As One Among Many Others:

Affirming a Multitude of Embodied Preaching Practices

By

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Chapter 1

Teaching Preaching in the Logic of One in a Context of Pluralism

This dissertation presents preaching as a multidimensional ritual that transfers collective memory and takes shape through many embodied practices such as public speech, symbolic action, and theater. This definition is based on a cultural-anthropological interpretation of a wide range of biblical and historical examples of embodied preaching practices.[1]

Why? Context, Problem, and Proposed Solution

The world's plurality is evident in every aspect of life in the United States of America including the preaching classroom, challenging homileticians' narrow focus on the sermon and its speech, the naturalization of pulpit preaching through public speech as a Greek rhetor or Roman political orator (stand and speak) as "real" preaching, and a concomitant privileging of Western epistemologies.[2] The imposition of a single preaching norm is hegemonic and colonizing and demands a move from inclusion to affirmation.[3] Ethnic, cultural, and religious pluralism in preaching courses pushes instructors to expand the study and practice to other aspects of preaching, and thus to restore the legitimacy of other embodied preaching practices

[1] The word "preaching" has many meanings. A definition of preaching is inextricably linked to the data sample the researcher uses.

[2] The word "real" here is in quotation marks signaling my disagreement with the normative narrative of what constitutes preaching and with the tendency of some scholars to switch from "preaching" to "proclamation" or to "homiletical artifacts" when taking about "Other" modalities of preaching or embodied preaching practices as if oratory was not embodied.

[3] I understand inclusion as the attempt to make space for persons different to the "norm" or the "originals" in any given community with the unstated expectation that eventually "they" will assimilate, that "they" will subscribe to "our" narrative and/or behave like us. Affirmation does not have that expectation and makes no attempt to assimilate the "different Other" into "our" way of thinking and being. I develop this contrast in the upcoming section "A Proposed Solution: Multiplicity Without a Single Center."

that existed, exist, and are emerging today in the Christian tradition while decentering Christianity and maintaining space for multiple faith affiliations or lack thereof.[4] This multiplicity of preaching aspects and practices is the cure for hegemony in the dominant conceptualization and analysis of preaching in some preaching courses.

Context: Pluralism in the Classroom

The world's plurality has reached the preaching classroom. Students of diverse ethnicities and a wide range of religious beliefs —even within the Christian tradition—sit side by side to learn about preaching. If we take the data compiled by the Association of Theological Schools (ATS) as a point of entry to the changing face of theological education, we find that between 2013 and 2017 white students comprised little more than half of the students enrolled in ministerial and theological programs in the United States, and their numbers continue to fall. Conversely, the number of enrolled students identified as either Hispanic, with temporary visas, or as multiracial is increasing even if those students comprise less than a fifth of the total of students enrolled. Asian, Black, Hispanic, Native American, multiracial, students with visas, and those who did not report their race or ethnicity together comprise almost half of the enrollment. Native Americans are by far the most underrepresented group constituting less than 1 percent of the enrollment.[5]

[4] I am thankful for Allie Utley who told me that moving the body in dance or aesthetic theater for preaching should not be called "embodied preaching" because all preachers have bodies. I agree with Allie, all preachers have bodies and therefore all preaching is embodied. It is important to point out whether and how it makes a difference in preaching to stay still, walk, dance, act, and otherwise communicate bodily from the pulpit. In contrast, Marcia Mount Shoop uses the phrase "disembodied faith" in reference to ignoring the body or staying silent about the body in protestant worship. Such a disposition has resulted in some faith traditions gaining the reputation of being the "frozen chosen." Marcia W. Mount Shoop, *Let the Bones Dance: Embodiment and the Body of Christ* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2010), 1–8.

[5] See Table 2.12 for USA on The Association of Theological Schools (ATS) website. https://www.ats.edu/uploads/resources/institutional-data/annual-data-tables/2017-2018-annual-data-tables.pdf (accessed December 12, 2018). The proportions are similar to the first-year undergraduate class in 2017 in

Religious diversity is also present in classrooms in institutions of higher theological education. The ATS data about church/denominational affiliation of students enrolled in 2017 in its US member schools show that the categories of other, nondenominational, Southern Baptist, and Roman Catholic consistently rise to the top four in M.Div., ministerial non-M.Div., and other programs. Though students from Christian denominations in these institutions are by far in the majority, the data still show significant numbers of Jewish, Buddhist, Muslim, and Inter/multidenominational students.[6] In short, at the end of the second decade of the twenty-first century, religious students, non-religious, and everything in between, Christian, non-Christian, and everything beyond, are mixed in the preaching classroom.

Amidst this racial, ethnic, and religious diversity, people of color find their way into the classroom, some of them coming from el barrio and the 'hood, some of them lacking a life-long "high-quality" education and a background in theology, as the story of Patrick Reyes illustrates.[7] As part of his book on vocational discernment through narrative, Reyes exposes biases and concealed aspects of higher theological education. He relates how he was among seminary students who were getting ready to save the world, to bridge the church and the academy, and to help the poor and the vulnerable. Those students—Reyes' classmates—did not realize that the

Vanderbilt University, which suggests that this snapshot of ethnic and racial diversity is not limited to theological education. See https://www.vanderbilt.edu/about/facts/ (accessed December 12, 2018).

[6] See Table 2.12 for USA on the ATS website, https://www.ats.edu/uploads/resources/institutional-data/annual-data-tables/2017-2018-annual-data-tables.pdf (accessed December 12, 2018).

[7] "Patrick B. Reyes is a practical theologian, educator, administrator, and institutional strategist. He currently serves as the Director of Strategic Partnerships for Doctoral Initiatives at the Forum for Theological Exploration (FTE)." Patrick B. Reyes, *Nobody Cries When We Die: God, Community, and Surviving to Adulthood* (Saint Louis, MO: Chalice Press, 2016), 190. See also, https://fteleaders.org/about/team (accessed December 15, 2018). See also Patrick B. Reyes, "The River Beneath: A Decolonial Practical Theology" (Ph.D., Claremont School of Theology, 2015), http://search.proquest.com/pqdtglobal/docview/1766603679/abstract/25EF68070FEC4B31PQ/1, (accessed December 15, 2018).

poor and the vulnerable were already in their midst. His classmates were getting ready to "save" people like him ignoring the fact that people like him were and are already doing that "saving" work. Reyes refused to play into the role of poor, vulnerable, and in need of saving. Coming from a working-class background, working to pay his way through grad school, Reyes tells a story not only of being removed from the classroom because he was dirty and smelly after having worked a long shift of manual labor and coming straight from work to the classroom but of being so removed because he was deemed, by his lack of high-class attire and laptop, not to be taking the class seriously, when perhaps he was the student taking it most seriously of all given all the additional effort he had to put in to be in the classroom. Reyes finished his test in the hall that day and proved the instructor right that he could not do well in that specific test—but only because of lack of educational preparation and exhaustion from working such long hours to be there. In the long run, Reyes got his degrees, survived the academy and what he describes as the rigged game that the academy is, while knowing the truth of the instructor's words to him—"Like I said, grad school isn't for everyone. Certain people just aren't meant to be here."[8] Reyes tells that story as an example of institutionalized racism, not as one of triumph to perpetuate the myth of upward mobility that he also challenges in his book.

If Reyes is the face of the Other[9] in which Christians are to perceive the "Eternal Thou" that is God, and if preaching is speaking a word from God, is Reyes' presence in itself preaching? Is the preaching instructor the expert who can teach Reyes how to preach? Or should the preaching instructor listen for Reyes' words as words from God? Moreover, is the dominant

[8] Reyes, *Nobody Cries When We Die*, 53.

[9] I capitalize Other here because these embodied preaching practices are often ascribed to cultural differences of Others than those who subscribe to the norm, rather than to historical precedents in the Jewish and Christian traditions.

narrative of what constitutes preaching suitable for Reyes' context, culture, ethnic heritage, theologies, ideologies, personal gifts, sense of calling and vocational aspirations? From these perspectives, Reyes' story invites instructors of preaching to reconsider both what to teach and how to teach and assess students.

While it is tempting to think that this story is an isolated case, we, the ones who teach preaching may choose instead to live with the discomfort of entertaining the possibility that it is one story among many similar ones. While it is also tempting to think that we are not that instructor, we need to acknowledge that we are part of the higher theological education industrial complex. We may choose to take responsibility as part of the industry and entertain the possibility that Reyes is telling truth in his story, that is, the story of many working-class persons of color who make it into our preaching classrooms. If we do so, we realize that Reyes is that "Other" about whom we, well-meaning preachers, have preached, that "Other" about whom we, well-meaning teachers of preaching, have taught.[10]

Martin Buber invited his readers to find in that "Other" a "touch of transcendence," the "Eternal Thou" that is God.[11] John S. McClure in his ethics for homiletics, Olive Elaine Hinnant in her proposal for queer preaching, and Mayra Rivera Rivera in her postcolonial theology expanded Buber's work, and teachers of preaching may use their respective proposals to teach

[10] There are, of course, many "others" to Reyes because there are margins in the margins. Working-class persons of color might be at the margins of wealthy executives while totally destitute homeless persons of color might be at the margins of working-class persons. I learned from Marcella Althaus-Reid that sexual minorities live at the margins of the margins in Argentina. See Marcella Althaus-Reid, *From Feminist Theology to Indecent Theology: Readings on Poverty, Sexual Identity and God* (London: SCM Press, 2004). I learned from Alba Onofrio, Vanderbilt Divinity School alumnx, that queer immigrant people of color in the United States live at the margins of the marginalized queer people in the USA and queer people in Latin America, because beyond the multiple layers of oppression (class, gender, sexual orientation, and ethnicity) there is the added layer of being uprooted people. Lis Valle, personal conversation with Alba Onofrio, Nashville, TN, sometime in 2017 or 2018.

[11] Martin Buber, *I and Thou* (Edinburgh: T& T Clark, 1937). "Touch of transcendence" is Mayra Rivera's proposal (in her book of the same name) for a postcolonial theology of God. "Eternal Thou" is Buber's term.

preachers to exhort their congregations to go out into the world and live into I-Thou rather than I-it interpersonal relationships.[12] I affirm such possibility and yet embrace the challenge of perceiving Thou in the "not-I" present in our classroom. Reyes' story demonstrates that we are capable of perpetuating I-it relationships and excluding the minoritized groups represented in the classroom. Whether due to race, ethnicity, religious affiliation, gender, sexuality, ability, or class, the minoritized students who are present in our classrooms invite us to welcome *and affirm* their diversity.

What then shall we, educators of preaching, teach in the preaching classroom? Better said: How then shall we teach preaching? How then shall we preach? How then shall we research and theorize the embodied practice that preaching already is?

If we truly want to stop colonizing our students, I propose we teach many definitions, many purposes, and many embodied practices of preaching in diverse ways that honor multiple ways of knowing and being and that tend to multiple intelligences. This dissertation is not about encouraging preachers to encourage parishioners to live into an Other-oriented ethic.[13] It is about living into one's own ethic, in the here and now, rather than *talking about* a future doing, there and then. The implications of this assertion are different yet similar for the tasks of preaching, teaching preaching, researching preaching, and producing homiletic theories. Thus, because of their interrelatedness I seek consistency in the application of my liberationist ethic through all

[12] See John S. McClure, *Other-Wise Preaching: A Postmodern Ethic for Homiletics* (St. Louis, MO: Chalice Press, 2001); Olive Elaine Hinnant, *God Comes out: A Queer Homiletic*, The Center for Lesbian and Gay Studies in Religion and Ministry (Cleveland, OH: The Pilgrim Press, 2007); Mayra Rivera, *The Touch of Transcendence: A Postcolonial Theology of God*, 1st ed (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2007).

[13] Such is the work that John S. McClure does in *Other-Wise Preaching*.

those tasks.[14] To model my proposal, I reframe and examine a collection of diverse preaching traditions, each tradition holding promises and perils for the task of liberation.

Diversity in the classroom requires diversity in teaching. To teach a single definition of preaching or a single purpose for preaching or a single embodied preaching practice follows the

[14] To name my liberationist ethic is a declaration of bias that by now should be, but is not, standard in the academy, after feminist scholars have demonstrated the impossibility of objectivity or have denounced objectivity as the subjectivity of those in power. For example, in *Rhetoric and Ethic*, Schüssler Fiorenza challenges the notion of objectivity in historical hermeneutics. See Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, *Rhetoric and Ethic: The Politics of Biblical Studies* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1999). Another example is Ada María Isasi-Díaz who denounces "any and all so-called objectivity" as being the subjectivity of those in power and authority to impose their point of view. See Ada María Isasi-Díaz, *Mujerista Theology: A Theology for the Twenty-First Century* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1996), 77.

My liberationist perspective is the product of a synthesis of various feminist, queer, postcolonial, decolonial, and other liberation theories and theologies. Some of my favorite theorists in this respect include: Ada María Isasi-Díaz, Audre Lorde, Augusto Boal, bell hooks, Ched Myers, Christine M. Smith, Diana Taylor, Eve Sedgwick, Franz Fanon, Gloria Anzaldúa, José Esteban Muñoz, Judith Butler, Laurel Schneider, Leonardo Boff, Luis N. Rivera Pagán, Marcella Althaus-Reid, Marvin A. McMickle, Musa Dube, Paulo Freire, and Rubem Alves. Such a synthesis allows me to consider multiple aspects of oppression in interrelation. The consideration of multiple aspects of oppression together has been popularized among feminist and womanist scholars in the USA as constituting *intersectionality*, mostly thanks to the work of Kimberlé Crenshaw, and has existed in books at least since the first publication of *This Bridge Called my Back* in 1981. See "Catching Fire," preface to the fourth edition of the book, where Cherríe Moraga explains that the book "documents the living experience of what academics now refer to as 'intersectionality,' where multiple identities converge at the crossroads of a woman of color life. The woman of color life *is* the crossroad, where no aspect of our identity is wholly dismissed from our consciousness, even as we navigate a daily shifting political landscape." Moraga, *This Bridge Called My Back*, xxii. See also Anzaldúa's "To(o) Queer the Writer—Loca, escritora y chicana" first published in 1991, where the author establishes the impossibility of dividing race, gender, sexuality, and class as neat identity categories. Anzaldúa, Gloria, and AnaLouise Keating, *The Gloria Anzaldúa Reader* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2009), 163–75. See also the first publication of *This Bridge Called my Back* in 1981. Black feminists and mujerista theologians have also long pointed out that the triple oppression of poor women of color requires the simultaneous consideration of race, gender, and class. For example, Ada María Isasi-Díaz advocates for an integrated analysis of the oppression that Hispanic [Latin American] women in the USA suffer due to gender, ethnicity, and economic status because "different modes of oppression are compounded into one multilayered burden which touches every aspect of our lives in an ongoing way." Isasi-Díaz gives credit to Deborah K. King's "Multiple Jeopardy, Multiple Consciousness: The Context of a Black Feminist Ideology" and Rosemary Radford Ruether's "A Feminist Perspective" in footnote 20 to chapter 1. Ada María Isasi-Díaz, *En La Lucha = In the Struggle: Elaborating a Mujerista Theology*, Tenth anniversary ed., (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2004), 35.

