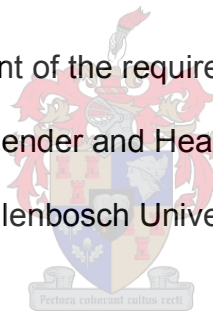


**Bodies in the Body of Christ:  
in search of a theological response to rape**

by  
Margeretha van Niekerk

Thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree M.Th. in New  
Testament with the focus on Gender and Health in the Faculty of Theology at  
Stellenbosch University



Supervisor: Prof. Jeremy Punt  
Co-supervisor: Dr. Charlene van der Walt

April 2014

## **Declaration**

By submitting this thesis electronically, I declare that the entirety of the work contained therein is my own original work, that I am the authorship owner thereof (unless to the extent explicitly otherwise stated) and that I have not previously in its entirety or in part submitted it for obtaining any qualification.

Signature: Margeretha van Niekerk

Date: April 2014

Copyright © 2014 Stellenbosch University of Stellenbosch

All rights reserved

## **Abstract**

This study argues that rape is an instrument of patriarchy, functioning in the same way as torture to keep patriarchal power hierarchies intact. Rape robs women of their voices, making and keeping them invisible. The body is a symbol for power and the female body represents patriarchal angst about losing power. The development of ontologies of body over the ages is traced, showing how these ontologies eventually led to the dualistic devaluing of the body. The body came to be seen as a commodity while the so-called inner or spiritual world became the body of theology. The body of Christ in 1 Corinthians is analysed, showing how Paul placed the body in the centre of theology and Christian life, while he simultaneously undermined the seemingly natural societal hierarchies by (re)constructing the body of Christ in a subversive way. The body of Christ re-members (remembers and reconstructs) the body in a way that controverts the abuse of women's bodies. By subverting patriarchy's power hierarchies, by valuing bodies and thereby making them visible, by transforming bodies and by imagining a body beyond patriarchy, the body of Christ re-members the social and individual body in a way that resists the violently abusive patriarchal body.

## **Opsomming**

Hierdie studie argumenteer dat verkragting 'n instrument van patriargie is. Verkragting funksioneer op dieselfde manier as marteling met die doel om patriargale mag-strukture in stand te hou. Verkragting beroof vroue van hul identiteit en maak en hou hulle sodoende onsigbaar. Die liggaam is 'n simbool van mag en die vroulike liggaam verteenwoordig patriargale angste oor magsverlies. Die ontwikkeling van liggaamsontologieë word nagespeur om aan te toon hoe hierdie ontologieë uiteindelik ontwikkel het tot 'n dualistiese devaluasie van die liggaam. Die liggaam is gesien as 'n kommoditeit, terwyl die sogenaamde innerlike of geestelike wêreld die liggaam van teologie geword het. Die liggaam van Christus in 1 Korintiërs word geanaliseer, om aan te toon hoe Paulus die liggaam in die sentrum van die Christelike lewe geplaas het, terwyl hy terselfdertyd die oënskynlik natuurlike samelewingshiërargieë ondermyn deur die liggaam van Christus op subversiewe wyse te (her)konstrueer. Die liggaam van Christus onthou en rekonstrueer die liggaam op so 'n wyse dat dit die misbruik van vroue se liggame opponeer. Deur patriargiese magstrukture te ondergrawe, deur liggame te waardeer en hulle sodoende sigbaar te maak, deur liggame te transformeer en deur 'n liggaam anderkant patriargie voor te stel, onthou en rekonstrueer die liggaam van Christus die gemeenskaplike en individuele liggaam op 'n manier wat die gewelddadige misbruik deur die patriargale sisteem teëstaan.

## **Acknowledgements**

With thanks to The Church of Sweden's Gender, Health and Theology pilot programme initiative for their financial support.

## Contents

Declaration.....	i
Abstract.....	ii
Opsomming .....	iii
Acknowledgements.....	iv
Chapter 1: Bodies In The Body Of Christ? Introduction .....	1
Chapter 2: This Is My Blood: Considering Rape And A Rape Culture .....	6
2.1 Definitions Of Rape And Rape Culture .....	6
2.2 Prevalence Of Rape .....	10
2.3 Whose Body Is It Anyway? Causes Of Rape.....	11
2.3.1 Rape As Instrument Of Patriarchy.....	21
2.3.2 The Church As Instrument Of Patriarchy.....	26
Chapter 3: This Is My Body: Overview Of Body .....	29
3.1 Definitions Of Body .....	30
3.2 A Historical Overview Of Christianity And The Body.....	34
3.2.1 Hebrew Scriptures.....	34
3.2.2 New Testament.....	37
3.2.3 Early Christianity .....	44
3.2.4 Middle Ages .....	47
3.2.5 Reformation.....	49
3.2.6 Enlightenment And Beyond.....	53

3.3	Modern Body Theology.....	56
3.4	Summary .....	59
Chapter 4: Discerning the Body .....		61
4.1	The Body Of 1 Corinthians.....	61
4.2	The Church As The Body Of Christ In 1 Corinthians 12 .....	64
4.3	Discerning The Body Of Christ At The Table In 1 Corinthians 11 .....	68
4.4	Discerning The Body Of Christ As Divine Property .....	72
4.5	Re-membering A Tortured Body .....	74
4.6	Remembering Bodies Transformed .....	78
4.7	Imagining Bodies Transformed .....	79
4.8	Living As The Body Of Christ.....	80
Chapter 5: This Is My Body, This Is My Blood: Re-membering The Body Of Christ In A Rape Culture.....		82
5.1	Re-membering Power Hierarchies Through The Ecclesial Body Of Christ .....	83
5.2	Re-membering Corporeality Through Holy Communion .....	85
5.3	Re-membering Invisible Bodies .....	87
5.3.1	Re-membering Invisible Bodies Through The Ecclesial Body Of Christ.....	87
5.3.2	Re-membering Invisible Bodies Through Holy Communion .....	89
5.4	This Is My Body, This Is My Blood: Bodies Transformed And Imagined.....	92
5.5	Conclusion: The Body Of Christ In A Rape Culture .....	94
Bibliography .....		96

## Chapter 1: Bodies In The Body Of Christ? Introduction

South Africa has an extremely high incidence of rape. At the same time, a very high percentage of the population claim to be Christian (Punt 2005:361). Whereas one would expect that the Christian view of the body would lead people to respect and protect their own and others' bodies, it seems the opposite is often the case. It has even been suggested that current ways of thinking about the body in Christian communities perpetuate gender-based violence like rape (see for example Landman 2007:17-31, Harrison and Heyward 1994:116, as well as Fortune 1994:234).

We therefore need to explore the different ontologies about the body in Christian theology. If these ontologies do indeed prove to be inadequate or even dangerous, we need to look for different ways of viewing and understanding the body. I believe that the body of Christ, as used by Paul in 1 Corinthians to refer to Holy Communion<sup>1</sup> and the Church, taken up and developed by the Christian community over centuries, contains untapped possibilities for thinking about the body, especially within a rape culture.

Jeremy Punt suggests that “the politics of the body need to be addressed also on a religious level and (considering its interrelation) with proper attention to scriptural notions” (Punt 2005:360-261). The objective of the current study is to add to the conversation suggested by Punt – addressing the politics of body on a theological level, exploring the bodiliness of the sacramental and ecclesial body of Christ, with specific reference to Paul’s use of said body in 1 Corinthians. I shall consider how a body of Christ body theology can serve as a possible theological response to rape. The sacramental body of Christ

---

<sup>1</sup> I choose the term *Holy Communion*, rather than Eucharist, as it is closest in representing my own Church tradition. Since this paper assumes a connection between the body of Christ in communion and the body of Christ in community, I also refer to Communion for the semantic relationship it has with community.



constitutes the ecclesial body of Christ (Kelly 2010:800). How can this body of Christ, as used by Paul in his reflections on the sacrament of Holy Communion and the Church, help us consider the body in a rape culture?

The study will use body theology as theoretical framework. Body theology “allow[s] the body and its experiences to be a site of revelation” (Isherwood & Stuart 1998:40), thus taking the body seriously while at the same time challenging dualistic thought that suggests that we are not really our bodies. It is born of liberation theology and therefore takes seriously the lives of people and injustices committed against them, while believing that situations of oppression can be changed. As such, it is also strongly influenced by feminist theology, placing the experience of the marginal at the heart of theology and exposing power and hierarchy.

According to Denise Ackermann, a feminist theology of praxis begins by critically analysing the context, focusing specifically on how gender is understood and enacted. It then engages said context with “liberating and transformative praxis in order to encourage human flourishing, undergirded by the belief that such theology is done in service of furthering God’s reign on earth” (2006:227).

The current study is non-empirical, consisting mainly of a literature review, as well as some exegetical work. As such it will describe the development of theological thought on the body and search existing literature for embodied views on the body of Christ.

Following Ackerman’s definition, I start in chapter two with a critical analysis of rape in the South African context, with specific focus on the influence of the understanding and enacting of gender roles in this context. This chapter will look at *what* rape and a rape culture is, consider the *prevalence* of rape in South Africa and consider some theories

regarding the underlying *causes*. In this chapter I shall argue that all the suggested causes of rape are in fact instruments in service of patriarchy. I shall also reflect on the connection between rape and *torture* and give a short overview of the role of the *Church* in this patriarchal regime, before taking a historical look at the Church and the body.

After establishing the context in which the body is abused and exploited through rape, chapter three will then move on to consider what the body is and what it means. The term *body* will be discussed, to establish a foundation for the meaning of the body as used throughout the research. This is important, as the “explosion of thought and literature on the subject of ‘body’ in the last decades has begged a question of definition which is not easily grasped, let alone answered” (Coakley 1997:2). However, the work of anthropologist Mary Douglas (1980) is still seminal and will serve as the starting point for my working definition of the body.

With Douglas’s view of the body in mind, it becomes important to look at the ways the body have been and are seen in Christian theology, since this is also a reflection of what is going on in society. Accordingly, the tradition of Christianity and body will be discussed next. A short historical overview of different ontologies of body will be given. Even though Christianity has embodiment at its core, the overview will show a pervasive ambiguity toward the body. The history of the body in Christianity is not one, unified picture, but a diverse and varying picture that changed over the ages and that even reflected a multitude of thoughts and actions within a single era. From this historical overview it will be clear that there is no single way to view the body, that the body can be fluid. It will also show the destructiveness of the development of dualism.

In order to lay the foundation for the establishment of a positive ontology of the body in our rape culture, modern body theology will also be considered. This will show that the body is a source of and vehicle for revelation.

Having laid the foundation of body theology, chapter four moves to a specific focus on the body of Christ. Here I consider Paul's body theology in 1 Corinthians, with specific attention to Holy Communion and the Church as the body of Christ. This chapter will argue that Holy Communion places the body in the centre of the life of the Church. The members of the Church are the body of Christ. The body of Christ is a body of solidarity with vulnerable bodies. There is an eschatological element to this embodiment, since bodies are still exposed to violence and abuse. But the body of Christ is also a powerful current reality. Bodies are the body of Christ. In celebrating Holy Communion, the body of Christ exposes the violence of torturous powers and thereby strips them of their power. The body of Christ creates a redeemed body of justice and solidarity.

Following Ackerman's summary of a feminist theology of praxis (quoted above), I attempt to engage the South African rape culture "with a liberating and transformative praxis" of the body of Christ, "in order to encourage human flourishing" (2006:227). Serene Jones (2012:25) describes a world in which women flourish as, inter alia, a world "where women's bodies are valued, respected and protected from demeaning forms of exploitation, abuse and violence". Therefore chapter five asks how the body of Christ can inform our response to a rape culture, how it creates a world in which women's bodies are valued and protected. This chapter (to extend the metaphor) aims to bring all the limbs from the previous chapters together in one body. In it I shall consider how the body of Christ subverts the power constructed in a rape culture and how it places rape firmly on the Church's agenda by construing corporeality and body-issues as fundamental. Chapter

five will suggest that the body of Christ, both ecclesial and in Holy Communion, makes bodies visible, thus exposing the weakness of the patriarchal power that strives to keep certain bodies invisible. Certain aspects of transformation and eschatology will also be discussed.

## **Chapter 2: This Is My Blood: Considering Rape And A Rape Culture**

I was shocked to hear of a leader in a mainline South African Church telling the following supposed joke in 2013<sup>2</sup>: A woman goes to her pastor for help. It seems her husband drinks a lot. Every time he comes home drunk, he beats her. The pastor answers: “I have advice that will help you. Every time he comes home drunk, immediately mix one tablespoon of salt with a glass of water. Gargle this until your husband goes to sleep.” A while later the woman speaks to the pastor again. She is amazed. “It worked! My husband hasn’t beaten me since I started following your advice.” To which the pastor replies, “You see. You just need to know when to keep your mouth shut!” Or, as the Afrikaans saying goes: *’n Toe bek is ’n heel bek* (a closed maw is a whole maw).

### **2.1 Definitions Of Rape And Rape Culture**

Although this study focuses on rape, rape is only one form of gender-based violence. While gender-based violence might be a broader term, all forms of gender-based violence have the same DNA. It will be argued below that rape, as one example of gender-based violence, serves to keep patriarchal structures in power.

In South Africa, rape is defined as any act of sexual penetration of another person without their consent. When someone inserts their genital organs, any other part of their body (such as a finger), any object (like a stick or bottle), or the genitals of an animal into the mouth, anus or genital organs of another person without consent, it is rape. When someone forces others to penetrate each other against their will, this is compelled rape. When any of the above happens within marriage, it is still considered rape. When someone is intimidated or threatened with violence against themselves or someone else,

---

<sup>2</sup> For ethical reasons, and to protect the identities of those involved, no further information can be divulged.

or damage to their property, they have not consented. Consent is also absent when a person in authority abuses their power (for example by threatening to fire or not hire someone), as well as when someone has a mental disability, is asleep, unconscious, under the influence of drugs or alcohol or under 12 years old (A Summary of the Criminal Law Sexual Offences Amendment Act 32 of 2007).

In spite of the clear definition given by the law, rape is not always so easily defined, especially in public discourse. Rachel Jewkes and Naeema Abrahams (2002:1232) rightly point out that a given incident of non-consensual sex will be interpreted differently depending on many factors, like the relationship of the survivor<sup>3</sup> to the perpetrator, the ages of those involved, the social notions of gender roles, the circumstances in which the rape occurred as well as who is discussing the incident with whom and in what context. People often only consider particularly violent rape by strangers as so-called true or proper rape.

When this study refers to rape, it therefore means all forms of coerced sexual acts, including stranger rape, intimate partner rape, date rape, gang rape, underage sex, trafficking, forced prostitution, forced sexual initiation and sexual exploitation due to economic vulnerability (including debt bondage, so-called sugar daddies and sex in exchange for work) (Jewkes & Abrahams 2002:1238). While I acknowledge that men are also raped and I in no way wish to diminish male rape, this study focuses mainly on women raped by men, as by far the overbalance of rape is men raping women. Even

---

<sup>3</sup> I use the term *survivors* of rape, rather than victims, knowing that many women are not survivors, but that many women have died at the hands of their rapists.

when men rape other men<sup>4</sup>, it is an act perpetrated against someone less powerful than themselves, suggesting that the same forces are at play (Du Toit 2005:260).

Rape is not about sex, but about power. It is the violent abuse of power in a sexual way. It is therefore not a private matter, but of political and public nature. Du Toit (2005:254) points out that rape systemically instils fear in a clearly defined section of the population, which translates into power-political gain for another section of the population.

In addition to rape, this study also refers to a rape culture. Rape is not equally prevalent everywhere. It is more common and seemingly acceptable in some environments than others. Such an environment where rape is common, even endemic, and not universally and unequivocally condemned, is a rape culture. The term rape culture connects rape to a culture where “a pattern of behaviour is created, organized and transmitted from generation to generation as part of the expectations associated with being male and being female” (Williams 2007:3783). Talking about a rape culture suggests that rape is a socially and culturally produced problem.

A rape culture is a “complex of beliefs that encourages male sexual aggression and supports violence against women” (Williams 2007:3783). It is characterized by a high frequency of rape and other forms of gender-based violence. This prevalence is however not the only attribute of a rape culture. The cultural assumptions and practices that create a favourable environment for rape, is also taken into account.

So, for example, a rape culture projects moral and social responsibility onto women. “Women are socialized to assume responsibility for controlling the ‘naturally aggressive’

---

<sup>4</sup> I also acknowledge that women sometimes rape men, but consider this to be outside the scope of the current study.

behaviour of men in interpersonal relations and by restricting their own movements and behaviour” (Williams 2007:3785). Women are considered responsible for not getting raped. Failure to meet this responsibility leads to so-called victim-blaming. The victim is made into the perpetrator by questioning her reputation, moral standing, dress, alcohol consumption, etcetera. Women are seen to somehow cause the violence against them. The supposed joke accounted above falls squarely into this category: blaming the victim for the violence against her and presenting her silencing as a source of mirth and entertainment.

Coupled with female responsibility, a rape culture is one of gender inequality. According to Joyce Williams (2007:3785) rape is historically a product of women’s lower status, while at the same time being a mechanism to keep women unequal. In a rape culture, the media usually colludes with gender inequality by defining and depicting women as secondary and subordinate to men (Williams 2007:3785).

Furthermore, a rape culture is a culture of fear for women. Even though not all women are raped, girls in a rape culture grow up knowing that they may be raped<sup>5</sup> - with good reason, as the statistics below will show. Girls internalize fear and a sense of restriction based on gender from a very young age. The fear limits women’s mobility and tends to restrict the way they live their lives. Women are taught to protect themselves, for example by not wearing ostensibly provocative clothes or acting in a way that deviates from the culturally accepted norm of femininity (Williams 2007:3786). The message in a rape culture is not first and foremost to men: *don’t rape*. Instead, the message is to women: *don’t get raped*.

---

<sup>5</sup> Once again, I am not suggesting that men cannot and do not get raped. They are not, however, socialized to expect rape, whereas women are socialized to fear rape. “For women, rape is part of the natural environment” (Williams 2007:3786).



In a rape culture, punishment of perpetrators is perfunctory (Williams 2007:3783). Survivors carry the burden to prove their innocence, rather than proving the perpetrator's guilt. The stereotypical constructions of sexuality conspire to make rape a trifling matter. Heterosexual sex is constructed on a model of aggressive masculinity and passive femininity. Men are socialised to believe themselves to be sexual predators by nature (Williams 2007:3785).

The endemic nature of rape in South Africa and the favourable cultural environment in which rape can be so common, leads me to refer to our current South African context as a rape culture. This rape culture will be expounded further below.

## **2.2 Prevalence Of Rape**

South Africa has a notoriously high incidence of rape and other forms of gender-based violence. Figures vary, but are universally horrific. Beverly Haddad (2003:150) mentions several studies, stating that it is estimated one woman is killed by her male partner every six days in Gauteng; 44% of men in Cape Town have admitted to abusing their partners and 26.8% of women in the Eastern Cape, 28.4% in Mpumalanga, and 19.1% in the Northern Province have been physically abused by a partner. In the 1990's it was suggested that one woman is raped every 23 seconds in South Africa. This has since been increased to one every 17 seconds. Ackermann (2004:218) refers to research finding that many girls experienced their first sexual encounter as coercive and that 72% of girls attending clinics in KwaZulu-Natal attested to not being able to successfully refuse sexual relations with their partners. According to Du Toit (2009:2), there are 46 000 *police recorded* rapes in South Africa per year, while the Law Reform Commission estimates 1.7 million rapes per year. She also states that South Africa has the highest rate of rape in the world, according to Interpol. Sarojini Nadar (2006:79) quotes a study of the Centre for the

Study of Violence and Reconciliation, saying “South Africa has the highest rape statistics in the world *for a country not at war*. It is estimated 1 in 2 women will be raped in her lifetime in South Africa.” [Emphasis added]

While such statistics help us to get a picture of the endemic nature of rape in South Africa, they are also widely contested. The reported figures – especially those reported to the police – represent the tip of the iceberg. In one study, only 15% of women said they had reported their case to the police (Jewkes & Abrahams 2002:1231,1235). While non-consensual sex in marriage and other relationships are believed to be common, it is usually not well reported. Definitions of rape, the way questions are framed, the collusion of the legal system, shame, and fear all contribute to the underreporting of rape. We will therefore never know the exact magnitude and scope of rape in South Africa (Rakoczy 2000:7).

Even though reliable statistics are not available, the evidence that we do have suggests that rape “is certainly the norm and may be little short of universal” (Jewkes & Abrahams 2002:1240). We can conclude that the right to give or withhold consent to sexual intercourse is one of the human rights most commonly violated in South Africa.

### **2.3 Whose Body Is It Anyway?<sup>6</sup> Causes Of Rape**

From the anecdote accounted at the beginning of this chapter and the evidence above, it is clear that we are living in a rape culture in South Africa. Many explanations are given in our society’s attempt to grapple with the pervasiveness of rape. I shall now consider some of these explanations. These should be seen as a constellation of factors, working

---

<sup>6</sup> Title inspired by Fletcher, P.R. 2005. “Whose Body Is It, Anyway? Transforming Ourselves to Change a Rape Culture” in Buchwald, E. (ed.). *Transforming A Rape Culture*. Minneapolis: Milkweed Editions.

together in an intricate web to collude in the creation of a culture of rape. So, for example, “religion, violence and patriarchy are all intertwined” (Rakoczy 2004:29). Tinyiko Sam Maluleke and Sarojini Nadar refer to the “unholy trinity” (Maluleke & Nadar 2002:14) of religion, culture and gender socialization. Keeping in mind that these are all intricately intertwined, it is still helpful to try to separate and unpack the different suggestions regarding the causes of rape.

