

# The Historical Body of Christ

So familiar are we with Christ's body that our senses are dulled to the diversity of shapes and meanings it has had in the past. Indeed, the fact that Christ has a body at all should be a source of wonder to us, as it was for inhabitants of the world into which Christianity was born. How could the Word become flesh and dwell among us (John 1:14)? How could a divine being assume a corruptible body, suffer, and die? A great many Late Antique Christians had doubts on this score. Some argued that Christ's body was a shell, a disguise adopted by God who Himself felt no pain and suffered no death. Others, such as the Arians, believed that the form of God that assumed human flesh must rank lower in the divine hierarchy than that which did not. Many other formulations of the relationship between divine and human in Christ were proposed. Of these proposals, the one preserved in the Nicene Creed (A.D. 325) proved most influential and became canonical:

We believe... in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God... from the substance of the Father, God from God... begotten, not made... Who... came down and became incarnate, becoming man, suffered and rose again on the third day... But as for those who say, there was when He was not, and, before being born He was not, and that He came into existence out of nothing, or who assert that the Son of God is of a different... substance, or is created, or is subject to alteration or change – these the Catholic church anathemizes.

This solution to God's corporeality came to be widely accepted (if occasionally challenged), but the importance, uses, and representation of Christ's body nevertheless varied across time and space. Early Christianity, for example, minimized the exemplary importance of Christ's human element. Other divisions are regional rather than chronological. Eastern Greek-speaking Christianity focused on the deified and transfigured Christ, Western Latin Christianity on the crucified Jesus. But even within the Latin West, which is the main focus of this essay and this exhibition, Christ's body was not static. Perhaps as an antidote to the Arianism of the Germanic invaders of the Roman Empire, or perhaps as

a concession to their expectations of a divinity victorious in war, early medieval Latin Christianity tended to emphasize Christ the resurrected king, the *rex tremendae maiestatis*, rather than Jesus the suffering human. In this period the bodies and relics of saints were of comparatively greater importance in mediating between the human and the divine.<sup>1</sup> During the High and later Middle Ages, this mediating role was assumed increasingly by the body of Christ, until the Reformation and the Counter-Reformation prompted a parting of the ways. For many post-Reformation Protestants, the body of Christ ceased to be the central image of mediation between God and man: crucifix and Eucharist alike were stripped of Jesus's physical presence. Counter-Reformation Catholics, on the other hand, particularly those in Spain and its empire, dwelt increasingly on Christ's sacrificial suffering in the flesh as a central aspect of orthodox devotion.

This thumbnail comparative history cautions us against taking the centrality of Christ's body to Christian devotion for granted, but it also throws into high relief the importance of that body for the period covered by this exhibition. For it is in the latter part of the Middle Ages that devotional and theological emphasis on Christ's fleshly body reached its height. The rest of this essay aims to chronicle some of these developments, though it does so in a necessarily abbreviated and abstract fashion because Christ's body functioned on so many symbolic levels.

European society suffered a sea change in the three centuries following the first millennium. The so-called agricultural revolution of the eleventh century was "a moment of primary mutation in the forms of human life... No more fundamental modification in man's relation to his environment can be imagined: he ceased to be nature's child and became her exploiter." Agricultural expansion in turn made possible new forms of social and cultural organization: this period is associated with the rise of towns and trade, with the expansion of monasticism and ecclesiastical reform, with the spread of literate cul-

My feet, as sweetly as thou will. And as often as thou . . . wouldst do any good deed to Me, thou shalt have the same reward in Heaven, as if thou didst it to Mine own Precious Body. . . .<sup>19</sup>

Such eroticized yearning for Christ's body became quite widespread in both male and female mystical circles in the later Middle Ages, and had a considerable impact on the way His body was depicted in devotional art of the period.