This perspective is liberationist because it joins and honors a long tradition of a broad range of liberationist approaches such as Latin American, feminist, postcolonial, and queer. This perspective is mostly political and feminist because the tools that actualize it come mainly from performance theorist Diana Taylor, closely followed by the influence of gender theorist Judith Butler. Both of them modeled for me the use of phenomenological analysis, the one with an emphasis on geopolitics and culture, and the other on gender and sexuality. This liberationist tradition is further explored in Chapter 2, section "Scenarios Perceivable to a Radical Liberationist Gaze."

logic of One[15] rather than a logic of multiplicity and thus constitutes a hegemonic act, as I will argue next.

Problem: Hegemony and the Logic of One

In the context of diversity, hegemony is a problem and affirmation of diversity is one of its solutions. The logic of One upholds hegemony; in contrast, the logic of multiplicity may hold the key to affirmation of diversity without assimilationist inclusion.

Hegemony is, for the purposes of this study, the imposition of a single or dominant perspective. This understanding draws on the notion of cultural hegemony attributed to Antonio Gramsci,[16] and resonates with recent uses of the term in the work of Vietnamese film-maker and feminist postcolonial rhetorician Trinh Minh-ha, as well as American theologian Laurel Schneider. Gramsci's preoccupation with hegemony was steeped in class analysis. I share Gramsci's suspicion of "ideological predominance of the cultural norms, values and ideas of the dominant class over the dominated."[17] I extend the implications of such ideological

[15] I capitalize "One" as Laurel Schneider does to keep her intention to signal a totalized sense of the word. See Laurel C. Schneider, *Beyond Monotheism: A Theology of Multiplicity* (London; Routledge, 2008). Schneider explains that the real task of the book is "to begin to think ontologically beyond the strictures of the One in theological, philosophical and scientific endeavours (where the capitalized One' denotes a totalized sense of the word)." Laurel C Schneider, "'Response' to Edward Butler's Review of Beyond Monotheism: A Theology of Multiplicity," *International Journal of Public Theology* 4, no. 2 (2010): 266.

[16] The notion of cultural hegemony is mostly associated with Antonio Gramsci, communist member of the Italian Parliament and general secretary of the Communist Party from 1924 until his arrest in 1926. Though he did not offer his readers a succinct definition of the concept, other scholars have noticed the importance of the concept for Gramsci, mostly drawing on his collected prison writings. Stutzman reports that Gill and Law note that for Gramsci, "hegemony was a concept used to analyze the relation of forces in a given society" (24). See Linford L. Stutzman, "Gramsci's Theory of Cultural Hegemony Applied to Contemporary Evangelical Mission Activity in Albania." Ph.D. dissertation, The Catholic University of America, 1997. http://search.proquest.com/docview/304354149/abstract/C7A9C2C8E5444CB9PQ/1 (accessed December 15 2018), quoting Stephen R. Gill and David Law, "Global Hegemony and the Structural Power of Capital," *International Studies Quarterly* 33 (December 1989): 476. See also James Joll, *Gramsci* (London: Fontana, 1977), T. J. Jackson Lears, "The Concept of Cultural Hegemony: Problems and Possibilities," *The American Historical Review*, 90 (June 1985): 567–593, G. Hoare and G. N. Smith, eds., *Selections from the Prison Notebooks of Antonio Gramsci* (New York: International Publishers, 1971), and Lynne Lawner, trans., *Gramsci's Letters From Prison* (New York: Harper and Row, 1973).

[17] Linford L. Stutzman, "Gramsci's Theory of Cultural Hegemony Applied to Contemporary Evangelical Mission Activity in Albania." Ph.D. dissertation, The Catholic University of America, 1997, 24, quoting Joseph A.

predominance beyond class to other spheres of asymmetric relations such as difference in race, ethnicity, physical and mental ability, gender, and sexuality, and to the interactions between groups such as preachers and parishioners, teachers and students, homileticians and preachers.

To the class outlook that Gramsci offers I add the feminist and postcolonial perspective of Trinh Minh-ha. Trinh's works challenge hegemony understood as "the authority or power of any particular perspective over others."[18] Furthermore, Trinh's work denounces how hegemonic systems of thought often go unnoticed and are confused with what is natural at the risk of becoming the "only way to think of something."[19] Trinh sets out to displace and empty out "the establishment of totality" and argues that the normative methodology in her filmmaking field ignores the multiplicity of meanings and the reiteration of its own methods (a circular, self-referential move), confusing their own gaze with the real one.[20]

Similar to Minh-ha's disruption of such totalization, Laurel Schneider disrupts totalizing oneness in Christian theology.[21] Schneider challenges monotheism and divine absolutes, in *Beyond Monotheism: A Theology of Multiplicity*, a book that "is not about God or gods," but about "the logic of the One" that prevails in imperial rule.[22] The logic of the One is intertwined

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Woolcock, "Politics, Ideology and Hegemony in Gramsci's Theory," *Social and Economic Studies* 34 (September 1985): 204, http://search.proquest.com/docview/304354149/abstract/C7A9C2C8E5444CB9PQ/1 (accessed December 15, 2018).

[18] Karen A. Foss, Sonja K. Foss, and Cindy L. Griffin, *Readings in Feminist Rhetorical Theory* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2004), 213, introducing essays by Trinh Minh-ha.

[19] Foss, Foss, and Griffin, *Readings in Feminist Rhetorical Theory*, 213.

[20] Trinh T. Minh-ha, "The Totalizing Quest of Meaning," in *Readings in Feminist Rhetorical Theory*, ed. Karen A. Foss, Sonja K. Foss, and Cindy L. Griffin (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2004), 225–38.

[21] Schneider, *Beyond Monotheism*.

[22] Schneider, *Beyond Monotheism,* 5.

with supremacy or what Schneider calls "supremacist entailments."[23] The logic of the One tends to be imperialistic, supremacist, and colonizing. The logic of the One that has moved political empires to expand through conquest has moved the Christian Church to expand through evangelization.[24] It is imbedded in Western cultures and Christian practices, including preaching, teaching preaching, and researching and theorizing homiletics.

If hegemony is the imposition of a single or dominant perspective, then to teach a single definition of preaching or requiring from preaching students the performance of a single embodied preaching practice is a hegemonic act that follows the logic of One rather than the logic of multiplicity, especially when there are many different embodied preaching practices that exist in both the present and in the history of Christian preaching.[25] The fact that several homiletic theories have been developed with the purpose of challenging hegemonies does not negate this assertion, and remains as true as the fact that preaching, teaching preaching, researching, and theorizing homiletics is hegemonic, as this dissertation shall demonstrate.

A Proposed Solution: Multiplicity Without a Single Center

Affirmation of diversity undergirded with a logic of multiplicity is a possible solution to hegemony and the logic of One. In this dissertation, I affirm diverse definitions, purposes, and embodied practices of preaching as equally valid, even if they are not considered as such in the "real" world. To consider several definitions, purposes, and practices as equally valid does not

[23] Schneider, *Beyond Monotheism*, 26.

[24] For connections between Imperial expansions and Christian evangelization, see, for example, Luis N. Rivera, *A Violent Evangelism: The Political and Religious Conquest of the Americas* (Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1992).

[25] Take, for example, whooping and call and response in the African American tradition or collaborative preaching during the worship service in Latin America and some places in the United States, and the plays in the Caribbean, Latin America, and the Golden Age in Spain. More about some of these histories in chapter 3.

prevent me from using some definitions more than others, and so forth. It does prevent me from having or using only one. My ultimate aim as a liberationist homiletician is to actualize, rather than just talk about, liberation.

My goal here is to contribute to the liberation of invisibilized and excluded aspects of preaching and of Other embodied preaching practices. My goal is not to negate, erase, or silence the voices of the liberationist homileticians whom I do not include. Rather, it is to offer an initial collection of diverse and accessible preaching traditions upon which we can build and about which we should know if we are to have a thorough understanding of our options as embodied preachers, a collection that helps us recognize that what works for one specific preacher does not necessarily work for others, and vice versa.

To accomplish my goal, I decenter the normative narrative of what constitutes preaching and how it is practiced. I highlight various aspects of thinking and theorizing that are not always visible in traditional homiletic theories. These aspects become visible when I examine each embodied preaching tradition employing a phenomenological approach from a liberationist perspective.[26] In addition, I write this work from my perspective as an itinerant preacher, with hopes that it will be helpful as well for pastors who have to preach weekly. I acknowledge that this study constitutes only one way of framing liberationist homiletics, celebrate this framing as a legitimate one, and actively seek out other ways to frame, teach, honor, critique, and record liberationist homiletic theories.[27]

[26] See footnote 15 and Chapter 2, section "Scenarios Perceivable to a Radical Liberationist Gaze."

[27] I found the inspiration for the way I phrased this paragraph in great part in the Introduction to Karen A., Foss, Sonja K. Foss, and Cindy L. Griffin, *Readings in Feminist Rhetorical Theory* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2004.)

Such a liberationist aim guides my decisions as a scholar regarding which theories and methods to use to examine preaching. Likewise, such a liberationist aim guides my decisions as a preacher regarding which definitions, purposes, or practices of preaching are more suitable, and under which circumstances. The variations of the *why*, *what for*, *who*, *when*, *where*, and *how* are crucial in my proposal even if the *what* is always preaching, as Chapters 2 and 4 discuss. The underlying assumptions exceed by far what I can explain in this study. Suffice it to say that I do not share most of the assumptions that underlie many homiletic theories. Thus, I explain some of my own assumptions and elucidate my own understanding of a logic of multiplicity and of how such a logic may shape what affirmation of diversity may look like in the ongoing loop of homiletic theory and praxis.

Multiplicity, for the purposes of this study, means validating many unique *ones*, in theory and practice, simultaneously, that is in synchronous times and spaces in action. The many unique ones that we validate may be persons, definitions, methods, theories, purposes, or practices. The ones may be similar or different from one another. The ones may agree or disagree, may be complementary, congruent, contradictory, paradoxical, and/or incompatible. Multiplicity, in this sense, implies promiscuous scholarship as the ethical value that guides this study and best promotes the practice of affirmation of diversity.[28] Such multiplicity has both quantitative and qualitative attributes. It impacts the arguments and methodology of this dissertation and the gaze of this researcher. This understanding of multiplicity draws on and expands upon the work of

[28] Here, 'promiscuous' implies multiple sources of authority. Per Laurel Schneider's instruction, I am suspicious of purity, even as an intellectual form. As guest instructor in a class I took, Schneider explained that the logic of One also includes the analytical logic of traditional philosophy and its desire of literate purity. This is part of the problem. Still, there is no way to think outside of the system that has produced us. We are still a part of it. Lis Valle, class notes for the course *Feminist Womanist Theology* (REL 3340), taught by Prof. Ellen Armour. Session of October 16, 2013. Laurel C. Schneider's essay, "Promiscuous Incarnation," in *The Embrace of Eros: Bodies, Desires, and Sexuality in Christianity*, ed. Margaret D. Kamitsuka (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2010), remains a source of inspiration for my scholarly work and ways of behaving in the world, including this dissertation.

theologian Laurel Schneider, rhetorician Trinh Minh-ha, and African postcolonial feminist biblical scholar Musa W. Dube.[29] Multiplicity embraces the many in the uniqueness of each one and in the apparent sameness that many may share. Multiplicity holds in tension human uniqueness and relationality. It embraces heterogeneity. Multiplicity remains open to a multitude of meanings, beings, and doings. It challenges expectations and seeks to decenter and destabilize. Multiplicity neither excludes nor includes. It does not assimilate, but seeks exchange and mutuality. Multiplicity embraces difference.

A logic of multiplicity simultaneously honors uniqueness and seeks relationality. Here I follow Schneider's theology of multiplicity. With Schneider, I adopt the paradox and incongruity of the interrelation of all porous human beings (and other living beings), which cannot be separated nor distinguished from one another, and the uniqueness of each human being, which calls us not to subsume persons into categories that will render them disposable. Unlike Schneider, I keep in the notion of multiplicity the idea of multitude in terms of amount. This marks a significant difference between my work and Schneider's in *Beyond Monotheism*. There, Schneider refuses to turn to polytheism as a solution to monotheism because, as she contends, they are two sides of the same coin. Multiplicity, then, is not a matter of amount for Schneider; it is not about switching from one to many. Indeed, because the logic of One that rules imperialism follows a principle of abstraction that subsumes individuals and their embodiments in categories for the sake of making them expendable, Schneider wants to keep each individual person in view so that each one is indispensable. Thus she argues for heterogeneous individuality. Yet simultaneously, Schneider explains, persons are inextricably interrelated. Human beings are

[29] I have not yet found the country of origin of Musa Dube; only her continent of origin is clear in the sources I have consulted. Dube serves as Professor at the Department of Theology and Religious Studies of the University of Botswana. See https://www.ub.bw/staff-profiles/staff/735 (accessed December 15, 2018).

embodied and multiple. We are not indistinguishable but we are unique.[30] Heterogeneity recognizes that all of us participate in intersecting realities and communities, and that reality is multiple. Schneider's notion of multiplicity keeps these contradictions in tension while rejecting the quantitative idea of one among many.

I find that the idea of being one among many others is compatible with Schneider's multiplicity. On the quantitative side, I expand Schneider's coin metaphor (of polytheism and monotheism being two sides of the same coin) by showing other sides and aspects of the coin, and on the qualitative side, I draw on Trinh's work for developing a decentering strategy.

Multiplicity, in this dissertation, means perceiving a multitude of aspects of preaching. A logic of multiplicity perceives many sides of a coin. Schneider's metaphor is indeed appropriate. The metaphor pre-exists Schneider and it seems to respond to binary thinking. Binary thinking occludes the reality of the thickness of the coin. Many points make up the thickness of the coin

[30] I recognize that Mayra Rivera belongs to this school of thought, along with Catherine Keller and many others. I also think that Schneider is more successful than Rivera in keeping the body's corporeality in view. Rivera distinguishes in helpful ways between Pauline's understandings of body as closed and Johannine understandings of flesh as interrelated in *Poetics of the Flesh*. As I understand her book, however, carnality and materiality are objects of theological reflection rather than loci of theological production and knowledge production. At this point of my intellectual journey I realize that there are many points of connection between Rivera's work and this dissertation but find Schneider's notion of multiplicity more helpful. In addition, the title *Poetics of the Flesh* suggests a helpful reflection for the practice of preaching through bodily rather than verbal discourse, and yet I find that there is a crucial distinction between bodily discourse and discourse about the body. That distinction has to do with *communicating through* the body rather than *talking about* the body. There is a distinction between producing theological knowledge through the body and producing art *about* the knowledge that was previously produced through embodied experience, which is the way I understand Rivera's poetics of the flesh. My understanding of Rivera's concept is based in her offer of poets and their poems as evidence of reflection upon carnal experience. See Mayra Rivera, *Poetics of the Flesh* (Durham; London: Duke University Press, 2015). In addition, Rivera talks about thinking bodies advancing the idea that persons classified as poor or as people of color think too. See Mayra Rivera, "Thinking Bodies: The Spirit of a Latina Incarnational Imagination," in *Decolonizing Epistemologies: Latina/o Theology and Philosophy*, ed. Ada María Isasi-Diáz and Eduardo Mendieta, 1st ed (New York, NY: Fordham University Press, 2012), 207–25. Rivera is doing an important work with which I agree, and yet my understanding of thinking bodies is different. What I want to point out is that everyone has a body and that that body is knowledgeable in ways that thinking persons—all of us—sometimes do not even realize. In any case, neither preaching through bodily discourse nor the use of theater for preaching are the main focus on this dissertation. Instead, this dissertation is about the many embodied practices that have existed, still exist, and may emerge in the Christian traditions and other faiths and how each one produces knowledge in ways that assist and/or resist imperial logic.

resulting in a circular shape of which we cannot identify a particular beginning or end. In the case of the USA quarter, the circularity is interrupted with many indentations that produce many sides, two per indentation. Though I have not counted how many indentations there are in a quarter dollar coin, my observation of the coin leads me to conclude that it has several more sides than two. Schneider makes a valuable point that if we want to disrupt binary thinking and move away from the logic of the One we cannot simply move to the logic of many, if many is the other side of the same coin. Many, however, is simultaneously the other side of the coin and the many sides that exist and are seldom perceived between the two sides of the coin.