### *Culture*

It is easy in South Africa to identify different cultural aspects that lead to a culture of acceptance of rape. As Maluleke and Nadar (2002:7-8) point out, these cultural aspects lead to women often being up against a “societal covenant with violence against them”. They cite an example where family members of a woman being abused by her husband blamed the woman, because she did not fulfil the cultural expectations of a wife. Haddad (2003:152) mentions the cultural practice of dry sex, where women use substances to dry out their vaginas at the request of their male partners, as it is believed to give the male partner greater pleasure. Jacqueline Anam-Mogeni (2005:9) adds the culture of mystery and silence that shrouds sexuality in most African practices and traditions. Bernadette Mbuy-Beya (1998:63) refers to “customs that allow the husband’s relatives to ‘train’ the woman to submission”. The practice of *lobola* is often cited<sup>7</sup> as a marriage custom that gives men the idea that they own their wives and their wives’ bodies. Some writers (e.g. Maluleke & Nadar 2002) refer to traditional sayings and songs that depict violence against

---

<sup>7</sup> *Lobola* can be translated as “bride price”, “bride wealth” or “dowry” (Mubangizi 2012:40-41). This practice, widely practiced in Africa, refers to the transfer of property from the family of the groom to the family of the bride in order to join the two families together. Whereas *lobola* was traditionally paid with cows, it has in recent times often been replaced with money (Mubangizi 2012:40-41). The advantages and disadvantages of the practice of *lobola* are widely debated. So for example, Haddad (2003:152) refers to research that showed how *lobola* sometimes leads to women being seen as property, which is then used to justify violence and marital rape. If *lobola* has however not been paid, the woman may be considered ostensibly cheap, which may also lead to violence. See also Rakoczy (2004:30) and Magorokosho (2011:247).

women or seem to sanction sexual violence (like the so-called joke accounted above). In my own (Afrikaner) culture we grow up singing:

Wat maak Oom Kalie daar? Wat maak Oom Kalie daar?

Oom Kalie drink 'n stywe dop en slaan sy vrou met die handsambok.

Wat maak om Kalie daar?<sup>8</sup>

However compelling, these cultural ideas and practices do not explain the pervasiveness of rape across all the different cultures in South Africa. Furthermore, such explanations are deeply problematic, often resulting either from lack of knowledge, misunderstanding or the juxtaposition with idealized Judeo-Christian standards, resulting in prejudiced misrepresentation of Africa (Nzegwu 2011:263). Sylvia Tamale (2011:19-20) uses the circumcision of African women to discuss the problematic history of research and theories regarding African sexualities, arguing that most of the work on female circumcision in Africa are culturally insensitive, focusing only on the negative aspects and overlooking many facets and meanings of the rituals. She claims that African feminists take strong exception to the “imperialist, racist and dehumanizing infantilisation of African women” (Tamale 2011:20) which perpetuates racist clichés about Africa, calling the perpetual victimhood of African women one such cliché. She also suggests that most of what we class as culture is in fact a product of “colonial authorities in collaboration with African male patriarchs” (Tamale 2011:20).

---

<sup>8</sup> This folk song roughly translates: “What is Uncle Kalie doing over there? Uncle Kalie drinks a stiff drink and beats his wife with the small whip. What is Uncle Kalie doing over there?” The Afrikaans writer C.J. Langenhoven in later years added verses to the song, putting the violence in the wife’s hand. Although this is seen by many as tempering the song – and thus making it more acceptable – it is still very much steeped in a context of gender-based violence.

## *Apartheid*

Another aspect of the South African landscape that bears considering, is our Apartheid legacy. Deborah Posel (2011:130-144) considers the politics of sexuality and nation-building in post-Apartheid South Africa. She traces the Apartheid regime's heavy censorship of everything sexual and the role that racist clichés regarding black sexuality played in the formation of laws and prohibitions. Rape was not a site of political concern, unless the perpetrator was black and the victim white. With the fall of Apartheid and the acceptance of the new Bill of Rights, sexuality became framed as a rights issue. Rape has consequently been redefined as a public matter, a violation of constitutional rights.

Louise du Toit (2009:16) argues the opposite. She points out that rape was part and parcel of the previous dispensation. During the struggle, rape was used as “a weapon of terror, an instrument of torture, or women's sexuality was simply used as a way of motivating or rewarding soldierly acts.” This was done by both sides in the struggle against Apartheid. However, when the TRC<sup>9</sup> first failed to discuss rape and then treated it as a separate matter in so-called Special Women's Hearings, they privatized and domesticated rape, removing it from the public, political sphere.

Mamphela Ramphele traces how the violence of the Apartheid regime shaped so-called black masculinity, leading to what she calls a role reversal between “strong women and weak men” (2000:113-115). Apartheid robbed black men of their status. They were referred to as boys in order to position them at the very bottom of societal hierarchy. They

---

<sup>9</sup> After extensive negotiations between the African National Congress and the National Party, South Africa had its first democratic elections in 1994, ending decades of Apartheid. As part of the transition, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) was created through the Promotion of National Unity and Reconciliation Act (no. 34 of 1995). The aim of the TRC was to deal with the trauma of Apartheid and the struggle against Apartheid, to restore trust and humanity, and to build a moral basis for the South African society (Du Toit 2009:9).

could never become men – something that has, according to Ramphele, not changed for many poor black men. “Their only escape from complete powerlessness is the control they exercise over African women and children”, which is expressed in violence (Ramphele 2000:114). Furthermore, Apartheid undermined their traditional role as protectors. They were unable to protect their families from the violence of the struggle. They could not provide for their families, since job opportunities were scarce and, according to Ramphele, “many men find taking up [menial] jobs an intolerable further assault on their manhood” (2000:114). When households then depended on women as providers, men were humiliated and became violent. “The weak position African men find themselves in is complicated by the humiliation of having to rely on the very female bodies they were initiated into despising...” (Ramphele 2000:114). Outbursts of violence are men “desperately attempt[ing] to reassert their dominance in both private and public spheres in the only language they understand” (Ramphele 2000:114).

Whereas Ramphele focuses on black masculinity shaped by Apartheid, Stéphan van der Watt (2007:107-111) traces the development of (white) Afrikaner masculinity under Apartheid. Under Apartheid Afrikaner men developed a hegemonic masculinity, closely connected to social and political power and Afrikaner nationalism. After 1994, Afrikaner masculinity shifted to business acumen and affluence. What remained the same, however, was the concept of men as warriors. Whereas the Afrikaner male pride in an ostensibly proud military tradition disappeared, the metaphor of the heroic warrior remained prominent in Afrikaner masculinity. “[B]ut with the death of Apartheid... the economic and/or political support which was necessary for the Afrikaner masculinity to rule like before, is non-existent” (Van der Watt 2007:110), while the discourses of men as

dominant, aggressive, unemotional, and focused on success, remain (Van der Watt 2007:107).

Compelling though arguments such as Ramphele's and Van der Watt's may seem – that Apartheid somehow, though in very different ways for black and white men, led to the development of violent masculinities - the assumptions underlying them need to be examined further. Ramphele fails to explain how a perceived loss of power translates into violence. The so-called crisis in masculinity cannot simply be a product of Apartheid, but rather of the social construction of masculinity and femininity, which will be discussed further below.

When rape is considered a product of Apartheid, this unfortunately often leads to constructions of rape as a product of race. Helen Moffett (2006:129-144) shows how discourses regarding rape in South Africa are often framed around race, which leads to a demonization of black men, while keeping the real forces behind a rape culture hidden. The true legacy of Apartheid in terms of rape is that it “legitimated violence by the dominant group against the disempowered, not only in overtly political arenas, but in social, informal and domestic spaces” (Moffett 2006:129). The legacy of Apartheid is not violent masculinities, but violence in order to keep some members of society in power while oppressing others. Whereas violence under Apartheid was used to keep white people in power by oppressing black people, rape in post-Apartheid South Africa is used to keep men in power by oppressing women.

### *Violence*

Whether rape has become more or less public or political, it is, however, impossible to disregard the legacy of violence that the Apartheid regime left us with. According to Susan

Rakoczy (2004:6), “we are now experiencing the bitter fruits of that wanton disregard for human dignity”, that has “spawned a culture of violence that permeates all facets of life”. Not only do we have a history of violent repression and struggle, but we have become a society where violence is a frequent part of life, used in disputes between neighbours, colleagues, and staff and patients in health settings (Jewkes 2002:1426), where violence has even become the subject of jokes (as accounted above). Research suggests that rape is much more prevalent in societies where violence is common (Jewkes 2002:1426).

Violence also plays a central role in the modern understanding of sexuality and gender. Beverly Harrison and Carter Heyward argue in *Sexuality and the Sacred* that “in our culture sexual desire has been shaped around the dynamic of dominance and submission, conquest and surrender” (1994:116). In the same anthology, Marie M. Fortune (1994:234) argues that our culture “links love with violence, distorts the truth of violence against women, and resists naming this violence a sin”. James B. Nelson (1978:265) suggested in 1978 already that spiritual dualism contributes to social violence, saying that anti-sex dualism looks with suspicion upon bodily pleasure. He states that the link between deprivation of physical pleasure and tendencies toward physical violence has been demonstrated in a number of studies, but that a number of studies have also shown the reverse: positive attitudes toward the body and sexuality correlate with a minimal orientation toward violence.

Add this blurring between violence and sexuality to our culture of violence, and it seems to create a perfect storm for rape: the high levels of violence lead to a high tolerance for rape, and the tolerance leads to the high incidence of rape. This tolerance is seen, according to Rachel Jewkes and Naeema Abrahams (2002:1240), in the trivial way in which complaints



are treated by the police, the lenient sentences, the hostility of district surgeons, and the high incidence of dockets being ostensibly lost (by public officials bribed by suspects).

Of all the factors contributing to high incidence of rape, a violent society is the clearest marker. “In a violent society, the use of sexual force to acquire desired relations becomes unremarkable” (Jewkes & Abrahams 2002:1239).

### *Poverty*

Closely linked to the questions of the legacy of Apartheid and the culture of violence, is the role poverty plays in the high incidence of rape. Although poverty is a key contributor to rape, rape is not confined to poorer communities. Indeed, rape occurs in all socioeconomic groups (Jewkes 2002:1424). It even seems that “women are protected from intimate partner violence in some of the poorest households, which are those that are mainly [financially] supported by someone other than the woman or her partner” (Jewkes 2002:1424). The poverty as such is not the aggravation, but the economic inequality within said context of poverty. Describing this effect of inequality within poor families, Gibson and others (2003:78) say: “the males ... complained of feelings of insecurity and distrust towards women because they [the males] were incapable of financially supporting their partners, their families and themselves”.

Poverty does tend to put women at greater risk. It increases the likelihood of transactional sex. It forces women to carry out daily tasks (like fetching water) which place them at risk. Their desperation for employment leaves women vulnerable to exploitation (Jewkes & Abrahams 2002:1239).

### *HIV and Aids*

One can also not discuss rape in South Africa without considering HIV and Aids. HIV and Aids are often associated with the high incidence of child rape. It is suggested that men rape young girls, as they can be sure that these girls are not HIV positive and will not give them the disease. There are also suggestions that some men rape girls due to a myth that having sex with a virgin will cure the disease (Haddad 2002:154).

However, Jocelyn Newmarch (2003:105) points to the existence of the same myth in, among others, renaissance Europe and twentieth-century Scotland. She suggests that the myth is society's way of trying to understand the rape of girl-children and reflects society's assumptions, rather than the rapist's. Quoting Jewkes, Newmarch (2003:126) suggests that the myth "allows public outrage without actually challenging the social values that give rise to child rape in the first instance." The myth is used to blame HIV "rather than recognizing the need to change social values on male sexuality" (Newmarch 2003:126).

### *Socialization*

Socialization is one part of Maluleke and Nadar's (2002:14) "unholy trinity". By this they mean gender socialization and the power dynamics this leads to. Nelson (1978:263) sees this socialization as the cause of sexist dualism, which perpetuates rape, both by connecting men to power and violence and by connecting women to weakness and emotion.

Philip Venter (2009) discusses the development of master narratives and shows how the body is constructed as a symbol for social codes. Master narratives become second nature, internalised to such an extent that it becomes automatic, mechanical behaviour. The master narrative regarding masculinity and femininity, for example, is so internalised

that men and women unquestioningly take up their ostensible roles. People instinctively know how they are supposed to act within their culture's master narrative. So the body is not only produced by the master narrative, it also serves to maintain said narrative. Such a master narrative is not easily questioned, as it is the culture into which people are born.

The master narrative regarding masculinity in South Africa is one of violent, aggressive, assertive and militant masculinity, created not only through years of violent conflict, but also through our predominantly pastoral-patriarchal cultural backgrounds – something which most cultures in South Africa, including Afrikaners, share (Du Toit 2003:59). In this context, femininity is constructed as “passive, receiving, responding and void of a desire of her own” (Du Toit 2005:260).

Research points to gender power inequalities, status within male peer groups and a climate of male sexual entitlement as important factors in the prevalence of rape (Jewkes & Abrahams 2002:1238). Rape therefore needs to be understood within the context of the extreme gender power inequalities which pervade South African society. Rape is an attestation and manifestation of male dominance over women. “[M]ale control of women and notions of male sexual entitlement feature strongly in the dominant social constructions of masculinity in South Africa. Both sexual and physical violence against women form part of a repertoire of strategies of control” (Jewkes & Abrahams 2002:1239). The common occurrence of gang rape confirms that the focus is not on the woman being raped, but on the interaction between the men. These gang rapes are “extreme manifestations of a general culture of male sexual entitlement” (Jewkes & Abrahams 2002:1239).

Research suggests (Gibson, Mfecane, Mathison, Damon, Henda & Tuba 2003:77) that men in South Africa believe themselves to be entitled to sex on demand, believe that they have the right to control women's behaviour and believe that they have a right to punish women, and that these beliefs lead to rape. One study found that, in a context of urbanization, rape became a way to control women who is seen not to conform to traditional gendered behaviour (Gibson *et al.* 2003:77).

### *Instruments in the same hand?*

So it seems that culture, Apartheid, our violent society, poverty, HIV and Aids, and the socialization into aggressive masculinities and passive femininities are all factors that play a role in creating a rape culture. Jewkes (2002:1423) states that rape "is entirely a product of its social context" and identifies a violent culture on the one hand and male superiority on the other as the two main ideologies leading to rape. These two ideologies then appropriate the other factors described above in serving the agenda of male superiority and violence.

My contention is, however, that culture, Apartheid, poverty and the ideology of male superiority are all instruments of patriarchy. Even our culture of violence is a product and instrument of patriarchy. I shall therefore unpack rape as an instrument of patriarchy to control women, silence them and make them invisible. *'n Toe bek is 'n heel bek.*

### **2.3.1 Rape As Instrument Of Patriarchy**

Culture, Apartheid, our violent society, poverty, HIV and Aids, and socialization into aggressive masculinities and passive femininities are all instruments of patriarchy, colluding with patriarchy to keep some in power while making others invisible. In a strongly worded article, Andrea Dworkin (2005:14) contends that there is nothing difficult

or complex to understanding why rape is happening. For her, the reason is simple: “Men are doing it, because of the kind of power that men have over women.” This is real, concrete power, exercised by men who feel they have a right to this power. This power functions in public and in private. “It is the sum and substance of women’s oppression” (Dworkin 2005:14).

Rape is not only a manifestation of patriarchy – it also serves to maintain patriarchy’s unequal balance of power. It is an instrument of control. Abusive men are not out of control – they are establishing control (Adams 2005:86). When these men feel they are losing control of their environment, they turn women into objects to be controlled, and rape becomes a way for them to confirm their superiority to themselves (Gibson *et al.* 2003:69). Not all men rape. When a man does rape, the subordination of women might not be his explicit motivation. It is, nevertheless, a consequence of his violence (Watts & Zimmerman 2002:1232). Du Toit (2005:261) goes so far as to call the rapist “the policeman of male sexual ethics”, enforcing the hierarchy of patriarchy.

One of patriarchy’s instruments to keep women invisible and silent, is to insist that rape is a private matter. The political space is thus maintained as a masculine space, defined by its “violent differentiation and separation from what is construed as private sexual, ‘feminine’ space” (Du Toit 2005:9). This makes rape a political instrument, dividing those with power from those without, “but on such a basic level that it does not appear as political, within the political, at all” (Du Toit 2005:9). By insisting that rape is an instrument of patriarchal control over women’s bodies, we free it from the powerlessness and invisibility of being a private matter, moving it firmly to the political sphere.

For this reason, Du Toit (2003) argues that rape is a form of torture<sup>10</sup>. In a compelling study of state terror, the crucifixion, and sexual abuse, David Tombs (1999:91) says that state terror is used to support and enforce the power of the ruling regime. Terror keeps said regime in power through fear – simply the threat of torture keeps people suppliant to the regime. However, people cannot be arrested and tortured without reason. The supposed threat they might have posed or information they possessed, are therefore excuses used to justify state terror. But this is not what the torture is about – it is intended to paralyze a society’s willingness to resist. Not only are the victims themselves targeted – the torture terrorizes a public audience.

Using Elaine Scarry’s phenomenology of torture, Du Toit unpacks the mechanisms of rape. Scarry (1985:49) discusses the interplay of body and voice in torture, explaining how the victims of torture lose their voices. The body is embodied in the voice, in the ability to speak and use language. The torture makes the body present by destroying it, while simultaneously making the voice absent by destroying it.

Similarly, rape silences survivors. First of all, it is as difficult to talk about rape as it is to give voice to any pain. But when rape is described, the description is often read as pornography<sup>11</sup>, since the act of rape itself has an inherently pornographic dimension. The

---

<sup>10</sup> Some feminists are hesitant to refer to rape as a form of torture. So for example Clare McGlynn (2008:71-85) argues from a legal perspective, suggesting that the term “rape” be kept due to its gendered meaning and powerful associations. She argues, furthermore, that not all rapes are the same (coming dangerously close to the concepts of “simple” and “aggravated” rape – see Du Toit 2009:34). Rape, according to McGlynn, is “mundane”, in that it is an everyday occurrence and is committed by ordinary men. For these reasons, rape is not torture as such, although it is used sometimes with torture. Even though I agree with her when she asserts that the trauma of rape is often over-generalized, I think her reluctance to view rape as a form of torture hides the way rape serves to keep one part of society in power by subjugating another part of society.

<sup>11</sup> Du Toit (2005:257) refers to the South African journalist Charlene Smith’s account of male reactions to her writings about rape, where some men suggested that she “just needed a good fuck”. Apparently, male policemen gather to read reports of rape as soon as the plaintiff leaves the station, thus reading a pornographic, over-sexualised interpretation into the rape (Du Toit 2003:49).

survivor's attempt to regain her voice by putting language to the rape is therefore turned against her. The moral blame is shifted to her for ostensibly creating pornography that the men simply passively enjoy. "The attempt to represent an *experience of female pain* with the aim of fighting or stopping it, is hijacked by an audience who reads it (apparently innocently) as a *spectacle of male pleasure*" (Du Toit 2005:256-258). By reading accounts of rape as pornographic, the male readers by implication assist the original rapist(s) by acknowledging the rapist's work as so-called production work.

Furthermore, rape survivors often internalize the social shame attached to rape. Due to the social construction of male and female sexuality, women's sexuality is seen as a scandal and shame *per se* (Du Toit 2005:260). Simply by being female – and therefore desirable to men – women are already complicit in their own rape (Du Toit 2009:264-265).

The humiliation suffered during rape has the effect of stripping the survivor of her humanity – of treating her as less than fully human. This humiliation is, however, contagious. The fact that rape is so pervasive and nothing seems to be done about it, "translates for ordinary South African women into pervasive fear, systemic (contagious) humiliation, and incapacitation" (Du Toit 2009:260). Since women are often in danger of being raped and always have to be careful, their power and freedom are seriously curtailed. Women form the habit of fearing men, of avoiding danger, of seeing their own sexual identity as vulnerable, and of objectifying their own bodies. So rape serves to suppress all women in society, not just the survivors of rape.

Scarry (1985:47) also discusses torture as a vehicle of self-betrayal. The torturer aims for a confession. When this aim is reached and the tortured ostensibly confesses, the torturer is absolved and vindicated. The confession proves that the torture was justified and the

tortured becomes the source of their own pain – they deserved it by hiding important information or colluding against the regime. By confessing, the tortured betray themselves and are seen as having betrayed their cause.

Similarly, rape functions under the guise of self-betrayal. The popular notion is that women “ask for it”. The way masculine and feminine sexuality is constructed casts women as teasers who incite and deny, which serves as justification and rationalization for force. Rape survivors need to prove that they did not consent. If it can be shown that they somehow participated, facilitated or not actively resisted, the rapists are absolved through a claim to consensual sex – no rape took place. This apparent consent can take many forms: the way a woman is dressed, her presence in a certain place at a certain time, her acting in a particular manner, and so on. The supposed joke accounted at the beginning of this chapter plays into the same discourse – that women somehow cause and deserve the violence committed against them. “This kind of thinking effectively silences survivors of rape, convincing them that they have betrayed themselves and their loved ones in ‘allowing themselves’ to be raped” (Du Toit 2005:262-263).

The false motive of torture (gathering information) sets the torturer up as the vulnerable party with a special need that only the prisoner can fulfil. In the same way, rapists are seen as vulnerable to the desire women create – women cause rape simply by being women and therefore desirable. This apparent vulnerability serves to cover up the real vulnerability or need. In torture, the vulnerability is that of the threatened regime. The real vulnerability in rape is the rapist’s contested masculinity (Du Toit 2009:264-265).

Torture is a production, enacted not only for the victim, but also for society at large. It becomes a theatre of control. Likewise, in rape “the female body is a theatre on which



patriarchy is enacted” (Isherwood 2000:22). This is particularly poignant in South Africa, where 75% of reported rapes are gang rapes, confirming the theatrical nature of rape. Rapists often want (male) onlookers (Du Toit 2005:265-267).