But the most human aspect of Christ's body was its suffering, the depiction of which grew more and more intense between 1000 and 1500 A.D. In the tenth century, for example, the crucifix was a symbol of victory, embraced by an eager Savior indifferent to pain and straining toward heaven. By the thirteenth century the crucifix had become an agonizing image: Christ's limbs sagged in exhausted death, and He wore not a royal crown but one of thorns.<sup>20</sup> This emphasis on Jesus's susceptibility to human pain constituted the discovery of a new commonality between God and man and of a new form of mediation between the two. Of course this commonality had been present already in Christian scripture: "With Christ I am nailed to the cross," as Saint Paul put it in Galatians 2:19.<sup>21</sup> But only after the millennium did these texts become central. In the eleventh century Peter Damian urged Christians to meditate on Christ's wounds, for meditation on,



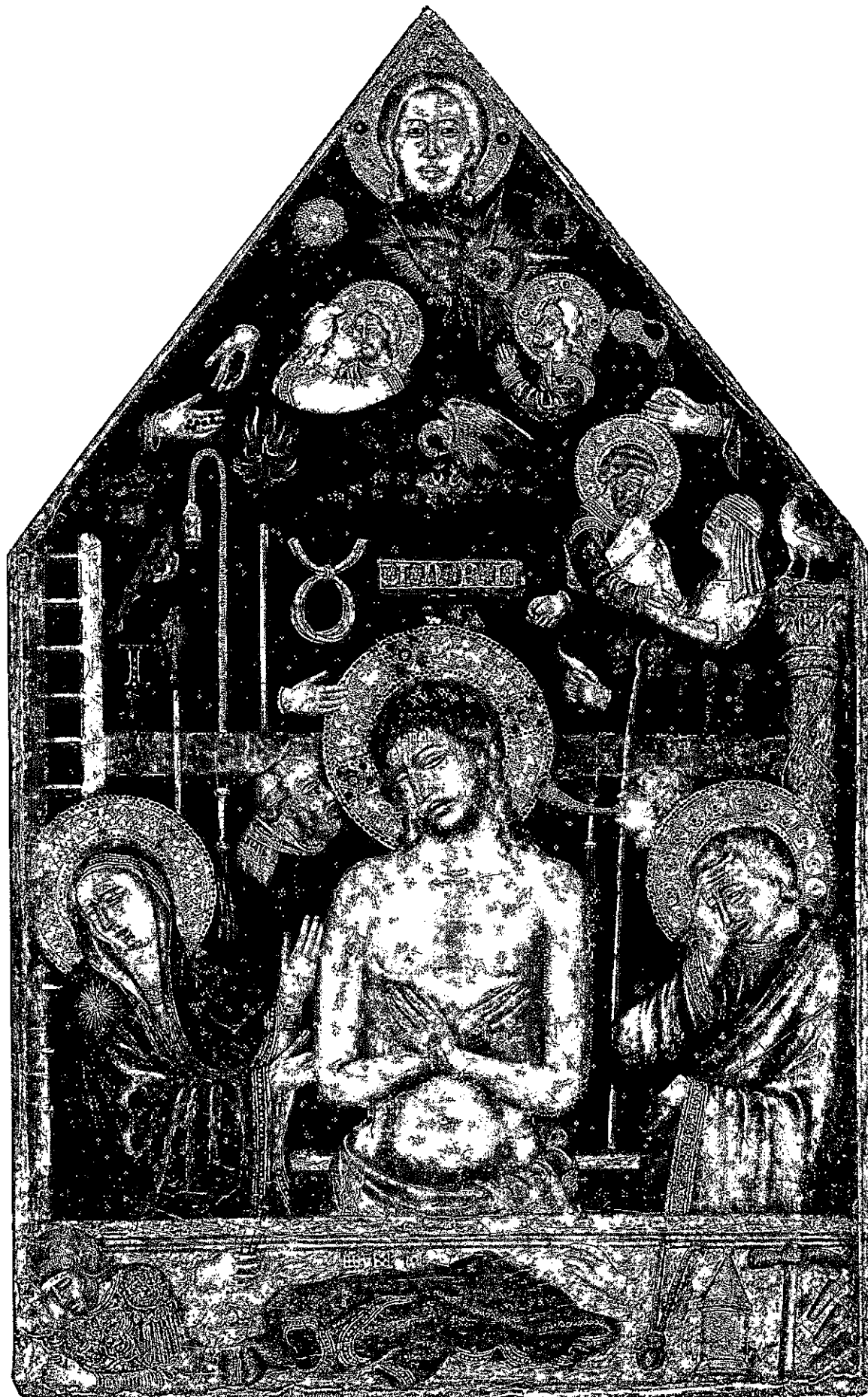
Louis Cousin, called Primo, or Il Gentile, *Saint Catherine of Siena Drinking from the Side Wound of Christ* (detail), c. 1648, oil on lapis lazuli, the Barbara Piasecka Johnson Collection Foundation, Princeton, New Jersey. (Cat. no. 63, page 139)

and imitation of, His suffering would lead to the believer's spiritual crucifixion and thus to companionship with Jesus. Hence Peter, an early advocate of flagellation, asked Christ to mark his soul with the sign of the cross, "in order that, once configured to the Crucified in punishment, I may merit to be the companion of the Resurrected in glory."<sup>22</sup>