Multiplicity also means decentering the aspect/s of preaching thus far deemed normative, dominant, taken for granted, and that consequently has or have gone unchallenged. A logic of multiplicity rearranges the aspects of preaching, considering each one as one among many others, decentering all by centering each one in turn. Such is a decentering strategy that this dissertation proposes, drawing on the work of Schneider and Trinh. They share their desire to disrupt hegemony and imperial ruling. It is to such a shared goal (which is also the goal of this study) that Trinh aligns her proposed strategies for decentering.

In Trinh's work, decentering is actualized through openness to multiple meanings and active challenging expectations. Her proposal is "not [to] rely on any single source of authority."[31] Thus, Trinh decenters and destabilizes the logic of One by decentering meaning. She explains, "Thus, even when this [single] source [of authority] is referred to, it stands as one among many others, at once plural and utterly singular."[32] Through these strategies Trinh displaces and empties the establishment of totality. To disrupt hegemonies in the practice and

[31] Trinh T. Minh-ha, "The Totalizing Quest of Meaning," 232.

[32] Trinh T. Minh-ha, "The Totalizing Quest of Meaning," 232.

theorization of preaching, this dissertation likewise considers any single source of authority as one among many others and does not rely on any single source of authority. Simultaneously, it remains open to multiple meanings and challenges readers' expectations, all while honoring heterogeneous individuality, uniqueness, and relationality.

In addition to actualizing decentering through openness to multiple meanings and through challenging expectations, this dissertation does not consider multiplicity to be either exclusive or inclusive. Herein lies the difference between being welcoming and being affirming, between being inclusive and advancing multiplicity: Multiplicity does not assimilate. Contrary to the expansionist drive of empires, a drive that seeks not only to conquer other territories but also to assimilate their subjects through cultural hegemony, multiplicity does not seek assimilation. In this sense, the notion of multiplicity that this dissertation advances shares points of connection with affirmation of multiple ethnicities and cultures and with affirmation of multiple genders.

Refusal to assimilate is another way to actualize the strategy of decentering, as we learn from postcolonial feminist scholar Musa W. Dube. Dube has implied that valuing excluded traditions is a better way to destabilize and decenter the dominant culture, a better way to disrupt cultural domination or assimilation than "reproducing imperial strategies of subjugation."[33] Dube critiques Western feminist biblical practitioners for reproducing imperial strategies, while working towards their own liberation.[34] In other words, Dube critiques a feminism that fails to critique imperialism and that resorts to assimilationist tactics. In Dube's words, "the logic of

[33] Musa W. Dube, *Postcolonial Feminist Interpretation of the Bible* (St. Louis, MO: Chalice Press, 2000), 26.

[34] bell hooks makes a similar critique of white feminists, arguing that they have not examined how they collude with racism even as they struggle to end sexism. hooks proposes developing political solidarity on self-defined terms rather than within the terms set by the dominant ideology of the culture. See bell hooks, "Sisterhood: Political Solidarity between Women," *Feminist Review*, no. 23 (1986): 125–138.

radical democracy invites international women to the ekklesia as long as they speak the language of the 'civilized' and the 'cultured' and not necessarily to bring traditions that were devalued by Western kyriarchal logic and to seek out liberating ways of coexistence—a move that would truly destabilize the exclusionary and subversive center."[35] Dube then proposes a feminist postcolonial perspective that pays attention to imperialism as much as to patriarchy.

Furthermore, multiplicity seeks exchange and mutuality, rather than assimilationist inclusion. Exchange of wisdom and mutuality in relationship affirm difference and diversity rather than embrace it through an assimilationist inclusion. This aspect of multiplicity, as proposed in this study, finds its source of inspiration in Dube's notions of cultural exchange and of liberating interdependence. Dube contends that "among African people there is alienation because evangelization has not been that of cultural exchange but of cultural domination or assimilation."[36] Her critique of cultural domination and assimilation implicitly proposes cultural exchange. Explicitly, she calls her proposal liberating interdependence. With these words, Dube invites her colleagues, "In the postcolonial era literary practitioners must read beyond decolonization for liberating interdependence."[37] She portrays this liberative interdependence as a space "where differences, equality, and justice for various cultures, religions, genders, classes, sexualities, ethnicities, and races can be subject to constant reevaluation and celebration in the interconnectedness of our relationships."[38] Exchange, mutuality, and interdependence are

[35] Dube, *Postcolonial Feminist Interpretation of the Bible*, 39.

[36] Dube, *Postcolonial Feminist Interpretation of the Bible*, 32. Emphasis added.

[37] Dube, *Postcolonial Feminist Interpretation of the Bible*, 200.

[38] Dube, *Postcolonial Feminist Interpretation of the Bible*, 123.

simultaneously values and practices. In reality, they play out differently than the logic of the One that has an authoritative center, a single "real" or "right" way of meaning and doing.

In sum, this dissertation is born out of a theo-ethical framework that consists of the affirmation of diversity undergirded with a logic of multiplicity. With a liberationist aim, multiplicity here seeks validation of many unique ones, in theory and practice synchronized in time and space through action. Multiplicity honors uniqueness and seeks relationality. Multiplicity here considers any aspect of preaching as one among many others and decenters normative and dominant aspects, definitions, purposes, and embodied practices. Multiplicity shows openness to multiple meanings; it challenges expectations, rejects assimilation, affirms diversity, values many traditions, and seeks exchange, mutuality, and interdependence.

If, as teachers of preaching, we want to move from hegemonic center to multiplicity, from inclusive to affirming preaching classrooms, then we must affirm and teach a multitude of definitions, purposes, and embodied practices of preaching. We are well positioned to encourage the rhetor to preach like a rhetor, the activist like an activist, the artist like an artist, and so forth. We can encourage each preacher to live into the fullness and authenticity of the preacher's race, ethnicity, religious (dis)affiliation, gender, sexuality, ability, class, culture and community. We can affirm the uniqueness of each preacher as one among many others embracing a multitude of embodied preaching practices.

The Research Question

Many Homileticians are concerned with asking what is the nature and purpose of preaching. Some homileticians are also concerned with the embodied practice that preaching is, and call this delivery. Among those homileticians who discuss the topic of delivery, few have

challenged the assumption that the only valid embodied preaching practice that exists is to stand and speak, to perform the Greco Roman classic orator. [39] As a liberationist homiletician, I am concerned with asking: What is the embodied knowledge that preaching produces and transfers? And how does that knowledge resist or assist imperial logic and colonization?

Rejecting the logic of the One as the perpetuation of hegemonies, I adopt a logic of multiplicity to argue that preaching is a multidimensional religious ritual that transfers collective memory and takes shape through many embodied practices such as public speech, symbolic action, and theater, all of which simultaneously resist and assist imperial and colonizing hegemonies. To support my argument, I will use the performance theory and methods of performance theorist Diana Taylor. To overcome the seemingly unavoidable entanglement of simultaneous resistance and assistance of hegemonies, I propose the use of *scenario* as a framework for the critical analysis needed to decide what aspects, purposes, and embodied practices of preaching to employ or emphasize according to the variations of the *why, what for, who, when, how,* and *where* of the action of *preaching*.

In Chapter 2, I elaborate the methodology of this study. First, I begin to develop my liberationist homiletic disclosing some of my assumptions on the nature (multidimensional religious ritual), purpose (transfer collective memory), and preaching practices (oratory, symbolic action, theater), which stem from taking the role of cultural anthropologist and drawing on the work of religious studies scholar Catherine Bell, performance studies scholar Diana Taylor, and diverse biblical and historical examples of embodied preaching practices. In the

[39] I am referring here to my classification of homiletic theories into those who do not mention delivery or the body of the preacher (Augustine of Hippo, for example), those who expressly reject the option to cover such topic (Henry Grady Davis, for example), and those who have engaged the topic from the perspective of skillful performance of public speech (Charles Bartow, Jana Childers, Clayton J. Schmit, and others).

second part of Chapter 2, I discuss the categories of analysis that I will employ in Chapter 3 to evaluate a range of embodied preaching practices (meaning much more than simply the words or text of the sermon, or the skillful delivery of it) and uncover *preaching scenarios*. I suggest performance studies scholar Diana Taylor's work as one way to help us in such analysis. I explain Diana Taylor's theory (performance as a system of knowledge production and transmission, an embodied practice and episteme) and methodology (which examines *scenarios* – repeatable acts, paradigms that structure society, behaviors, and potential outcomes – in context, out of the bounds of Western notions of a closed event with a beginning, middle, and end, to reveal the knowledge (re)produced and transferred through human action). I also explain the radical liberationist perspective that guides this study, which goes to the roots, and is primarily focused on political interpretation in search of whether and how each scenario assists and/or resists imperial domination and cultural hegemony and on identification of the preaching norm bodily cited.[40] Such a perspective will help me interpret the findings after I describe and analyze preaching practices using Taylor's framework.

In Chapter 3, I argue that preaching scenarios bodily cite diverse preaching norms. Though the hegemony of words limits homileticians' perceptions of preaching and the repertoire that we advance through our teaching, the Christian tradition itself offers a rich multitude of embodied preaching practices on which we can draw. In this multiplicity we find options for the variety of preachers that populate our classrooms and for the variety of contexts in which they

[40] The radical liberationist scholars that provide material to interpret the findings include Gloria Anzaldúa, Cheríe Moraga, Audre Lorde, and Ched Myers among others. The political aspect of the interpretation is inherent in Taylor's method and present in the radical liberationist scholarship that helps the interpretation. The language of bodily citation of norms comes from the work of gender theorist Judith Butler. See, for example, Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (New York: Routledge, 1990); Judith Butler, "Gender Is Burning: Questions of Appropriation and Subversion" in *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of "Sex,"* (New York, NY: Routledge, 1993), 121–40; and also Ellen Armour and Susan St Ville, eds., *Bodily Citations: Religion and Judith Butler* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2006).

preach or do not preach. To sustain my argument, I describe and analyze three *scenarios* through six aspects of Diana Taylor's methodology, providing a few examples of each scenario. The analysis demonstrates that when we examine diverse embodied preaching practices through Taylor's prismatic methodology, we find how delivery (performance in preaching) brings to life norms, social constructs, collective memory, cultures, and specters, and produces and transfers embodied knowledge that at once assists and resists colonization.

In Chapter 4, I discuss some implications and applications of the findings. Once we recognize that delivery brings to life ideologies, social constructs, collective memory, histories, and cultures while bodily citing preaching norms, and once we affirm a multitude of embodied preaching practices as valid for the pulpit, the public square, and the classroom, then how do we teach and evaluate them? Here, I begin to develop my proposal for the use of *scenario* as a framework for the critical analysis needed to decide what aspects, purposes, and embodied practices of preaching to employ or emphasize according to the variations of the *why, what for, who, for whom, when,* and *where* of the action of *preaching*. The framework of scenario is useful for self/assessment from the preacher – to locate oneself and identify the many ghosts brought to life and the embodied preaching practice reiterated. It is possible to evaluate students against the same criteria we use now for the analysis of preaching, regardless of the public communication genre that they use. Also, in addition to the speech and in addition to the content of the sermon, we need to examine the delivery of the sermon. Beyond the skillful delivery of a speech, beyond the performative (world-making) aspect of the speech, beyond the non-verbal cues of bodies while preaching, we need to analyze the live event in contexts – real (the classroom) and imagined (the student's intended audience), by considering how places, spaces, preachers,

audiences, and purposes play a role not only in what the preacher is saying, but in what the preacher is doing through the preaching event.

As one among many other proposals, this dissertation remains incomplete. It presents preaching as a multidimensional religious ritual that transfers collective memory and takes shape through many embodied practices such as public speech, symbolic action, and theater, among others. The list is not exhaustive; other examples include ecstatic speech, spoken word, visual art, song, stand-up comedy, quilts, hip-hop, and so forth.[41] The significance of this proposal does not lie in the practices per se, but in the method to uncover the underlying logic of each practice intertwined with a liberationist ethic that seeks affirmation of multiplicity to infinity and beyond. Moreover, this study does not attempt to make a "universal" contribution. The question for this writer is not so much, "What is the significance of this study?" Rather, the question is, "For whom is it significant?" The significance of this study then is its contribution of options for the minoritized and invisibilized students in the classroom of preaching who do not or might not subscribe to the normative narrative of what constitutes preaching if we as teachers of preaching make them aware of other options.

[41] Donyelle McCray has argued that sermons can take the shape of quilts. "Quilting the Sermon: Homiletical Insights from Harriet Powers," *Religions* 9, no. 2 (February 2018): 1–7. Similarly, Michael Brandon McCormack has argued that hip hop bears prophetic witness. McCormack, "The Cornell West Theory: Prophetic Criticism and the Cultural Production," in *Religion, Culture and Spirituality in Africa and the African Diaspora,* William Ackah, Jualynne E. Dodson, and R. Drew Smith, eds., (New York, NY: Routledge, 2018), *129*–144.

Chapter 2

Towards An-Other Liberationist Homiletic[42]

Though the hegemony of words limits homileticians' perceptions of preaching and the range of embodied preaching practices that teachers of preaching advance through their teaching, the Christian tradition itself offers a rich multitude of definitions, purposes, and practices on which professors can draw. Homileticians are adept in many definitions and purposes of preaching. However, most focus on the One embodied practice of "standing up and speaking" from the pulpit. Few homileticians have questioned what the embodied knowledge is that preachers transmit through the reiteration of this One single embodied practice or the Other marginalized preaching practices. Even fewer, if any, scholars have explored such embodied knowledge from an Amerindian worldview and a radical liberationist perspective. Yet it is precisely in such multiplicity that options exist for the variety of preachers and non-preachers that inhabit preaching classrooms and for the variety of contexts in which they preach or do not.

In this chapter, I elaborate the methodology that allows me to find a collection of embodied preaching practices and the embodied knowledge that they produce and transmit. First, I offer some ideas towards an-Other liberationist homiletic to expand the assumptions of this study beyond the theo-ethical framework offered in Chapter 1. Second, I discuss the categories of analysis that I will employ in Chapter 3 to evaluate a range of embodied preaching practices that exist in the Christian tradition/s. I then assess current approaches to the evaluation of preaching as a live event and argue that those are limited to the virtuosity of the preacher as

[42] I hyphenate another and capitalize the O to bring attention to the process of "otherizing" human beings. Though I cannot recall where exactly I saw the practice, it is possible that it was in the work of liturgical scholar Cláudio Carvalhaes.

public speaker. In this way, I will establish the need to analyze *preaching scenarios* (meaning much more than simply the words or text of the sermon, or the skillful delivery of it), and suggest performance studies scholar Diana Taylor's work as one way to help us in such analysis.[43] Then, I explain Diana Taylor's theory of performance (a system of knowledge production and transmission, an embodied practice and episteme) and methodology (which examines scenarios – repeatable acts, paradigms that structure society, behaviors, and potential outcomes – in context, that is out of the bounds of Western notions of a beginning, middle, and end, to reveal the knowledge (re)produced and transferred through human action). Finally, I explain how I will use Taylor's approach from a radical liberationist perspective that is primarily focused on the norms and plots/scenarios that come to life in delivery to examine how each of the paradigms analyzed assists and resists colonization, imperial logic, and cultural hegemony.

