Brace Jovanovich, 1971). Cf. Roth and Berenbaum: "Events do not undo themselves" (*Holocaust*, xiv).

23. Caruth, *Unclaimed Experience*, 100.

24. Ibid., 103.

25. I extrapolate from the father's story, which is "no longer simply his own" (ibid., 102; cf. 8).

26. Ibid., 100.

27. Ibid., 102.

28. I refer the reader to Eliezer Berkovits's midrash "In the Beginning Was the Cry: A Midrash for Our Times" (in Roth and Berenbaum, *Holocaust*, 298–301), where he suggests that God cannot save souls who no longer believe in life but must wait upon humankind to save God from sorrow in the antewomb of creation.

29. In *Haunting Legacies*, Schwab shows that key historical events, like the Vietnam War, can become cover memories that enable us to evade our histories of genocide and colonization. She argues for a methodology that connects, in uncovering screened-off trauma, memories of global trauma.

SCHOLAR'S SESSION

Karmen Mackendrick

Carnal Eternity

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I

Let me begin with Karmen MacKendrick on eternal flesh. Already in the opening chapter of *Fragmentation and Memory* (2008) entitled "The One and the Many," MacKendrick makes a strong case for what she calls the "decidedly corporeal foundations" of Christianity.[1] Over and against the Gnostic strains that came to dominate so much of the mainstream

Christian tradition, MacKendrick reminds us that there is an "eternity to corporeality" if we read the corporeal "not as dead matter but as flesh already in complex relation with the word" (23). This is the basic hypothesis that underlies what I would call her "carnal hermeneutics of Christianity" throughout the rest of the book.[2]

One of MacKendrick's most audacious insights, in my view, is the idea of a radical opening up of ourselves through flesh. But careful—not just any flesh but the flesh of bodies broken open by something (or some time) bigger than ourselves. In this carnal rupturing there is a twisting and disrupting of linear time, exposing us to "another time" outside yet within time: what she terms the eternity of the flesh. This leads directly and logically to what I consider to be one of MacKendrick's most important notions: the eternal time of resurrection as repetition and return—what we might call *ana*-time, that is, a time *after* time that comes *back* to the beginning before time, but time nonetheless. (The *Oxford English Dictionary* definition of *ana* is a movement "back, up, again, anew, in space or time.")[3]

The promise of the resurrected body is a reminder that corporeal afterlife is in fact *ana*-life. It is more-life, again-life: the after returning back to this life anew, but this time at another degree of intensity and depth. This is a time of ceaseless birthing, again and again, re-natally. Otherwise put, the time of ana-theism is the overabundance of life *in* this life, just as the invisible is *in* the visible (Merleau-Ponty) or the infinite is *in* the finite (Levinas). MacKendrick would add, no doubt, as the incorporeal (spirit) is *in* the corporeal (body)—which is another way of saying incarnation: word *in* flesh. So we are talking here about an eternal surplus within temporal passing that refuses to pass away but keeps bubbling up again and again like Eckhart's *ebulutio* or Hildegaarde de Bingen's irrepressible *veriditas*. MacKendrick does not cite the latter mystic (a feminist sister soul avant la lettre), but she does cite Lou Andreas-Salomé to good effect: "The afterlife (*survivance*) no longer means death and the return of the specter, but the surviving of an excess of life which resists annihilation" (112).

This is no reductive materialism (eliminative or positivist). It is, rather, a mysticism of matter that inscribes itself in a long Christian countertradition stretching from Gregory of Nyssa through the medieval mystics to Teilhard de Chardin. At the beginning of *Fragmentation and Memory*, MacKendrick approvingly invokes Nyssa's claim that because the immaterial soul is already incarnate in all the multiple atoms of our bodies, bodily

resurrection is an extension of this Word-in-Flesh phenomenon. "There is," writes Gregory, "nothing to hinder the soul's presence in the body's atoms, whether fused in union or decomposed in dissolution" (114). When Christ says, accordingly, that he comes to bring life and to bring it "more abundantly" this hyperabundance—promised to all people and things, to all fragments of the universe no matter how multilocated and spread out—he does not mean eternal life "after" death but eternal life in this life: a life so transfigured by vital intensification that it defies the finality and annihilation of death. See, for example, the Song of Songs claim that "love is as strong as death" or the sacramental belief that Christ's host-body is available in the multiple hosts of multiple altars throughout the world. The notion of one-as-many (the title of MacKendrick's opening reflection) is powerfully celebrated by Gerard Manley Hopkins in the final verse of "When Kingfishers catch fire":