The redemptive, imitative, and representational potential of bodily pain continued to develop over the centuries. The rise of stigmata is one example. Peter Damian had asked for interior, spiritual markings. Later, Bernard of Clairvaux talked metaphorically of nails passing from Christ's wounds into the limbs of the believer.<sup>23</sup> But the mimetic desire continued to grow. Some of its outlets were judged illegitimate, as when a demonically deluded layman crucified himself on a hill on Good Friday, 1229. In other cases the flesh of the faithful could legitimately acquire the marks (stigmata) of the divine wounds as a manifestation of exceptional piety: Saint Francis's (left) is among the earliest, and is certainly the most famous, of some 300 examples.<sup>24</sup>

Devotion to Jesus's wounds, to His body parts and to His suffering became even more intense in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, a trend to

Lucas Vorsterman, *The Stigmatization of Saint Francis* (detail), 1618-20, engraving, The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Gift of Marjorie G. and Evan C. Horning. (Cat. no. 61, page 135)



Roberto Oderisi,  
*The Man of Sorrows*, c. 1354,  
tempera and gold leaf on  
wood, courtesy of the Fogg  
Art Museum, Harvard  
University Art Museums,  
Gift of Grenville Winthrop.

which the upheavals of the period (including the Black Death, the Hundred Years War, and a series of famines and demographic crises) may have contributed.<sup>25</sup> By the fourteenth century the interest in Jesus's wounds, evinced earlier in monastic circles by figures like Peter Damian and Bernard of Clairvaux, had spread widely amongst the laity. The



Book of Hours, a late medieval genre developed for lay private devotion, was frequently illustrated with Christ's bleeding flesh. One newly popular motif was that of the wounds. Like all of Jesus's human aspects (but particularly those connected with His suffering), the wounds had eucharistic overtones. In the words of a popular hymn saluting the host:

But your wounds and your bruises are  
For us both host and intercessors.

The devout are often depicted kissing the wounds, and especially drinking blood from them in eucharistic fashion.<sup>27</sup> In the fourteenth century masses dedicated to the wounds appear, as does a special feast with associated indulgences. Later papal indulgences were granted to anyone wearing or kissing a

picture of the wounds.<sup>28</sup> The mystical importance of the wounds was also considerable. As Thomas à Kempis wrote in the immensely popular *The Imitation of Christ*:

Rest in Christ's passion, and live willingly  
in His holy wounds. If indeed you escape into  
Jesus' precious wounds and stigmata,  
You will sense a great comfort in your tribulation.<sup>29</sup>

A good many other devotional and representational practices oriented around Christ's suffering humanity arose in this period. The Cult of the Sacred Heart originated slightly earlier, but came to be commonly represented in the fifteenth century. Like the wounds, the Sacred Heart represented Christ's sacramental body in fleshly form. We also begin to see depictions of the instruments of the Passion in early fourteenth-century devotional painting (the *Arma Christi*: spear, tongs, hammer, whip, nails, etc.).<sup>30</sup> Often a number of these traditions could come together, as they did in a type of image known as the Man of Sorrows (page 21). Here the focus was the suffering and bleeding Christ, sometimes accompanied by the crucifix, wounds, or instruments of torture.<sup>31</sup> In another representational genre known as the Mass of Saint Gregory, Christ's eucharistic body and Jesus's suffering one are brought together with a variety of other motifs such as the *Arma Christi*. The story first appeared in an eighth-century *Life* of Gregory the Great written by Paul the Deacon. There, a woman laughs during communion because she cannot believe that the bread, which she herself has baked, is Christ's body. Gregory asks for a sign, and a bleeding finger appears in the bread. In the later Middle Ages the body of Christ became more central to the story, and the bleeding finger turned first into a depiction of Christ Himself upon the altar, and later into a Man of Sorrows surrounded by the *Arma Christi* or bleeding into a chalice.<sup>32</sup>