Exposing More Assumptions Under the Skirt of this Study[44]

This section offers initial thoughts on the nature of preaching, what its purpose is, and how it is (or could be) practiced from the perspective of a cultural anthropologist using a

[43] Taylor is professor of Spanish and Performance Studies at New York University (NYU), the founder and director of the Hemispheric Institute of Performance and Politics, and the author and editor of several books in her field. She is an expert in Latin American theater and performance, and hemispheric studies. She uses the term "hemispheric" in reference to the Western hemisphere, considering the Americas as interrelated countries that share one hemisphere. Taylor comes from a multinational upbringing and professional experience that includes Mexico, Canada, and the USA in the fields of theater and performance. See, Hemispheric Institute of Performance and Politics, "Diana Taylor, Founder Director," http://www.hemisphericinstitute.org/hemi/en/people (accessed November 6, 2017). New York University, "Diana Taylor, Professor," http://as.nyu.edu/faculty/diana-taylor.html (accessed November 6, 2017). Tisch School of the Arts, "Diana Taylor," http://tisch.nyu.edu/about/directory/performance-studies/3092281 (accessed November 6, 2017). Diana Taylor, "Who, When, What, Why," in *The Archive and the Repertoire: Performing Cultural Memory in the Americas* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2003), xiii–xx.

[44] In "The Indecent Virgin" Marcella Althaus-Reid examines what is under the skirt of the Virgin Mary, la Guadalupana, and finds phalogocentrism. See chapter 2 of Althaus-Reid's *Indecent Theology: Theological Perversions in Sex, Gender, and Politics* (London: Routledge, 2000). In this chapter, I expose the scholarly promiscuity and liberationist bias of my study, which allows me to uncover words-centrism in the normative and hegemonic practice of preaching in the next chapter.

liberationist perspective. From this standpoint, I now begin unfolding my understanding of preaching, of its purpose, and its practices, so that as homileticians we may expand our understanding of preaching.

Among Many Definitions of Preaching

There are many definitions of preaching. Some homileticians disclose their definition of preaching[45] and others do not.[46] Some homileticians disclose one definition of preaching and others disclose many.[47] These definitions seem to be constricted to Christian practices and many

[45] Among the homileticians who have disclosed their definition of preaching, we find Marvin A. McMickle and Kenyatta Gilbert. McMickle has defined preaching as "a professing—of truths God has placed upon a person's heart and of teaching from which that person cannot turn away." See Marvin Andrew McMickle, *The Star Book on Preaching* (Valley Forge, PA: Judson Press, 2006), 2. Gilbert defines preaching as "a means by which God reminds a society of God's concern for community wellness, life, human dignity, and freedom in a less-than-perfect world." See, "Introduction" to Kenyatta R. Gilbert, *Exodus Preaching: Crafting Sermons about Justice and Hope* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2018), ix.

[46] Among those who do not define preaching, we find, for example, John S. McClure, *Preaching Words: 144 Key Terms in Homiletics* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2007), and Paul Scott Wilson, ed., *The New Interpreter's Handbook of Preaching* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2008).

[47] Among those who disclose many preaching definitions, we find Gennifer Benjamin Brooks and Thomas G. Long. Brooks offers various definitions of preaching while Long gives that impression by refusing to offer a concise dictionary style definition or to reduce preaching to a formula and instead offering several affirmations, metaphors, and similes.

In the Preface to her *Good News Preaching*, Brooks defines preaching as "the proclamation of the gospel to the people of God in a particular time and place" (xiii). Brooks immediately explains that gospel means good news, which "implies that the act of preaching is intended to offer good news to the hearers of the preached word" (xiii). Brooks offers more definitions when she explains that she begins any class or workshop with the *what-is-preaching?* question and finds that, "The answer in all cases are almost as many and as varied as the number of people in attendance" (2). Brooks then proceeds to offer five definitions that "speak to the critical nature of preaching as good news." Again, she immediately clarifies that the list is by no means exhaustive and names as the commonality in all the definitions that she honors "that they name as an ingredient in the sermonic construction the gospel or good news of God's grace." See Gennifer Benjamin Brooks, *Good News Preaching: Offering the Gospel in Every Sermon* (Cleveland, OH: The Pilgrim Press, 2009).

In contrast, Thomas G. Long, in the third edition of *The Witness of Preaching*, discusses the nature of preaching through a series of metaphors and similes such as that preaching: is a wild, wide, and deep river with white-water currents (13), is a little like cooking (15), is a little like learning to play the piano (16). Though Long prefers to focus on the actual event of preaching as it happens in a congregation, Long teases out Moltmann's definition of preaching. Long also states, "Preaching, like all other actions of the church, is joining in on what God is already doing, and we dare to preach because we believe that Jesus Christ is already speaking to the church and to the world" (19). Long continues, "To preach is to join our human words with the word that God in Christ in the power of the Spirit is already speaking to the church and to the world, and to speak in Christ's name is to claim Christ's own promise, 'Whoever listens to you listens to me' (Luke 10: 16)" (19). Thomas G. Long, *The Witness of Preaching*, Third Edition (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2016). Long's definition implies that God speaks through the preacher. Thus, Long's definition is consistent with Charles L. Bartow's practical theology of

of them point to proclamation or to sharing the Gospel as a defining and shared feature of all preaching.[48] To expand the various definitions of preaching that may be offered in an introductory course to preaching, the definition that drives this dissertation is a definition from a cultural-anthropological perspective because the theory and methods that frame this study come from the cultural anthropology school of thought within the field of performance studies.[49]

For purposes of this dissertation, preaching is a multidimensional religious ritual that transfers collective memory and takes shape through many embodied practices, including public speech, but also through symbolic action, and theater, among many others.

I understand the nature of preaching as a multidimensional religious ritual drawing mostly on the work of Religious Studies scholar Catherine Bell. In the Christian tradition, pulpit preaching is part of what Bell calls, "a series of rites that express the most basic beliefs of the community."[50] More specifically, from the six basic genres of ritual action that Bell identifies in

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proclamation, which argues for understanding preaching as God's human speech. See Charles L. Bartow, *God's Human Speech: A Practical Theology of Proclamation* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub., 1997).

[48] That might be true from a Christian perspective but not necessarily from a cultural-anthropological perspective as chapter 3 shows.

[49] As a Christian leader in an ecumenical and interfaith context, I define preaching as the sharing of religious beliefs – based on an interpretation of a sacred text –for the purposes of growing the religion and the faith of the members of the religious community. As a life-long member and now ordained minister of the Word and Sacraments, as well as a doctoral student in homiletics, I define preaching as the sharing of the Gospel – an interpretation of scriptures – for the purposes of growing the Church. The latter definition shares some resemblance with the codes that John S. McClure develops in his *The Four Codes of Preaching*, if we consider that an interpretation incorporates semantic and theosymbolic meaning. See John S. McClure, *The Four Codes of Preaching: Rhetorical Strategies* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1991). McClure and I agree on the need for a scriptural code. Given that not all Christian traditions value Scripture more than tradition as Presbyterians do, and given that not all faith traditions have sacred written scriptures but may have preaching, I changed "scriptural" to "sacred text" to generate space to include tradition, lived experiences, and non-religious texts. I do realize that the phrase is still inadequate, as sacred may suggest religion in some minds and text may exclude lived experience in some minds as well. Nonetheless, the phrase "sacred text" prompted a group of people to choose a person as text when I was facilitating a performance in which I invited participants, "Now we need a sacred text." Lis Valle, "Words and Flesh Entangled" (a performance piece in progress), Theopoetics Conference (Boston, MA; March 10, 2018).

[50] Catherine M. Bell, *Ritual: Perspectives and Dimensions*, rev. ed. (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 105.

Ritual: Perspectives and Dimensions, weekly pulpit preaching would be classified under the calendrical and commemorative genres because it is part of the ongoing round of Christian rituals in the rhythm of the yearly liturgical calendar and because it takes the events of a Christian narrative and turns them into a cyclical sacred myth.[51] Like any other religious ritual, preaching both forms and is formed by religious devotions and responsibilities. Bell offers a holistic and pragmatic orientation to multiple dimensions of the phenomenon of ritual and explains that "Today we think of 'ritual' as a complex sociocultural medium variously constructed of tradition, exigency and self-expression; it is understood to play a wide variety of roles and to communicate a rich density of overdetermined messages and attitudes."[52] Such an assertion is true also of preaching, which is a sociocultural medium variously constructed of many Jewish and Christian traditions, multiple ecclesial exigencies and expectations, and varied self-expressions of preachers.

Among Many Purposes of Preaching

As a multidimensional religious ritual, one of the purposes of preaching is transferring collective memory.[53] Preaching transfers collective memory in at least two ways—through speech and through human action. Through speech, preaching transfers collective memory through verbal allusions to the sacred text. As we learn from John S. McClure, preaching is anamnestic, "principally by encoding some kind of interpretive relationship to the stories, life world, language, and event expressed in Holy Scripture."[54] By retelling past sacred stories and

[51] Bell, *Ritual*, 105.

[52] Bell, *Ritual*, 13.

[53] For more about many other purposes of preaching, see, for example, Jana Childers, editor, *Purposes of Preaching* (St. Louis, MO: Chalice Press, 2011).

[54] John S. McClure, *The Four Codes of Preaching: Rhetorical Strategies* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1991), 17. McClure defines anamnesis as "a special kind of remembering that is intended to move a sacred

interpreting them for the present, the preacher transfers collective memory. In addition, preaching transfers collective memory through human action. Human action makes preaching an embodied practice, that is a performance, in the sense of being an event in time and space with a beginning, middle, and end. In that sense, preaching as a performance event transfers collective memory through reiteration. In the words of Diana Taylor, "performances function as vital acts of transfer, transmitting social knowledge, memory, and a sense of identity through reiterated, or what performance theorist Richard Schechner has called 'twice-behaved behavior.'"[55] A certain behavior or set of actions repeatedly and regularly executed in front of other human beings, what Schechner also calls "a showing of a doing," makes preaching a recognizable performance, an act that transfers social knowledge, memory, and a sense of identity in the very showing of the doing, in the very doing of the action in front of witness/es.[56]

Towards Affirmation of Many Embodied Preaching Practices

As a multidimensional religious practice that transfers collective memory, preaching takes shape through many embodied practices, including public speech, but also through symbolic action and theater, among many others. Public speech, being the dominant one, has been taken for granted and even confused with the real and only embodied preaching practice, resulting in some homileticians not addressing the topic and others focusing merely on the

person or event from the past into the present" (16–17). Drawing on the work of Geoffrey Wainwright, McClure asserts that preaching is anamnestic. See "Preaching as Worship," *The Greek Orthodox Review* 28 (1983): 325. See his footnote 3 on page 17.

[55] Taylor, *The Archive and the Repertoire*, 2. Taylor quotes from Richard Schechner, *Between Theater and Anthropology* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1985), 36. In addition, she credits Paul Connerton for the term "acts of transfer," from his book, *How Societies Remember* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1989), 39. See footnote 3 corresponding to page 2, *The Archive and the Repertoire*, 279.

[56] Richard Schechner, *Performance Studies: An Introduction*, 3rd ed. (London; New York: Routledge, 2013), 168.

virtuosity of the preacher as public speaker.[57] The Jewish and Christian traditions, however, offer other embodied preaching practices. For example, Hebrew Bible prophets such as Jeremiah and Isaiah preached through symbolic action on occasion.[58] In addition, St. Francis of Assisi and the Roman Catholic Church both in the medieval age and during the Conquest of the Americas employed theater to preach, as we will discuss in Chapter 3.[59] This diversity of embodied preaching practices on which preaching teachers can draw offers options for the diversity of preaching students that populate preaching classrooms today and for the variety of contexts in which they preach or do not preach. A repertoire of embodied preaching practices is the content of Chapter 3, which becomes perceivable upon expanding the gaze of the researcher beyond words and beyond the sermon. Such an expanded gaze is the focus of the next section.

[57] Among the many who omit the topic of delivery, the body of the preacher, or any other reference to the embodied nature of preaching, I note Augustine of Hippo, Henry Grady Davis, and John S. McClure. Henry Grady Davis, *Design for Preaching* (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1958). John S. McClure's *The Four Codes of Preaching* does not cover the topic of delivery or the body of the preacher at all, focusing instead on verbal rhetorical strategies. See John S. McClure, *The Four Codes of Preaching: Rhetorical Strategies* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1991). Among those who advocate for controlling the body, we find John A. Broadus, author of the landmark text on preaching, *Treatise on Preparation and Delivery of Sermons*. There, he argues that teaching preaching should follow the rules of Greco-Roman rhetoric. The section on delivery focuses on methods, voice, and action. Broadus depicts the body of the preacher as a possible hindrance to effective delivery of the sermon. He defines action as the natural "speech of the body." Broadus' perspective on the body of the preacher as a hindrance to be governed dominated preaching classrooms for several decades. Thomas Long's *The Witness of Preaching*, which seems to dominate preaching classrooms now, dedicates a couple of pages to the topic and refers the reader to Jana Childers and Charles Bartow for assistance in techniques of body and voice control. See Thomas Long, *The Witness of Preaching*, 3rd ed. (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2016). Among the ones who have focused on increasing their virtuosity as a public speaker, we can name: Charles L. Bartow, *Effective Speech Communication in Leading Worship* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1988); Charles L. Bartow, *God's Human Speech: A Practical Theology of Proclamation* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub., 1997); Jana Childers, *Performing the Word: Preaching as Theatre* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1998); and Jana Childers and Clayton J. Schmit, eds., *Performance in Preaching: Bringing the Sermon to Life*, Engaging Worship (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2008).

[58] See, for example, Jeremiah 27 and 28, and Isaiah 20.

[59] See, for example, Oscar G. Brockett, *History of the Theatre* (Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon, 1991); Kenneth G. Davis and Jorge L. Presmanes, *Preaching and Culture in Latino Congregations* (Chicago, IL: Liturgy Training Publications, 2000); and Daniel R. Lesnick, *Preaching in Medieval Florence: The Social World of Franciscan and Dominican Spirituality* (Athens, GA: The University of Georgia Press, 1989).

Methodology: Towards Interdependence of Homiletic and Performance Analysis

Current research approaches in the field of homiletics focus on the content of the sermon as meaning-maker. Those few homileticians who, besides the sermon, study preaching as a live event leave untouched the underlying assumptions of the act of preaching and focus on the content of speech as performative or world-making or on increasing the virtuosity of the preacher as a public speaker.[60] I am concerned with the world-making capacity of the bodily discourse in preaching. Consequently, I have searched but not yet found an analysis of the embodied knowledge that preaching produces and transfers, though there are some recent developments in the analysis of the embodiment of the preacher and how it affects the preaching event.[61] To

[60] Homileticians who have explored the intersection of performance studies and preaching have identified two schools of thought that are of particular significance for the field of homiletics. One is concerned with the performative function of words, the other is concerned with describing and evaluating performance events. The first school of thought, that of performative language, follows J.L. Austin's theory of speech-acts. The second school of thought more explicitly relates to embodiment during delivery. This school of thought is represented by Richard Schechner and Victor Turner. It brings insights from theater and anthropology to describe and evaluate preaching as a performance event. See Jana Childers and Clayton J. Schmit, *Performance in Preaching: Bringing the Sermon to Life* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2008), 15.