> Christ plays in ten thousand places
> Lovely in eyes and lovely in limbs not his
> to the father through the features of men's faces.

In this light, MacKendrick offers powerful and persuasive evocations of "how the infinite and eternal are present/absent in the absent presence of living flesh" (115).

2

In chapter 6, entitled "Eternal Flesh: The Resurrection of the Body," MacKendrick devotes much time to this conundrum. Her basic thesis here is that human corporeality is something immortal. (The critical question of whether this applies to every human body or to "some" kinds more than others—for example, bodies of love rather than of hate, of life rather than of dearth—is something I will return to.) MacKendrick sets out to demonstrate how a certain fragmenting of time can give eternity to life. She wants to explore ways in which our bodies may live eternity even as we live through time—and by extension, through motion, matter, and desire. Her notion of the carnality of lived eternity is, in my view, as intriguing as it is complex. MacKendrick is not coming to this straight, as if she were the first to think of it. Nor is she invoking some kind of

New Age mysticism (a mix of Swedenborg and Aurobindo, for example, though she could well have enlisted both in her cause). MacKendrick deploys instead a singular poetic phenomenology of carnal eternity lived in and through time, a phenomenology that she supplements with liberal appeals to contemporary Continental thought (Derrida, Blanchot, Deleuze, Nancy) alongside citations of classic church doctrines (Nicene Creed, Council of Trent, *Baltimore Catechism*) and stalwart theologians (Augustine, Nyssa, Eckhart). She knows her stuff and has no compunction mixing traditional and postmodern idioms. In this she is daring and original. Both her argument and her style have a unique character, a way of turning a phrase, honing a subclause, sounding a caution, pitching a hypothesis, raising a rhetorical eyebrow, that is inimitable. They evoke a sort of exquisite empathy with the texts she discusses as well as with the flesh they spring from. The chiasm between wording and fleshing is omnipresent and perhaps never more so than in this chapter. One can only respond, if one attends to what she is saying, with what she aptly terms, in another text, a "hospitality of listening."[4] But more on this question of auditory attention below.

Let me stay, for now, with the time of the flesh. The following is a key, and in my view pivotal, passage in which MacKendrick announces her basic distinction between the metaphysical notion of eternity as a time that *endures* and her own sacramental notion of time that *intensifies*. Speaking of the "corporeality of lived eternity," she writes:

> I want to emphasize the recurrent, breaking, or suspended times of the body, in which we may recognize the capacity of the body to be (as those early monists insisted) more than mere matter, yet wholly material; to be, as flesh, more than linear and brief in temporal occupation. Looking at both function and sensation in the living body, we find more than a time that endures: we find a time cut through and transformed by an eternity we can evoke, if not understand, in memory. What I would like to do here, to phrase it differently, is to take the "eternal" of eternal life seriously, take it as a noontime that already cuts through our time, or within which our temporality is already enfolded; the outside edge of time that we touch, barely, where staying is impossible. I want to suggest that eternal life in the body tells us more about eternal life as well as about bodies. (133)

MacKendrick echoes here Jean-Luc Nancy's idea of an infinite life that exceeds rather than succeeds finite life: an infinity that brims over inward, from within life, as life that is *more* than itself because it lives on, lives more livingly, more in-finitely in and through its very finitude. She explains this idea of eternity as living beyond ourselves, excessively, superabundantly, thus:

> Since, in thinking the resurrection of the body as the materiality of eternal life, I read eternity as a quality and fullness of corporeal life in time and not as indefinite endurance, I would read the "end of the world" (the "time" in or at which the resurrection of the body happens) as language's struggle with the unsayability in the world of the atemporality that disrupts it; "end" is perhaps no worse a metaphor than "outside." Somatic eternity is not the endurance of the body but the transfigurative rhythm and rupture of time and the fullness of life, in and through flesh. (133)

Note here the rhythmical repetition and recurrence of the keywords—*eternal, flesh, enduring, body, time, matter, life*—again and again (and it is like this from beginning to end!). The writing unfolds like an incantatory hymn not unlike the poeticizing prose of the later Heidegger or Derrida. (I was reminded at times indeed of Derrida's description of Levinas's style as a series of wavelets lapping against a shore incessantly, inexhaustibly, obsessively.) This is the kind of style that can give Continental philosophy a bad name in certain analytic circles. But here it is utterly authentic and, what is more, ineluctable. One is persuaded by the prose and its authorial persona that there simply is no *other* way of saying this. Apart from resorting to the words of certain poets and mystics—which she does from time to time—this is the only way of saying this unsayable thing: the resurrection of the body as crossover of time and eternity.

When MacKendrick does defer to poets she herself practices the sacramental acoustic she preaches. Take, for example, this citation from Hölderlin: "Even in a limited existence man can know an infinite life, and the limited representation of divinity, stemming for him from this existence, can itself also be infinite" (133). From this short passage, MacKendrick spins out a startlingly moving reflection on how our human life can live on exceedingly, *sur-vivant*, embodying an infinite life that does not come after our finite one but overflows from inside out and outside in simultaneously.

But what the great poets provide in terms of an acoustics of eternal flesh is also to be found, albeit in different terms, in the greatest theologians of the past. MacKendrick does not hesitate to slide from verses of the romantics to the Athanasian or Nicene creeds. She is the most revolutionary catechist you could imagine! Her audacious and innovative rereadings of the scriptural canon echo those of the great mystics whose feet were often put to the fire—think of Teresa, Eckhart, Porete, and the Beguines (whose perfume of singed flesh still floats between the pages of their once censored works). But there will be no such auto-da-fé for Karmen MacKendrick. We, her colleagues, will protect her!

MacKendrick is rethinking the Resurrection of the Body in novel and startling ways. But, as she keeps modestly reminding us, it is all *already* there in the body of the Christian text and the text of Christ's body. The risen body of Christ, she suggests, already hints at eternal life for all. For if the doctrine of the resurrected body is modeled on the resurrected body of Christ, is it not reasonable to suppose that spirited human flesh may be likewise read as eternal? Against dualist metaphysics, Platonic or otherwise, Christianity reveals that the most perfect human form is not divested of the body. And if it is true that human flesh always seems to involve some element of change, motion, time, and matter—not to mention desire and fragmentation—then these properties, too, must somehow sur-vive and re-vive in the glorified existence of eternal life (now)! But how can the fragmentary persist within the whole? How can eternity belong not to disincarnate, immaterial spirits but to the flesh of bodies in their very passing, their living on, their ebullition and brimming over? That is why the risen body of Christ is never, by Christ's own admission, risen enough (as he tried to point out to Mary Magdalene and his disciples, who wanted to hang on to him and turn him into a fetish of possession, power, and presence). The Paraclete comes as the risen Christ goes. Why? Because coming and going are the very essence of eternity, something recognized by the wonderful poetic notion of *perichoresis*, where the three persons keep shifting and changing places around an empty *chora*, forever filling, unfilling and refilling.[5]