In the same way that torture silences all dissent and keeps the regime in power, rape functions to keep women silent and men in power. Not only are the survivors of rape silenced, but in turning the moral universe upside down and making women’s bodies the cause of rape, all women are turned into potential victims. All women must be careful, lest they fall victim due to their own ostensible overtly sexual natures. Women’s bodies are seen not as their own, but as objects of male desire, there to satisfy male need.

### **2.3.2 *The Church As Instrument Of Patriarchy***

The Church often colludes with the current regime, serving patriarchy’s torturous agenda. So for example Christina Landman (2007:17-31) “explores the faces of harmful religious discourses that render believers vulnerable to abuse”. She lists harmful discourses found amongst her research population and suggests alternative discourses informed by the insights of body theology. Among these “spiritually abusive discourses” Landman (2007:25) lists statements like “My body does not belong to me; God has given power over my body to my partner/parent; My body is abused by criminals and rapists as God's punishment for my personal sins; God does not want men and women to be equal;” “The woman was created by God to please the man with her body. Her body belongs to him. A man must warn a woman to keep her body in good shape; A man must punish a woman (with words) if she is not a good woman as the Bible prescribes; The Bible forbids women and children to talk back”.

This is consistent with research done by Isabel Phiri (2000:107-108). She refers to Heggens, who identified four religious beliefs that may be influential in gender-based violence, namely that God intends that men dominate and women submit; that women are morally inferior to men and cannot trust their own judgment; that suffering is a Christian virtue and women in particular have been designated to be “suffering servants”; and that Christians must quickly forgive and reconcile with those who sinned against them. Phiri identifies all four these beliefs in the discourses of Christian women who have been abused by their husbands.

Phiri (2000:99, 108) also shows how the Bible is used to enforce these beliefs. So, for example, the women in her study refer to their husbands quoting texts like Ephesians 5 to subjugate their wives. The women also quote texts on forgiveness and see their forgiving their abusers as a prerequisite to God forgiving them their sins. Texts about divorce serve to keep women in abusive relationships, while 1 Corinthians 7 is used to teach women that they may not refuse sexual advances from their husbands, except by mutual consent and for a time in order to devote themselves to prayer (Phiri 2002:25). According to Susan Rakoczy (2004:33), the misuse of certain Biblical texts has led to incredible suffering over the ages. Even today, texts are used for a patriarchal agenda, so that “culture and scripture collude in women’s misery and women who protest are told by their husbands that ‘the Bible tells you to obey me’” (Rakoczy 2004:33).

While using the Bible to keep women in abusive situations, the Church paradoxically silences the Bible when it comes to rape. Gerald West (2000:37-38), for example, discusses the Church’s silence on the rape of Tamar in 2 Samuel 13. Texts like these are seldom, if ever, read in church. Reading them, West argues, empowers women to tell their stories. It reminds them that God knows about their situations and it connects their

lives with the Bible<sup>12</sup>. By not reading texts like these, the Church remains silent about rape.

The ostensibly Christian discourses mentioned above are eerily similar to the discourses of torture also discussed above. So, for example, the silencing of torture is analogous to Christian discourses which claim that women should be silent, are not allowed to talk back or are inferior to men, while the discourse of self-betrayal is present in Christian views of suffering as punishment for sin. By using discourses similar to those functioning in torture, the Church becomes a partner to the torturing patriarchy, robbing women of their humanity and of their bodily agency, effectively making them invisible. There is a dire need for the Church to reconsider women and men's bodies and their value and place in society.

By demonstrating the similarities between rape and torture, I have shown how rape serves to maintain the unequal power balance of patriarchy. In using the discourses mentioned above regarding women, the Church maintains an unholy alliance with patriarchy, thus subjugating women.

If torturing and raping bodies mean more than simply the act of torture or rape, it follows that bodies are more than simply physical vessels. I shall therefore consider what we mean when we talk about bodies and what they represent. In tracing the Church's track record in its collusion with the regime of patriarchy, I shall track the way the body has been viewed throughout Christian history, ending the next section with a discussion on current body theology.

---

<sup>12</sup> Indeed, Bruce Birch (1998:1306) shows how powerful a text such as 2 Samuel 13 can be when he states: "There is an empowerment that comes from recognizing that this story names present realities as well as those long passed. If such stories are read as part of our own biblical tradition, similar stories can be faced in our own lives ... [T]o read of the courage and wisdom of Tamar, may encourage those who have been victimized in our own time to give voice to their own experience, so that conspiracies of silence do not allow continued violence to be denied or ignored."

### **Chapter 3: This Is My Body: Overview Of Body**

In the previous chapter, rape was defined as all forms of coerced sexual acts. It was also placed within the context of a rape culture, thereby suggesting that rape is a socially and culturally produced problem. Studies regarding the prevalence of rape in South Africa were used to further show that we live in a rape culture. Different possible causes of rape, such as cultural beliefs, Apartheid, prevalence of violence, poverty, HIV and Aids, and gender socialisation, were discussed.

I then argued that suggested causes of rape, such as culture or violence, are in fact all instruments of patriarchy and that rape serves to maintain the unequal balance of power in a patriarchal system. The parallels between rape and torture showed how rape operates in an analogous way to torture. Torture keeps a regime in power by subjugating a large part of society. In the same way, rape keeps patriarchal structures in place by silencing women, making them invisible, and ruling them with fear.

Chapter two also addressed the Church's role in our rape culture. Specific Christian discourses were shown to be similar to that of torture, for example discourses that warn women to be silent or that claim that rape is punishment for a sin committed by the rape survivor. It also showed how the Church colludes with the rape culture by being silent about rape.

If raping a body can mean more than just the act of rape, then a body must represent more than just a physical vessel. The current chapter will now consider the body and its meaning.

### 3.1 Definitions Of Body

Just as torture serves to keep the reigning regime in power, so rape serves to keep patriarchy in power. Women's bodies become the battleground on which the patriarchal battle for power is fought. Or, as Lisa Isherwood puts it: "the body is a site on which many discourses of power and knowledge are enacted" (2004:151). We can only understand this if we understand what the body is, what it represents. "Bodies tell stories, very complex and challenging stories; they are not all they seem and they surprise us at every turn" (Isherwood 2004:154).

According to the Oxford Dictionary, a body is

- "the physical structure, including the bones, flesh, and organs, of a person or an animal"
- the torso
- a corpse
- "the physical and mortal aspect of a person as opposed to the soul or spirit [sic] ..."
- a person's body regarded as an object of sexual desire ...
- a person of a specified type ...
- the main or central part of something, especially a building or text ...
- large amount or collection of something ...
- an organized group of people with a common purpose or function...
- technical a material object" (Oxford Dictionaries 2013)

The body is, however, "deeply symbolic in human culture, the means by which and through which the person and the community express themselves" (Isherwood & Stuart 1998:10). We therefore find two theories of body. The first is the essentialist view, which

states that the body has intrinsic meanings, apart from the meanings society assign to it. This theory would insist that there is something universal and constant about the meaning of body. The second is the constructionist view, which emphasizes the construction of the meaning of the body and bodiliness by society (Nelson & Longfellow 1994:3).

Following the second theory, Isherwood (2000:22-23) identifies different kinds of bodies. The physical body is the individual body, the lived experience of the body as self. The social body is a symbol of nature and society. We perceive of the physical body through the lens of the social body. There is also a political body, which involves the regulation and control of the body. What is then at stake in the struggle for control over the body, is power in social relations. Isherwood adds a fourth body, the divine. With this, she does not mean anything dualistic or even metaphysical, but rather a subversive body. The divine body is the body of radical equality, the body subverting patriarchy and acting against oppression. Landman (2005:234) interprets the divine body as a spiritual body, the site and agent of relationships with God, even beyond what is evidently physical.

Putting the body in a broader social theoretical perspective, Bryan Turner (1997:15-16) states that there are basically four views of the body. "First, following Foucault, the body is an effect of deeper structural arrangements of power and knowledge. Secondly, the body is a symbolic system which produces a set of metaphors by which power is conceptualized." The body is also, in the third place, the product of historical changes in human society. The fourth approach is concerned with the body in the context of everyday life, which implies that having a body also means *being* a body. "Our bodies ... express the self because the loss of face... is a loss of self. Any loss of control over our bodies is socially embarrassing, implying a loss of control over ourselves. The mutilation of the

body is the primary mutilation of the self” (Turner 1997:19). Hence rape is not only violence against the body of another person, but against the person herself.

While keeping all of the above in mind, I believe Mary Douglas’s understanding of the body to be especially helpful in understanding rape.

In 1966<sup>13</sup> Douglas wrote her ground-breaking *Purity and Danger*. According to Douglas, the body is a symbol or model of a bounded system. “Just as it is true that everything symbolises the body, so it is equally true that the body symbolises everything else” (1980:122). The body is a symbol for society and the powers of society are reproduced on the body.

The rules in society are not just meant to regulate society, but do in fact divide reality into forms and structures, the basis of human thought (Wuthnow *et al.* 2010:86). Douglas uses the concepts of dirty and clean to understand these societal structures. Where at first it might seem like something is dirty in and of itself, Douglas found that dirt is not associated with matter *per se*, but with its location. Dirt is matter out of place. This “implies two conditions: a set of ordered relations and a contravention of that order. Dirt, then, is never a unique, isolated event. Where there is dirt there is a system. Dirt is the by-product of a systematic ordering and classification of matter” (1980:35).

---

<sup>13</sup> Even though Douglas first published her theory nearly five decades ago, it has been reprinted several times and is still frequently used by scholars, so much so that Jerome Neyrey calls it “seminal” (2003:87). See for example Gupta (2010), Kim (2008), Loughlin (2007) and Moulaison (2007). (For an interesting discussion of Douglas’ work in relation to body language in 1 Corinthians, see Neyrey, J.H. 1986. Body Language in 1 Corinthians: The Use of Anthropological Models for Understanding Paul and His Opponents. *Semeia*. 35, pp.129-170.) Building on Douglas’s work, scholars like Neyrey, Bruce Malina and others have since focused in greater detail on certain aspects of purity and impurity, providing greater nuance and specificity, for example regarding rites of passage that permit boundary crossing (Neyrey 2003:90-100).

The boundaries of the body represent the boundaries of the system, specifically “any boundaries which are threatened or precarious” (1980:115). Rituals (like cleaning) are enacted on the body to express societal concerns and to keep the boundaries intact. Douglas suggests “that when rituals express anxiety about the body’s orifices the sociological counterpart of this anxiety is a care to protect the political and cultural unity of a minority group” (1980:124).

The current study follows Douglas’s understanding of the body, as a representation of societal structures and the power hierarchies within said structures. In a rape culture, women’s bodies represent patriarchy’s anxiety about loss of male control. The threatened political body is that of the patriarchal system and its accompanying power and hierarchies. Rape expresses anxiety about male control over women’s bodies and, therefore, male control of the social body. Rape, like torture, is a grotesque ritual enacted on women’s bodies to keep the system intact. Within this system, the female body becomes a symbolic battlefield. The female body becomes “a depersonalized symbol, a bearer of man’s honour, a reproducer of the culture and of other traditional values” (Kesic, quoting Brownmiller 2005:279).

If the Church is colluding with the patriarchal system, one also needs to consider the Church’s view of the body. This is, however, not a homogenous view. Christian thought on the body has changed over the years and has also varied within one era. Accordingly, the tradition of Christianity and the body will be discussed next, by giving a short historical overview of Christianity and the body. This does not aim to be a complete representation of Christian ontologies of body, but will show a pervasive ambiguity toward the body in the Christian tradition.



### 3.2 A Historical Overview Of Christianity And The Body

A central conviction of Christianity is that God became embodied as a human, and the New Testament liberally employs the body as metaphor (Punt 2005:360). Christian theology has always been an embodied theology rooted in creation, incarnation, resurrection, and sacrament. “The Christian Scriptures ... have embodiment at their heart” (Isherwood & Stuart 1998:11). Yet the body has always occupied an ambiguous space within this embodied theology.

#### 3.2.1 Hebrew Scriptures

It is often assumed that the Hebrew Scriptures had a positive view of the body, with no trace of the dualism often attributed to later eras. Isherwood and Stuart (1998:52) suggest that this is to some extent true - ancient Judaism had a positive attitude to the body. There was no rigid dualism between body and soul, and sexuality was a God-given gift, an essential part of being human.<sup>14</sup> This absence of dualism and positive take on sexuality do not, however, mean that ancient Judaism never problematized the body. Already in the Hebrew Bible, the ambiguous space occupied by the body is visible.

The ambiguity toward the body is especially visible in the biblical material ascribed to priests ('P'), particularly the book Leviticus. This priestly preoccupation with the body was discussed by Douglas in *Purity and Danger*. As mentioned above, the body is the symbol of the social and religious structures to which it belongs<sup>15</sup> and the anxieties of society are

---

<sup>14</sup> Louis Jacobs (1997:71-72) reminds us that there is no single view of the body in Judaism and argues against what he calls the caricature of Judaism as focusing mainly on the body. However, Jacobs admits that the Hebrew Bible does not see the body and soul as separate entities, leading him to use mainly Talmudic and Rabbinic literature to show body and soul dichotomy in Judaism.

<sup>15</sup> “[Caste pollution] is a symbolic system, based on the image of the body, whose primary concern is the ordering of social hierarchy” (Douglas 1980:125).

played out in the human body. Accordingly, concern for bodily integrity and purity is a reaction against the threat to the unity and integrity of the body politic.

Howard Eilberg-Swartz (1997:34-55), however, points out that Douglas never explains why preoccupation with the body appears to be largely confined to the priests. He offers an alternative analysis. The priests believed that God had commanded human reproduction (Genesis 1:27) and made it an intrinsic part of his covenant with Abraham (Genesis 17:4-6) (which is why this covenant is written on the male reproductive organ). Accordingly, the priests' primary aims were to associate fertility with masculinity. They attempted to break the seemingly obvious connection between women, fertility and reproduction by associating menstrual and birth blood with impurity and death. This concern with patrilineal reproduction lies in the nature of the priesthood, which was passed down from father to son, and serves to legitimate the priesthood as a kinship of men (although they may also have rooted their theology in reproduction in order to increase a people decimated by exile).

This emphasis on reproduction caused tensions within priestly theology. The priests believed (along with believing that sexuality and reproduction were an essential and created part of being human) that human beings were created in the image of God. This image is assumed to be about abstract qualities, not embodiment, as God is considered to have no physical form (Deuteronomy 4:12-24). The absence of God's physical form causes human embodiment and sexuality to become the very symbols of human difference from God, creating tension between obeying God and being like God. "A person who wishes to obey God should be fruitful and multiply. But in doing so, one engages precisely that dimension of human experience that denies one's similarity to God" (Eilberg-Schwartz 1997:45).

Even though God is shown by the priests as having no physical form, other passages in the Hebrew Scriptures do suggest that God did have some bodily form and that it at least resembled that of a human being<sup>16</sup>. Could humanity then image God in terms of embodiment? Yet God's body is never fully evident, always at least partly disguised. The reason for this may be to conceal God's sex and in so doing avoiding questions of how both sexes can image God. Indeed, even though the dominant images of God in the Hebrew Scriptures do suggest masculinity, this would create enormous problems for ancient Israelite males. In fact, in the Hebrew Bible Israel is sometimes represented as being the female lover or wife of God (Hosea 1-3; Ezekiel 16:23). Since the priests understood Israel primarily as a gathering of males, a male body of a God potentially evokes homoeroticism (Eilberg-Schwartz, quoted by Isherwood and Stuart 1998:56).

It follows that the tension and ambivalence in and caused by Genesis 1:26-28 are deliberate: "Indeed, it seems that the passage is carefully formulated so as to obscure, as much as is possible, these various problems" (Eilberg-Schwartz 1997:50). The whole point of using both plural and singular (in references to God and humanity) is to hide the tensions implicit in a theology that views humans as being created in God's image. These tensions were not characteristic of all authors of the Hebrew Bible, but are the result of the priestly insistence that human beings are made in the image of God. The obsessive interest in the human body in priestly culture is born from these tensions. The elaborate rules around the body was in part an attempt to control, while at the same time diverting attention from the fundamental conflicts that surrounded the body (Eilberg-Schwartz 1997:53).

---

<sup>16</sup> Exodus 24:9-11; 33:17, 23; 1 King 22:19; Amos 9:1; Isaiah 6:1; Ezekiel 1:26-28; Daniel 7:9

Whereas Eilberg-Schwartz focuses on Genesis 1, Punt (2005:364) looks at the relationship between the two creation stories (Genesis 2:7 and Genesis 1:27) and points out that the different creation stories render gender and sexuality unstable. The ancient rabbis believed that God created Adam intersexed, only later dividing Adam into male and female. The image of God in which humanity was created, would then be the intersex Adam of the ancient rabbinic faith: a human with both male and female sexual organs (Punt 2005:364).

Even though the body was sometimes troubled in the Hebrew Bible, the body and soul is still presented as a unity, “indissoluble to the point of ceasing to exist at death” (Punt 2005:317).<sup>17</sup>

### **3.2.2 *New Testament*<sup>18</sup>**

In the time of the New Testament, the body was not viewed as a closed and solid system, but rather as open and permeable, susceptible to various environmental influences. This made the body vulnerable<sup>19</sup> and fickle (Punt 2005:366). Just like the Hebrew Bible, it is not possible to present a single, harmonised view of the body in the New Testament, as there is not a univocal view of the body.

---

<sup>17</sup> It is also interesting to note first-century Judaism’s view on the body, as this was part of the background in which Jesus and later the New Testament authors operated. Countryman (1998:45-65) shows that the purity laws became also for the Jews living in the Diaspora a way of distinguishing themselves from Gentiles and thus establishing strict boundaries, while simply being a reminder of Israelite identity for those living in Palestine.

<sup>18</sup> I focus here specifically on Jesus and Paul, which means not discussing a significant part of the New Testament. I consider an overview of Jesus and Paul enough to establish that the New Testament’s view on the body is not univocal.

<sup>19</sup> Widespread, severe poverty and high mortality rates (with a life expectancy of 25 years) intensified the experience of the body as problematic (Punt 2005:366).

### 3.2.2.1 *Jesus And Body*

Looking at different discussions on Jesus and body – on Jesus' body and on Jesus' attitude toward bodies - it is clear that here, too, different views emerge.

William Countryman (1998) argues that Judaism used two concepts to interpret and control the body: purity (the avoidance of dirt relating to the boundaries of the human body, expressed in, for instance, food and sexual laws) and property (for example the concept of male ownership of women's bodies)<sup>20</sup>. In the Gospels, purity stopped being a condition for the relationship with God, so much so that John even uses impure examples to explain Christian rites, while the other Gospels shift the focus from physical purity to purity of heart. "[I]t becomes clear that the Gospels dismiss purity, not selectively, but across the board" (Countryman 1998:96).

Indeed, Jesus "was perceived by his followers to have abolished the purity code" (Stuart 1997:50), showing no regard for it in his dealings with people. He touched the so-called unclean and ate and drank with everyone. His whole ministry was deeply embodied, breaking the barriers of the purity system and placing people "in a new set of social and therefore bodily relationships" (Stuart 1997:50). Where under the purity system bodies served as boundary symbols which could separate people from both God and one another, the importance of bodies shifted in the Gospels from boundary protection to social relationships (Countryman 1998:94-96).

It is the new social relationships established in the Gospels that Countryman interprets as a new property ethic. In the Gospels property ethic was restructured in such a way that

---

<sup>20</sup> Countryman (1998:188-189) argues that the ethic of property is kept in the Gospels, but in such a way that it endangers the existing *paterfamilias*, rather than protecting and perpetuating it.

the bodies of women and children no longer belonged to the *paterfamilias* (Countryman 1998:188-189). Instead, property – and therefore bodies – is subject to the reign of God. Bodies no longer belong to the *paterfamilias*, but to Christ (Countryman 1998:242).

Some scholars, like Samuel Terrien, argue that “Jesus was known to have stood beyond sexual affection, intimacy, or attachment” (1985:124)<sup>21</sup>. James B. Nelson (1978:74) calls this “spiritual dualism”, the most common Christological heresy. According to Nelson, Jesus was a sexual being. Nelson considers it unfortunate that the Church has, for the most part, pretended that Jesus was sexless. By denying Jesus’ sexuality, we deny that he was fully human. The absence of any comment about Jesus’ sexuality cannot be taken to imply that he had no sexual feelings, just as much as the lack of reference to Jesus’ bodily function did not imply that such did not exist or that he was not wholly human. It is important to affirm his sexuality, otherwise “we shall either deny much of our own sexuality or else find considerable difficulty integrating our Christological beliefs into the reality of our lives as body-selves” (Nelson 1978:77).

It is also possible to read the construction of Jesus’ body in the Gospels as a site of profound and subversive hospitality. Isherwood and Stuart (1998:58) refer to Bruce Malina, who pointed out that hospitality meant something quite different in the ancient Mediterranean world than what it means today: it was about transforming the outsider, the stranger, into the guest. Jesus spends his life incarnating hospitality, being portrayed (in the Gospels) most often and most obviously in the role of stranger/guest. The Jesus body (Jesus and his followers) was, according to Isherwood and Stuart (1998:60), deeply

---

<sup>21</sup> Terrien argues that the Gospel of John presents Jesus as the incarnation of Sophia. In his discussion of Woman Wisdom in the Old Testament, Terrien finds a counter to the priestly obsession with the body. She (Wisdom) “reveals the reciprocity of masculine and feminine in divinity as well as in humanity” (Terrien 1985:87).

vulnerable because it constructed itself as a permanent stranger in a world where being a stranger was synonymous with being at risk of social or physical rejection. The gospels seem to suggest that Jesus constructed his community in opposition to the crucial family unit, which was the foundation of his society through which the outsider/insider classification was defined and maintained. “Jesus incarnated his ministry outside of, and therefore against, the social system which created ‘strangers’, by becoming a stranger himself” (Isherwood & Stuart 1998:60). This vulnerability of Jesus as a stranger is emphasized in his periodic rejection by his own disciples, which reaches its climax in the crucifixion.