The devotional practices and representational genres discussed here are among the many that illustrate the increasing emphasis placed on Jesus's flesh as the primary form of mediation between God and man. These examples were chosen as representative of some of the most influential attitudes toward the body of Christ in Catholic Europe between 1050 and 1500. They represent as well the Body that was borne by Columbus and his successors into New Spain, and it is worth asking how these images were translated or transformed as they were re-

Juan Patricio Morlete Ruiz,  
*Christ Consoled by Angels*  
(detail), c. 1760, oil on copper,  
Pinacoteca Virreinal, Instituto  
Nacional de Bellas Artes,  
Consejo Nacional para la  
Cultura y las Artes, Mexico.  
(Cat. no. 32, page 77)

ceived in a New World with very different traditions about the relationship between sacrifice, suffering, and the sacred. Early missionaries were asking a similar question when they wondered suspiciously if, for example, Indian affection for the festival of Corpus Christi might spring from memories of older, forbidden sacrifices previously conducted at that time of year.<sup>33</sup> Unfortunately, little is yet known about the impact of indigenous or Pre-Columbian devotional practices or art forms on depictions of the body of Christ. Nor do we know whether the extreme exploitation, physical cruelty, and devastating disease to which the indigenous peoples were subjected colored their view of the Savior whose arrival brought such violence. What is clear is that New Spain elaborated its own devotional idiom, one that

emphasized to an unusually high degree the suffering, even tortured humanity of Jesus's body in its various manifestations (opposite page).

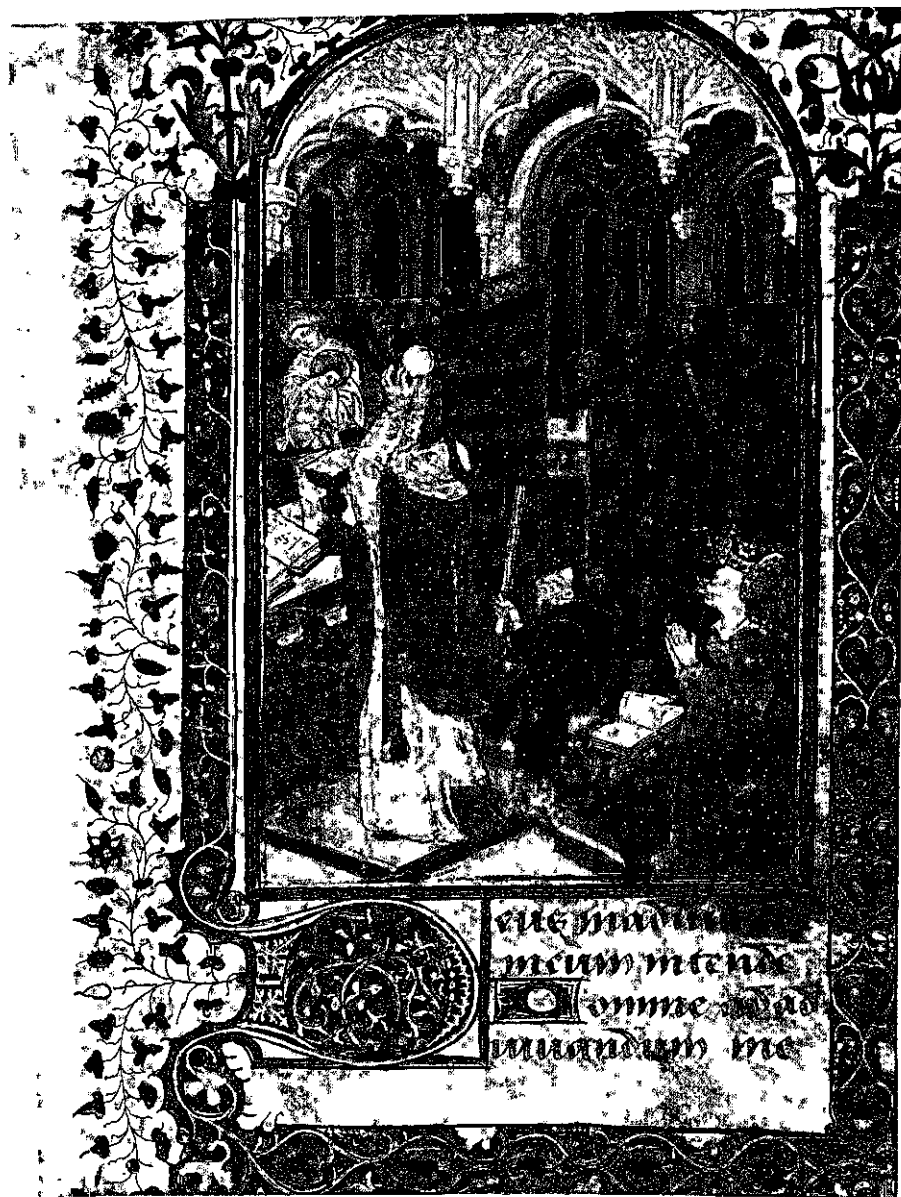
The developing emphasis on Christ's body traced throughout this essay obviously framed the style and the contents of the works of art in this exhibition. Equally important, it valorized the very act of visualization and representation. If the anti-anthropomorphic strain of the Hebrew Bible could be invoked to reject representations of the divine as idolatrous, the human form of Jesus could be used to authorize such representations. This was an ongoing debate (recall the iconoclasm of seventh- and eighth-century Byzantium, or of sixteenth-century Protestants), but for the people who produced the objects displayed in this exhibition the answer was certain: it was through visualizing the human body of God that individuals could interiorize and approach the divine.<sup>34</sup> Such visualization could be internal, as in the quote from Peter Damian cited previously in this essay. But often such interiorization was built upon devotional techniques involving images.