3

So what is this "other time" where, MacKendrick claims, matter is interleaved with the eternal? Well it is clearly *not* a time of chronological

progression, as noted, but, rather, one of strangeness, a time that recurs and suspends, ruptures and shatters. Here time and eternity are not opposed as linear to perpendicular but are interwoven in a crisscrossing play of enveloping and enveloped, touching and touched, ascending and descending. MacKendrick rightly sees precedents for this way of thinking in a number of rich and reverberating examples: the reversible carnal chiasm of Merleau-Ponty, the mystical *implicatio-explicatio* of Cusanus, or the endless birthing and rebirthing of the divine in the human of Eckhart. The latter's bold description of Christ being constantly born within the human soul, traversing the borders of interiority and exteriority, immanence and transcendence, profanity and sacrality, is, for MacKendrick, perfectly fitting: "If someone were to ask me . . . [W]hy did God, the All-Highest, take on our flesh?—then I would reply: in order that God can be born in the soul and the soul be born in God. That is why the whole of Scripture was written and why God created the whole world" (138). This double natality epitomizes the way in which all time is gathered into the "now of eternity in which the soul knows all things new and fresh and present in God" (138). The word *fresh* is particularly telling here, for it signals the ceaseless novelty of this process of mutual passing and return, suspension and renewal. Here is an eternal divinity that, to borrow from Paul Simon, keeps "slip-sliding away" even as it keeps revolving and returning. The eternal birthing is never completed; and its very incompletion is its divinity. It is not deferred to some final future but, rather, is lived out eternally in each moment as mutual *co-naissance* (Claudel). This is how MacKendrick sums up her central reading of eternity as carnal natality:

> Eternity gives us this sense of immortal flesh not as flesh that lasts forever but as time's own redemption, its own transfiguration of this slippage, in rhythm and in rupture. I won't claim that this keeps us from loss either—we do well to retain our sense of the mutual inherence of absence in presence, mourning in joy. But it redeems, or, a little more exactly, transfigures loss, in a more complex sense than the repeating slippage of endurance. . . . The eternal does not hold onto presence but exceeds it. The God mortally sacrificed is the God always just being born. (138)

MacKendrick concedes that it is not easy to comprehend this notion of a nonending newness in the flesh. She is right. The mind buckles

and boggles. For without some concept of enduring, how could we make sense of a body that changes while somehow remaining itself (otherwise we would just have a series of discreetly succeeding bodies)? Hence the classic practice of conceiving the resurrected body as a transfigured flesh that endures everlastingly. But how, then, to make sense of the fact that Christ's own incarnation involves mutability, change, passing? Or how to resolve the puzzle (encountered by both Augustine and Anselm) that a timeless God can be temporal and changing in the person of Christ? MacKendrick's considered response to this age-old theological puzzle is to amplify the range of reference and suggest that "no body is in fact lived solely within time," which—careful!—does not mean that "the body has some part outside time, but rather that time has an outside, and that this outside can come to us (as does time) corporeally. That is, once again, *this* world is blessed, and this body, too, is redeemed in time" (139).

Now I have a few questions on this matter of eternal time before moving on to my final comments. First, when MacKendrick speaks of "*no* body" existing solely within time and adds that "*the* body has some part outside time" and that "*this* body" is redeemed in time, does she mean that *every* body is so redeemed? In other words, is everyone redeemed within eternal time, or are there some—or parts of some—that are not so redeemed? I am thinking here not just of universal redemption (everyone is saved including Hitler and Attila the Hun) but also of the question of irredeemable evil done to bodies: rape, torture, sadism, child abuse, war crimes. Are these embodied horrors also part of the eternal body? In which case, is nobody or no embodied act, however heinous, excluded from the glorified flesh? What, then, of ethical discernment or responsibility: the choice between feeding the stranger (whose starving, beaten body lies before me on the street) or killing the stranger? Is every evil eligible for membership in the mystical body? Is no one or nothing excluded?

Jung's answer to Job—and that of Gnosticism for millennia—has been that the evil side of the divine is as indispensable as the good side: violence as much as peace, hate as much as love. Would MacKendrick concur? Is her phenomenology of brokenness another tacit version of "all is permitted"? If so, what of the biblical notion that God only remembers good and overcomes evil by forgetting it? Are we allowed such selective memory in MacKendrick's poetics of eternal flesh? Or to put this in another way: I wonder how, given her position, we might distinguish, however provisionally and tentatively, between eros and

thanatos—that is, between carnal acts that enable or disable, emancipate or incarcerate, heal or maim. In short, is there a real place for ethics in MacKendrick's poetics? Justice regarding singular persons and acts as well as all-embracing glorifications? In this scenario, who is responsible for what and for whom?