[61] Several homileticians have studied embodiment as it relates to preaching, usually referring to social constructs of identities marked on bodies. Some homileticians broadly address how embodiment may affect the content of the sermon, while others address the embodiment of the preacher. John S. McClure is among those who address embodiment in general. He invites preachers to step into an Other-wise homiletic, looking at the face of an Other (referring to a person with a different embodiment) and find there a touch of transcendence. See, in general, John S. McClure, *Other-Wise Preaching: A Postmodern Ethic for Homiletics* (St. Louis, MO: Chalice Press, 2001); and Mayra Rivera, *The Touch of Transcendence: A Postcolonial Theology of God*, 1st ed (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2007). Both books draw on Emmanuel Levinas and reach similar conclusions within their respective fields of homiletics and theology. Several other homileticians also consider the different embodiment of those outside of the pulpit. For example, Kathy Black considers those with different abilities and diverse cultures. See, Kathy Black, *A Healing Homiletic: Preaching and Disability* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1996); Kathy Black, *Culturally-Conscious Worship* (St. Louis, MO: Chalice Press, 2000). Christine M. Smith considers ethnic and cultural perspectives in congregations. See Christine M. Smith, *Preaching Justice: Ethnic and Cultural Perspectives* (Cleveland, OH: United Church Press, 1998). Black and Smith studied the embodiment of parishioners.

Yet, other homileticians have considered the embodiment of the preacher specifically. Anna Carter Florence, Eunjoo Mary Kim, Teresa L. Fry Brown, Rebecca S. Chopp, and Mary Donovan Turner, among others, have pointed out how being female makes a difference in preaching. See Anna Carter Florence, *Preaching as Testimony* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2007); Eunjoo Mary Kim, *Women Preaching: Theology and Practice through the Ages* (Cleveland, OH: The Pilgrim Press, 2004); Teresa L. Fry Brown, *Weary Throats and New Songs: Black Women Proclaiming God's Word* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2003); Teresa L. Fry Brown, *Can a Sistah Get a Little Help?: Encouragement for Black Women in Ministry* (Cleveland, OH: The Pilgrim Press, 2008); Rebecca S. Chopp, *The Power to Speak: Feminism, Language, God* (New York: Crossroad, 1989); and Mary Donovan Turner, *Saved from Silence: Finding Women's Voice in Preaching* (St. Louis, MO: Chalice Press, 1999).

identify the embodied knowledge that preaching produces and transfers, and to assess how that knowledge resists or assists imperial logic and colonization, it is helpful to resort to an interdisciplinary approach and focus on the body of the preacher rather than on the verbal content. This way, we can pay close attention to the bodily discourse through an analytical lens, in accordance with performance theory. Diana Taylor's performance theory and method for the analysis of human action offers fitting tools to expose aspects of preaching that have remained occluded by current approaches to the analysis of preaching. Furthermore, Taylor's performance theory helps us expand our repertoire of preaching practices. Taylor's theory of performance as a system of knowledge production and transmission, and her notion of scenario as tool of analysis shed light on preaching as a live event from an Amerindian perspective and as a world-making practice.

My conviction that the verbal discourse only distracts from what the reiterated practice means and does in the world leads me to downplay the verbal aspect of the sermon. Shifting the attention from the words to the bodily utterances, also known as human action, helpfully

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Lisa L. Thompson, for example, has explored the preaching bodies of black women and how embodiment impacts one's perception of the biblical text. See Lisa L. Thompson, "The Caged Bird's 21st Century Song: A Homiletic Practical Theology from the Preaching of African American Women." Unpublished Dissertation. (Vanderbilt University, 2013). See also Lisa L. Thompson, *Ingenuity: Preaching as an Outsider* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2018). Whether the embodiment of the preacher, or that of others as it affects the content of preaching, these homileticians are addressing embodiment as a social construct. Then, there is also homiletician Amy P. McCullough who seems to conflate body and embodiment. In arguing that preaching is a risky moment that demands the preacher's whole self, McCullough focuses on *embodied living*. In an article that summarizes her dissertation and her experience of producing it, McCullough explains, "Embodiment encircles both the physical body and the living self. Embodiment explores the ways we live *as* bodies, rather than as those who *have* bodies. To study an individual's embodied experiences involves investigating materiality, consciousness, movements and intentionality." She realized the entanglement of body and embodiment after failed attempts "to construct a causal relationship between a perception, stance or use of the body and 'good' preaching." McCullough relates that while she studied ways that female preachers "conceived of and related to embodied life," she was able to generate theory from focusing on the body of the preachers only when she switched "the conceptual lens from bodies to embodiment." See Amy P. McCullough, "Her Preaching Body: Embodiment and the Female Preaching Body," *Practical Matters: A Journal of Religious Practices and Practical Theology*, March 1, 2013: 5. McCullough resorted to *lived body* theory, drawing mostly on the work of Saba Mahmood, though she also credits Marion Young and Elizabeth Grosz. McCullough's work shows a gaze focused on the body of the preacher that uses "embodiment" as the analytical lens in accordance with lived body theory.

destabilizes logocentrism and reveals the multitude of dimensions of preaching and the multitude of practices that exist within and beyond the mind/body dualism. This shift also decenters words and sermon as two among many other aspects of preaching. From my liberationist perspective, words and body are not two parts of the same coin, nor a binary that I could reiterate by shifting the attention from words to body, but rather two of several other aspects of preaching, which include the more familiar aspects of body, mind, sermon, preacher, congregation, and less studied ones such as social actor, geopolitical and physical locations, bodily citations, preaching norms, cultural memory, embodied knowledge, and so on.

Performance in Preaching: Bringing the Sermon to Life

Some homileticians are concerned with the embodied practice that preaching is and call it *delivery*. Among those homileticians who discuss the topic of delivery, few have challenged the assumption that the only valid embodied preaching practice that exists is to stand and speak, that is, the use of public speech or to perform the Greco Roman classic orator. [62] With this assumption unchallenged, the focus of study has been in the virtuosity of the preacher as a public speaker. Many homileticians who study delivery from such a perspective have resorted to performance studies as their interdisciplinary partner. This study joins that conversation and uses performance studies as an interdisciplinary partner to challenge the very practice of preaching, its prevailing assumptions, and to uncover the embodied knowledge that it produces and transfers.

When it comes to using performance studies as an interdisciplinary partner to the field of homiletics, two main schools of thought are relevant. One focuses on the performative aspect of

[62] I am referring here to those homileticians who have engaged the topic of delivery from the perspective of skillful performance of public speech (Charles Bartow, Jana Childers, Clayton J. Schmit, and others). Among the few who have challenged the assumption of preaching primarily as standing up and speaking, and have proposed the use of art, pantomime, and theater for preaching, we can find Todd Farley, Jerusha Matsen Neal, and Leah Schade, among others. John McClure does not offer a concrete proposal for a specific art other than classic rhetoric but does acknowledge the possibility and leaves the door open for future work on the matter.

words, the other on describing and evaluating preaching as a performance event.[63] The one that focuses on the performative aspect of words draws mostly on the work of J. L. Austin and philosophy of language. The one that evaluates preaching as a performance event draws mostly on the work of Richard Schechner and Victor Turner, theater and anthropology, and does so from Western worldviews and perspectives. Meanwhile, the performative aspect of the bodily utterances in preaching remains understudied.[64] This study takes the purpose of one school of thought and the methods of the other but from an Amerindian world-view and perspective to address the performative (world-making) aspect of the bodily utterances in preaching. Rather than evaluating how *speech* is performative, I evaluate how performance in preaching (delivery) is performative, that is, how the *bodily utterances* in preaching are world-making, and I do so with the stated purpose of identifying how preaching resists and assists hegemonies. In other words, like my predecessors I draw on the insights of theater and anthropology, the school of thought represented by Richard Schechner and Victor Turner, to describe and evaluate preaching as a performance event with a different framing, the Amerindian framing that Diana Taylor has to offer, as the next section discusses.

Thus far, the work of the homileticians concerned with the description and evaluation of performance events demonstrates two tactics in employing the wisdom of performance studies to evaluate performance in preaching: some borrows techniques from theater to increase the

[63] See Childers and Clayton J. Schmit, *Performance in Preaching*, 15.

[64] I have not found yet such a study, but this does not necessarily mean that it does not exist.

preacher's virtuosity as speaker and performer.[65] Other work borrows concepts from theater and performance studies and builds homiletic theory via metaphor or analogy.[66]

Besides describing and evaluating preaching as a performance event, other scholars have suggested using creative ways to prepare sermons or to preach. Some use performing arts (dance, theater) to understand better the biblical text as part of sermon preparation, that is, as part of the exegetical process.[67] Still others have suggested the use of mime, theater, or other creative ways to preach, that is for delivery.[68]

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[65] See, for example, Charles L. Bartow, *Effective Speech Communication in Leading Worship* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1988); Charles L. Bartow, *God's Human Speech: A Practical Theology of Proclamation* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub., 1997); Jana Childers, *Performing the Word: Preaching as Theatre* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1998); several contributors in Jana Childers and Clayton J. Schmit, eds., *Performance in Preaching: Bringing the Sermon to Life* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2008); and Joan Huyser-Honig, "Todd Farley on Embodied Preaching," Calvin Institute of Christian Worship for the Study and Renewal of Worship, https://worship.calvin.edu/resources/resource-library/todd-farley-on-embodied-preaching/ (accessed December 21, 2017).

[66] Some examples include: Bartow, Childers, Farley, and Jennifer Lord. See for example, Jennifer Lord's inaugural address, "The Sunday Sermon: Liturgical Participation as Shared Authority," Austin Theological Presbyterian Seminary, November 21, 2013, http://www.austinseminary.edu/cf_media/index.cfm?obj=3867 (accessed December 24, 2017). There, she offers the theater notion of "fourth wall" and invites preachers to disrupt it but only in the imagination, not with their bodies.

[67] See, for example, Pamela Ann Moeller, *A Kinesthetic Homiletic: Embodying Gospel in Preaching* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1993); Anna Carter Florence, "It Could Have Gone Differently: Repertory Readings of Texts of Terror," Yale Divinity School, https://divinity.yale.edu/news-and-media/videos/it-could-have-gone-differently-repertory-readings-texts-terror (accessed December 21, 2017). See also, Anna Carter Florence, *Rehearsing Scripture: Discovering God's Word in Community* (Norwich, UK: Canterbury Press, 2018).

[68] See for example, Todd Farley, Marilyn Farley, and Mimeistry, *The Mastery of Mimodrame: An in-Depth Study of Mime Technique* (Pasadena, CA: Meriwether Pub., 1991); Jerusha Matsen Neal, *Blessed: Monologues for Mary* (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2013); and Leah Schade, *Creation-Crisis Preaching: Ecology, Theology, and the Pulpit* (St. Louis, MO: Chalice Press, 2015). In addition, the use of the notion of performativity that most closely resembles this dissertation but is still about verbal language and not about bodily utterances is Kwok Pui-lan**, "**Postcolonial Preaching in Intercultural Contexts," *Homiletic* (Online), 40 no. 1 (2015): 9–20. There, Kwok argues for the celebration of multiple voices disrupting colonial ways of worship and preaching. She draws on Mikhail Bakhtin's notion of heteroglossia. Regarding performance, Kwok explores "the performative aspect of postcolonial biblical criticism, in order to glean insights from it for postcolonial preaching as performance" (15). Kwok invites preachers to imitate Musa Dube, herself, and other women who use imaginative and creative ways such as creative writing, storytelling, and interviews to communicate their ideas. Kwok invites preachers to "learn from the ingenuity of postcolonial critics" and "use different methods to introduce postcolonial biblical criticism in lively and contextual ways" (18).

All these approaches are designed to improve the virtuosity of the preacher. They help the preacher bring the sermon to life. They help the preacher to control the body for the sake of clearer verbal communication. They focus on the content of the sermon via speech, ignoring the fact that the bodily utterances are also bringing scriptures to life, as well as many other social constructs and norms. None of these approaches is suspicious of the underlying assumptions and subjacent ideologies of the very act of preaching or concerned with how the very act of preaching as human action is world-making. For these reasons, we need to analyze preaching as a live event outside of the captivity of the Western gaze, a task for which I propose that the work of performance studies scholar Diana Taylor is particularly well suited.

Epistemological Concerns: Analysis of the Embodied Knowledge that Preaching Produces

Since the goal of this dissertation is to challenge hegemonies in preaching, I will use the theory and methods of Taylor, who challenges the privileging of writing in Western epistemologies. Diana Taylor's work might help homileticians in the analysis of preaching as a live event in context. Taylor's performance theory and methods are particularly helpful for identifying a broader repertoire of embodied preaching practices and for analyzing preaching scenarios (meaning much more than simply the words or text of the sermon), rather than the skillful delivery of sermons.

Homileticians typically consider the context of preaching to determine what to say. Such an approach leaves unexamined the unarticulated expectation that preachers will use words and nothing else to communicate their message. It also leaves unexamined the embodied knowledge that the very act of preaching produces and transfers, and the many specters that preaching brings to life. In this study, we focus our attention on the body of the preacher in order to determine whether and how preaching produces and transfers knowledge. We also repeat the process with

other embodied practices that exist in the Christian tradition that homileticians seldom recognize as preaching. To do that, we employ the performance theory of Diana Taylor and her notion of scenario as a method of analysis.

Performance theorist Diana Taylor belongs to the NYU stream of performance studies in the USA, which perceives itself as distinctively avant-garde and combines the wisdom from theater and anthropology to study performance in everyday life as much as on the stage, rather than to study communication theory or the rhetorical tradition of speech and oral interpretation.[69] Yet she disagrees with this self-perception of her field and strives to expand its perceptions of histories and approaches of performance studies as a field. From these locations, Taylor is mindful of the role of visual arts and embodied knowledge in the study of performance, and she stands on the side of permanence rather than ephemerality in the debate about the nature of performance.[70] Her approach is particularly important because it values embodied ways of knowledge, maintains cultural identity and history, and exposes the hidden scripts that are always operational and that become visible in performance.

[69] Some performance theorists ascribe the origins of this school of thought to the pioneering work of anthropologist Victor Turner and theater studies turned performance theorist Richard Schechner. For example, Peggy Phelan states, "a potent version of the history of performance studies is that the field was born out of the fecund collaborations between Richard Schechner and Victor Turner" when they brought theater and anthropology together. See Peggy Phelan, "Another history, another future of performance studies," quotation from the "Introduction" to *The Ends of Performance* (1998), as it appears in Schechner, *Performance Studies*, 14. See also, "The Victor Turner connection," Schechner, 17–20. The other most prominent school of thought in the field of performance studies is that associated with Northwestern University, where the emphasis is on communication theory or the rhetorical tradition of speech and oral interpretation. See Shannon Jackson, "The genealogy of performance studies at Northwestern," a quote from "Professing Performance" (1994), as it appears in Schechner, *Performance Studies*, 6.