A good example of such use is the crucifix. Aelred of Rievaulx, advising a recluse to keep a crucifix in her retreat, stressed that the image "represents to you His passion which you should imitate, invites you with outstretched arms to His embraces in which you delight, pours out to you from His naked breasts the milk of sweetness by which you are consoled."<sup>35</sup> Later texts are more explicit about how such visualization helped achieve mystical union with God. Elizabeth of Erkenrode frequently kissed and contemplated "an excellently painted image of the crucified Lord." When she

fixed on this image the mind of her eyes with the complete concentration of her mind, ... she tasted, as is believed, the indescribable sweetness of the suffering Lord ..., and she was immediately enraptured ..., and from considering the image she was raised to the contemplation of truth. ...

Petrarch believed that Saint Francis's stigmata had their origin in his meditation on Christ's death: "when in his mind he had for a long time transferred it on to himself, and seemed to himself attached to the cross with his Lord, at last his pious thought transferred the true image of the thing from his mind onto his body." So powerful was this technique that one sixteenth-century doctor hypothesized that a woman's constant visualization of Jesus's wounds could imprint stigmata on her fetus.<sup>36</sup>

Anonymous, French (Normandy), *Priest Celebrating a Mass* (Leaf from the *Tarleton Book of Hours*), c. 1430, ink, tempera, and gold on parchment, University of Michigan Museum of Art, 1968/2.43.



The central devotional role of the visual imagination is evident in the treatment of other forms of Christ's body as well. The "daily immolation of Christ" in the eucharistic sacrifice, for example, was thought to stimulate memory, devotion, and imitation by prodding the visual imagination. From the thirteenth century forward this effect was heightened by the custom of elevation (page 23). A ringing bell would mark the moment of transubstantiation, and the celebrant would raise the Eucharist while the parishioners knelt to adore it. "And by this the devotion of believers is excited, and an increase in their faith affected."<sup>37</sup> Later genres of devotional representation like the Mass of Saint Gregory can be seen as didactic glosses on central visual experiences like these. By depicting Jesus upon the altar, by surrounding Him with icons of the Passion such as the

*Arma Christi*, these images were meant to remind the devout of what it was that they were seeing and chewing: an offering of real flesh, suffering and bleeding, torn from the body of Christ. Still other genres had other devotional roles. But whether as spurs to memory, objects of physical adoration, or templates for imitation and internalization, all the objects collected here mediated visually between human and divine. Like Christ's body itself, they were thought to be the means by which humanity might become God.