4

This brings me back to the central theme of brokenness. Carnal fracturing seems the privileged means to open the self to the eternal. But how is this compatible with the idea that healing is the answer to fragmentation? I suspect that MacKendrick is challenging the received wisdom in most psychotherapeutic theories—and in a long Christian tradition—that reintegration is the answer to disintegration (i.e., dissociation, dysfunction, destruction, and despair). This is surely what she intends when she invokes the experience of "abysmal . . . brokenness" as a refusal of "catharsis" (77). Most recent trauma studies, from Judith Harmon to Dori Laub, suggest that the best way to healing is by retrieving the frozen fragments of traumatic experience so as to restore them to some kind of cathartic memory: a narrative of mourning that restores and reconciles one with one's past. This therapeutic method is supported by two main approaches: (1) the Aristotelian view of catharsis as purgation by pity and fear (in a *mythos-mimesis* carried out in a unity of time, place, action, and character) and (2) the psychoanalytic notion of the "talking cure" deeply informed by Freud's own treatment of World War I trauma victims in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*. Most cases of trauma analyzed in contemporary literature concern extreme incidents of torture, rape, incest, or genocide. MacKendrick is clearly not dealing with such dramatic breakings; but her analysis does suggest a certain isomorphism between such instances and the more everyday experiences of kairological breakage—the irruption of eternity in time. In both cases, the power of human agency, initiative, and freedom appear contested. But what are the implications of such a move for theology, psychology, and ethics?

In chapter 4, entitled "Poppies and Rosemary: Love," MacKendrick speaks of a love that has already happened before I choose it to happen. I can only give the gift of love if the gift is already given to me; I can only keep a promise if I already find myself promised. Or as she puts it, "Love's promise is given as something remembered." The "stranger already" precedes any notion of "subjective intentionality." Promises are made before I know it; love is a commandment obeyed before I say, "I love"—as if I have to remember that I have already forgotten myself.

MacKendrick speaks here of "obsessive memory." And she might well have added something on Proust's involuntary memory. For love seems involuntary to the extent that it is, in MacKendrick's terms, "strange," "anarchic," and "greedy." In other words, obsessive eros precedes and exceeds the ethics of law. And MacKendrick celebrates eros accordingly as "disordering" and "profoundly disruptive of selfhood" (86), "excessive and exhausting" (courtesy of Roland Barthes). Sacred eros is radically transgressive in that it "possesses us" to the point of rupturing the moral self. "I am not there . . .," she explains, "as the one to whom the law, or the commandment, might apply" (87). Love is thus revealed as a kind of suprapersonal excess that divests the self of itself and breaks it open to the other within and without.

Now let me admit straightaway that MacKendrick's analysis is more complex than my account suggests. She is touching on a deep mystical enigma that goes back to Paul's prioritizing of love over law; and she is right, in my view, to challenge a long tradition of rationalist moralism and voluntarism in favor of what Pascal calls "la logique du coeur—le coeur a ses raison que la raison ne connait pas." She is contesting the idea of rational control over the senses going from Platonism and scholasticism right up to modern thinkers like Kant and Sartre: namely, the view that desire is a passion to be subjugated lest it subvert the autonomy of conscious will. (Think here of Kant's moral reason versus inclination or Sartre's utilitarian view of desire as an ordered pattern of means directed toward an end.) In this, MacKendrick echoes the general posthumanist critique of the sovereign ego from Nietzsche and Heidegger to a host of postmodern thinkers such as Foucault, Barthes, Derrida, and Irigaray.