Jesus accepts hospitality from those considered sinful and unclean by society. He does not, however, offer hospitality to them. He remains the stranger, dependant on the host and therefore always in the position of gratitude and disempowerment. None of this makes any sense within the social system in which Jesus operated, which was, it seems, the point: the kingdom was to replace that social system. No wonder those who had the responsibility to police the crucial insider/outsider parameters found Jesus’ behaviour scandalous (Isherwood & Stuart 1998:60-61).

There is one point in the Gospels where Jesus becomes host rather than guest: the night when he is arrested. Here the host becomes the hospitality, the food and drink on which his guests can survive until the kingdom comes. “Jesus’ death is... the punishment inflicted on a stranger who cannot be conformed to the laws of society... His resurrection is the divine vindication of hospitality over meanness and inclusion over exclusion” (Isherwood & Stuart 1998:61).

### 3.2.2.2 *Paul And Body*

Much of the dualist and disconfirming views on the body has been blamed on Paul. Traditional Pauline theology did not particularly value the body. According to Punt (2005:370), this can be ascribed in part to the corresponding low esteem in which the body was traditionally held by Christians, which was transferred onto the interpretation of Paul. In contrast to traditional Pauline theology, scholars now realise that the body was an important point of departure for Paul. Jane B. Moulaison even goes so far as to say that “one could read the entire Pauline corpus as an extended effort to create and shape Christian bodies” (2007:353). The body was not incidental to Paul’s thinking, but “central in and for his theology, vital for his perspectives on Christ and community, and important for making sense of Pauline thinking” (Punt 2010:91).

Paul was not a dualist – nowhere in his letters do we find a contrast between σῶμα (body) and ψυχή (soul). When there is mention of contrast, it is between σὰρξ (flesh) and ψυχή, not between σῶμα and ψυχή. Σὰρξ does not suggest the physical aspect, but total humanity in its rebellion against God. In the same way, ψυχή refers to the whole person in obedience to God. The terms σὰρξ and ψυχή thus indicate, not components of the person, but relationships embracing personhood in totality (Ware 1997:93).

Except for Philemon, σῶμα (or related forms thereof) is used by Paul in all his other (authentic) letters, though in different ways. It can either be the body as physical form of human life, the unity among believers<sup>22</sup>, the body of Christ<sup>23</sup> (τοῦ σώματος τοῦ Χριστοῦ) and

---

<sup>22</sup> As Punt (2005:369) suggests, we need to consider whether Paul is using σῶμα metaphorically only, or whether he is also using a first century notion of the body which is foreign to us today.

<sup>23</sup> Paul’s use of the concept “the body of Christ” will be discussed in the next chapter.



its derivatives, and in terms of sinfulness, like “the body of sin” (τὸ σῶμα τῆς ἁμαρτίας) in Romans 6:6 (Punt 2005:369).

Of course, Paul was a child of his time and therefore influenced by his social location. First of all, his theology is framed within the Jewish context (as described above). It was, however, also influenced by the ideas of Hellenism, with its generally negative view of the body. Furthermore, the dominance of the patriarchal system in the first century CE, led to, for example, Paul’s use of the so-called creation order argument (as in 1 Corinthians 11) (Punt 2005:364-365). Paul embodies the struggle of early Christianity to position itself in the Greco-Roman context, exemplifying “the grappling efforts of early Christianity to establish some empowering space for the body, in resistance to the prevailing, dominant socio-historical environment” (Punt 2005:367).

At times, according to Isherwood and Stuart (1998:63), Paul’s body theology causes him to depart radically from his inherited tradition, for example when he subverts the traditional reproductive ordering of men and women’s bodies by recommending celibacy (1 Corinthians 7:32-34)<sup>24</sup>. At other times, however, he reproduces the gender hierarchies and social-symbolic ordering of bodies found in the priestly writings (Isherwood & Stuart 1998:64). This causes Paul’s body theology to seemingly veer between the radical and the conservative. This is why Terrien (1985:163) calls Paul “the half-liberated legalist” and says that “his preaching of the gospel to communities as varied as those of Galatia in Asia

---

<sup>24</sup> For Punt (2010:87-88), 1 Corinthians 7 does not reflect a divergence from the patriarchal system in the first century CE. At this time, sexuality was a continuum of possibilities still shaped by the one-sex model, not the stark contrast between male and female that we have today. A body consisted of both male and female aspects and a person could move on the spectrum of masculinity and femininity. Punt therefore suggests that Paul’s assertion in Galatians 3:28 (no longer male and female), meant that women became more male. Punt sees Paul’s preference for celibacy and virginity in 1 Corinthians 7 as part of this trend toward greater masculinity.

Minor, Corinth in Greece, and Rome forced him to improvise various modes of expression that were not in any way systematic or homogeneous” (Terrien 1985:170).

Punt (2005:373-374) gives another perspective when he discusses the interrelatedness of Pauline body theology with the morality of his letters. Paul’s notion of the body (specifically in 1 Corinthians) has a substantial focus on control. Since the body is reflective of and a contributor to social realities, it needs to be controlled in order to preserve the fabric of society. Especially the bodies of women are in need of social (that is, male) control. But this need for control of the body is extended even to the body of Christ.

The body also had a central role to play in transformation. The body is weak and influenced by sin. It is, however, the temple of God and the site of the glorification of God and therefore in need of redemption. But this redemption was “not *from* the body but *of* the body (Romans 8)” (Punt 2005:379), so that the final transformation of the body is the resurrection. The Christian body thus becomes the centre of transformation. When Paul discusses this resurrection body in 1 Corinthians 15:35-55, his treatise is shaped by his Jewish apocalyptic background<sup>25</sup> (Punt 2011:319). It is the (corporeal) body that is resurrected, albeit in a more glorious, non-perishable form. As Isherwood and Stuart (1998:63) states: “For Paul, embodiment is an essential part of being human and the body is intimately involved in the process of redemption, in the process of undergoing transformation.”

The emphasis on life in its bodily form is central to Paul’s letters. The body amounts to much more than simply a material object or an instrument. Paul’s theology is thoroughly

---

<sup>25</sup> This belief in the resurrection of the physical body is in clear contrast to the Platonic dualism of the body as a prison of the immortal soul (Ensjø 2008:418).

embodied. For Paul, “the *soma* of the Eucharist connects the *soma* of the believers with the corporate *soma* of the Church which is the *soma* of Christ” (Isherwood & Stuart 1998:62).

### **3.2.3 Early Christianity**

The philosophical environment in which early Christianity developed was marked by dualism. Though the Hellenistic philosophies did not preach or practice hatred of the body, it did see the body as fundamentally different from the soul and prone to change, decay, disease, etcetera. Until the soul could be free from the body, the body had to be controlled through asceticism.

There was enough anxiety over the body in the Judaeo-Christian tradition for such philosophy to be acceptable in early Christianity. Belief in the resurrection, though, meant that the early Christians could not long for complete disembodiment. This prevented most from falling into a dualistic attitude to the human person (Isherwood & Stuart 1998:64). The body did, however, occupy a very ambivalent space in early Christianity.

Peter Brown (1998) wrote a comprehensive study on sexual renunciation in early Christianity. From this it emerges that attitudes toward the body were not uniform in early Christianity. The Gnostics taught that matter and body had nothing to do with God but were the result of rebellion against God (Brown 1998:103-121). However, most theologians rejected the Gnostic view but held that the body was prone to decay and in need of redemption. Thus the ascetic movement became popular. Particularly celibacy, or “contenance” as Brown calls it, became the way in which Christians differentiated

themselves<sup>26</sup>. This celibacy was at first a post-marital matter for middle aged people who suspended sexuality, but over time the young virgin body became the most powerful symbol of the transformed resurrected body.

Some theologians, like Origen (Brown 1998:160-177), believed in a so-called double creation, the first of pure spiritual beings who turned away from God and were provided with bodies in the second creation. Though these theologians did not associate this second creation of bodies with evil, they were clear that it was a lesser good. So for example Origen castrated himself and Jerome called the man who dashes his genitals against a stone blessed, while Tertullian connected anti-body views with anti-woman persuasions (Nelson 1992:37). For these theologians, redemption involved an ultimate return to a pre-fallen, genderless state. Again the celibate is one who incarnates the process of salvation, having left the second creation and being in the process of returning to the first.<sup>27</sup>

Yet early Christian theologians found it difficult to conceive of existence without bodies. Ambrose of Milan, for example, thought that redemption involved liberation from sexuality (Brown 1998:341-365). His disciple, Augustine of Hippo, rejected the idea of double creation. Augustine taught that, before the fall, sexual desire was completely under the control of Adam and Eve's will. After the fall, as punishment for sin, human beings are no longer able to control their bodies. The human body becomes, for Augustine, a

---

<sup>26</sup> Some scholars do not agree with Brown's positive take on celibacy. So Daniel Harrington and James Keenan (2002:139-140) mentions Joyce Salisbury, who views celibacy as a form of control, keeping specifically women out of the public sphere. The closed womb became associated with the closed mouth, which led to the Christian community privileging celibate women, while at the same time silencing them.

<sup>27</sup> The focus here is mainly on development within the Western Church. Kallistos Ware (1997:90-110) discusses the body within the Greek Church and points out that the Platonizing approach of Origen existed alongside the more integrating, biblical anthropology of Irenaeus (treating personhood as a single unity), and that it was the latter view which prevailed in the Greek Church.

battleground between reason and humanity's animal nature. The male orgasm shows, according to Augustine, how easy it is to lose the battle, as loss of control is loss of the image of God, which is located in the mind (Clack 2004:239-240).

Although Andrew Louth (1997:119-121) suggests that Augustine's influence has been exaggerated by Brown, he still refers to the delayed effect Augustine's understanding of the body had on the Church. The body came to be seen as outward structure through which the inward expresses itself<sup>28</sup>.

Whereas Brown (and others) use celibacy as lens to investigate early Christian views on the body, another intriguing lens is that of martyrdom, not least because of its problematic relationship with rape. The early Christians elevated martyrdom to the point of preoccupation, especially with the martyred body. Texts describing martyring focus on the physicality thereof and the bodies of the martyrs. Although this concentration on what we might consider to be macabre details seem morbid to a modern reader, the early Christians considered material objects to possess referential value, having revelatory qualities. The martyred body was not just a vessel to be discarded. The martyred body itself was believed to be significant. The martyred body became an object of faith – a sermon in and of itself, a *sermo corporis* (Martin 2006:1-6). Elena Martin (2006:7) sees in the martyring of women specifically a space for women to attain physical and spiritual

---

<sup>28</sup> Thus, Augustine's influence led to changes in the use of the body of Christ. By the twelfth century *corpus Christi*, previously used to refer to either the Church or the historical body of Jesus, shifted to designate Holy Communion, while *corpus Christi mysticum*, previously used for Communion, came to refer to the Church. Previously, Holy Communion pointed to the actualization of the Church as the Body of Christ. With the shift, Holy Communion becomes the focus. It shrinks from a sacred action to a consecrated host, which leads to the nature of the presence of Christ in Holy Communion becoming a problem, so that the doctrine of transubstantiation emerges in this time (Louth 1997:123-124).

equality. While they were excluded from preaching in the Church, they silently preached a *sermo corporis* through their martyrdom<sup>29</sup>.

Francine Cardman (1998:144-150) suggests that the inherent ambiguity in martyrdom is strikingly visible on women's martyred bodies. The unmaking of bodies is especially dramatic in women's martyring, as it upsets the social and familial relationships on which the body politic was built – the dissolution of the social body is placed in stark relief. The introduction of women into the essentially male context (of gladiatorial combat, for example), made their martyrdom all the more shocking. "For women especially, the making of a martyr meant the unmaking of the body – her own, as well as her world's" (Cardman 1998:150).

The Church was thus marked by ambivalence, by an unresolved tension toward the body. While the fundamental goodness of the body was mostly upheld, practice tended to contradict this sentiment. Though the evidence does not always point in only one direction, it seems that a suspicion of the body, and more especially of women's bodies, was a recurrent feature (Ware 1997:98-99).

### **3.2.4 Middle Ages**

According to Isherwood and Stuart (1998:67), the ambiguous attitude toward the body demonstrated by early Church theologians like Origen persisted in the mediaeval period. Thomas Aquinas (who Isherwood and Stuart take to be the dominating figure of this period) asserted the unity of the body and the soul. However, a continued suspicion of the

---

<sup>29</sup> Johannes Vorster (2003:68), on the other hand, argues that women's martyrdom in no way led to or represented empowerment or equality for women. Instead, the bodies of women martyrs were not good enough, but seen as weak, incomplete and insufficient. Their bodies had to become male in order to become a *sermo corporis*. "[T]heir bodies had to be changed, and changed into the body of the oppressor" (Vorster 2003:93).

body accompanied an increasing emphasis on the sacraments, relics and the sufferings of Christ. This increasing emphasis on sacraments accompanied an increasing clericalism, resulting in the gradual exclusion of women from ecclesiastical power. And the clerical exclusion led to a deeply embodied form of female mysticism. Visions gave women authority and a voice in the Church. These visions were often marked by a deeply embodied, erotic nature (sometimes accompanied by stigmata).

One interesting aspect of medieval women's spirituality was their self-imposed excessive fasting. Various explanations have been offered for this phenomenon. Piero Camporesi (Isherwood & Stuart 1998:69) suggests that it has something to do with the increasing emphasis on Holy Communion, coupled with the continuing ambiguity towards the human body. The thought of the body of Christ journeying down through the human body into the bowels caused some anxiety and hence it was necessary, particularly for the gender more closely associated with flesh, to ensure that the body was appropriately purified before Christ entered it.

Catherine Walker Bynum (1987:219-244) argues that excessive female fasting had such a central place in women's spirituality in the Middle Ages because it was food (rather than wealth or power) that women had control over. The fasting was a way in which women tried to take control of their lives and gain access to power. Women's position was becoming more and more marginal. But food and the body were women's concerns. Thus strategies that focused on the body and food offered women access to power. Through their bodies they could make manifest their oneness with Christ. Stigmata and miraculous bleeding gave them access to a power and authority of experience – not hierarchical power, but charismatic power.

There is still deep ambiguity towards the body, particularly the female body, in most of the writings of medieval women mystics. According to Isherwood and Stuart (1998:69) we can observe, however, how these women subverted the patriarchal association of fleshiness with femaleness by obtaining bodily knowledge of Christ in their own flesh.

Another aspect of (both female and male) mysticism was the distinctive gender fluidity. Gerard Loughlin (2007b:1-4) illustrates this in his discussion of the tradition surrounding the wedding at Cana in John 2:1-11. Even though the narrative does not say who is getting married, Loughlin suggests that the groom was traditionally identified with John, the author of the gospel and the disciple whom Jesus loved. One popular medieval tradition stated that John left his betrothed on their wedding day, and married Jesus. Indeed, the whole monastic tradition was characterised by ambivalence toward gender, testifying that sex, marriage and family life were not essential to Christian discipleship, but that all desire is ultimately orientated toward God (Stuart 2007:69). These and other examples of gender fluidity remind us that the medieval mystics moved beyond their own gender categories, making such categories continually fluid. Both female and male mystics often expressed their relationship with Christ in erotic language<sup>30</sup>. “Their Christ is both male and female; their soul both male and female and their self seeks dissolution through union with that which is both utterly far and near” (Loughlin 2004:20).

### **3.2.5 Reformation**

It would be easy to suggest that the Reformation was a retreat from bodiliness to inwardness, focused as it was on the centrality of the Word and the spiritualizing of the

---

<sup>30</sup> This sacred eroticism is, however, not straightforward and unproblematic. In the dualist contrasting of carnal and spiritual desire, the spiritual is elevated, while the carnal is disparaged. The carnal becomes something to be shunned in pursuit of true knowledge of God (Loughlin 2004:4).



sacraments, but this would be a caricature (Isherwood & Stuart 1998:69). It was, however, a time of radical shifts in the understanding of sex and gender (Shaw 2007:215).

David Tripp (1997:131-153), writing on the image of the body in the Reformation, uses the reformers' judgement on dancing as an "index of attitudes to the body". He suggests that Luther distinguished levels of humanness and that the body came a poor third to the mental and the spiritual. But the biblical distinction between carnal and spiritual was far more important for Luther. Sin was carnal – which is not the same as identifying sin with fleshy desire. Luther unambiguously placed the core of sin in the will. He considered the life of faith as a life for the entire person and pictured heaven as a place of happy dancing.

In *Little Book of Instruction on how Lads should be Christianly taught and brought up*, Zwingli taught that God is known through the created world. Zwingli affirmed the body and the body as an image of society and suggested vigorous exercise – anything but swimming (Tripp 1997:137)!

For Calvin the body, though marginal within the essence of humanity, was nonetheless integral to the divine image. He considered dancing to be a preamble to fornication, but this is not necessarily a deprecation of corporeality. Even though he subordinated the body to the spirit, he was concerned for the wholeness and moral integrity of the entire person (Tripp 1997:138-141).

It is regarding Holy Communion that there seems to be a great divide amongst the reformers<sup>31</sup>. This has been widely studied, but Tripp (1997:141) suggests that the place of

---

<sup>31</sup> There have been many quarrels over the interpretation of the presence of Christ at Holy Communion, leading Bieler and Schottroff (2007:131-132) to identify three models for describing Christ's presence in Holy Communion, namely transubstantiation, spiritual presence, and what they call "the Lutheran view, which emphasizes the real presence of Christ in both natures, human and divine".

body imagery within the Reformers' views of Holy Communion have not attracted attention. Where both Luther and Zwingli shared a vigorous appreciation of the physical and the communal body, their views on the body present in Holy Communion differed sharply. For Luther, the totality of Christ is present at Communion, his body and blood given to believers – the bread is Christ's body. Zwingli, on the other hand, insisted that Christ's body and blood cannot be present in Holy Communion, as Christ's resurrected body and blood went up to heaven. This does not mean that Zwingli was negative of corporeality. Instead, Christ is present in Holy Communion because the Church, not the elements, is his Body. The bread means Christ's Body. For Zwingli and Calvin, Christ's individual body must be away in heaven: only for Calvin, however, is the true locus of Holy Communion not on earth but in heaven. Christ gives his entire self to believers, but this happens in heaven, even as the sacrament is received on earth (Tripp 1997:141-142).

One of the most radical aspects of the Reformation was the de-idealizing of virginity (Isherwood & Stuart 1998:70). The Reformers found no scriptural warrant for the superiority of the celibate state and believed that compulsory celibacy led to immorality among priests. The focus on marriage was so strong that it almost became a litmus test of commitment to reform (Shaw 2007:221). Yet this rehabilitation of marriage is not entirely positive. For many women the Reformation signalled a narrowing of their bodily choices. Women could no longer, as nuns, be part of the clergy. Coupled with the dissolution of the monasteries, women were totally collapsed into the roles of wife and mother, with no other choices before them. The power and freedom women obtained through celibacy and monasticism were lost to women in the Reformation (Isherwood & Stuart 1998:70).

Jane Shaw (2007:216-218) points to the constriction of this shift for women by discussing *A Serious Proposal for the Ladies*, written by Mary Astell in 1694. Astell pled for what she

called a “religious retirement”, a monastery for unmarried women. Although her work was warmly received, the idea was summarily squashed. Astell poignantly shows the narrowing of choices for women when marriage became the only option, the only vocation, available to them.

The focus on marriage attenuated the whole notion of what a woman is. Social roles became internalised as inherent personality traits. The earlier models of powerful women prophets and independent nuns all but disappeared. In their place came confined and passive models of Christian womanhood. Femininity became identified with the roles of wife and mother, with selfless care (Woodhead 2007:236). The gender fluidity that was so common in the mysticism of the Middle Ages, became unpalatable (Loughlin 2004:4).

It is worth noting, however, that the idealizing of marriage did not dispel the ambivalence toward the body and sexual desire. Isherwood and Stuart (1998:70) discuss the work of Daniel Doriani regarding the attitudes of the Puritans toward marriage. Puritans regarded marriage as an honourable and chaste state and regarded sexual activity as essential to marriage – not simply because it prevented fornication and resulted in procreation, but because it increased the love between women and men (who had equal right to be satisfied). Yet they feared excessive desire, since they believed that it reduced human beings to the level of animals. Therefore the bodies of married couples had to be disciplined. Couples were required to pray before intercourse. Levitical laws on the timing of intercourse were observed. Couples who did not practice moderation would be punished by the birth of deformed children. This fear of excess also applied to eating, drinking and recreation.

Although it brought seismic shifts regarding sexuality and gender, the Reformation still did not manage to resolve the ambivalence concerning corporeality. To generalise, even during the Reformation period the Church of the Reformation was thus still marked by ambiguity toward the body.

### **3.2.6 *Enlightenment And Beyond***

Isherwood and Stuart (1998:71-72) suggest that it was Rene Descartes who ushered in the era of profound body/soul dualism, by arguing that the mind is a substance completely distinct from the body. After Descartes, human reason became the sole key to unlocking the external world. Punt (2005:370-371) describes the philosophical shift of the Enlightenment as a change from a “philosophy of being to a philosophy of consciousness”. It was during this time that a person came to be understood as a rational being. Permanence became ascribed to the mind, replacing the body as the basis for immanence. In the process, the body became inferior and secondary to the mind.

Ironically, according to Isherwood and Stuart (1998:72), the Enlightenment’s eclipse of the body by reason enabled women to claim authority on the basis of said reason. Disembodied objectivity promised the liberation of women. One response to this was the development of the two-sex model, declaring a radical distinction between male and female bodies.