[70] For more on the permanent vs. ephemeral debate, see Peggy Phelan, *Unmarked: The Politics of Performance* (London; New York: Routledge, 1993). Diana Taylor, *Performance*, trans. Abigail Levine (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2016), 10. Rebecca Schneider, *Performing Remains: Art and War in Times of Theatrical Reenactment* Abingdon, UK: Routledge, 2011. Rebecca Schneider, "Performance Remains," *Performance Research,* Vol. 6 no. 2 (2001): 100–108.

Because Taylor understands performance as episteme or a way of knowing, her approach is particularly appropriate for challenging the tyranny of words in preaching. Of her many ideas, in particular I draw upon: those about performed utterances as acts of transfer (a mode of transmission of knowledge); her distinction between the archive (enduring materials supposedly resistant to change, such as documents, buildings, bones, videos, films, and the like) and the repertoire (embodied practices that transmit knowledge, such as dance, rituals, sports, spoken language); and her methodology of analyzing scenarios of embodied practices as transmitters of knowledge and cultural memory.[71]

In *The Archive and the Repertoire: Performing Cultural Memory in the Americas*, Taylor argues that performance is an embodied praxis and episteme, and that performed utterances are acts of transfer, acts of storing, producing and transmitting knowledge, information, and histories.[72] Following Joseph Roach, Taylor understands performance as "coterminous with memory and history" and thus as participating "in the transfer and continuity of knowledge."[73] Several times Taylor insists on performance as being a mode of knowledge transmission and fleshes out her notion that embodied practice offers a way of knowing.[74] Such a theoretical framework allows homileticians to examine preaching in search of the knowledge, memory, and histories that preaching as a performance produces and transfers.

Taylor refers to the collection of embodied practices that transmit knowledge as the repertoire in contradistinction to the archive, which is a different mode of storing knowledge.

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[71] Here, I am drawing mostly on Taylor's *The Archive and The Repertoire: Performing Cultural Memory in the Americas*, but also on many other of her books and essays.

[72] Taylor, *The Archive and the Repertoire*, 17.

[73] Taylor, *The Archive and the Repertoire*, 4.

[74] Taylor, *The Archive and the Repertoire*, 2.

Her multilayered understanding of performance frames the archive and the repertoire as distinct but complementary modes of knowledge transmission. On the one hand, she explains that, "'Archival' memory exists as documents, maps, literary texts, letters, archaeological remains, bones, videos, films, CDs, all those items supposedly resistant to change."[75] Her critique of this form of memory includes the fact that it can be disappeared or fabricated and that it cannot contain the live events that make up histories. Scripture and sermon manuscripts, as well as video recordings of sermons are archival evidence that homileticians use frequently in the production of homiletic theory. As Taylor points out, archival memory is incomplete evidence.

On the other hand, the repertoire offers a different kind of memory that complements and works in tandem with archival memory, even as these two are not all there is to examine. The repertoire is for Taylor a "nonarchival system of transfer," which transmits that aspect of performance that persists.[76] The repertoire consists of "embodied practice/knowledge (i.e., spoken language, dance, sports, ritual)."[77] The repertoire "enacts embodied memory."[78] The repertoire is another way in which scholars may "trace traditions and influences."[79] As a ritual, preaching is part of the repertoire and enacts embodied memory. Taylor's notion of repertoire allows homileticians both to identify embodied memory in preaching acts and to trace preaching traditions and influences beyond classic Greco-Roman rhetoric.

Taylor's performance theory that conceives of performance as a way of knowing and of knowledge production and transmission, and that espouses a rift between the archive and the

[75] Taylor, *The Archive and the Repertoire*, 19.

[76] Taylor, *The Archive and the Repertoire*, xvii.

[77] Taylor, *The Archive and the Repertoire*, 19.

[78] Taylor, *The Archive and the Repertoire*, 20.

[79] Taylor, *The Archive and the Repertoire*, 20.

repertoire as two equally incomplete forms of archiving evidence, memory, and history, is the basis and her methodology of analyzing scenarios of embodied practices as transmitters of knowledge and cultural memory.[80] To understand both her theory and her methodology, it is important to understand the various ways in which Taylor uses the term performance.

Diana Taylor uses the word performance in at least three ways: as event, as methodological lens, and as system of knowledge. As event, performance may constitute an object of study. As object of study, Taylor has defined performance as "a doing, a done, and a redoing,"[81] "a doing to, a thing done to and with the spectator."[82] In Taylor's performance theory, an event or practice is a performance when 1) it has a beginning and an end; 2) it involves rehearsed behaviors; and 3) its particular location in history, culture, and society say it is. When performance constitutes the object of analysis in the field of performance studies, the researcher is looking at "the many practices and events—dance, theatre, ritual, political rallies, funerals—that involve theatrical, rehearsed, or conventional/event-appropriate behaviors."[83] Taylor lists as examples "theatre, performance art, cabaret, and political performance interventions," among many others.[84] These practices constitute a discrete focus of analysis because they are bracketed off from those around them; the event itself "has a beginning and an

[80] Here, I am drawing mostly on Taylor's *The Archive and The Repertoire: Performing Cultural Memory in the Americas*, but also on many other of her books and essays.

[81] Taylor, *Performance*, 41.

[82] Taylor, *Performance*, 86.

[83] Taylor, *The Archive and the Repertoire*, 3. Taylor follows Richard Schechner's distinction of the *is/as* of performance but adds her ontological and epistemological understanding of performance. Taylor agrees with Schechner in the contextual nature of determining whether something **is** a performance. When it comes to ontology, however, they disagree. For Schechner, performance is socially constructed through and through. For Taylor, to say that something is a performance is an ontological affirmation. Taylor embraces the ambiguity of both the real and the constructed natures of performance.

[84] Diana Taylor and Roselyn Costantino, eds., *Holy Terrors: Latin American Women Perform* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2003), 3.

end; it does not run continuously or seamlessly into other forms of cultural expression."[85] In addition, performance is contextually determined. Taylor notes that, "What one society considers a performance might be a nonevent elsewhere."[86] When it comes to the contextual determination of what constitutes a performance, Taylor seems to agree with Schechner when he says that "performance is determined by the historical and social context," that it is related to specific cultural circumstances.[87] When all these criteria are met, we can say that an event or practice *is* a performance.

Performance as a methodological lens relates to the scholar's decision to analyze an event *as* performance. In these cases, the scholar is the one framing the event and establishing the beginning and end, the narrowness or breadth of the object of study. Taylor offers as examples practices that are "rehearsed and performed daily in the public sphere," such as, "Civic obedience, resistance, citizenship, gender, ethnicity, and sexual identity."[88] The external bracketing is provided by the observer, presumably the researcher: "The bracketing for these performances comes from outside, from the methodological lens that organizes them into an analyzable 'whole.' "[89] In other words, a scholar looks for practices that are repeated, that do not necessarily have a beginning and an end that would deem them to be an event, and that might not be regarded as performance in a particular context, but that, because the scholar perceives in the practices the repetition and enactment of certain actionable concepts, the scholar organizes as a

[85] Taylor, *The Archive and the Repertoire*, 3.

[86] Taylor, *The Archive and the Repertoire*, 3.

[87] Schechner, *Performance Studies*, 38.

[88] Taylor, *The Archive and the Repertoire*, 3.

[89] Taylor, *The Archive and the Repertoire*, 3.

whole, bracketing them based on the notion that anything can be analyzed as performance. This is Taylor's methodological lens.

As system of knowledge, Taylor understands performance as "an embodied praxis and episteme,"[90] and as "acts of transfer."[91] Taylor is intentional about her methodological lens reflecting an epistemology. After Taylor lists the examples of events that can be analyzed as performance because they are rehearsed and performed in the public sphere, Taylor observes that, "To understand these as performance suggests that performance also functions as an epistemology."[92] Taylor explains: "Embodied practice, along with and bound up with other cultural practices, offers a way of knowing."[93] For Taylor, it is important that the performance and aesthetics of everyday life "vary from community to community, reflecting cultural and historical specificity as much in the enactment as in the viewing/reception."[94] For these reasons, she is constantly looking at both the what and the how of knowledge and inviting researchers to "exercise caution as we analyze what we know and how we know it."[95] Taylor's approach to analyzing embodied practices and everyday life as performance consists of a methodological lens with an epistemological sensitivity that seeks to value marginalized forms of knowledge.

Taylor is not the first scholar to analyze the theatricality of everyday life.[96] What sets Taylor apart is her non-Western, that is her Amerindian way of approaching such task. With a

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[90] Taylor, *The Archive and the Repertoire*, 17.

[91] In footnote 3 of chapter 1 of *The Archive and the Repertoire*, Taylor credits Paul Connerton for the term "acts of transfer," which he uses in his book, *How Societies Remember* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1989), 39.

[92] Taylor, *The Archive and the Repertoire*, 3.

[93] Taylor, *The Archive and the Repertoire*, 3.

[94] Taylor, *The Archive and the Repertoire*, 3.

[95] Diana Taylor, "Scenes of Cognition: Performance and Conquest," *Theatre Journal* 56, no. 3 (2004): 356.

[96] The idea that rituals are performances and the analysis of rituals as performances is old. For example, Richard Schechner succinctly introduces a number of theorists, such as Catherine Bell, Victor Turner, and Arnold

cyclical, rather than linear sense of time, with a sense of permanence, rather than ephemerality, Taylor frames human action differently than her decidedly Western predecessors. Furthermore, Taylor's framing is a strategy of disrupting binaries in her performance theory. According to Taylor, to determine whether a performance "is," or "as," or both at the same time, "depends on how we frame the event."[97] When Taylor keeps is/as together, it is because an event can simultaneously *be* a performance and be studied *as* a performance. While this seems like an obvious assertion, it has interesting consequences. Taylor explains, "The is/as underlines the understanding of performance as simultaneously 'real' and 'constructed,' as practices that bring together what have historically been kept separate as discrete, supposedly free-standing,

van Gennep, who agree with the idea that rituals are performances. Richard Schechner, *Performance Studies*, 6. According to Schechner, Émile Durkheim proposed the idea nearly a century ago. Durkheim theorized that performing rituals created and sustained 'social solidarity' (and insisted that, "although rituals may communicate or express religious ideas, rituals were not ideas or abstractions, but performances enacting known patterns of behavior and texts." Schechner, 57. For Durkheim then, rituals are performances; rituals embody ideas, and are thought-in/as-action. Durkheim recognized a similarity between ritual and theater in this quality of thought-in/as-action. Schechner agrees with Durkheim, given that for Schechner every action is a performance, and for him rituals consist of actions. Durkheim's distinction between thought and action framed his interpretation of what is embodied in ritual. For Durkheim, which separates beliefs from rites in religion is analogous to the separation of thought and action. Catherine M. Bell, *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice*, Kindle Edition (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 20. Ritual studies scholar Catherine Bell rejects the thought-action dichotomy that serves as a basis for both Durkheim's and Turner's approach to studying cultures by studying their rituals. Instead, Bell suggests ritualization (culturally strategic ways of acting) as a framework by which to reconsider traditional questions about ritual. See in general, Bell, *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice*. This leads her to assert that ritualization is a strategic arena for the embodiment of power relations. Bell, 170. Analogous to Bell, Taylor explains that conquered native groups did not endorse western dichotomies. For that reason, their religious rituals were not like western theater in the sense of being mimetic representation. Rather, their rituals embodied, among other things, presentations to the gods as form of debt payment, their social order, and their map of the universe. Taylor, *The Archive and the Repertoire*, 38. Moreover, according to Taylor's theoretical framework, embodied practices, such as rituals, are acts that transfer knowledge, collective memories, values, and belief systems. Taylor, *The Archive and the Repertoire*, chapters 1–3. Therefore, while all these scholars agree that there is a relationship between performance and ritual, their foundational paradigms result in different understandings of what is embodied in ritual/ization. In brief, Schechner's is/as distinction is predicated on the difference between defining and analyzing. He suggests that every action is a performance, while admitting that it is also true that something *is* a performance only when the socio-historical context says it is. Schechner distinguishes such determination from the ability to examine something *as* a performance. In addition, Schechner agrees with Durkheim that rituals are performances. Durkheim's thought/action distinction leads to belief/rite distinction whereas Bell and Taylor perceive ritual/ization as integrated wholes that embody social orders and power relations.

[97] Taylor, *Performance*, 29.

ontological and epistemological discourses."[98] This particular framing of the object of study challenges several binaries: is/as; ontological/epistemological; real/constructed; onstage/daily life. Taylor addresses the dividing line asserting, "the slash in the IS/AS is slippery and changes with time and context."[99] The researcher may analyze an event deemed to be a performance within the limits of what happened onstage within the beginning and the end, or may broaden the frame to include other aspects, such as the audience, the neighborhood, and the occasion. Framing the event beyond the limits of time and space reveals knowledge transferred through bodily practices. Framing preaching beyond the limits of time and space is precisely what this study intends to do to reveal the knowledge transferred through its bodily practice.

Preaching Beyond Each Preaching Event: Analysis of Scenarios

Scenario as a tool of analysis, for purposes of this dissertation and following Taylor's performance theory and Amerindian perspective, places the sermon and the preaching event in context, that is outside of the Western framework that limits preaching within its beginning, middle, and end, and offers homileticians a broader perspective and a fuller picture of what preaching is and does. Taylor's notion of scenario is part of a broader trend in the field of performance studies that is dedicated to interpreting theatricality across genres. In this approach, theatricality does not refer to theatrical or staged events necessarily, but to the "beholder's perceptual construction" rather than to the medium of theater, in other words, the researcher's framing. In *Reading Contemporary Performance: Theatricality Across Genres*, Meling Cheng and Gabrielle H. Cody propose *the theatrical matrix (ttm)* as "an accessible and malleable way to

[98] Taylor, *The Archive and the Repertoire*, 3.

[99] Taylor, *Performance*, 27.

engage with myriad daily performative incidents."[100] This matrix consists of five aspects: time, space, action, performer, and audience.[101] Taylor's notion of scenario is consistent with these five aspects and she nuances them in specific ways due to the non-Western framework that she privileges. These five aspects are not completely new to the field of homiletics, as it has previously paid attention to the action of preaching, to the preacher as the performer, and to the congregation or listeners as the audience, even if using different nomenclature. Considerations of time and space are often part of contextual approaches to preaching. What is new to homiletics is Taylor's non-Western framework for analysis, which she calls scenario.

Diana Taylor uses the notion of scenario as a framework for analysis. She begins with a dictionary definition of scenario as "a sketch or outline of the plot of a play, giving particulars of the scenes, situations etc.,"[102] Elsewhere, she expands this definition, explaining its origins in theater. A scenario is then an outline of movement and action; it offers established parameters and a general plotline.[103] But for Taylor, scenarios are more than that; they "are structured in a predictable, formulaic, hence repeatable fashion"[104] and constitute "meaning-making paradigms that structure social environments, behaviors, and potential outcomes."[105] For Taylor, a scenario is a paradigm for understanding social structures and behaviors.[106] By focusing on scenarios,

[100] Meiling Cheng and Gabrielle H. Cody, eds., *Reading Contemporary Performance: Theatricality across Genres* (Abingdon, UK; New York: Routledge, 2016), 12.

[101] Cheng and Cody, *Reading Contemporary Performance*, 13.

[102] Taylor, *The Archive and the Repertoire*, 28.

[103] Taylor, *Performance*, 136.

[104] Taylor, *The Archive and the Repertoire*, 13.

[105] Taylor, *The Archive and the Repertoire*, 28.

[106] Taylor, *The Archive and the Repertoire*, 29.

Taylor uses an old category from theater to analyze performance in everyday life, in good performance studies fashion.