And we might add Levinas to this list. I am thinking especially of his later work where, in a passage in *Otherwise than Being*, for example, he glosses the phrase "je suis malade d'amour" (Song of Songs) with the claim that the self is obsessed, violated, invaded, and persecuted by the other—hostaged before the self was ever free to think, act, or respond. Levinas's discourse of the hostaged self has connotations at times of theological masochism; but he confesses deploying a "language of hyperbole." Would MacKendrick admit as much? And how would she address the Levinasian

dilemma of reconciling the hostaged-self with the host-self (the host being morally enjoined to open the door to the invasive Other with the phrase: "Here I am")?[6]

5

The ethical question becomes even more problematic, I think, when MacKendrick compares the temporal structures of *evil* and *trauma*. Clearly she intends no moral equivalence here, but by declining to tackle the moral difference between these two human experiences there is room for misunderstanding. The damned, no less than the traumatized, are closed up in their split, separated selves; they are unable (or unwilling) to speak or listen to others: "The damned, living in the time of trauma, . . . refuse the double openness of time and word." MacKendrick explains the connection between trauma and the banality of evil as follows: "The shared characteristic is exactly that of not (quite) being experienced—in the case of trauma, an event is not experienced because the ability of consciousness to register the 'experience' is exceeded; in the case of banal evil, a regret or sorrow that would seem appropriate to the rest of us is not experienced because the capacity of otherness, of humanity outside oneself, to register in one's consciousness is absent. In both cases the offense—the symptom or the evil, the restriction on possibility and on response—is likely to go on repeating" (78).

In short, trauma and evil both epitomize the absence of memory, the "eternal dullness of repetition" from which forgiveness seeks to free us. How? Precisely by releasing a "future from the sameness of the past" (79). The structure of confessional forgiveness and of therapeutic speaking would thus appear to function isomorphically. By recounting the story in a new way, by "remembering and then transforming memory, [forgiveness] breaks open the future." MacKendrick opposes accordingly the transfigurative "time of revelation" to the "same-again repetition" of both trauma and damnation. The time of such "new narrative" is, she writes, "the time of the promise, the revelation of the future in its openness instead of the traumatic, damning closure of repetition" (83). But my question is this: Are "traumatic" closure and "damning" closure as similar as the juxtaposition in this sentence suggests? For even if they are both forms of "self-separation" (dissociation for trauma, isolation for sin), are they not fundamentally

different? Surely there is more separating trauma and damnation than a comma?

Let me clarify. When a therapist helps the traumatized victim (of rape/torture/genocide) to break the paralyzing spell of repetition in order to live a new future, is she *forgiving* him? And if so, for what? I am sure that MacKendrick does not wish to *equate* the experience of trauma with evil. But by establishing such an intimate connection between the two it is hard to resist suspecting that such close comparison betrays an implied theodicy (Augustinian or Leibnitzean). Otherwise put: if we are all subject to the temporal structure of trauma in some manner (even if it is what MacKendrick calls "lesser" trauma, similar perhaps to Levinas's notion of a *traumatisme originel* that all humans experience), if we are all thus temporally traumatized with a small "t," is it not because each of us is subject to the deadly repetitiveness of fallenness (or what theologians call "original sin")? And if this is so, are we not all in need of forgiveness and revelation to save us from ourselves? And if this in turn is so, does it not imply that Trauma victims with a capital "T" are even more condemned to the repetitive nontime of damnation than the rest of us lesser-traumatized beings? Again, I am sure that MacKendrick would not endorse such a view; but by juxtaposing "traumatic" and "damning" as she does, is she not lending herself to such possibilities of confusion?

6

Let me conclude with some remarks on MacKendrick's poetics of the sacred. In raising my above reservations I feel that I am not taking sufficient account of the liturgical flow of her writing, nit-picking rather than delicately tracing the unfolding fleece of this beautiful text. For this is prose that pulses to its own "delirious beat," sounding an utterly unique rhythm precisely because it "listens" to a rhythm beyond itself. So doing, it bids its readers to listen in turn, to attend—sacramentally, somatically, acutely—to its inner music, its intensively lived tempo: adagio, andante, allegretto. The prose moves poetically, like the repetition of the rosary, to "something outside of the self" (142). And the author does not shirk from calling this "the shared beating of the sacred heart" (142). But such shared cardiac percussion is not exclusively Christocentric. For MacKendrick the score for this song of the eternal body is as easily found in Deleuze's "other