In the early modern period the one-sex model still functioned. Men and women were considered to have the same genitals, but women’s were imperfectly formed (in relation to men’s) and remained inside. Gender was often viewed as unstable and changeable.<sup>32</sup>

---

<sup>32</sup> Isherwood and Stuart (1998:71) suggest that this is a view that we see reflected, to some extent, in Paul’s writing. While he appears to advocate a rigid hierarchical distinction between male and female, he actually

Men had to strive to stay masculine, while girls were warned not to stretch their legs too far, lest they become male (Shaw 2007:222-223). During the Enlightenment, the one-sex model was gradually replaced by the two-sex model. This shift was not because of scientific discoveries, but was instead the product of societal structures in which “radical difference between the sexes became culturally imperative” (Shaw, quoting Laqueur 2007:223). The old hierarchies of society were being questioned, and the language of natural rights started gaining ground. Who had rights? If women could be proven to be essentially different from men, that might lead to ostensibly scientific grounds for denying them rights. Following these social shifts, scientists started looking for biological and physiological differences between women and men. So, for example, skull size became very important, women’s smaller skulls being considered objective proof that they were less capable of natural reason (Shaw 2007:223).

The new focus on sexual difference led to the notion of complementarity – the idea that men and women are distinctly different and therefore have distinct, complimentary, roles prescribed by their biology (Shaw 2007:223).

Turner (1997:21-33) traces the influence of the capitalist enterprise on the body, which led to the medicalization of the body. As the above discussion on fasting in the Middle Ages suggested, notions of diet and asceticism focused on the religious, internal body. People did not fast in order to correspond to some notion of bodily beauty or health, but rather to achieve moral discipline. With the rise of capitalism arose the need for a productive labour force, which led to a shift of focus from the interior body to concern for the exterior body.

---

renders gender “theologically slippery”. Thus the image of the Church as Christ’s bride renders all within it – including men – female, and the call for all members of the Church to act as Christ implicitly urges women to perform supposed male roles. They then suggest that our modern preoccupation with fixed gender and sexual identities is such that we fail to wrestle with the subtleties of the pre-modern understanding of sex as seen, for example, in Paul’s letters.

Body discipline was no longer focused on religious life, but on training bodies to be productive. Bodies had to be useful and reliable. The medical field expanded, along with scientific theories of diet. Bodies became objects of consumption. The body as object of consumerism and consumption in turn led to a focus on the exterior. Where the previous religious model of dieting sought to regulate the interior body by restraint in order to control passion, “the new consumer culture seeks to enhance the surface of the body and to emphasize its sexual desirability” (Turner 1997:32). The capitalist focus on consumption led to the body becoming the vehicle of pleasure.

These shifts to a dualist focus on reason, a two-sex model and the commodification of the body were readily embraced by the Church. In the new economic structures work became separated from home, religion became privatised, and the home and religion became the domain of women. Especially the ideology of sexual difference was embraced by the Church, apparent in the evangelical revivals of the era. Differences between men and women were given so-called biblical grounding, while being blended with old ideas about the subordination of women (Shaw 2007:224).

Many theologians in the modern period bought into the dualism, with the body ceasing to have any ultimate value or purpose in redemption. So Isherwood and Stuart (1998:72) refer to Paul Tillich who, in his construction of Being, located it in the internal, individual self, ignoring the body. Karl Barth, on the other hand, read enormous theological significance into the bodily difference between male and female, regarding it as a reflection and symbol of the relationship of Christ to the Church. This led him to the subordination of women. Barth’s “inattentive enthusiasm for his own views about women and men – deeply influenced by the societal norms of his day - ... leads him to read them *into* the Scriptures” (Shaw 2007:226).

The influence of the Enlightenment pervades to this day, where “ideas about sexual difference and complementarity that our ancestors would have barely recognized 300 years ago, let alone 3000 years ago, are regularly mapped back onto ... Scripture” (Shaw 2007:226). Dualism has become the ideology of patriarchy, leading to the widely accepted dualisms of body and soul, will and desire, spirit and flesh, culture and nature, and public and private, masculine and feminine (Thatcher 1993:30-35).

### **3.3 Modern Body Theology**

The short and admittedly limited overview of the Christian tradition nevertheless reveals that dualism is a recent phenomenon that was never universally adhered to. Christian tradition seems rather to be characterised by an uneasy acceptance of embodiment. Nevertheless, there is generally a clear sense that the body and soul together are in the process of redemption (Isherwood & Stuart 1998:73).

The recognition both of the problems caused by dualism and the fact that we *are* bodies have led to the birth of body theology. Body theology is inspired by process thought, liberation theology and feminist theology. Process thought is an evolutionary approach that sees the world as ever becoming. As history is part of this becoming, so history is also written on the body and by the body, which means that God is working in, on and through the history of the body. Liberation theology placed the question of justice squarely on the theological table, believing that unjust realities can be changed. And feminist theology reminded the Church to take the lived realities of people seriously, placing

experience (especially of the marginalised)<sup>33</sup> and the body as site of experience in the centre of theological thought (Isherwood & Stuart 1998:33-39).

Body theology “creates theology *through* the body and not *about* the body” (Isherwood and Stuart 1998:22 – emphasis added). It begins with the corporeal, the concrete - not with doctrinal formulations - and reflects critically on bodily experience as a fundamental place of the experience of God<sup>34</sup> (Nelson 1992:42-44). It uses the body as the subject of God’s revelation, justifying this through the central Christian notion of the incarnation – that God has become human in Christ. Indeed, all the central elements of Christianity have the body in mind: incarnation, virgin birth, crucifixion, resurrection, Trinity, and the sacraments. The body is not just the symbol of theological truth, but also the site where these truths are realised (Loughlin 2007a:115).

Even though the field of body theology is a diverse field, touching on aspects like eco-theology, thealogy, queer theology, and so on, one specific controversy needs discussion: the question of the meta-physical, the Divine body outside the human body. Some body theology scholars aim to remove the Divine from any position beyond or outside the physical<sup>35</sup>, calling transcendence dualistic and questioning any opposition between immanence and transcendence (Mantin 2004:216-217). Since transcendence has previously been used to confirm dualistic constructions, rejecting the significance of

---

<sup>33</sup> Many feminist scholars, like Marcella Althaus-Reid (2004:158160) argue that *women’s* bodies and women’s experience should be the basis of our theology. Others, like Jane Moulaison (2007:341-359), warn that the female and marginal body is in itself also socially constructed and that a singular focus on women’s bodies is another form of essentialism.

<sup>34</sup> This is not to suggest that there is only one body experience or that all body experiences are the same. Taking bodily experience seriously means taking the diversity of experience seriously, and not setting one experience as the measure or standard for all others.

<sup>35</sup> See, for example, Isherwood, L. 2004. The Embodiment of Feminist Liberation Theology. In Clack, B. (ed.). *Embodying Feminist Liberation Theologies*. London: Continuum Publishing, pp.141-156.



ordinary experience, these scholars feel that transcendence needs to be reformulated in a way that resists all dualism (Clack 2004:249).

Against this negation of transcendence and mystery, scholars like Elizabeth Stuart argue that a “refusal to recognise duality (which is not the same as dualism) between divinity and humanity collapses the divine into human experience to the point that it disappears or virtually disappears” (2004:229). She pleads for a “re-enchantment” of the world, which dethrones reason to make space for the non-rational, emotional and transcendent. The Christian tradition can hold together the otherness of God and the incorporation of humans into the divine life (Stuart 2004:230-231).

Why is this focus on body theology important? Nelson (Isherwood & Stuart 1998:43) claims that when we feel awkward and embarrassed by our bodies and more concerned with so-called high spiritual matters, we lose the capacity for passionate caring, which he sees as the central task of the Christian life. Thomas Breidenthal (2002:343-355) argues that sexuality serves as a physical reminder of our connection or availability to our neighbour, a sometimes hopeful, sometimes frightening sign that we cannot escape our fellow human beings. Our bodies do not hide us or stand as a barrier of defence between our innermost selves and the world. Instead of protecting us from the world, our bodies reveal the fact that we belong to the world – and to one another. The trick, according to Breidenthal, is to grow into our vulnerability as intimacy with God and neighbour. This involves a discipline which consists not of the avoidance or control of vulnerability, but in its perfection. Similarly, Stuart (1997:54-55) sees bodies as sites of hospitality to God and to one another. It is through our bodies that we are in relationship with ourselves, one another, God and the rest of creation. And it is through our bodies that we are able to express these relationships, loving, caring, and acting against injustice.

In our current rape culture, it is also helpful to take note of Christine Gudorf (1994:161), who discusses sexual ethics as bodyright, stating that humans have a right to control their own bodies. It is ironic that Western societies have for centuries developed understandings of political and economic rights, and yet the most foundational right – bodyright – remains a relatively late one to be developed. She connects this bodyright to mutuality in sexual pleasure, which she sees as normative. She also debunks the model of sexual control – the idea that we can control our sexual desire as if it is something apart from us. This model of control causes the body to be seen as an enemy of our real selves. And it is this model of control, Gudorf (1994:87) says, which is at the root of what makes women fear men as dangerous. It is also responsible for a great deal of men’s pain. In the control model, male socialisation centres on repression – the repression of feelings, wishes and desires. But repression is not necessary to ensure control of sexual desire. Sexual desire is not a raging river in flood about to overpower us. It is not beyond reason. Especially in terms of rape, her focus on bodyright, mutuality and control is important.<sup>36</sup>

### **3.4 Summary**

The current chapter started with definitions of body, using different theories of body to demonstrate the complexity of the body. Using Douglas’s theory, it was established that the individual body is a symbol of the social body. The structures and power hierarchies of society are reproduced on the body. In a rape culture, therefore, women’s bodies represent patriarchy’s anxiety about loss of male control.

---

<sup>36</sup> Gudorf’s focus of “bodyright” could, however, be seen as steeped in an individualistic culture, where every person’s body belongs only to her- or himself. If bodies serve to remind us of our connectedness and to focus us on relationship and caring, body cannot be seen as a single, autonomous entity. Countryman’s (1998) discussions on body ownership in the Bible are helpful. He concludes that in our era, the body belongs to the individual, while still being subordinate to God’s reign, since Christ owns all believers (1998:241-242).

Following the definition of the body as a symbol of the social body, an overview of the Church's history with the body was given. Here it was shown that Christian theology is thoroughly embodied and that the body often played a central role in the Church's life. It also became clear, however, that the Church's relationship with the body was a troubled one, marked by ambiguity. Even so, it was only after the Enlightenment that dualisms such as body and soul, will and desire, spirit and flesh, and male and female took root. Bodies became commodities. In the Church, focus shifted to the soul, constructing the Christian life as an inner, spiritual life. The body and corporeality became secondary to the life of the Church. Gender dualism was embraced and theologised as part of God's created will, serving other dualisms such as private and public, and rational and emotional.

In recent times, the awareness of the problems caused by dualism led to the development of body theology. Body theology takes the body seriously. It begins with the corporeal. It does not, however, theologise about the body, but through the body. The task of the Church (and theology), then, is to restore belief in the basic goodness and importance of human bodies (Nelson 1978:68). In our rape culture, this is especially significant. In the next chapter, I shall consider the body of Christ in Paul's theology, exploring the sacramental and ecclesial body as a bodily reality over against a rape culture.

## **Chapter 4: Discerning the Body**

While Christian theology is and always has been thoroughly embodied, there was also a marked ambiguity toward the body throughout the Church's history. This ambiguity finally developed into a body-soul dualism, which saw bodies being relegated in favour of the soul, and female being subjugated to male. Chapter three indicated that much of the dualistic and negative body discourses have been ascribed to Paul. While this negativity was more a reflection of the readers' prejudices regarding corporeality than Paul's, the Pauline letters were – and still are – often appropriated for “other-worldly focused religious practices” (Punt 2010:79). Thus Paul is read to focus more on ostensibly spiritual matters, while his theology is seen to not hold the body and bodiliness in high regard. If our task, established in the previous chapter, is to restore belief in the basic goodness and importance of human bodies – especially female bodies – then we need to discern the body in Christian religious belief and practices. And if dualist body ontologies have often been blamed on Paul, we need to discern Paul's body theology anew. My aim in this chapter is to account for Paul's body theology, specifically with regards to the body of Christ.

### **4.1 The Body Of 1 Corinthians**

The word σῶμα occurs eighty-three times in the Pauline letters, of which fifty-two occurrences (63 per cent) are in 1 Corinthians. Even though numerical ascendancy does not necessarily equate to the importance of “body” in Corinthians, and even though 1 Corinthians is the second longest Pauline letter, the frequent occurrences do suggest that there is something notable about the body in this letter (Kim 2008:119). Indeed, according to Jerome Neyrey, Paul's first letter to the Corinthians is “thoroughly and intensely concerned with BODY [sic]” (1986:130).

Paul's concern for corporeal issues is clear in the structure of the letter. I follow James Hollingshead's outline (1998:166), highlighting specific bodily issues not necessarily indicated by him: Paul starts with a greeting, followed by a discussion of the presence of factions in Corinth and an account of Paul's own ministry<sup>37</sup> (1:10-4:20). Yung Suk Kim points out that this section of the letter focuses on the cross as God's power, embodied by Paul (2008:71)<sup>38</sup>. Paul then turns to specific problems in the Corinthian Church, addressing the unacceptable sexual practice of incest (5:1-13), public litigation of internal conflicts<sup>39</sup> (6:1-11), and men having sexual intercourse with prostitutes (6:12-20). From 7:1, following the phrase "Now concerning the things you wrote", Paul goes on to discuss issues apparently raised by the Corinthians themselves, starting with marriage and sex (7:1-40), the eating of meat sacrificed to idols (8:1-11:1), men and women's hairstyles<sup>40</sup> - and therefore bodies - when prophesying (11:2-16), and problems during the eating of the common meal or Holy Communion (11:17-34). Then there is an extended section focusing on spirituality and spiritual gifts (chapters 12-14), including a discussion of the Church as the body of Christ (12:12-31), the famous section on love as the lived implication of being part of said body (13:1-13) and an extended discussion on

---

<sup>37</sup> Martin (1995:67-68) shows how Paul uses traditional rhetoric, attesting to at least some level of rhetorical training. He points out that Paul is consistently focusing on status in 1 Corinthians 1-4, which affirms that the divisions in Corinth were around social status differences (see below). Paul turns traditional rhetoric on its head by claiming a low status for himself and the apostles, thereby reflecting the alternative status system of the Church. His goal, already in this introduction to his letter, is the "disruption of the hierarchy of the Greco-Roman body and the reversal of status positions" (Martin 1995:67-68).

<sup>38</sup> Indeed, Kim's (2008:71-73) outline of 1 Corinthians follows the theme of Christ crucified and Paul's argument alternating between Paul and the Corinthians embodying Christ crucified on the one hand and the Corinthians' failure to embody Christ crucified on the other.

<sup>39</sup> Here Martin (1995:76-79) again shows how the court cases are in fact about the divisions between rich and poor within the Corinthian community, as the courts were structured to favor the upper classes. Paul is therefore referring to higher-status Christians taking lower-status Christians to court.

<sup>40</sup> Murphy-O'Connor (2009:142-158) argues convincingly that 1 Corinthians 11:2-16 does not refer to head coverings, but to both men and women's hairstyles. O'Connor's argument is part of a broader ranging argument pertaining to the understanding of head coverings in 1 Corinthians 11, which cannot be addressed here.

glossolalia<sup>41</sup> (14:1-39). The letter culminates in a discussion of the resurrection and the resurrection body (chapter 15), ending with some final instruction on money collected for Jerusalem and other practical arrangements (chapter 16).

Neyrey (1986:129-130) uses the following outline to show the body as a constant point of reference in 1 Corinthians:

1. Concern for bodily orifices
  - a. Genitals (chapters 5-7)
  - b. Mouth for eating (chapters 8-10 and 11)
  - c. Mouth for speaking prophecy (chapters 12-14)
2. Bodily surface regarding hairstyles (11:2-16)
3. Body as metaphor for the Church (chapter 12)
4. Head and feet to describe relationships (11:3, 15:25-28)
5. Athlete's body as model (9:24-27)
6. The resurrection body (chapter 15)
7. Unified body members greeting with a kiss (16:20)

Much of 1 Corinthians is born out of conflict between members of the Corinthian community – groups Dale Martin (1995:69) calls the “Strong” and the “Weak”, the Strong being wealthier members of the community with a higher social status (though probably not part of the elite of the time) and the Weak being poorer workers and slaves with lower social status. The Strong – a minority in the Corinthian community – “stressed the hierarchical arrangement of the body and the proper balance of its constituents”, while not showing much concern over boundaries or pollution (Martin 1995:xv-xvi). Paul and the

---

<sup>41</sup> Once again, Martin (1995:87-88) argues that the issue of speaking in tongues is also about the “disruptive hierarchy of the body of Christ”, since glossolalia was associated with higher status.

majority of the Corinthian Church - the so-called “Weak” - considered the body to be dangerously permeable, threatened by polluting agents. The conflict therefore stemmed from the two groups’ different assumptions regarding the individual and social body. Their positions correlated with socioeconomic status, since the Strong were relatively secure economically and had a high level of education, while the Weak were less educated and not economically secure, therefore feeling vulnerable to and threatened by outside agents. Paul consistently sides with the Weak, which does not mean that he came from a lower socioeconomic background, but might suggest that he chose to associate with a lower status for the sake of his beliefs regarding the hierarchy (or lack thereof) of the body of Christ (Martin 1995:xv-xvi).

As shown above (in chapter three), the physical body is a reflection of the social body. Concerns for the physical body are therefore reflections of concern for the social body, and the way the physical body is perceived and structured reflects the way the social body is perceived and structured. Indeed, in 1 Corinthians “the borders between the two are sometimes so unclear and obscured that they become so near as to be almost merged” (Gupta 2010:528). Paul’s arguments in 1 Corinthians are therefore not only about the physical body, but reflect assumptions and beliefs about the social body.

#### **4.2 The Church As The Body Of Christ In 1 Corinthians 12**

The reciprocity between social and physical body can be seen clearly from Paul’s argument regarding the body of Christ in 1 Corinthians 12. According to Martin (1995:47), Paul is using a traditional Greco-Roman rhetorical mechanism<sup>42</sup> called a *homonía* or

---

<sup>42</sup> Neil Elliot (2010:16-23) is cautious about ascribing traditional Greco-Roman rhetorical mechanisms to Paul’s letters. He asserts that letters did not conform to the strict rules of traditional Greco-Roman rhetoric and, furthermore, that such rhetoric was used only by the ruling class. Instead, Elliot argues that Paul’s letter to the Romans is framed as an announcement of the power of God – an *apodeixis* or manifestation of divine

concord speech. These speeches were usually aimed at concord or unity within the political body, focusing on an ideology of social control Martin (1995:47) calls “benevolent patriachalism”. Paul’s use of the body in 1 Corinthians 12 stands squarely in this rhetorical tradition, containing many elements usually found in *homonía* speeches. *Homonía* speeches often used the body as metaphor to confirm the so-called natural order hierarchy of the social body. So for example Richard Horsley (1998:171) tells of a fable told by Menenius Agrippa about the negative result for the whole body when other parts refuse to feed the stomach<sup>43</sup>.

Paul’s use of *homonía* corresponds to the traditional Greco-Roman concord rhetoric in several ways: it uses the physical body as an example of the social body, it focuses on the mutual benefit to all the parts belonging to the body (12:7), it expounds the different yet same theory (12:4), stresses the interdependence of the members (verses 15 and 21), repeats the traditional assertion that the body would perish were it not for the different functions of different members (verses 17-20) and claims that this is a given order (12:18) – although not given by nature, but by God (Martin 1995:94).

His use of traditional body analogy differs, however, on a very important aspect: where traditionally the body is invoked to solidify a so-called natural hierarchy, Paul uses this

---

power. Elliott finds the same rhetoric of divine power in 1 Corinthians 1:4, where Paul claims not to be using traditional words of wisdom, but rather to rely on “demonstration [*apodeixis*] of spirit and power” (Elliott 2010:18). Paul does indeed disparage rhetoric and insists in 1 Corinthians that he is not using rhetorical methods (1 Corinthians 1:17). But Paul “protests too much”, according to Martin (1995:47). Martin (1995:47-49) argues convincingly that even though Paul rejects rhetoric throughout 1 Corinthians 1-4, this deprecation of rhetoric was in itself a common rhetorical technique. He also demonstrates how Paul’s claim in 2 Corinthians 11:6 to be a “layman with regards to speech” simply means that Paul was not a professional orator. In fact, both Paul’s disparagement of rhetoric and his claim to be a rhetorical layman are established rhetorical methods. Moreover, Martin (1995:47) suggests that it would have been impossible for an urban person not to have been exposed to a great deal of rhetoric. One can therefore with some confidence accept that Paul is indeed using traditional Greco-Roman rhetoric, though adapted to his own circumstance.

<sup>43</sup> “According to the Roman historian Livy (*Hist.* 2:32), Menenius Agrippa (fifth century BCE) used a fable about the common emaciation resulting from the other body parts’ refusal to feed the stomach in order to persuade the plebs to end their ‘sedition’” (Horsley 1998:171).



hierarchy's own rhetorical instrument to subvert that very same hierarchy. So Paul says: "But by much more the members of the body which are judged (supposed) to be weaker (of lower status) are actually necessary, and what we judge (or suppose) to be the less honourable of the body, to these we accord more honour, and our least beautiful (presentable) have more beauty (presentableness), whereas our beautiful parts do not need it. But God arranged the body, giving greater honour to the lesser, in order that there may be no schism in the body, but that the members may be equally concerned for one another" (Martin 1995:94 translating 1 Corinthians 12:22-25).

