the theological abstraction of the body. I have not had opportunity to explore these ruptures in great detail in this thesis (although the work I have done in this project has served to begin to address these two ruptures). Learning to love the body in the future will require reading these ruptures through the hermeneutical lens of the somatic memory of the Annunciation-Incarnation event and examining the consequences of such a reading for embodied theology.

Learning To Love My Body

This research has been, for me, a lesson in learning to love my body. In part it has been coming to terms with the body I have—an incomplete, dysfunctional, unpredictable, imperfect body. It has been a lesson in reshaping how I perceive my female body; this body of mine is more than just a vehicle for reproduction. It is eucharistic, it is ecclesial, and it is ecstatic. My body is loved.

Trauma is written into the liturgy of my flesh because it is part of who I am. I will always be a trauma survivor. Trauma is permanently etched upon my body. The public worship performed by my body is traumatic because my body is a traumatised body. To say that my body is eucharistic is to acknowledge that when I receive the eucharistic bread and wine, I take the Triune God into my body even as my body is drawn into intimate relationship with the Triune God. To say that my body is eucharistic is to recognise that my body is the presence of God in my community. The materiality of the Eucharist makes me materially

eucharistic. It is through my body that I enter into the sacramental encounter with God.²⁶ The full knowledge of God is an engagement and affirmation of all the senses²⁷—a fully embodied experience. My body is eucharistic as it offers an embodied thanksgiving to God.

When my body enters into *perichoretic* intimacy with the body of the Triune God through my consumption of the Eucharist, I share in the trauma of Christ and Mary. As Fiddes so vividly demonstrated:

[W]e share in death as we share in the broken body of the bread and in the extravagantly poured out wine, and as we are covered with the threat of hostile waters. We share in life as we come out from under the waters (whether immersed in them or affused by them), to take our place in the new community of the body of Christ, and to be filled with the new wine of the Spirit.²⁸

My body, with all its trauma, is drawn into their bodies as we, the Church, non-identically repeat the trauma of the Annunciation-Incarnation event. My trauma-marked body becomes then part of the ecclesial body formed anew in each celebration of the Eucharist. The ecclesial body—the Church—is a traumatised body because it is constituted of traumatised bodies. The liturgy of the flesh of this body is the liturgy of a traumatised body. Recognising this requires a theology of trauma, an understanding of the traumatic somatic memory at the heart of the Christian faith; it means we have to learn how to love the traumatised body that is both ours and others'. We have to learn to witness to and walk in the traumatised body. This is the challenge Rambo presents in her work on Spirit and trauma. She offers a vision of the Spirit that remains and witnesses in the depths of human suffering. The witness of this Spirit is the

²⁶ Power, *Sacrament*, 149.

²⁷ Méndez-Montoya, *Theology of Food*, 148.

²⁸ Fiddes, *Participating in God*, 281.

persistence of Divine love.²⁹ To witness to and walk in the traumatised body is to be drawn into the Divine love by loving the body.

Rambo has been a significant dialogue partner in the development of this thesis. Through her work on the relationship between trauma and the Spirit, Rambo demonstrated how to allow trauma to constitute the hermeneutical lens through which theology can be constructed. It is through engaging with her work on trauma that I have been urged to challenge the eucharistic focus on the Cross. Rambo argues that, when considering the death and resurrection of Jesus, we approach the narrative in an atomised fashion.³⁰ Our reading of this narrative doesn't tell the whole story because we so often skip over Holy Saturday. It is by recovering the whole story that Rambo is able to offer such a powerful call to 'remaining' and 'witnessing'.

This challenge, to tell the whole narrative, is one evident in my work. Like Rambo, I recognise that when one only tells part of the story, when one focuses on the bits that are 'easier', one loses something from the narrative. Building on Rambo, I have sought to present the Annunciation-Incarnation event—the whole story of Christ from Annunciation to Resurrection—as the somatic memory at the heart of the Christian faith. Looking at the whole story doesn't just make room for the Spirit, as it does in Rambo's work,³¹ but rather, I argue, a consequence of such a perspective is that it helps us see what it really means to be Trinitarian in our theology.

It is in this identification of somatic memory that I have gone beyond Rambo. By looking at the Annunciation-Incarnation event, which includes Good Friday, Holy Saturday, and Easter Sunday, we can see what it means to be a

²⁹ Rambo, *Spirit and Trauma*, 172.

³⁰ *Ibid.* 46-47.

³¹ *Ibid.* 82.

trauma survivor. Mary becomes our model for trauma recovery. We can move away from death/grave imagery and instead find afresh imagery that is nourishing and generative. The persistence of Divine love is found in the witness of the Spirit and, as I have demonstrated, is shared, *perichoretically*, in each new celebration of the Eucharist.

Constructing this narrative, from the rupture of my own trauma, has shown me not just how to love my body, but that my body—as it is—is worth loving. It has demonstrated to me that to persist in hating my body serves to damage not only myself but also the bodies of those around me. To love my body is to acknowledge that it is only through my body that I can know God and come into *perichoretic* relationship with the Divine. And so I can say, along with Hadewijch that:

[T]hey [the receiver of the Eucharist and Christ] penetrate each other in such a way that neither of the two distinguishes himself from the other. But they abide in one another in fruition, mouth in mouth, heart in heart, body in body, soul in soul.³²

In this, my body is ecstatic. To enter into this *perichoretic* relationship with the Divine is to dwell in God as God dwells in me.

Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love. God's love was revealed among us in this way: God sent his only Son into the world so that we might live through him. In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. Beloved, since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; *if we love one another, God lives in us, and his love is perfected in us. By this we know that we abide in him and he in us*, because he has given us of his Spirit. And we have seen and do testify that the Father has sent his Son as the Saviour of the world. God abides in those who confess that Jesus is the Son of God, and they abide in God. So we have known and believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and those who abide in love abide in God, and God abides in them.³³

³² Hadewijch, "Letter 9." ll. 7-11, 66.

³³ 1 John 4. 7-16. Italics my own.

We see in this Johannine letter that the response to being loved by God is to love one another—to love the bodies around us. Loving others is what draws us into intimate union with the divine. When we love the bodies around us we abide in God, and God abides in us—we enter into that mutual, self-giving *perichoretic* relationship. Learning to love our own bodies, and the bodies of others, is a response to being loved by God. Learning to love in this way allows us to dwell in the Divine and gives permission for the Divine to dwell in us.

Learning to love my body has both flowed from and flowed into learning to love the Eucharist and the Church. This love, too, is *perichoretic*. It dwells in the eucharistic body and the body of the Church, as it dwells in me. These loves feed each other. Being loved by the Triune God and by the Church enables me to love God and the Church. Loving and being loved brings me into vertical unity with the Triune God and horizontal unity with the ecclesial body of the Church of which I am a member.

To love my body is not to despise its role in my traumatic experiences but to marvel at its capacity to survive and seek connection with the other. The process of learning to love my body is redemptive. This love is part of God's work of love in restoring all things. Loving my body, despite its role in my trauma, is to resist the temptation of isolation and detachment as modes of self-preservation. Loving my body is loving and being in communion with other bodies, made possible by and as a response to the love of God.

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