Taylor turns to scenario as a framework for analysis because, as she argues in *The Archive and the Repertoire*, "the notion of the scenario allows us to more fully recognize the many ways in which the archive and the repertoire work to constitute and transmit social knowledge."[107] In developing this particular use of the concept of scenarios, Taylor points "to some of the ways that using scenario as a paradigm for understanding social structures and behaviors might allow us to draw from the repertoire as well as the archive."[108] Her proposed understanding of scenario provides an analytical tool to examine the relationship between the archive and the repertoire. Taylor lifts up embodied memory and the knowledge that is produced and transferred through embodied practice. In so doing, she attempts to undo what the conquest of the Americas did in privileging writing and archival material as the only or the best means of transfer.

In this study, I use six of Taylor's categories of analysis for scenarios: space or place and action in metonymic relation, the interaction of social actor and role or character, a formulaic structure that is repeatable and transferable, audiences, how scenarios work through reactivation rather than duplication of a live event, and the multifaceted systems at work.[109]

Regarding space, Taylor explains the need to conjure up the physical location. Furthermore, Taylor explains that scene (physical environment, place) and scenario (action),

[107] Taylor, *The Archive and the Repertoire*, 33.

[108] Taylor, *The Archive and the Repertoire*, 29.

[109] Here, I am drawing mostly on *Taylor's The Archive and The Repertoire: Performing Cultural Memory in the Americas*, but also on many other of her books and essays.

"stand in metonymic relationship."[110] The place determines possibilities of action, but action also defines place due to history and social practice. For example, Martin Luther King Jr. conjures church when he preaches in a public open space, whereas the action of swinging a bat sideways in the chancel conjures a baseball park inside the church through the action of playing baseball.

Regarding actor and role, Taylor tackles several aspects through scenario as paradigm. According to Taylor, in scenarios, viewers need to deal with the function that actors perform as well as the social construction of bodies in specific contexts. This refers to the difference between the character and the actor. This difference or "generative critical distance" between actor and character applies in cases of mimetic representation (an actor assuming a role) or of performativity ("social actors assuming socially regulated patterns of appropriate behavior").[111] Consequently, the scenario "more fully allows us to keep both the social actor and the role in view simultaneously, and thus recognize the areas of resistance and tension."[112] Furthermore, the scenario allows us to examine the frictions between plot, character, and the embodiment of social actors, revealing "hidden transcripts" and also the rearrangements that the social actors introduce and that result in parody and subversion.[113]

An audience is needed for transference to happen. In Taylor's words, "participants, spectators, or witnesses, we need to 'be there,' [as] part of the act of transfer."[114] The importance

[110] Taylor, *The Archive and the Repertoire*, 29.

[111] Taylor, *The Archive and the Repertoire*, 30.

[112] Taylor, *The Archive and the Repertoire*, 30.

[113] Taylor, *The Archive and the Repertoire*, 30–31. Taylor mentions that "hidden transcript" is a phrase developed by anthropologist James Scott.

[114] Taylor, *The Archive and the Repertoire*, 32.

of this presence lies in that "the scenario precludes a certain kind of distancing" and makes the audience or the ethnographic writer part of the scenario.

The formulaic structure of a scenario allows the fixed frame to be repeatable and transferable. Scenarios are portable. Also, because scenarios "encapsulate both the setup and the action/behaviors," they "predispose certain outcomes and yet allow for reversal, parody, and change."[115] Moreover, they have staying power, says Taylor: "Scenarios change or adapt but do not seem to go away."[116] In this characteristic of scenarios, Taylor finds that they are like Pierre Bourdieu's *habitus* in that "scenarios are 'durable, transposable dispositions.'"[117] A scenario is not only repeatable and transferable, it is long lasting.

Taylor also explains that, "a scenario is not necessarily, or even primarily, mimetic." Scenarios work "through reactivation rather than duplication." According to Taylor, scenarios conjure the past even when it has been so internalized that the audience does not remember the precedent. "Rather than a copy," Taylor states, "the scenario constitutes a once-againness."[118] The newness of each performance reactivates the past and produces knowledge in the repetition of the general outline of movement and action, not necessarily in the exact same movements or gestures.

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[115] Taylor, 31.

[116] Taylor, *The Archive and the Repertoire*, 33.

[117] Taylor, *The Archive and the Repertoire*, 31. In footnote 58 to chapter 1, Taylor includes the whole definition of habitus proposed by Pierre Bourdieu, which informs her work, "Bourdieu defines habitus: 'The structures constitutive of a particular type of environment (e.g. the material conditions of existence characteristic of a class condition) produce habitus, systems of durable, transposable dispositions, structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures, that is, as principles of the generation and structuring of practices and representations which can be objectively 'regulated' and 'regular' without in any way being the product of obedience to rules, objectively adapted to their goals without presupposing a conscious aiming at ends or an express mastery of the operations necessary to attain them and, being all this, collectively orchestrated without being the product of the orchestrating action of a conductor.'" Pierre Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, trans. Richard Nice (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge UP, 1989), 72. Taylor, 284.

[118] Taylor, *The Archive and the Repertoire*, 32.

Finally, Taylor asserts that "a scenario reflects the multifaceted systems at work in the scenario itself."[119] She explains that it is possible to draw from various modes of transmission "that come from the archive and/or the repertoire–writing, telling, reenactment, mime, gestus, dance, singing."[120] There is multiplicity of forms of transmission, and "they have different discursive and performatic structures."[121] Several modes of transmission keep alive the scenario. Each mode of transmission cooperates in keeping alive that which remains, the abstract concept, the norm, the memory, the cultural given, the ghosts. Given such multiplicity, Taylor suggests, "The challenge is not to 'translate' from an embodied expression into a linguistic one or vice versa but to recognize the strengths and limitations of each system."[122]

Taylor's methodology to analyze human action through the lens of scenario as meaning-making paradigm has advantages and disadvantages. One of its advantages, as I have already shown, is that scenario allows homileticians to perceive memory, traditions, assumptions, ideologies, norms, and embodied knowledge that is otherwise absent from the gaze of the researcher when limited to existing approaches to the analysis of preaching. Furthermore, it gets at how preaching as human action is world-making. In this sense, scenario is a good addition to the analytical tools that homileticians may use.

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[119] Taylor, *The Archive and the Repertoire*, 31.

[120] Taylor, *The Archive and the Repertoire*, 31.

[121] Throughout *The Archive and the Repertoire*, Taylor seems to use the term *discursive* to refer to the verbal language aspect of an utterance, the words orally transmitted in a performance. She explains *performatic* as the theatrical aspect of a performance. Apparently, Taylor's notion of *performatic* has not gained as much traction or general acceptance as her notions of the archive and the repertoire. Rather, many authors and interlocutors use performatic to refer to theatricality in everyday human action or non-staged human action. The distinction between human action and what human action accomplishes or actualizes in the world then remains invisible. In this study I am interested in the discourse imbedded in human action. In that sense I depart from Taylor asserting that a performance or human action is discursive as well. I agree with Taylor in the need for better nomenclature, especially when it relates to the distinction between verbal expression and physical expression, and also between physical expression and what it effectuates in the world.

[122] Taylor, *The Archive and the Repertoire*, 32.

Scenario, however, also has some shortcomings. These shortcomings include the need for imagination, lack of physical presence, and a sample of voices. As a phenomenological approach, scenario as a tool of analysis requires the use imagination, which is subjective and limited to the prior knowledge of the researcher.[123] This is true whether the researcher is present during the original live event or not. In the case of this study, an additional shortcoming of using scenario as a tool of analysis is the lack of physical presence of the researcher in the original event that serves as point of entry for each paradigm. A careful reading of *The Archive and the Repertoire* reveals that Diana Taylor is participant-observant of the enacted actions that she analyzes. Such is not always the case in this study, which most of the time analyzes the enacted actions as described in the archive or in the Bible as archival memory. In addition, the sample of voices offered here responds to the aim of this study and the research methodology, which draws on cultural anthropology but does not consist of ethnographic research.[124] Despite these shortcomings, scenario as a tool of analysis provides a picture of some aspects of preaching that

[123] Victor Turner draws on the work of Wilhelm Dilthey to point out how important prior experience is for a human being to generate meaning. I think this is true whether the person is a researcher or not. Turner draws on Dilthey's work regarding experience to examine how human beings make meaning of their lived experiences and how they express that meaning. According to Turner, Dilthey presented five moments of *Erlebnis* (a German term meaning literally "what has been *lived* through," 12). These moments include perception, recollection of past events, reliving feelings bound up with those past events, generation of meaning by "feelingly thinking" about the interconnections of past and present, and expression of meaning, because, Turner reports, experience is never truly completed until it is expressed or communicated to others. See Victor W. Turner, *From Ritual to Theatre: The Human Seriousness of Play* (New York City: Performing Arts Journal Publications, 1982), 12–14. Similarly, feminist biblical scholar Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, and mujerista theologian Ada María Isasi-Díaz, among many others, have pointed out how knowledge is situated and how the social location of the researcher impacts scholarship. In *Rhetoric and Ethic*, Schüssler Fiorenza challenges the notion of objectivity in historical hermeneutics. In *Mujerista Theology*, Isasi-Díaz proposes epistemic vigilance, which includes being aware of one's own biases and revealing them and being aware of how one's subjectivity limits one's capacity to know reality. Isasi-Díaz also challenges in traditional theology the sense of immutability and of being official as leading to the belief "of being the only perspective that is correct." Isasi-Díaz, *Mujerista Theology*, 77.

[124] If this dissertation was an ethnographic study, ideally it should include the perspective of all the actors mentioned and of members of the audiences as well. As a phenomenological approach concerned with epistemology, this study is limited to the plots that repeat "themselves" through times and spaces, the histories that bodies contain and communicate, and the world-making aspect of performance through reiteration, as well as focusing on collusions or lack thereof between preaching embodied practices and empire, rather than the multiple interpretations that exist.

have been occluded by current approaches to the study of preaching, the ones that relate to performance as a system of knowledge production and transmission.

In sum, for Taylor, a scenario, more than a plotline, is a meaning-making paradigm that structures society. It serves the purpose of revealing how embodied practice, on its own and in tandem with the archive, transmits cultural memory. Scenario as unit of description and analysis together with the social actors encapsulates both the setup and the actions or behaviors in a formulaic structure that is repeatable and yet allows for change, requires presence and implicates the audience present, reactivates rather than duplicates, and is multifaceted, drawing from various modes of transmission.[125]

Scenarios Perceivable to a Radical Liberationist Gaze

Taylor brings an Amerindian perspective to cultural anthropology that allows the researcher to look beneath the surface of human action and to perceive the histories that human action brings to life repeatedly.[126] Taylor's methodology is a decolonized methodology that rejects the Western bracketing in time and space of an event. Rather, she uses the event as evidence of a pre- and post-existing paradigm. Taylor's approach raises questions about the knowledge that remains, that precedes and extends beyond the preaching moment, the actionable concepts that humans bring to life again and again. In the hands of any researcher, the analysis of the archive and the repertoire reveal the scenario, the social script that remains. For someone

[125] These particularities of scenario as unit of description and analysis is what distinguishes Taylor's work from Victor Turner's social drama, which was dependent on a Western world-view of closed event, with beginning, middle and end. See Victor W. Turner, *Schism and Continuity in an African Society; a Study of Ndembu Village Life.* (Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 1957), xvii; Victor W. Turner, *From Ritual to Theatre: The Human Seriousness of Play* (New York City: Performing Arts Journal Publications, 1982), 65; and Taylor, *The Archive and the Repertoire*, 8.

[126] Taylor admits that the ephemeral event says more about the researcher than about the culture of the event observed. In her words, "Performances may not, as Turner had hoped, give us access and insight into another culture, but they certainly tell us a great deal about our desire for access, and reflect the politics of our interpretations." Taylor, *The Archive and the Repertoire*, 6.

with a Western epistemology and worldview it may be easier to think of cyclical rather than linear time. From that perspective, the researcher is searching for the plot that repeats in times and spaces again and again, the scripts and characters that have been and will be there in the imaginary of society before and after specifics instantiations. Similarly, to think of preaching scenarios rather than a preaching event is to reframe it out of the Western bracket, out of the time limits of a beginning, a middle, and an end.

Taylor's methodology focuses on political oppression and opens doors to find repeated collusions between preaching and empire, and repeated strategies of resistance against and subversion of empire. For example, some questions to consider about specific preaching events include: In what ways, if any, does the preaching event assist or resist imperial logic or domination? In what ways, if any, does the preaching event advance cultural hegemony? What cultures come to life during a specific preaching event? What cultures are embodied during a specific preaching event? Whose memories, traditions, and histories appear and disappear with each instantiation? Whose memories, traditions, and histories are visible or invisibilized in each instantiation? What hidden scripts come to be perceivable through the preaching event? What are the frictions between plot, characters, social roles, and the embodiment of social actors? Some questions to consider about each scenario include: What is the plot of the scenario? Where and when else has this scenario been repeated? What are the characters and what are their roles? What are the socially regulated patterns of appropriate behavior that come to life in the scenario?

For purposes of this dissertation and in accordance with the ethical value of promiscuous scholarship that guides this study, liberationist perspective means drawing on a broad range of theories and interpretive lenses that were developed for the purposes of liberating specific marginalized groups. In chronological order, theology received influx from liberation approaches

from male perspectives, both Latin American and Black, prioritizing a better future for those suffering economic oppression.[127] After liberation theologies, feminist theories helped theologians develop feminist theologies that continue to expand and that include womanist, mujerista, and queer theories that prioritize a better future for persons who suffer marginalization due to gender and sexuality, in addition to economic and racial oppression.[128] Postcolonial theories have expanded liberation theologies and hermeneutics beyond economic systems to geopolitics, and feminist perspectives once again correct postcolonial perspectives that disregard gender.[129] Similarly, in the field of homiletics we can find liberationist homiletic theories that pay attention to class, race, gender, ability, and sexuality, typically one of these at a time, seldom, if at all, in combination until the popularization of intersectionality, that is.[130] To honor

[127] See, for example, the work of Rubem Alves, Gustavo Gutiérrez, and James Cone. Some of their pioneering writings include: Rubem A. Alves, *Towards a Theology of Liberation* (A doctoral dissertation presented to the Faculty of Princeton Theological Seminary, 1968) Order No. 6902025, Available from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. (302365855). Retrieved from http://login.proxy.library.vanderbilt.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.proxy.library.vanderbilt.edu/docview/302365855?accountid=14816 (accessed on December 29, 2018). Rubem A. Alves, *A Theology of Human Hope* (Washington: Corpus Books, 1969). Gustavo Gutiérrez, Caridad Inda, and John Eagleson, *A Theology of Liberation: History, Politics, and Salvation* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1989). Gustavo Gutiérrez, *Praxis de liberación y fe cristiana* (Bilbao: Zero, 1974). James H. Cone, *A Black Theology of Liberation*, 1st ed. (Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1970).

[128] See, for example, some of the classics: Sallie McFague, *Metaphorical Theology: Models of God in Religious Language* (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1982). Delores S. Williams, *Sisters in the Wilderness: The Challenge of Womanist God-Talk* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1993). Ada María Isasi-Díaz, *En la lucha = In the Struggle: Elaborating a Mujerista Theology*, Tenth Anniversary ed., (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 2004). Marcella Althaus-Reid, *The Queer God* (London: Routledge, 2003).