Martin (1995:94-95) points out that Paul uses status terms like ἀτιμότερα (lacking in honour - 1 Corinthians 12:23), τιμὴν περισσοτέραν (abundantly honoured – 1 Corinthians 12:23) and δοκοῦντα (1 Corinthians 12:22 - which calls to mind οἱ δοκοῦντες - prominent persons) to claim that the normally perceived hierarchy is actually only surface hierarchy. While some physical elements of the body may seem to be the parts with the lowest status, our attention to them affirm that they are the most necessary members and therefore have the highest status. Paul's use of ἀναγκαῖά (necessary) in verse 22 is ambiguous. It may imply high status, since *homonía* rhetoric aimed to demonstrate the higher-status members of the body (such as the head and the belly, representing the ruling class) were the most necessary parts of the body. But here Paul states that the weaker parts are the most necessary. Furthermore, ἀναγκαῖος was sometimes euphemistically used to refer to the penis (Martin 1995:95, 269). Paul therefore both admits and denies the weaker members' low status. In fact, he deliberately confuses the accepted hierarchy by claiming that the weaker members are of high status because they are necessary.

In the end, Paul's argument is that the normal connection between status and honour should be disrupted, that those who seem to occupy positions of lower status are actually

essential and should therefore be accorded more honour. Paul uses the elite's own rhetoric to push for an actual reversal of the normal, accepted attribution of honour and status (Martin 1995:95-96). "Paul's proposed body, the body of Christ, represents the hierarchical reversal of the normal cosmic body of upper-class ideology" (Martin 1995:88)<sup>44</sup>.

According to James Hollingshead (1998:155-156), Paul's use of *homonía* also differs from the traditional Greco-Roman rhetoric in that Paul does not use the body of Christ simply as a metaphor. Instead, he considers the Church to literally comprise the "physical, material, corporeal presence of Christ on earth." Hollingshead bases his argument on Paul's use of *σῶμα*. As shown above, Paul was not a dualist. *Σῶμα* refers to the whole person, including *πνεῦμα* – which, according to Martin (1995:14), was not considered an immaterial substance in Greco-Roman discourse<sup>45</sup>. This leads Hollingshead to assert that the unity between Christ and Church is literal for Paul, but that said unity is rooted in *πνεῦμα* rather than *σῶμα*. "The community can be called Christ's body, because the individual bodies of community members contain the spirit Paul identifies with Christ. It is *one* body because there is *one* spirit" (Hollingshead 1998:159). Anthony Kelly (2010:806) calls this a "distinctive realism": members of the community, as corporeal bodies, are incorporated into the body of Christ "in its present vital relationship to the reality of the universe of space and time". He sees a clear bodily mutuality in Paul's writing. Members of the community must live as the body of Christ in their current, day-to-day reality, not in

---

<sup>44</sup> However, Martin (1995:199) claims that Paul does not make the same claims for male-female hierarchy in 1 Corinthians. Even though Paul undermines hierarchy in terms of socioeconomic status, educational privilege, and slavery and freedom, he never does the same regarding gender. Instead, he bases his assumptions about gender on the same strong-weak hierarchy he consistently disrupts! Perhaps modern readers living in a different temporal and spatial context would do well to apply Paul's logic consistently, also regarding gender, taking the disruptive hierarchy of the body of Christ seriously in all its forms.

<sup>45</sup> Martin (1995:6-15) discusses what he calls "The Ancient Philosophical Body". He shows how every existing thing was seen as corporeal. Only nonexistent things, like products of imagination, were considered incorporeal. Even when something was incorporeal, it was still composed of "stuff".

some celestial, mythical way. The shared πνεῦμα is not a disembodied reality, but the sustaining principle of the body.

### **4.3 Discerning The Body Of Christ At The Table In 1 Corinthians 11**

Even though they were all part of the body of Christ, the social status discord in the Corinthian community often led to disunity. This lack of unity was especially visible at the communal meal – what was supposed to be their Holy Communion. Jerome Murphy-O'Connor (2009:182-185) retraces the background which led to the exacerbation of already existing social discord during communal meals. He points out that community gatherings would take place in the public part of private houses. The *triclinium* (dining room) was too small to accommodate all the members. The host therefore had to divide guests into two categories, some being invited into the *triclinium* while the rest had to stay outside this room in the adjacent atrium. Those in the *triclinium* would recline, while people in the atrium had to sit. Furthermore, it was customary to offer different types of food to the different categories of guest, leading to those in the atrium receiving inferior food. A likely scenario was that the Strong was economically secure, did not need to work late and could therefore arrive early, take up the best seats and eat the best food. The poorer members were less free to dispose of their time. Their work responsibilities led to them arriving later and then having to sit in the atrium, eating inferior food.

According to Peter Lampe (1994:37-41), the Corinthian Holy Communion followed the pattern of any Greco-Roman dinner party. Such a meal would start at “First Tables”, where several courses would be served. After a break, the “Second Tables” would start with a sacrifice and invocation of the house gods. Second Tables ended with a toast to the house gods, followed by drinking and singing. Following this pattern, it is possible that the richer Corinthians arrived early and started with a form of First Tables. When the other

members arrived, the bread would be blessed and broken, followed by the sacramental meal – the Second Table. The meal is ended by the blessing of the cup, drinking and perhaps other worship activities. Even though Lampe suggests that every member brought their own food, the resulting discord is the same: the wealth of the richer members widened the gulf between the rich and poor members of the community.

Such Greco-Roman dinner practices provide a likely scenario for what Paul is writing about in 1 Corinthians 11:17-34, talking about the improper use of Holy Communion (11:27) and urging members to examine themselves before partaking in the meal (11:28). His interest is not in a proper attitude of piety or a specific doctrinal position regarding the nature of the elements (Martin 1995:194). He is, however, very much concerned with the Corinthians' bodily state: partaking in a way that is unworthy has everything to do with the body – the body of Christ. Paul's concern is with the implications of bodily actions of individual members of the community on the social body of the whole community. He therefore focuses his argument on the fracturing of the Church body. Those who reinforce social distinctions during the meal are tearing Christ's body apart, making the meal of unity one of schism and difference. And by tearing Christ's body apart, the Corinthians open their own bodies to disease and death (11:30), as the physical body is a microcosm for the social body. Individual bodies are healed by healing the social body.

The proper use of Holy Communion requires "discerning the body" (διακρίνων τὸ σῶμα – 1 Corinthians 11:29). The complex sets of meanings pertaining to the body are especially clear in this passage. According to Martin (1995:194-195) σῶμα in this instance points to several things: it is, first of all, the bread of the meal. However, when Paul says that the unworthy eaters are guilty of the blood and death of the Lord, he implies that they are indictable for Jesus' death. Σῶμα therefore also signifies the crucified body of Christ.

Since the Church is equated with Christ's body throughout 1 Corinthians, and the argument in 11:17-34 focuses on the unity of the Church,  $\sigma\omega\mu\alpha$  must relate to the Church as Christ's body as well. Furthermore, as Paul is lamenting the mistreatment of the poorer members by the richer members,  $\sigma\omega\mu\alpha$  also refers to the body of one's fellow believers, therefore the bodies of all believers, including one's own. "Discerning the body" is to recognize the bread as sacrament, to remember Christ crucified, to ponder the unity of the Church, and to pay attention to the bodily needs of oneself and of fellow members of the community.

Andrea Bieler and Luise Schottroff describe the body of Christ in Holy Communion as "the body as metaphor as body" (2007:134). They explain what they mean by this by pointing out that individual bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit and that "the assembly around the table *is* (in the flesh and not only representationally) the body of Christ" (Bieler & Schottroff 2007:135)<sup>46</sup>. Christ's presence is manifested in the bodies of those gathered at the table. This leads Bieler and Schottroff to call the body of Christ an embodied metaphor. It is neither a comparison nor an analogy. It expresses something that is not true on one level – believers are not the corporeal body of the person Jesus – but that is true on another level – believers are, as corporeal bodies, the body of Christ. The body of Christ can be a body as metaphor as body because the body carries several meanings simultaneously. It

---

<sup>46</sup> Above, in Chapter 4.2, I called the ecclesial body of Christ a "distinctive realism" (Kelly 2010:61). Bieler and Schottroff's argument here suggests that the body of Christ at Holy Communion is also a distinctive realism. Questions regarding the nature of Christ's presence at Holy Communion, and specifically in the elements of bread and wine, have been a theological controversy and cause of schism for centuries. The question regarding the presence of Christ in the elements is an important one for considering corporeality within the body of Christ. However, the question regarding Christ's presence in the elements does, according to Lampe (1994:43), not feature in 1 Corinthians 11 and is therefore beyond the scope of the current study. "For Paul, the ethical implications of the Eucharist were far more vital than the later intricate theological discussions of *how* Christ might be present in the Lord's Supper. The fact *that* Christ is present matters for Paul" (Lampe 1994:43).

is the body of the person Christ, the collective people of God and individual human bodies (Bieler & Schottroff 2007:140).

The stratified meaning of the body of Christ makes what Bieler and Schottroff (2007:5) call “sacramental permeability” possible – Holy Communion opens up to include more than just the bread and wine consumed at the table. It pulls the realities of human bodies in as a central part of the practice and life of the body of Christ. Permeability draws the bread consumed at kitchen tables and the bread stolen from the poor into the bread at the Communion table. Similarly, it draws broken, abused and violated bodies into the body of Christ. It makes transparent the body of Christ, the presence of God, in the bread and in the bodies. This body of Christ permeates through to the rest of life.

Martin (1995:195-196) points to the parallel chiasmic structure of 11:29 and 11:31, which underlines the multiple subjects of the body of Christ. The way to avoid judgement in 11:31 is to discern oneself. In 11:29, it is to discern the body. To discern the body therefore means “taking proper account of one’s own bodily state, realizing one’s contingent status as a member of the larger body of Christ, and recognizing one’s vulnerability to dissolution and destruction” (Martin 1995:196). To discern the body also means to recognize and look after the vulnerable members of the body. “Those who truly discern the body and are incorporated into it cannot remain insensate to the sufferings of the weaker members” (Cavanaugh 1998:231).

#### 4.4 Discerning The Body Of Christ As Divine Property

Bieler and Schottroff highlight another aspect of the body discerned. Considering Paul's assertion that some members of the Corinthian community became sick or died because of the misuse of Holy Communion<sup>47</sup>, Bieler and Schottroff (2007:118-122) point to Acts 4:32-5:11. In the Acts narrative property was shared and Ananias and Sapphira were punished for violating divine property. When the Corinthian members brought bread and wine to the communal meal, the bread and wine became community property consecrated to God. In comparison to the situation portrayed in Acts 4, the Corinthians appear to have failed to discern the divine community property as such, and treated it as private property. Discerning the body therefore means discerning God's property – in bread and wine, but also in the bodies of the community members. If the body is one and the body is God's property, then looking after the bodily needs of others is not charity – it is justice. Holy Communion “derives not only from the idea of God's property; the meal itself is an expression of economic and ecumenical responsibility” (Bieler & Schottroff 2007:122).

Based on this concept of divine property, Bieler and Schottroff (2007:91-96) suggest that Holy Communion creates an alternate economy: an economy of grace. They discuss the influential work of Marcel Mauss. In his work, originally published in 1950, Mauss studied gift-giving in several Native American tribes. His research led him to distinguish between two forms of gift exchange: agonistic and non-agonistic. Agonistic gift exchange aims to shame the receiver, making it impossible for the receiver to respond with a bigger gift. It is competitive and aggressive, a struggle for one-upmanship in order to claim higher status.

---

<sup>47</sup> Bieler and Schottroff (2007:121) point out that it is not only the richer Corinthian members who became sick – the poorer members became sick as well. As a body, a unity, the whole community was injured by the misuse of Holy Communion. Cavanaugh (1998:246) shows how Paul considers the body to be a unity. When members act in ways that deny that their bodies are members of the body of Christ, their actions endanger the entire body.

Non-agonistic gift exchange, on the other hand, aims to create relationships with generosity and hospitality. Bruce Malina (1993:37) connects agonistic exchange with honour and shows how all transactions in the New Testament world were based on agonistic exchange. All goods, including honour, were seen as limited. All social interactions outside the family were a contest for honour. Gift-giving in Paul's time would therefore have been of an agonistic nature. "[E]very social interaction that takes place outside one's family or outside one's circle of friends is perceived as a challenge to honour, a mutual attempt to acquire honour from one's social equal" (Malina 1993:37).

There is, however, another form of giving gifts, namely responsive giving. Responsive giving "acts out of the acknowledgement of a surplus that existed before one's own gesture of giving" (Bieler & Schottroff 2007:93). It is a response to a gift received beforehand. With responsive giving, the line between giving and taking starts to blur, leading to the reciprocity of giving being emphasized.

It is plausible that Paul sees Holy Communion as functioning within an economy of grace based upon responsive giving. I have argued above that Paul's construction of the body of Christ in 1 Corinthians 12 subverts the social hierarchy of his time. In 1 Corinthians 12 he deliberately confounds the accepted hierarchy, claiming that weaker members have higher honour. In so doing, he reconstructs honour in a non-agonistic way as something to be given and shared. In a discussion of Paul and poverty, focusing specifically on the collection for the church in Jerusalem, Punt (2004:262) shows how Paul considered equality a divine principle which became the source of giving and receiving. We can conclude that Paul reconstructed honour and giving within the community of believers in a non-agonistic way.



We can therefore see in Holy Communion, based on Paul's restructuring of honour and giving in a non-agonistic way, an economy of responsive giving: the body of Christ brings what it has received (Bieler & Schottroff 2007:110). Through an economy of grace Christ gave his body. By sharing in Christ's body through Holy Communion, believers are taken up into the body of Christ, become a part of said body and are transformed into a new body-reality (see below). Through Holy Communion, believers share in the new body-reality as members of the body of Christ, giving what they have received. Bodies in the body of Christ are not commodities, but part of an economy of grace, received and given in a cycle of responsive giving.<sup>48</sup> Holy Communion is "governed by charity, God's free gift... It is the communal commitment to charity" (Cavanaugh 1998:229) and justice.

#### 4.5 Re-membering A Tortured Body

Paul establishes Holy Communion as an act of ἀνάμνησις (remembrance). In 1 Corinthians 11:24 and 25, after both the bread and the wine, Paul reminds his readers of how Jesus commanded his followers to commemorate the meal in remembrance of him. Bieler and Schottroff (2007:157-165) suggest that ἀνάμνησις is a mutual process, where both God and the members of the body of Christ remember God's liberating acts in the history of Israel, Christ's life, death and resurrection, "as well as the faces and names of the body of Christ who sustains the church and the world" (Bieler & Schottroff 2007:165).

---

<sup>48</sup> Countryman (1998:248) argues that New Testament sexual ethics is property ethics. One of the guidelines he derives from the New Testament is that believers own their own bodies, leading him to call rape property violation – not of the property of the *paterfamilias*, but of the individual as owner of her own body. There is, however, a danger that the body as individual property might lead to individualism, which treats the body-self as its own source and end. Countryman (1998:242) therefore adds that, although the body belongs to the individual, it is also subordinate to the reign of God – like the cycle of responsive giving described above. "Since Christ 'owns' all believers, their lives must cohere with this reality" (Countryman 1998:242) of being subordinate to the reign of God.

Remembrance in Holy Communion is not merely recalling events and people. “It is a meal of resistance, of resurrection, and of assurance of God’s justice in a world of violence” (Bieler & Schottroff 2007:161). It is not simply a ritual repetition or calling to mind of the past. It is a “re-membering of Christ’s body, a knitting together of the body of Christ” (Cavanaugh 1998:229). This is why Bieler and Schottroff (2007:167) can refer to ἀνάμνησις as relational and existential. It is existential, because members partaking of Holy Communion are no longer bodies listening to a distant story, but become involved participants. Bodies are drawn into the body of Christ in a transformative way. It is relational because it is emphatic. Observers are drawn into the body and body-experiences of the body of Christ.

However, we do need to consider how remembering an abused, tortured body of Christ on the cross can create an alternate body life for abused, tortured bodies of women today. What is being remembered at Holy Communion is, after all, also the death of Christ. The meal is understood to be a repetition of Jesus’ last meal before his Passion (1 Corinthians 11:23), proclaiming his torturous death every time it is enacted (1 Corinthians 11:26). Jesus was crucified by the imperial powers of his day. His crucifixion was a political act to maintain Rome’s imperial power. The focus on sacrifice and the crucified Body is not unproblematic.

Kim (2008:82) reminds us that the cross can be used to perpetuate or condone injustice by discouraging resistance. Such abuse of the message of the cross has been shown in chapter two, in the discourses used to discourage women’s resistance to violent relationships. So, for example, Phiri’s (2000:107-108) research showed how ideas about the suffering servant, forgiveness, and reconciliation are used by women in violent relationships – and their abusers – to rationalise the violence. Since the cross can indeed

be used to perpetuate injustice, Kim (2008:82) emphasises that the cross is an unwanted, unnecessary evil. The message of the cross is not to affirm imperial torture, but to resist the imperial power as destructive.

Indeed, Bieler and Schottroff (2007:58) point out that, from Rome's point of view, Jesus' crucifixion turned out to be a mistake. Paul specifically reminds his readers in 1 Corinthians 11:24-25 that Holy Communion is an act of ἀνάμνησις because Holy Communion became a place to remember Jesus' death, and every time the meal was celebrated, Rome's torture was named and exposed. In the sacramental re-enactment, the torturer's false motive was exposed. Where torture aims to create fear in order to silence its victims, Holy Communion gave voice to the pain, enabled the body of Christ to speak. The shame was exposed as a lie, the torturer as guilty. "The remembrance of Jesus' death gave Rome's imperial oppression the name that unmasked it. It did not bring peace, but rather death" (Bieler & Schottroff 2007:58). The ἀνάμνησις of Holy Communion made the tortured body visible. Celebrating Holy Communion was an act of resistance. At the same time, hope was given a name: the body of Christ. The body of Christ became "a symbol of power for going against and beyond the power of Roman imperialism" (Punt 2010:90).

Eugene Rogers (1999:249) adds another interesting perspective to the remembrance of Jesus' death in Holy Communion. He calls the Last Supper a "deathbed wedding" and sees Holy Communion as God's hospitality in the face of rejection and violence. "It gives us a chance to revisit the rape of Sodom, the un-hospitality, the un-eucharist, and God's great reversal of it in using the Gentiles' very violence to adopt them" (Rogers 1999:249). When one of the Trinity dies, it is not only Jesus' body that is broken. The Trinitarian fellowship of God is broken. Both the breaking of the body and the breaking of the

Trinitarian fellowship are overcome in Jesus' bodily resurrection. The breaking turns out to be a promise rather than a threat, not a breaking but a breaking open. This is what Rogers calls "the Eucharistic reversal". "God turns human inhospitality and murder into the very matter of the feast, giving back to human beings what they would take by force. God gives back for feasting the bread and wine the Romans would break; God gives back for love the body the Sodomites would rape" (Rogers 1999:260).

While ἀνάμνησις makes a tortured body visible and exposes the corrupt powers of the day, it is still important to remember that the communion (κοινωνία in 1 Corinthians 10:16) with the body of Christ is specifically the communion with Christ *crucified* (Kim 2008:21). The crucified body is important, as it deconstructs any idea of community based on wealth or status. Instead, the body of Christ is based on sacrificial love. As a crucified body, the body of Christ is in radical association and solidarity with the broken bodies of the world (Kim 2008:31). The body of Christ implies "radical empathy with the most vulnerable" (Bieler & Schottroff 2007:131). Indeed, Hollingshead (1998:208) can say that "Paul's ethic is driven by the idea of giving up authority and power for the sake of others".

Paul's re-structuring of the hierarchical body in 1 Corinthians 12 underlines the point that the body of Christ is not a powerful body with high social standing, but instead a body wherein the weak and vulnerable are honoured and respected. Paul's treatment of the ecclesial body of Christ and the factions at Holy Communion point to the solidarity with vulnerable bodies – strong bodies cannot continue living in a way that perpetuates a social system that suppresses some while favouring others. The ἀνάμνησις of Holy Communion is therefore a re-membrance not of powerful, ruling bodies, but of vulnerable, marginalised bodies.

#### 4.6 Remembering Bodies Transformed

While it is also a crucified body that is remembered at Holy Communion, it is important to add, according to Bieler and Schottroff (2007:63-65), that it is not *only* the crucified body of Christ that is remembered in Holy Communion. The body of Christ is both Christ crucified (1 Corinthians 1:18) and risen (1 Corinthians 15:12-22). Since Holy Communion is the place of *κοινωνία* with the body of Christ, it is the place where the resurrection is experienced. Bieler and Schottroff (2007:207) argue that *ἐγείρω* (resurrect) in 1 Corinthians 6:14 is found in future, present and aorist in variant manuscripts, that the *lectio difficilior* is the present tense and that the aorist corresponds to the present, which could imply that resurrection is a present reality. However, the resurrection as a present experience very quickly became considered a heretical teaching in early Christianity, which led to the present being replaced by the future. Bieler and Schottroff (2007:63) nevertheless argue that “believers are members of the body of the Risen One; they themselves are risen”. Because believers belong to the body of Christ, their bodiliness are changed, so that they become risen people. The body is the very site where human life is transformed (Punt 2005:380). Holy Communion expresses the radical transformation of the body and of life. The renewal is made present in Holy Communion, while simultaneously remaining an eschatological vision. It is both experience and hope. As experience, it has consequences for daily life (Bieler & Schottroff 2007:63).

Holy Communion as the transformation of bodies is another aspect to Rogers’s “Eucharistic reversal”. In the breaking of the bread, the body of God opens up to let us in. The Trinity breaks open and human beings, through their bodies, are taken up into God’s triune life. “The Trinity is entered by the body of the believer through the broken body of the Lord, and the body of the Lord is also broken to enter into the bodies of believers”

(Rogers 1999:241). This leads Rogers to affirm that human bodies are not left out of God's work. Human bodies are taken up into God's work, into the very body of Christ. Natalie Watson (2002:91) quotes Susan Ross, who considers this the criterion for the authentic body of Christ: whether Holy Communion "effects what it signifies", namely community, radical inclusion, an affirmation of body value and a concern for the body realities of its members. Paul's non-dualistic body theology takes body realities very seriously.