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- 1 For the generalization about early Christianity, see A.D. Nock, *Conversion: the Old and the New in Religion from Alexander the Great to Augustine of Hippo*, Oxford, 1933, p. 210. On East vs. West, see P. Van der Aalst, "Le Christ dans la piété orientale. Quelques aspects," *Proche-Orient Chrétien* 8, 1958, pp. 99-116, 295-312. On early medieval Germanic Christianity, see J. Jungmann, "Die Abwehr des germanischen Arianismus und der Umbruch der religiösen Kultur im frühen Mittelalter," in *Liturgisches Erbe und pastorale Gegenwart*, Munich, 1960, pp. 3-86. On the cult of saints, see P. Brown, *The Cult of the Saints: Its Rise and Function in Latin Christianity*, London, 1981.
- 2 The quote is from L. White, "The Life of the Silent Majority," in *Life and Thought in the Early Middle Ages*, ed. R. Hoyt, Minneapolis, 1967, pp. 85-100, here p. 98. See also G. Constable, *The Reformation of the Twelfth Century*, Cambridge, 1996, p. 300; B. Stock, *The Implications of Literacy*, Princeton, 1983.
- 3 See R. Southern, *The Making of the Middle Ages*, New Haven, 1953, pp. 222-34; L. Genicot, "Valeur de la personne ou sens du concret. A la base de la société du haut moyen âge," in *Miscellanea mediaevalia in memoriam Jan Frederik Niermeyer*, Groningen, 1967, pp. 1-18; C. Morris, *The Discovery of the Individual, 1050-1200*, London, 1972; C. Bynum, "Did the Twelfth Century Discover the Individual?" in *Jesus as Mother: Studies in the Spirituality of the High Middle Ages*, Los Angeles, 1982, pp. 82-109.
- 4 Marbod of Rennes, *Miracula Toberti Casae-Dei*, cited in Constable, *Reformation*, p. 24. Gilbert Crispin cited in *ibid.*, p. 7.
- 5 Compare Bynum, *Jesus as Mother*, pp. 17, 101-2.
- 6 Bernard of Clairvaux, Sermon 1 in Annunciatione, 7, Sermon 2 in Nativitate, 3-4, both in *Sancti Bernardi opera*, ed. Leclercq et al. Rome, 1957-77, vol. v, 19, and vol. iv, 253.
- 7 Hugh of Saint Victor, *De institutione*, chap. 7, PL 176, cols. 932D-33C. Compare Godfrey of Clairvaux on Christ's providing a "form of perfection": "But where 'the word was made flesh and dwelt among us,' the image of life was already given to us in Him, and the exemplar of behaviour, which should also be bodily imitated, so that we may follow the double path and no longer halt on the other thigh with the patriarch

- Jacob." Cited in G. Constable, *Three Studies in Medieval Religious and Social Thought*, Cambridge, 1995, p. 192.
- 8 Saint Bernard of Clairvaux's formulation is succinct. Christ shows us "the form of life, as of a road, by which you may return to the fatherland." See his Sermon 22 super Cantica, III, 7, ed. Leclercq, vol. 1, 133. Cf. Bynum, *Jesus as Mother*, p. 17.
- 9 Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae*, III, q. 1, art. 2; Petrarch, *De remediis utriusque fortunae*, II, 93.
- 10 Epistle 48, PL, CCXI, 635C-6A. Others emphasized carnal delight even more. The mystic Christina of Markyate, for example, fondled the baby Jesus, and also felt Him move within her. See *Vita Christinae* 45, ed. C. H. Talbot, Oxford, 1959, p. 118.
- 11 Bernard of Clairvaux, *Sermo 3 in Psalmum 'Qui habitat'*, 3, ed. Leclercq, vol. IV, 394.
- 12 See G. Macy, *The Theologies of the Eucharist in the Early Scholastic Period*, Oxford (1984); and M. Rubin, *Corpus Christi: The Eucharist in Late Medieval Culture*, Cambridge, 1991, pp. 14-35. For the latter two questions, see pp. 68-9.
- 13 "Oh how clean should be your hands, for with your hands you handle the body of Jesus Christ. To you is given what is not given to any of the angels. . . . To none except priests is it given to accomplish the sacrifice of the body of the Lord." Alexander Nequam, Sermon 12 (Bodl. MS Wood. empt. 13, fol. 33v), transcribed in R. W. Hunt, *The Schools and the Cloister: The Life and Writings of Alexander Nequam (1157-1217)*, p. 90. Compare the fourteenth-century vision of Margaret of Cortona, to whom Jesus complained about corrupt priests: "For if they truly knew me they would know that there is no beauty in the created world similar to that of those priests who celebrate. And they would not come to touch me with polluted hands." For Margaret, see C. Bynum, *Holy Feast and Holy Fast: The Religious Significance of Food to Medieval Women*, Los Angeles, 1987, p. 141.
- 14 See canon 1 on transubstantiation. Compare chapter 4, session 13, of the Council of Trent (1551). On the theology of the Eucharist, see especially Macy, *Theologies*. Fourth Lateran stipulated annual confession and communion in canon 21, *omnis utriusque sexus*.