repetition," or Merleau-Ponty's sonata of flesh, or Nietzsche's chorus of recurrence as in the incantation of Christian liturgy. What MacKendrick terms "the sacred body of all bodies" pulses with the ease of sleep, a temporal phrasing of which we are scarcely aware. It approximates to the beating of breath and blood, respiring and expiring, expanding and contracting, enfolding and refolding, spiraling around and looping back through the flesh of time (142).

One cannot read MacKendrick's prose—not because it is unreadable but because it is doubly readable. One *rereads* it, as one does poetry. And in rereading one listens and listens again.

So we are back to the *ana*-time of the beginning, the time that goes back by going forward and upward: the double "a" of *a-dieu*—both away from (*ab*) and toward (*ad*) the Infinite. This is what MacKendrick calls the "seductive power of rhythms, drawing us out of self and into beauty" (143). It is a double tempo, which draws human and divine bodies to each other in an intensification—not extension—of time that is the time of resurrected flesh. Here epiphanic (extraordinary) time solicits profane (ordinary) time. It is irresistible. "We find it difficult to walk or otherwise move against a strong beat," says MacKendrick. And this applies to her own writing. "What draws us to beauty, what draws language into memory, into poetry, and draws our bodies into participation," she concludes, "is what we have created to seduce the gods" (143): whence what she calls "the fabled seductiveness of musicians generally" (142), and we might add, of certain philosophers—MacKendrick being one of them.

NOTES

1. Karmen MacKendrick, *Fragmentation and Memory* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2008), 22; hereafter cited parenthetically in the text by page number.

2. See my discussion of carnal hermeneutics in "What Is Diacritical Hermeneutics?" *Journal of Applied Hermeneutics* 1, no. 1 (2011): 1–14.

3. See my discussion of *ana* in *Anatheism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010).

4. See Karmen MacKendrick, "The Hospitality of Strangeness: A Note on Sacramental Strangeness," in *Phenomenologies of the Stranger*, ed. K. Semonovitch and R. Kearney (New York: Fordham University Press, 2011), 98–99.

5. See my discussion of perichoresis in "Eros, Diacritical Hermeneutics, and the Maybe," in "Philosophical Thresholds: Crossings of Life and World," ed. Cynthia Willett and Leonard Lawlor, *Philosophy Today* 55 (SPEP suppl.; 2011): 75–85.

6. MacKendrick does, in fairness, insert a parenthesis later in her analysis admitting the need to address the ethical question; and I take her sentence to be both an acknowledgment of elision and a promissory note: "Although my own religious emphasis has always been rather more aesthetic than ethical, I do think there are real ethical and political implications here regarding the care of bodies" (130). I wholeheartedly agree and look forward to learning from her insights into such an ethics of somatic care.

SCHOLAR'S SESSION

Karmen Mackendrick

Response

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I am grateful both to the Society for Phenomenology and Existential Philosophy's organizers for scheduling a session on my work and to the panelists who so graciously fulfilled the rather selfless task of devoting their time and energy to the responses making up that session. It is an honor, and still something of a surprise, to have several smart people discussing my texts and to have the opportunity to take up those responses for a few, admittedly overgeneral, thoughts of my own.

I cannot really think (those thoughts or any others) in distinction from writing or write in distinction from the carnal. This thinking-writing-moving process tends to start in an obsession with something fairly small—an idea, a passage, a sentence, sometimes just a phrase. Usually, these are in tension to the point of paradox with some other idea or sentence or phrase;[1] I am almost never intrigued by anything unidirectional and easy. I am particularly charmed that Rick Lee has called me patient, even if only about original sin, as it seems to me that impatience may well be my greatest scholarly flaw. But obsession, in its persistence, may pass for patience too—and my concerns and interests do come back anew. Each time it seems to me that they were always there, and I am only uncovering