#### **4.7 Imagining Bodies Transformed**

In 1 Corinthians 11:26, Paul points the celebration of Holy Communion toward Jesus' return: ἄχρι οὗ ἔλθῃ (until he comes), thereby also placing the *parousia* within the scope of Holy Communion's remembrance (Horsley 1998:161). According to Bieler and Schottroff (2007:56-57), Paul here refers to the Day of the Lord, the day of divine judgment and salvation, expressing the expectation of God's salvation for the world. The coupling of Holy Communion with *parousia* suggests that Holy Communion is also an act of "eschatological imagination" (Bieler & Schottroff 2007:6).

Those who take part in the meal are infused into the body of Christ with their actual bodies. But bodies, as we have seen, are still broken, abused and in pain, used by others to increase their own power. Elizabeth Stuart (2004:232) points out that when body theology embraced process thought, it also embraced (perhaps unintentionally) the not yet of liberation. Holy Communion is therefore, to use Stuart's metaphor, the red pill of *The Matrix* – it incorporates members into a new reality, "the reality into a space beyond patriarchy, beyond the space of performance" (2004:232).

Eschatological imagination at Holy Communion keeps eschatology and corporeality together. In Romans 8:22-23, Paul describes how creation and humans groan in expectation of bodily redemption (τὴν ἀπολύτρωσιν τοῦ σώματος ἡμῶν – the redemption of our bodies). The ἄχρι οὗ ἔλθῃ (until he comes) at Holy Communion is such a groaning expectation of bodily redemption. The body of Christ “remind[s] God of the suffering of concrete bodies”, keeping together “the reality of brokenness and a hope of wholeness” (Bieler & Schottroff 2007:7).

#### **4.8 Living As The Body Of Christ**

The body of Christ in Holy Communion places bodies and body realities in the centre of the life of the Church. We do not come to the table despite our bodies and our earthly lives, but precisely through them (Power & Hogan 2013:4). We are bodily partakers of the physical elements of bread and wine. The very bodiliness of the celebration of Holy Communion affirms the centrality of body in the practice of faith (Ackerman 2003:141).

Holy Communion is therefore an expression of responsibility. It reminds us that partaking in and being part of the body of Christ has ethical implications, leading to what Bieler and Schottroff (2007:4) call the “Eucharistic life”. Being part of and taking part in the body of Christ implies a way of living with regard to food, bodies, economics and power. “It is the very proclamation of the death of Jesus in the common meal that announces the end of violence that kills and oppresses human beings” (Bieler & Schottroff 2007:58).

We can conclude that Paul’s body theology overturns traditional status hierarchies. Paul constructs the body of Christ in such a way as to expose the abuses of traditional hierarchies while also subverting these hierarchies. Paul places the body of Christ in radical solidarity with vulnerable bodies.

The body of Christ gives us a new body language (Kelly 2010:800), one where all members are honoured and traditional power hierarchies are subverted. It is a body language that takes corporeality seriously. The body language of the body of Christ is one of solidarity with vulnerable bodies, a language of justice, exposing the weakness of systems that need torture to stay in power. It is a body language of bodies transformed, changed into honoured, valuable members of the body of Christ. It is a language of hope, of bodies groaning in labour pains toward the redemption of bodies. Using this body of Christ body language, I shall reconsider rape in the next chapter, demonstrating how the body of Christ can inform our response to a rape culture - how it creates a world in which women's bodies are valued and protected, so that women may flourish.



## **Chapter 5: This Is My Body, This Is My Blood: Re-membering The Body Of Christ In A Rape Culture**

I have argued in chapter two that rape is an instrument of patriarchy, functioning in the same way as torture to keep patriarchal power hierarchies intact. Rape robs women of their voices, making and keeping them invisible. I have also discussed, in chapter three, how the body is a symbol for power and how female bodies represent patriarchal angst about losing power. I then traced the development of ontologies of body over the ages, showing how these ontologies eventually led to the dualistic devaluing of the body, how the body came to be seen as a commodity while the so-called inner or spiritual world became the body of theology. In chapter four I analysed the body of Christ in 1 Corinthians, showing how Paul placed the body in the centre of theology and Christian life, while he simultaneously undermined the seemingly natural societal hierarchies by (re)constructing the body of Christ in a subversive way.

To extend the metaphor, the task now remains to bring all of these limbs together in one body, showing how the body of Christ may be utilised as a theological response to a rape culture. This chapter aims to show how the body of Christ re-members the body in a way that controverts the abuse of women's bodies. I argue that by subverting patriarchy's power hierarchies, by valuing bodies and thereby making them visible, by transforming bodies and by imagining a body beyond patriarchy, the body of Christ re-members the social and individual body in a way that resists the violently abusive patriarchal body.

## 5.1 Re-membering Power Hierarchies Through The Ecclesial Body Of Christ

Using Douglas's anthropology, I have shown how the body is a representation of power hierarchies within society. The body "is a site on which many discourses of power ... are enacted" (Isherwood 2004:151). Rape is one particularly violent and repulsive way of enacting such a power discourse. It is about gaining and maintaining power by systemically instilling fear in a segment of society and in so doing, keeping another segment of society in power. Rape, I have suggested, is an instrument of patriarchy to maintain the unequal power balance between women and men.

As we have seen, the so-called two-sex model developed over time to establish an ostensibly natural dualistic order between male and female. The body of Christ, however, subverts societal hierarchies that claim to be natural. Paul's concept of the body of Christ reconstructs power and hierarchy, giving status to all members, acknowledging the value of every member – especially those that the ostensibly natural hierarchy of society would oppress. In fact, Paul's understanding of God and Christ (see also 1 Corinthians 1) is that through them the societal order of high and low status, important and peripheral, is not only subverted but reversed. The body of Christ exposes the so-called natural hierarchal order as unnatural and puts a new body of equality and respect for all members in its place.

Rape is the product of unequal gender relations. Where rape tries to sustain patriarchal power, the body of Christ subverts societal (patriarchal) power constructs. It relocates power in the cruciform body of Christ. It shows how power is not to be found in specific positions or supposed natural aspects such as gender, but redefines the importance and need of every member, constructing a body wherein the vulnerable are honoured and respected. Ackermann reminds us that the "body of Christ is in grave danger when it does

not affirm the value and the role of every single one of its limbs” (2006:236). In the body of Christ, the powerful serve the less powerful, not just vice versa. In the process, the less powerful are empowered, so that honour and power are equally constructed. Within the body of Christ the value of every member is affirmed.

Writing on intimate partner violence, Jewkes (2002:1427) suggests one of the primary ways to prevent such violence is by empowering women and improving their status in society. Similarly, Du Toit (2005:183) argues that “rape loses its devastating impact if the material and symbolic world in which the sexes relate to each other, changes”. This is exactly what the body of Christ does. When the body of Christ is re-membered as constructed by Paul in 1 Corinthians, and when the body of Christ is the body-language of the members of the Church, it empowers women by affording them status that subverts patriarchal hierarchies. The body of Christ changes the symbolic landscape on which men and women relate to each other. Instead of women’s bodies being simply an object of male desire<sup>49</sup>, women and men relate to each other as the body of Christ, a body of solidarity with those who would be most vulnerable in the patriarchal body. By naming women’s bodies the body of Christ, a space is created where women can enter into the Trinitarian relationship. By affirming the female body as the body of Christ, women’s bodies become a site of the presence of God in the world. The body of Christ is a reality in opposition to the patriarchal body. The body of Christ collapses the hierarchical power relations of patriarchy, restructuring the social body into a body of equality. It becomes a

---

<sup>49</sup> The body of Christ moves beyond all aspects of the capitalist enterprise’s commodification of the body – also of the male body. Stéphan van der Watt (2007:156) notes that in recent years the male body “started to be eroticized and objectified in ways that had previously been applied to the female body, henceforth the commercial exploitation of men-as-sex-objects became very big business. The voyeuristic sexualisation of the female body ..., was now transferred to the male body, ultimately in order to sell it.”

body where rape is not needed, since no part of the body needs to anxiously defend its power on another part of the body.

## **5.2 Re-membering Corporeality Through Holy Communion**

Chapter three showed how theology after the Enlightenment often negated the body, focusing on the eternal salvation of the soul. Cavanaugh (1998:16-17) uses this theological body-soul dualism to explain how the torture by the Pinochet regime in Chile was allowed to happen. The Church saw itself more as the soul of society than the true body of Christ. It was assumed that the Church is responsible for the eternal soul, whereas the body belonged to the state. When the state started torturing bodies and making them disappear, the church was ill-equipped to react, “since the Church had effectively already ‘disappeared’ itself through its own ecclesiological practice” (Cavanaugh 1998:16).

Against the dualist legacy of post-Enlightenment theology, Paul’s use of the body of Christ in Holy Communion places corporeality right at the centre of Christian theology. The ordinary, physical world is treasured at Holy Communion, where bread is broken and shared, where bodies share in the physical acts of eating, drinking, chewing and swallowing as sacrament (Bieler & Schottroff 2007:3). Or, as John Dunnill so eloquently puts it: “God delights in our bodily being” (2002:114). The fact that there is something like Holy Communion affirms the importance of the body. “It is in our bodies, and only in our bodies... that we find God” (Dunnill 2002:114).

Instead of the dualism Paul is often accused of, his body theology underlines the importance of the Eucharistic life (to use Bieler and Schottroff’s term). Sacramental permeability opens up the body of Christ, so that human bodies are taken up into God’s

work, becoming both the object and subject of God's work. The body becomes the site of redemption and transformation. Instead of being capitalist commodities, bodies are made into divine property (Bieler & Schottroff 2007:94). At Holy Communion believers receive the gift of Christ's body, while offering their own bodies in an act of responsive giving. The value of the body of Christ is not that of a capitalist commodity to be used, but that of a gift to be received and shared.

The distinctive realism of the body of Christ means that body-issues such as rape are placed in the centre of the life of the Church. Holy Communion points to the importance of bodies within the body of Christ. It does not lead us "beyond this world in which bodies are subjugated to violence... Rather, the opposite is the case: body realities... move to the centre" (Bieler & Schottroff 2007:3). Holy Communion serves as the conscience of the Church, reminding the body of Christ to take heed of the tortured and abused bodies at the table. It constructs the Christian life as a life of justice, encouraging the Church to live as the body of Christ in such a way that the powers of society are exposed and counteracted.

After sharing in the body of Christ, the Church can no longer consider rape a private matter. The Church can no longer consider its focus to be the spiritual life of the soul. It can no longer hand bodies over to the state while claiming responsibility only for souls. After sharing in the body of Christ in Holy Communion, bodies and body-issues become central to the life of the Church.

### **5.3 Re-membering Invisible Bodies**

#### ***5.3.1 Re-membering Invisible Bodies Through The Ecclesial Body Of Christ***

One of the instruments used by patriarchy to sustain unjust social relations, is to make certain people or unjust actions and situations invisible. Erecting what Luise Schottroff (1995:34) calls “linguistic walls in line with their power interests”, reality is narrated around the centres of power. Women are linguistically constructed to represent the exception. In the process of producing language around power, women and the violence perpetrated against them become invisible. So, for example, rape is constructed as a private matter, thereby keeping it hidden. Rape survivors are made invisible by robbing them of their voices. Reading rape as pornography, constructing male and female sexuality in a way that leads women to internalise social shame, fear, and humiliation all conspire to silence rape survivors. By silencing rape survivors and minimalizing the discourse around rape, the power enacted on women’s bodies are kept hidden – and in power.

The body of Christ, by contrast, makes bodies visible. In his discussion of torture and Holy Communion, Cavanaugh (1998:234-236) suggests that the Church can only resist violence against bodies by being visible as the body of Christ in the present time (not focusing on some spiritual concept of the soul of believers or relegating the Church’s work simply to the past or future). He shows how a focus on rights creates a fertile ground for torture - similar to the way that constructing rape as a private instead of political issue obscures the forces underlying rape. Rights language focuses on the individual. While it is true that individual bodies suffer greatly at the hands of torturers, the target of torture is the social body, not just the individual body. Just like torture, chapter two demonstrated how rape targets not only the individual but all women. Torture and rape fragments the social body through fear, thereby dismantling social bodies which would otherwise have been able to

resist the torture of individual bodies. A new social body is therefore needed to counter the “atomizing performance” of torture (Cavanaugh 1998:2-4) and rape.

Re-membering the body then means seeing the ecclesial body of Christ. It means seeing an alternate social body to the social body that tortures bodies and makes them disappear. Cavanaugh asserts that torture is an ecclesial problem, related not just to individual bodies but to the Church as a communal body (1998:70). The Church cannot confront the torture system simply by treating it as a violation of individual human rights. “Torture should be read as aspiring to the disappearance of the visible body of Christ” (Cavanaugh 1998:70-71). Since rape is a type of torture, Cavanaugh’s argument means that rape is an ecclesial problem which not only hurts the body of the person being raped, but the whole body of Christ.

Cavanaugh (1998:262-264) intriguingly suggests that making the ecclesial body of Christ visible in a context of torture requires excommunication. The violence carried out to keep some in power is not a matter of private sinfulness. Only when the violence is exposed and its public nature acknowledged, can reconciliation and unity be enacted. Cavanaugh argues that this is not based on a perfectionist ethic for the Church, but since torture attacks the body of Christ itself, it should be met with the appropriate action, which he considers to be excommunication.

In a rape culture, Cavanaugh’s suggestion would mean that the Church has to name perpetrators and publically declare their actions sinful. It is indeed intriguing to consider how excommunication makes rape visible and testifies to the gravity with which the body of Christ approaches it. Such a public action would also go far in deconstructing Christian discourses (like those mentioned in chapter two) that seem to condone rape and serve to

keep women in abusive situations. It will counter discourses that make women invisible, that claim they must be silent or that they are owned by men. Publically naming rapists will break the Church's own silence, will place the blame on the perpetrator (not the survivor), will confirm that rape is a political issue, and will clearly proclaim the Church's condemnation of rape. There are, however, several considerations to keep in mind when considering excommunication as a way of discerning the body of Christ, such as the way ecclesial discipline is understood and how grace is constructed. These considerations fall outside of the scope of the current study, but do suggest interesting avenues for further study.

The visibility of the body of Christ robs patriarchy of its ability to make women and rape invisible. The power hierarchies enacted on women's bodies during rape, are exposed. Confronted with the subversive (re)structuring of power hierarchies in 1 Corinthians 12, the social body can be re-membered against the patriarchal body, robbing it of its power.

### ***5.3.2 Re-membering Invisible Bodies Through Holy Communion***

The body of Christ does not only re-member the social body. The body of Christ is also the individual bodies of believers – individual bodies collectively form the body of Christ and bodies individually are members of the body of Christ. To re-member the body, is therefore to make not only the social body but also the individual bodies of believers visible. Holy Communion becomes the vehicle for making bodies visible (1998:234-236). Re-membering the body is to “script bodies into different performances” (Cavanaugh 1998:71).

Cavanaugh (2001:182) calls Holy Communion the “ritual maintenance of the ‘dangerous memory’ of Jesus’ confrontation with the powers” and affirms that ἀνάμνησις is not simply



to call something that happened in the distant past to mind – it is the making present of a past event. The remembering of Christ's body broken and blood shed (1 Corinthians 11) is not simply a memorial, but a performance. In Holy Communion, the body of Christ becomes both sign and reality, where Christians do not simply read the sign but perform it (Cavanaugh 1998:14). Holy Communion is an "anamnetic site" which gives shape to collective identity, to a new body (Bieler & Schottroff 2007:13-14). Holy Communion produces what Bieler and Schottroff (quoting Catherine Bell) refer to as "ritualised bodies" (2007:134). The ritual enactment of Holy Communion is not simply an expression of an inner state. It restructures bodies in the very act itself. It produces bodies onto which a particular way of knowing both God and the body-self are imparted.

In Holy Communion "we participate in the body of the risen Christ, seeking redemption for our own bodies..." (Bieler & Schottroff 2007:3). Bodies in the body of Christ become a symbol of liberation from torturous powers. In Holy Communion, Jesus, a victim tortured and killed by state terror, is remembered (Bieler & Schottroff 2007:3). It holds "before public gaze the representation of the Empire's victim as *the One whom God had vindicated bodily* through resurrection" (Elliot 2004:87). Just as Holy Communion was used also to expose the weakness and ultimate defeat of the torturous Roman Empire, so it still serves to expose the weakness and endangered nature of patriarchy which needs torture such as rape to stay in power.

The body of Christ in Holy Communion is a symbol of solidarity with the most vulnerable. Jesus' actions for the liberation of the poor and oppressed led to his crucifixion. In Holy Communion, the Church remembers Jesus' life, death, and resurrection and in so doing, remembers the victims of violence in our own time. Bodies broken by violence "become

visible in the body of Christ, and they transform the congregation into a solidary community of action” (Bieler & Schottroff 2007:153).

In discussing how the body of Christ makes bodies visible, Cavanaugh and Bieler & Schottroff point to another interesting consideration, namely martyrs. Bieler and Schottroff (2007:146-155) point out that martyrdom is not a justification for violence. It is neither something willed by God nor necessary for salvation. Martyrdom also does not mean becoming a victim primarily, but rather giving witness “to the victory of life, willed by God” (Bieler & Schottroff 2007:147). Martyrdom makes violence visible and calls it by name. Through martyrdom the body of the victim of unjust violence is transformed from broken body into the very seed of a new social body. The aim of torture or rape is not to break the body of one person. Instead, it tries to subjugate a whole group of people while keeping another group in power. With martyrdom, the body of one person can become the destruction of the social body that would break individual bodies, forming the basis for a new social body, constructed differently. In Holy Communion then, these martyrs are set in the midst of the Church. “They become visible in the body of Christ, and transform the congregation into a solidary community of action” (Bieler & Schottroff 2007:153). What is most crucial to martyrdom, according to Cavanaugh (1998:64), is whether the community discerns the body of Christ in the body broken by violence.

As with excommunication, martyrdom provides intriguing practical considerations for the Church’s response to rape. While discussing the body in the early Church in chapter three, I considered how women’s martyrdom placed the dissolution of the social body in stark relief. Martyrdom can indeed go far in making women’s bodies visible. There are, however, again several considerations to keep in mind when considering martyrdom as a way to make the body of Christ visible. Feminist theology has often been critical of

concepts like redemptive suffering, self-giving love and *kenosis*, pointing out how they are frequently used to uphold gender stereotypes “which encourage women to sacrifice their integrity and wellbeing in the service of a patriarchal system” (O’Donnell Gandolfo 2007:29). Indeed, studies by scholars like Landman (2007) and Phiri (2002) have confirmed that women sometimes internalise theological concepts concerning suffering, keeping them in abusive situations. While a dialogue between martyrdom and feminist theological critique is not impossible, as Elizabeth O’Donnell Gandolfo (2007) has indeed shown, considering martyrdom as a response to rape is especially problematic. Once again I suggest that martyrdom in relation to rape might present an interesting avenue for further study.

Where rape, just like torture, makes women’s bodies invisible by denying women their agency and by constructing women’s bodies as theatres for the enactment of patriarchal power, Holy Communion make women’s bodies visible again. “Suddenly the silence and invisibility under which the torture apparatus operates are shattered, interrupting its power” (Cavanaugh 1998:275). When the social and individual bodies are made visible through the body of Christ, body issues such as rape move from the margin to the centre (Adams 2005:80). By asserting the value of bodies and by making bodies visible, the body of Christ creates “a climate of non-tolerance” of rape. Such a climate is one of the primary ways to prevent rape (Jewkes 2002:1427).

#### **5.4 This Is My Body, This Is My Blood: Bodies Transformed And Imagined**

It is, however, not only broken bodies who become visible in the body of Christ, but also transformed bodies. Chapter four showed how Holy Communion expresses the radical transformation of body and life. If Holy Communion was only *ἀνάμνησις* of Jesus’ death, it would indeed vindicate the imperial power that killed him. But because Holy Communion

is ἀνάμνησις also of Jesus' resurrection, it is κοινωμία with resurrection (Bieler & Schottroff 2007:64-65). Holy Communion is a ritual of resurrection and therefore an experience of transformation. It is not a utopian dream of a different reality where bodies are not subject to the violent torture of patriarchal powers. In the performance of Holy Communion the social body that would use individual bodies to enact and cement its power, is exposed and emasculated. A new body is created, the body of Christ, where bodies are "infused with a divine energy that enables us to live in the culture around us but in such a way as to transform it" (Stuart 2004:236).

Even though bodies are transformed into a new body, rape and the underlying social structures still exist. The body of Christ leads us not beyond this world where bodies are subjugated to violence and rape. It does, however, show us flashes of the future. Cavanaugh (1998:12) describes torture as the formation of social imagination. The body of Christ, on the other hand, lives in and creates eschatological imagination. The acts of ἀνάμνησις in the body of Christ generate hope for the future. Holy Communion is an act of both memory and hope – remembering forward. "We envision, taste, and see what is not yet [completely] realised" (Bieler & Schottroff 2007:4). Where rape is the imagination of patriarchal power, the body of Christ is the imagination of the Church. To participate in Holy Communion is to "live inside God's imagination. It is to be caught up into what is really real, the body of Christ" (Cavanaugh 1998:279). People, as their body-selves, are incorporated into the body of Christ, resisting patriarchy's ability to define bodies.

## 5.5 Conclusion: The Body Of Christ In A Rape Culture

In a rape culture, rape functions similar to torture in order to maintain the unequal balance of patriarchy. Rape is a silencing performance, a ritual enacted on women's bodies to keep the patriarchal system of control intact. By allowing bodies to become commodities, by using discourses of patriarchal control and by subscribing to body-soul dualism, the Church colludes with the patriarchal system performed on women's bodies.