- 15 See R. I. Moore, *The Origins of European Dissent*, London, 1977. Most members of these groups would have agreed "that Christ and the Blessed Virgin and the Blessed John the Evangelist came down from heaven and were not of this flesh," that the cross was merely a stick of wood, and that the Host was not the body of Christ. For the first two statements, see the depositions against Peter Garcias collected by the Inquisition in Toulouse in 1247, translated in W. Wakefield, *Heresy, Crusade and Inquisition in Southern France 1100-1250*, London, 1974, p. 244. The third comes from a list of questions to be asked of all suspects in an Inquisition manual of c. 1248, in Wakefield, pp. 250-8.
- 16 See, e.g., Rubin, *Corpus Christi*; V. Kolve, *The Play Called Corpus Christi*, London, 1966.
- 17 They underscored the point with stories like the one about a man who tried to subsist on the Eucharist alone. His body digested itself and he died of starvation after fourteen days. See Roland Bandinelli, *Sententiae*, in A. Gietl, *Die Sentenzen Rolands nachmals Papstes Alexander III*, Freiburg, 1891, p. 232.
- 18 It is to the elaboration of these imbrications that Caroline Bynum's *Holy Feast and Holy Fast* is dedicated. The quote here is from p. 168.
- 19 W. Butler-Bowdon, *The Book of Margery Kempe*, 1436, London, 1936, pp. 354-5.
- 20 On tenth-century crucifixes see P. Hinz, "'Traditio' und 'Novatio' in der Geschichte der Kreuzigungsbilder und Kruzifixe bis zum Ausgang des Mittelalters," in *Traditio-Krisis-Renovatio aus theologischer Sicht. Festschrift Winfried Zeller*, ed. B. Jaspert and B. Mohr, Marburg, 1976, pp. 599-608; H. Mayr-Harting, *Ottoman Book Illumination*, London, 1991, vol. 1, pp. 68-80. For a sense of the shift, compare in Constable, *Three Studies*, p. 164 with p. 232. For late-medieval examples, see J. Marrow, *Passion Iconography in Northern European Art of the Late Middle Ages and Early Renaissance*, Kortrijk, 1979. For late-eighteenth century Mexican examples, see *Converging Cultures: Art & Identity in Spanish America*, ed. D. Fane, New York, 1996, pp. 108-9.
- 21 See also 5:24: "They that are Christ's have crucified their flesh."
- 22 *Oratio* 26, *PL*, 145, col. 927BC. On flagellation see his *De laude flagellolum*, *PL*, 145, cols. 679-686.
- 23 Bernard of Clairvaux, *Ep.* 322, ed. Leclercq, vol. VIII, p. 257.
- 24 On the history of stigmata, see most recently Constable, *Three Studies*, pp. 199-203, 212-25. On Francis, see J. Merkt, *Die Wundmale des heiligen Franziskus von Assisi*, Leipzig, 1910. James of Vitry's sermon about the layman is quoted in Constable, p. 216. The demon had disguised himself as an angel and instructed the layman to "suffer for Christ those things that Christ suffered for him."
- 25 On the increasing emphasis on suffering and death in late medieval art see E. Mâle, *L'Art religieux de la fin du moyen âge en France*, Paris, 1908, pp. 75-6.
- 26 *Analecta hymnica medii aevi*, ed. G. Dreves and C. Blume, 55 vols., Leipzig, 1886-1922, reprinted New York, 1961, vol. 42, p. 8.
- 27 See, for example, the thirteenth-century crucifix in the basilica of Saint Francis at Arezzo, in which Saint Francis, bearing the stigmata, is depicted holding and kissing Jesus's bleeding feet (Constable, *Three Studies*, pl. 19, p. 222). Compare a vision of Gertrude of Helfta, in which Christ says of a soul drinking from His side: "The union that you see between her heart and My side indicates that she is thus at every moment able to drink from the flood of My divinity." Gertrude of Helfta, *Oeuvres spirituelles 2: Le Héraut*, Sources Chrétiennes 139, Paris, 1968, bk. 1, chap. 16, pp. 206-18, here p. 208. See C. Bynum, "Women Mystics in the Thirteenth Century: The Case of the Nuns of Helfta," in *Jesus as Mother*, pp. 170-262, here p. 192.