Paul's body theology in 1 Corinthians constructs the body of Christ in a way that opposes and subverts the patriarchal body, providing the Church with a body-language with which to reclaim bodies. Whereas rape is a ritual enacted on women's bodies to keep the patriarchal system of control intact, Holy Communion is a ritual enacted on the bodies of believers to create a different societal body: the body of Christ. The body of Christ subverts patriarchal power, changing the way women and men relate to one another. The body of Christ demonstrates the value of bodies and corporeality, thereby placing body-issues such as rape firmly on the ecclesial agenda. The body of Christ, both ecclesial and in Holy Communion, makes bodies visible, exposing the weakness of the patriarchal power that strives to keep certain bodies invisible. Within the body of Christ, bodies are transformed, reflecting eschatological imagination and hope for a society where women's bodies can be safe.

For us today, in the South African rape culture, being the body of Christ means telling the truth about rape, exposing the torturous empire of patriarchy. It means viewing bodies and body-issues as central to the life of the Church. It means overturning the hierarchy of patriarchy, re-membering it with a body of honour for all members, in utmost solidarity with vulnerable bodies. Living as the body of Christ in South Africa can indeed be a "liberating and transformative praxis" (Ackermann 2006:227), where abuse of women's bodies is no

longer something to be joked about and where the female body is no longer a battleground for patriarchal power, but where the female body is “valued, respected and protected” (Jones 2012:25), allowing all bodies to flourish.

## Bibliography

*A Summary of the Criminal Law Sexual Offences Amendment Act 32 of 2007* [Online].

Available: <http://www.shukumisa.org.za/wp-content/uploads/2010/07/english-soa-booklet.pdf> [2013, October 3].

Ackerman, D. 2003. A Gendered Pandemic? - HIV/AIDS in South Africa. In Grenholm, C. & Kamergrauzis, N. (eds.). *Feminist Ethics: Perspectives, Problems and Possibilities*. Uppsala: Uppsala Universiteit, pp.20-143.

Ackermann, D. 2004. Seeing HIV and AIDS as a gendered pandemic. *Nederduitse Gereformeerde Teologiese Tydskrif*. 45(2 Supplementum), pp.214-220.

Ackermann, D. 2006. From Mere Existence to Tenacious Endurance: Stigma, HIV/AIDS and a Feminist Theology of Praxis. In Phiri, I.A. & Nadar, S. (eds.). *African Women, Religion, and Health: Essays in Honor of Mercy Amba Ewudiziwa Oduyoye*. Pietermaritzburg, South Africa: Cluster Publications, pp.221-242.

Adams, C. 2005. "I Just Raped My Wife! What Are You Going To Do About It, Pastor?": The Church And Sexual Violence. In Buchwald, E., Fletcher, P. & Roth, M. (eds.). *Transforming A Rape Culture: Revised Edition*. Minneapolis: Milkweed Editions, pp.77-104.

Althaus-Reid, M. 2004. "Pussy, Queen of Pirates": Acker, Isherwood and the Debate on the Body in Feminist Theology. In Clack, B. (ed.). *Embodying Feminist Liberation Theologies*. London, New York: Continuum Publishing, pp.157-167.

Anam-Mogeni, J. 2005. Sexual Violence: Developing a Culture of Accountability. *Sexuality in Africa Magazine*. 2(4), pp.9-10, 14.

Bieler, A. & Schottroff, L. 2007. *The Eucharist: Bodies, Bread and the Resurrection*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press.

Birch, B. 1998. The First and Second Book of Samuel. In Keck, L. (ed.). *The New Interpreter's Bible: Volume II*. Nashville: Abingdom Press, pp.949-1307.

Breidenthal, T. 2002. Sanctifying Nearness. In Rogers, E. (ed.). *Theology and Sexuality: Classic and Contemporary Readings*. Oxford, Malden: Blackwell Publishers, pp.343-355.

Brown, P. 1998. *The Body and Society. Men, Women and Sexual Renunciation in Early Christianity*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Bynum, C. 1987. *Holy Feast and Holy Fast: The Religious Significance of Food to Medieval Women*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Cardman, F. 1998. Acts of the Women Martyrs. *Anglican Theological Review*. 70(2), pp.144-150.

Cavanaugh, W.T. 1998. *Torture and Eucharist: Theology, Politics, and the Body of Christ*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers.

Cavanaugh, W.T. 2001. Dying for the Eucharist or Being Killed by It? Romero's Challenge to First-World Christians. *Theology Today*. 58(2), pp.177-189.



Clack, B. 2004. Sex and Death: Spirituality and Human Existence. In Clack, B. (ed.). *Embodying Feminist Liberation Theologies*. London, New York: Continuum Publishing, pp.237-252.

Coakley, S. 1997. Introduction: Religion and the Body. In Coakley, S. (ed.). *Religion and the Body*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp.1-12.

Countryman, L. 1998. *Dirt, Greed and Sex: Sexual Ethics in the New Testament and Their Implications for Today*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press.

Douglas, M. 1980. *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of Concepts of Pollution and Taboo*. London, Boston, Henley: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Du Toit, L. 2003. Rape Understood as Torture: What is the Responsibility of Men? In Conradie, E. & Clowes, L. (eds.). *Rape: Rethinking Male Responsibility*. Stellenbosch: EFSA Institute for Theological & Interdisciplinary Research, pp.36-66.

Du Toit, L. 2005. A Phenomenology of Rape: Forging a New Vocabulary for Action. In Gouws, A. (ed.). *(UN)Thinking Citizenship. Feminist Debates in Contemporary South Africa*. Burlington: Ashgate Publishing, pp.253-274.

Du Toit, L. 2009. *A Philosophical Investigation of Rape: The Making and Unmaking of the Feminine Self*. New York: Routledge.

Dunnill, J. 2002. Being a Body. *Theology*. 105, pp.110-117.

Dworkin, A. 2005. I Want a Twenty-four-hour Truce During Which There is No Rape. In Buchwald, E., Fletcher, R. & Roth, M. (eds.). *Transforming a Rape Culture: Revised Edition*. Minneapolis: Milkweed Editions, pp.11-22.

Eilberg-Schwartz, H. 1997. The Problem of the Body for the People of the Book. In Beal, T. & Gunn, D. (eds.). *Reading Bibles, Writing Bodies: Identity and the Book*. London, New York: Routledge, pp.34-55.

Elliott, N. 2010. *Arrogance of Nations: Reading Romans in the Shadow of Empire*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press.

Ensjø, D. 2008. Immortal Bodies, Before Christ: Bodily Continuity in Ancient Greece and 1 Corinthians. *Journal for the Study of the New Testament*. 30(4), pp.417-436.

Fletcher, P. 2005. "Whose Body Is It, Anyway?" Transforming Ourselves to Change a Rape Culture. In Buchwald, E. (ed.). *Transforming A Rape Culture: Revised Edition*. Minneapolis: Milkweed Editions, pp.373-387.

Fortune, M. 1994. Violence Against Women: The Way Things Are Is Not the Way They Have to Be. In Nelson, J.B. & Longfellow, S.P. (eds.). *Sexuality and the Sacred: Sources for Theological Reflection*. Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, pp.326-334.

Gibson, D., Mfecane, S., Mathison, J., Damon, F., Henda, N. & Tuba, M. 2003. The Complexities of Rape and Male Responsibility. In Conradie, E. & Clowes, L. (eds.). *Rape: Rethinking Male Responsibility*. Stellenbosch: EFSA Institute for Theological & Interdisciplinary Research, pp.67-85.

Gudorf, C. 1994. *Body, Sex and Pleasure: Reconstructing Christian Ethics*. Cleveland: Pilgrim Press.

Gupta, N. 2010. Which "Body" is a Temple (1 Corinthians 6:19)? Paul Beyond the Individual/Communal Divide. *Catholic Biblical Quarterly*. 72(3), pp.518-536.

Haddad, B. 2002. Gender Violence and HIV/Aids: A Deadly Silence in the Church. *Journal of Theology for Southern Africa*. 114(November), pp.93-106.

Haddad, B. 2003. Choosing to Remain Silent: Links Between Gender Violence, HIV/AIDS and the South African Church. In Phiri, I., Haddad, B. & Masenga, M. (eds.). *African Women, HIV/AIDS, and Faith Communities*. Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Publications, pp.149-167.

Harrington, D.J. & Keenan, J.F. 2002. *Jesus and Virtue Ethics: Building Bridges Between New Testament Studies and Moral Theology*. Chicago: Sheed & Ward.

Harrison, B. & Heyward, C. 1994. Pain and Pleasure: Avoiding the Confusions of Christian Tradition in Feminist Theory. In Nelson, J.B. & Longfellow, S.P. (eds.). *Sexuality and the Sacred: Sources for Theological Reflection*. Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, pp.131-148.

Hollingshead, J. 1998. *The Household of Ceasar and the Body of Christ: A Political Interpretation of the Letters from Paul*. Lanham: University Press of America Institute for Liberal Studies.

Horsley, R. 1998. *1 Corinthians*. Nashville: Abingdon Press.

Isherwood, L. 2000. Sex and Body Politics: Issues for Feminist Theology. In Isherwood, L. (ed.). *The Good News of the Body: Sexual Theology and Feminism*. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, pp.20-34.

Isherwood, L. 2004. The Embodiment of Feminist Liberation Theology. In Clack, B. (ed.). *Embodying Feminist Liberation Theologies*. London: Continuum Publishing, pp.141-156.

Isherwood, L. & Stuart, E. 1998. *Introducing Body Theology*. London: Sheffield Academic Press.

Jacobs, L. 1997. The Body In Jewish Worship: Three Rituals Examined. In Coakley, S. (ed.). *Religion And The Body*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp.71-89.

Jewkes, R. 2002. Intimate Partner Violence: Cause and Prevention. *The Lancet*. 359, pp.1423-1429.

Jewkes, R. & Abrahams, N. 2002. The Epidemiology of Rape and Sexual Coercion in South Africa: An Overview. *Social Science & Medicine*. 55, pp.1231-1244.

Jones, S. 2012. Feminist Theology and the Global Imagination. In Briggs, S. & Fulkerson, M. (eds.). *The Oxford Handbook of Feminist Theology*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp.23-50.

Kelly, A. 2010. "The Body of Christ: Amen!" The Expanding Incarnation. *Theological Studies*. 71, pp.792-816.

- Kesic, V. 2005. Establishing Rape as a War Crime. In Buchwald, E., Fletcher, P. & Roth, M. (eds.). *Transforming a Rape Culture: Revised Edition*. Minneapolis: Milkweed Editions, pp.271-289.
- Kim, Y.S. 2008. *Christ's Body in Corinth: The Politics of a Metaphor*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press.
- Lampe, P. 1994. The Eucharist: Identifying with Christ on the Cross. *Interpretation*. 48(1), pp.36-49.
- Landman, C. 2005. The Body as a Site of Relationship in the Sermones Super Cantica Canticorum Of Bernard Of Clairvaux (D1153). *Acta Patristica et Byzantina*. 16, pp.233-244.
- Landman, C. 2007. Religion as a Means of Preventing Injury and Promoting Safety: Christian Discourses on Embodiment as Safety Discourses. *African Safety Promotion*. 5(2), pp.17-31.
- Loughlin, G. 2004. Sex After Natural Law. In Althaus-Reid, M. & Isherwood, L. (eds.). *The Sexual Theologian: Essays on Sex, God and Politics*. London: Continuum International Publishing Group, pp.86-98.
- Loughlin, G. 2007a. Omphalos. In Loughlin, G. (ed.). *Queer Theology: Rethinking the Western Body*. Malden, Oxford, Carlton: Blackwell Publishing, pp.115-127.
- Loughlin, G. 2007b. The End of Sex. In Loughlin, G. (ed.). *Queer Theology: Rethinking the Western Body*. Malden, Oxford, Carlton: Blackwell Publishing, pp.1-34.

- Louth, A. 1997. The Body in Western Catholic Christianity. In Coakley, S. (ed.). *Religion and the Body*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp.111-130.
- Magorokosho, R. 2011. Barrenness and Sexuality in the Ndaou Community. In Tamale, S. (ed.). *African Sexualities: A Reader*. Cape Town, Dakar, Nairobi and Oxford: Pambazuka Press, pp.247-248.
- Malina, B. 1993. *The New Testament World: Insights from Cultural Anthropology*. Revised Edition. Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press.
- Maluleke, T. & Nadar, S. 2002. Breaking the Covenant of Violence Against Women. *Journal of Theology for Southern Africa*. 114(November 2002), pp.5-17.
- Martin, R. 2004. Theological Reflections on Embodiment. In Clack, B. (ed.). *Embodying Feminist Liberation Theologies*. London, New York: Continuum Publishing, pp.212-227.
- Martin, D. 1995. *The Corinthian Body*. New Haven; London: Yale University Press.
- Martin, E. 2006. *Iconic Women: Martyrdom and the Female Body in Early Christianity* [Online]. Available: <http://etheses.dur.ac.uk/2371/> [2013, October 1].
- Mbuy-Beya, B. 1998. *Woman, Who are You?: A Challenge*. Nairobi: Paulines Publications Africa.
- McGlynn, C. 2008. Rape as "Torture"? Catharine MacKinnon and Questions of Feminist Strategy. *Feminist Legal Studies*. 16, pp.71-85.

Moffett, H. 2006. "These Women, They Force Us to Rape Them": Rape as Narrative of Social Control in Post-Apartheid South Africa. *Journal of Southern African Studies*. 32(1), pp.129-144.

Moulaison, J.B. 2007. "Our Bodies, Our Selves?" The Body as Source in Feminist Theology. *Scottish Journal of Theology*. 60(3), pp.341-359.

Mubangizi, J. 2012. A South African Perspective on the Clash Between Culture and Human Rights, With Particular Reference to Gender-Related Cultural Practices and Traditions. *Journal of International Women's Studies*, 13(3), pp.33-48.

Murphy-O'Connor, J. 2009. *Keys to First Corinthians: Revisiting the Major Issues*. Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press.

Nadar, S. 2006. "Texts of Terror": The Conspiracy of Rape in the Bible, Church, and Society: The Case of Esther 2:1-18. In Phiri, I. & Nadar, S. (eds.). *African Women, Religion, and Health: Essays in Honor of Mercy Amba Ewudiziwa Oduyoye*. Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, pp.221-242.

Nelson, J. 1978. *Embodiment: An Approach to Sexuality and Christian Theology*. Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House.

Nelson, J. 1992. *Body Theology*. Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press.

Nelson, J. & Longfellow, S. 1994. *Sexuality and the Sacred: Sources for Theological Reflection*. Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press.

Newmarch, J. 2003. An Exploration of the Virgin Myth in South Africa. In Conradie, E. & Clowes, L. (eds.). *Rape: Rethinking Male Responsibility*. Stellenbosch: EFSA Institute for Theological & Interdisciplinary Research, pp.103-130.

Neyrey, J. 1986. Body Language in 1 Corinthians: The Use of Anthropological Models for Understanding Paul and His Opponents. *Semeia*. 35, pp.129-170.

Neyrey, J. 2003. Clean/Unclean, Pure/Polluted, and Holy/Profane: The Idea and the System of Purity. In Rohrbaugh, R. (ed.). *The Social Sciences and New Testament Interpretation*. Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, pp.80-104.

Nzegwu, N. 2011. "Osunality" (or African Eroticism). In Tamale, S. (ed.). *African Sexualities: A Reader*. Cape Town, Dakar, Nairobi and Oxford: Pambazuka Press, pp.253-270.

O'Donnell Gandolfo, E. 2007. Women and Martyrdom: Feminist Liberation Theology in Dialogue With a Latin American Paradigm. *Horizons*. 34(1), pp.26-53.

Oxford Dictionaries. 2013. [online]. Available: <http://oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/body?q=body> [2013, September17].

Phiri, I. 2000. Domestic Violence in Christian Homes: A Durban Case Study. *Journal of Constructive Theology*. 6(2), pp.85-110.

Phiri, I. 2002. Why Does God Allow Our Husbands to Hurt Us?: Overcoming Violence Against Women. *Journal of Theology for Southern Africa*. 114(November), pp.19-30.



- Posel, D. 2011. "Getting the Nation Talking About Sex": Reflections on the Politics of Sexuality and Nation-Building in Post-Apartheid South Africa. In Tamale, S. (ed.). *African Sexualities: A Reader*. Cape Town, Dakar, Nairobi and Oxford: Pambazuka Press, pp.130-144.
- Power, K. & Hogan, C. 2013. Introduction. In Elvey, A., Hogan, C., Power, K. & Rankin, C. (eds.). *Reinterpreting the Eucharist: Explorations in Feminist Theology and Ethics*. Sheffield: Equinox Publishing, pp.1-9.
- Punt, J. 2004. Remembering the Poor: Pauline Perspectives on Poverty. *Nederduitse Gereformeerde Teologiese Tydskrif*. 45(2, Supplementum), pp.256-265.
- Punt, J. 2005. Paul, Body Theology, and Morality: Parameters for a Discussion. *Neotestamentica*. 39(2), pp.359-388.
- Punt, J. 2010. Pauline Bodies and South African Bodies: Body, Power and Biblical Hermeneutics. *Journal of Theology for Southern Africa*. 136(March), pp.76-91.
- Punt, J. 2011. Paul, Body, and Resurrection in an Imperial Setting: Considering Hermeneutics and Power. *Neotestamentica*. 45(2), pp.311-330.
- Rakoczy, S. 2000. *Silent No Longer: The Church Responds to Sexual Violence*. Pietermaritzburg: Southern African Catholic Bishops' Conference.
- Rakoczy, S. 2004. Religion and Violence: The Suffering of Women. *Agenda*. 61, pp.29-35.

- Ramphela, M. 2000. Teach Me How To Be A Man: An Exploration of the Definition of Masculinity. In Das, V., Kleinman, A., Ramphela, M. & Reynolds, P. (eds.). *Violence and Subjectivity*. Berkeley: University of California Press, pp.102-119.
- Rogers, E. 1999. *Sexuality and the Christian Body: Their Way into the Triune God*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers.
- Scarry, E. 1985. *The Body in Pain: The Making and Unmaking of the World*. New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Schottroff, L. 1995. *Lydia's Impatient Sisters: A Feminist Social History of Early Christianity*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press.
- Shaw, J. 2007. Reformed and Enlightened Church. In Loughlin, G. (ed.). *Queer Theology: Rethinking the Western Body*. Malden, Oxford, Carlton: Blackwell Publishers, pp.215-229.
- Stuart, E. 1997. Body Theology. In Stuart, E. (ed.). *Religion is a Queer Thing: A Guide to the Christian Faith for Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgendered People*. London, Washington: Cassel, pp.47-57.
- Stuart, E. 2004. Exploding Mystery. In Clack, B. (ed.). *Embodying Feminist Liberation Theologies*. London, New York: Continuum Publishing, pp.228-236.
- Stuart, E. 2007. Sacramental Flesh. In Loughlin, G. (ed.). *Queer Theology: Rethinking the Western Body*. Malden, Oxford, Carlton: Blackwell Publishers, pp.65-75.
- Stuart, E. & Thatcher, A. 1997. *People of Passion: What the Churches Teach About Sex*. London: Mowbray.

- Tamale, S. 2011. Researching and Theorising Sexualities in Africa. In Tamale, S. (ed.). *African Sexualities: A Reader*. Cape Town, Dakar, Nairobi and Oxford: Pambazuka Press, pp.11-36.
- Terrien, S. 1985. *Till the Heart Sings: A Biblical Theology of Manhood and Womanhood*. Cambridge: W.B. Eerdmans Publishing Company.
- Thatcher, A. 1993. *Liberating Sex: A Christian Sexual Theology*. London: SPCK.
- Tombs, D. 1999. Crucifixion, State Terror, and Sexual Abuse. *Union Seminary Quarterly Review*. 53(1-2), pp.89-109.
- Tripp, D. 1997. The Image of the Body in the Formative Phases of the Protestant Reformation. In Coakley, S. (ed.). *Religion and the Body*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp.131-152.
- Turner, B. 1997. The Body in Western Society: Social Theory and Its Perspectives. In Coakley, S. (ed.). *Religion and the Body*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp.15-41.
- Van der Watt, J. 2007. Images of Men and Masculinities Within Cultural Contexts: A Pastoral Assessment. Unpublished doctoral dissertation. Stellenbosch: University of Stellenbosch.
- Venter, P. 2009. Beliggaamde Realisme en Ekobillike Godskonstrukte. *Verbum et Ecclesia*. 20(2), Article #58.

- Vorster, J. 2003. The Blood of the Female Martyrs as the Sperm of the Early Church. *Religion & Theology*. 10(1), pp.66-99.
- Ware, K. 1997. My Helper and My Enemy: The Body in Greek Christianity. In Coakley, S. (ed.). *Religion and the Body*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp.90-110.
- Watson, N. 2002. *Introducing Feminist Ecclesiology*. London: Sheffield Academic Press.
- Watts, C. & Zimmerman, C. 2002. Violence Against Women: Global Scope and Magnitude. *The Lancet*. 359(April 6), pp.1232-1237.
- West, G. 2000. Tamar's Story: A Text of Terror. In Rakoczy, S. (ed.). *Silent No Longer: The Church Responds to Sexual Violence*. Pietermaritzburg: South African Catholic Bishops' Conference, pp.37-38.
- Williams, J. 2007. Rape Culture. In Ritzer, G. (ed.). *Blackwell Encyclopedia of Sociology*. Malden: Blackwell Publishers, pp.3783-3787.
- Woodhead, L. 2007. Sex and Secularization. In Loughlin, G. (ed.). *Queer theology: Rethinking the Western Body*. Malden, Oxford, Carlton: Blackwell Publishers, pp.230-244.
- Wuthnow, R., Hunter, J., Bergsen, A. & Kurzweil, E. 2010. *Cultural Analysis: The Work of Peter L Berger, Mary Douglas, Michel Foucault, and Jürgen Habermas*. London, New York: Routledge.