- 28 R. Pfaff, *New Liturgical Feasts in Late Medieval England*, Oxford, 1970, pp. 62-83.
- 29 Cited in Rubin, *Corpus Christi*, p. 303; Thomas à Kempis, *Imitatio XI*, 1, vol. 2, p. 225.
- 30 On the Sacred Heart see C. Vagaggini, "La dévotion au Sacré-Coeur" in *Cor Jesu*, 2 vols., Rome, 1959, vol. 2, pp. 31-48. On the *Arma Christi* see R. Suckale, "Arma Christi. Überlegungen zur Zeichenhaftigkeit mittelalterlicher Andachtsbilder," *Städte-Jahrbuch* 6 (1977), pp. 177-208.
- 31 The genre emerged from thirteenth-century *Pietà* scenes and became a major theme of late medieval painting. E. Panofsky, *Early Netherlandish Art: Its Origins and Character*, 2 vols., Cambridge, 1953, vol. 1, pp. 123-5, figures 43-6; E. Mâle, *L'Art religieux de la fin du moyen-âge en France: Etude sur l'iconographie du moyen-âge et sur ses sources d'inspiration*, Paris 1928, pp. 98-104.
- 32 E.g., in the Getty Museum ms. 3, Book of Hours of Bruges, c. 1520-30, attributed to Simon Bening. On the Mass see J. Endres, "Die Darstellung der Gregoriusmesse im Mittelalter," *Zeitschrift für christliche Kunst* 30 (1917), pp. 146-56; and *Die Messe Gregors des Grossen*.
- 33 For an Andean example from about 1608, see *The Huarochoirf Manuscript: A Testament of Ancient and Colonial Andean Religion*, trans. and ed. by F. Solomon and G. Urioste, pp. 72ff. For a Mexican example, see Hernando Ruiz de Alarcón, "Tratado de las supersticiones y costumbres gentílicas que hoy viven entre los naturales de esta Nueva España," in F. del Paso y Troncoso, *Tratado de las idolatrías*, 2 vols., Mexico City, 1953. Cf. also C. Dean, "Ethnic Conflict and Corpus Christi in Colonial Cuzco," *Colonial Latin American Review* 2:1-2 (1993), pp. 93-120.
- 34 Medieval theologians were aware of the risks to such an approach. For but one example, see the debate between Herman, a convert from Judaism, and Rupert of Deutz in 1128. Against the suggestion of idolatry, Rupert argued that Christians focus on the cross "so that we ourselves are aroused internally to love of Him while imagining externally His death through the likeness of the Cross." Rupert added that images were for the ignorant what books were to the wise. See Herman, *De conversione sua*, 3, ed. G. Niemeyer (Weimar, 1963), p. 80. On Cistercian concern about images, see C. Rudolph, *The "things of greater importance": Bernard of Clairvaux's Apologia and the medieval attitude toward Art*, Philadelphia, 1990.
- 35 *De institutione incolarum*, 26, ed. C. Dumont, Sources Chrétiennes 76, Paris, 1961, p. 104.
- 36 Philip of Clairvaux, *Vita Elizabeth sanctimonialis in Erkenrode*, 3, in *Catalogus codicum hagiographicarum bibliothecae regiae Bruxellensis*, Brussels, 1886-89, 1, 363 (BHL 2484). Petrarch, *Ep. sen* VIII, 3, tr. M. Bishop, Bloomington, 1966, p. 257. See in general Constable, *Three Studies*, "The Ideal of the Imitation of Christ," here pp. 219-20. On stigmatization of the fetus see Pietro Pompanazzi, *De naturalium effectuum admirandorum causis, seu de incantationibus liber c. 5*, in *Opera*, Basel, 1567, pp. 67-8, 81-4, cited in D. Elliot, "The Physiology of Rapture and Female Spirituality," forthcoming in *Medieval Theology and the Natural Body*, ed. A. Minnis and P. Biller.
- 37 See Alger of Liège, *De sacramento*, 1.17, *PL* CLXXX, 789B. On the elevation see Rubin, *Corpus Christi*, pp. 54-63, 69-70. The quote is from p. 57, citing Bishop Quivil of Exeter in 1287.

# The Body of Christ

*In the Art of Europe and New Spain, 1150-1800*

By James Clifton

with essays by David Nirenberg  
and Linda Elaine Neagley



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