[129] See for example, Rasiah S. Sugirtharajah, *The Bible and the Third World: Precolonial, Colonial, and Postcolonial Encounters* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2001); Fernando F. Segovia, *Decolonizing Biblical Studies: A View from the Margins* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2000); Kwok Pui-lan, *Postcolonial Imagination and Feminist Theology*, 1st ed., (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2005); and Musa W. Dube, *Postcolonial Feminist Interpretation of the Bible* (St. Louis, MO: Chalice Press, 2000).

[130] Though arguably some of these are not technically homiletic theories, some examples of prior contributions to the preaching task from a liberationist perspective include: Henry H. Mitchell, *Black Preaching: The Recovery of a Powerful Art* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1990); Justo L. González and Catherine Gunsalus González, *Liberation Preaching: The Pulpit and the Oppressed* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2000), first published in 1983 by Abingdon Press; Mary Donovan Turner, *Saved from Silence: Finding Women's Voice in Preaching* (St. Louis, MO: Chalice Press, 1999); Christine M. Smith, *Preaching Justice: Ethnic and Cultural Perspectives* (Cleveland, OH: United Church Press, 1998); Donna E. Allen, *Toward a Womanist Homiletic: Katie Cannon, Alice Walker, and Emancipatory Proclamation* (New York: Peter Lang Pub., 2013); Olive Elaine Hinnant, *God Comes*

all these antecedents to the present state of liberationist theories and theologies and refusing to choose one aspect of oppression, I prefer the more encompassing term *liberationist.*

Moreover, this dissertation responds to a radical liberationist perspective in the sense of addressing the roots. Cherríe Moraga and Gloria Anzaldúa use the term "radical" in its original form, "stemming from the word 'root'" to communicate both that their feminist politic emerges from the roots of their cultural oppression and heritage and that they want "nothing short of a revolution."[131] Similarly, black feminists such as Audre Lorde have critiqued white feminism for its operation under "an exclusively european-american male tradition" that merely substitutes white men for white women but leaves the plot unchanged. Lorde invites her readers "to examine the ways in which our world can be truly different," and "to pursue genuine change within our world, rather than merely settling for a shift of characters in the same weary drama."[132] Likewise, Ched Myers argues against recycling the old world and advocates for breaking the primal structures of power and domination. He advocates for a "more radical (driving-to-the-roots) social transformation, a unity between means and ends" given that, "[t]he means of the old order cannot bring about the ends of the new."[133] Moraga, Anzaldúa, Lorde, and Myers call for structural change, which requires identification of the underlying structures of oppression. Taylor's notion of scenario reveals the underlying structures, making evident what is hiding in plain view.

Out: A Queer Homiletic (Cleveland, OH: The Pilgrim Press, 2007); and Sarah Travis, *Decolonizing Preaching: The Pulpit as Postcolonial Space* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2014).

[131] Cherríe Moraga and Gloria Anzaldúa, *This Bridge Called My Back: Writings by Radical Women of Color*, Fourth edition (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2015), xliv.

[132] Audre Lorde, "Uses of the Erotic: The Erotic as Power," in *Sister Outsider: Essays and Speeches* (Trumansburg, NY: Crossing Press, 1984), 59.

[133] Ched Myers, *Binding the Strong Man: A Political Reading of Mark's Story of Jesus*, Twentieth Anniversary Edition (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2008), 438.

With this radical liberationist perspective, I interpret the findings of content and context of preaching scenarios (limited to reiterated plots) to uncover whether and how each paradigm assists or resists colonial and imperial forces.[134] It is the repeated exercise that shows that there are many paradigms and that each one simultaneously assists and reiterates colonization in different ways. For each paradigm, I offer various examples, for doing so reveals that even the many instantiations that seem to be the same result in different effects due to difference in their particularities. Such nuances are not visible using current methods of homiletic analysis concerned with the words, the content of the sermon, and the virtuosity of the preacher as speaker. These are the specters that the anthropology-theater school of performance studies allow homileticians to perceive, and that show where collusions with empire, strategies of resistance, and cultural hegemonies hide in plain view.

A preaching norm hides among the specters that each scenario brings to life. Thanks to the identification of the plot and characters of each paradigm, the preaching norm becomes perceivable. Preaching norms come to life in the same way that gender norms come to life. As Judith Butler has successfully argued, the ideology precedes the body and is then inscribed in the body.[135] The body cites the social norm. For Butler, the action itself is a citation of the convention or norm, and the repeated action invokes and reiterates a social norm. As Armour and St. Ville explain, "the citational process produces (that is, gives body or weight to) the norms it

[134] Taylor's scenario has profound implications for affect and imitation and lends itself to the use of affect theory as well as neuroscience and its recent discoveries about mirror neurons. It is an attempt to make the scope of this study manageable to limit it to reiterated plots and politic oppression.

[135] See, in general, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (1990), *Bodies That Matter* (1993), *Excitable Speech* (1997), and *The Psychic Life of Power* (1997). In *Gender Trouble*, Butler argued that gender produces sex. That is, that masculinity and femininity "are bodily performances based on the demands of our heterosexual and phallocentric economy, not expressions of the body's inner nature." Ellen Armour and Susan St Ville, eds., *Bodily Citations: Religion and Judith Butler* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006), viii.

invokes."[136] In the case of preaching, the body of the preacher cites a preaching norm. Just as there are more than two genders and a spectrum of gender performances between and beyond the woman/man binary, there are many preaching norms in a spectrum between and beyond the body/words aspects of preaching or the pulpit/pew binary that dominates the field's production of knowledge. The next chapter shows three of these preaching norms, each one imbedded in a specific preaching scenario.

A liberationist interpretation of human action in preaching that employs the notion of scenario as basic unit of description and analysis can identify collusions with and subversions of imperial logic, along with diverse preaching norms, and can expand the dimensions of preaching that we analyze and the range of embodied preaching practices that we validate, as the next chapter discusses.

[136] Armour and St. Ville, *Bodily Citations*, 4.

Chapter 3

The Findings: Different Embodied Preaching Practices Cite Diverse Preaching Norms

Delivery brings to life norms, social constructs, collective memories, cultures, and other specters, and produces and transfers embodied knowledge. Bible stories are part of the embodied knowledge of the Christian imaginary. Not only they are written but they are also imbedded in our embodied memory. This chapter offers three different scenarios that are biblically based and constitute a data sample that engenders a broader definition of Christian preaching as proclamation regardless of place, genre, number of preachers and number of persons in the audience. These stories and histories show that the Jewish and Christian traditions offer alternative ways of preaching. Because these stories are part of our embodied history we need to elevate the status of these to the same level. These three scenarios show diverse ways of bringing the word to life, not just words about the divine but revelation and preaching through diverse modes of human communication.

Different preaching scenarios constitute bodily citations of different preaching norms.[137] This reality becomes evident when we analyze preaching scenarios featuring diverse embodied practices through Taylor's prismatic methodology. For each one of the three preaching scenarios that follow, I describe and analyze the physical discourse through *scenario* as an analytic tool, drawing on the work of performance theorist Diana Taylor. For each scenario I offer various examples. Then, I interpret the findings from liberationist perspectives.[138]

[137] Performativity may be understood as a kind of citational practice, a ritualized repetition of norms. Amy Hollywood, "Performativity, Citationality, Ritualization" in *Bodily Citations*, 252 and referencing Judith Butler's *Bodies That Matter*, x.

[138] In line with the problematizing and transgressive pedagogy that I practice, based on the scholarship of Howard Gardner, bell hooks, and Paulo Freire, if I were to teach the material of this dissertation, I would not share my interpretation of the findings. Rather, I would share the findings and let the students interpret them in order to

Preaching Scenario One: Pulpit Preaching through Public Speech

Many preachers consider pulpit preaching through public speech the "real" way of preaching and thus it functions as the norm in many contexts due to its ubiquity. Our point of entry into this scenario is Rev. Marielis Barreto Hernández, who for purposes of this dissertation represents the embodiment of the normalized concept of preaching. Barreto, pastor of the First Presbyterian Church in Aguada, Puerto Rico, represents any given preacher, any given Sunday in any given mainline Christian church in Puerto Rico and the USA.[139]

Marielis Barreto Hernández, a Puerto Rican woman with dark skin, ordained in the Presbyterian Church (USA) and member of the Northwest Presbytery in Puerto Rico, as pastor of the First Presbyterian Church in Aguada, stands up and speaks from behind the pulpit. Unlike the woman before her, unlike anyone else in the sanctuary, she wears a clergy robe. For the next roughly thirty-seven minutes, she speaks and her congregation listens.

Barreto's actions constitute the typical set of actions that the bodies gathered for this specific embodied preaching practice perform during Sunday morning preaching in most mainline historical congregations of the Christian Western tradition. This is the formulaic structure of the dominant preaching norm: pulpit preaching through public speech.

The repetition of this scenario shows ghosts of our pasts, and embodied images of authority and persuasion, as much as resistance. The human action brings past and present

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better promote their critical thinking skills rather than indoctrinate them with my liberationist perspectives. See, Gardner, Howard. *Frames of Mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligences* (New York: Basic Books, 2011); Howard Gardner, *Multiple Intelligences: New Horizons* (New York, NY: Basic Books, 2006); Howard Gardner, *Intelligence Reframed: Multiple Intelligences for the 21st Century* (New York, NY: Basic Books, 2003); bell hooks, *Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom*, Kindle Edition (New York, NY: Routledge, 1994); and Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*.

[139] For an example of how Barreto preaches, see her sermon *Y se escandalizaban*, Iglesia Presbiteriana en Aguada, July 5, 2015. https://youtu.be/jHlTOyw66es and https://youtu.be/uHxgEu2Rlgw (accessed October 13, 2018).

together in the reperformance of Cicero the classical orator, Paul the Jew with Roman citizenship and apostle to the Gentiles, Augustine of Hippo the patristic bishop, the protestant reformers, and many others.

Preaching Scenario: *Public Speech Turned Preaching*

Taylor's categories for the analysis of scenarios uncovers how one history of Christian preaching is bodily cited frequently. Taylor's scenario as lens also reveals the underlying plot of an expert that deposits ideas in the audience, a plot that is recognized as preaching because of the many aspects of a scenario.[140] The use of scenario as lens also reveals a multitude of ghosts and specters that serve as a basis for the upcoming liberationist interpretation.

It is the action of public speech in metonymic relation with the place of a religious building in a specific location within a liturgy that communicates that a person is preaching. Barreto preaches inside a church building in Aguada, a West coast town in Puerto Rico. The church is a place for worship and preaching. It is big by Puerto Rican standards, and has a landscape orientation, which is less common.[141] The floor features shiny and fancy tiles that suggest a middle- to upper-class community. The pulpit is on the chancel, which is on a higher level than the rest of the space. There are two sets of pews, facing forward, forming aisles in the middle and the two sides. There is a communion table and a baptistery to the side of the pulpit.

The interaction of social actor and role suggests that Barreto is the pastor, or at least the preacher of the day. It also serves as evidence of access that marginalized persons have gained to spaces and roles of the privileged. Barreto, who presents as woman with dark skin, plays the role

[140] Paulo Freire considers depositing ideas in the audience as banking education. See in general *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, New rev. 20th-Anniversary ed., (New York: Continuum, 1993).

[141] The average attendance at a regular Sunday morning worship service is 125 persons. Marielis Barreto, e-mail message to author, March 17, 2019.

of the preacher. *Preacher* is a social role that for centuries was reserved for men, and in the United States of America, for white men. The actor is playing a role that at some point in the history of the United States and Puerto Rico was not available to her. The interaction of the social role of preacher with the indicators of gender and skin color of the social actor communicate that persons like Barreto — that is, Puerto Rican women of color — can be preachers.

The embodied preaching practice under analysis may have multiple performer(s) and audiences. The audiences include those in attendance the first time she preached a sermon, the people who watched the service online as it was streamed that very day, the researchers, and any other person who watches the video after the original live event. Her original audience includes people from a wide range of ages, genders, and skin colors, and presumably are all Puerto Ricans. Sexual orientations, if diverse, are not visible; the people present all appear to be heterosexual. They also wear clothes suggestive of the middle class. Preacher and parishioners operate as communal actors before a public audience. The neighborhood or surrounding community is the public audience but they cannot see the congregation or the preacher, unless they come inside. We, the researchers, through the gaze of the principal investigator who is writing this report, constitute another audience for the preaching event. Her ecclesial scenario is common in Puerto Rico and the USA among Presbyterians, other main stream historical Christian denominations, and even among non-denominational churches. We can already perceive the performance of gender and social roles, as well as the multiplicity of perspectives present in the multiple actor(s) and audiences.

The formulaic structure that is repeatable and transferable is very familiar because it constitutes the dominant conceptualization of preaching: public speech from a pulpit. The

preacher stands up and speaks from behind the pulpit to a congregation sitting in silence in the pews, looking forward at the pastor-preacher. This outline of movement, and the lack thereof, constitutes the transferable formulaic structure of pulpit preaching through public speech. Yet the specific gestures alone are not enough to conclude that someone is preaching.

It is the combination of specific gestures with verbal content within the church as the place and the worship service as the context, and with a particular purpose that together communicate that this is preaching. Let us consider as contrast that the specific gestures of public speech – one person standing up to speak while the others remain sitting in silence – are evident in other spaces and other communities, for example, a TED talk or a paper presentation at a conference of scholars. In all these alternative situations, the specific actions of standing up and speaking are duplicated, reenacted. The scenario and the purpose of the verbal content is what distinguishes one from another. In conferences and classrooms, we may find theological content, but the lecture would not constitute preaching because it lacks the purpose of addressing "the existential and spiritual dimensions of life."[142] It is, allegedly, the combination of theological content for preaching purposes, the liturgical context, the speaker, and the audience, as well as the relationship between them, along with the location in time and space that signals that "this is preaching."

Pulpit preaching through public speech as an embodied practice that is centuries old is reactivated in each instantiation, whenever any preacher stands behind the pulpit to interpret a sacred text for the edification of the religious community gathered. Preaching is not the only practice that is reactivated, however. Pulpit preaching through public speech reactivates a social structure—that of a religious community that recognizes in ordained or anointed people the

[142] McClure, *The Four Codes of Preaching*, 58.

expertise to preach.[143] This reactivation of recognition of expertise operates in the same way that a classroom full of students recognizes in a professor the expertise to teach, or that people in a TED talk auditorium recognize in a public speaker the expertise to share "ideas worth spreading."[144]

The reactivated plot in each instantiation goes beyond the specific gestures. As we learn from Taylor, a scenario works through reactivation more so than through mimesis or duplication. Preaching reactivates recognition of expertise, moral exhortation, and life-giving inspiration. Many people associate preaching with moral exhortation. For example, Lutheran pastor and former professional writer Nathan Aaseng refers to the negative affect that preaching reactivates when people recognize in the communicator a "know-it-all," a person who disrespects the audience by claiming the right to tell them what is true, how to act, and what to think, and a person who feels like a parent talking to or admonishing small children, among other ills.[145] As pop singer Madonna used to say associating preaching with moral exhortation, "papa, don't preach."[146]

Similarly, people associate preaching with life-giving inspiration. For example, the positive affect that preaching reactivates may be present in a spoken-word event. People snap

[143] We recognize that some Christian traditions require ordination after prior formal training, while others require indication of the person being anointed, however they interpret the person to show the charisma necessary for preaching. See, for example, Adam Bond, who shares his story of being licensed at eighteen years of age in the Mt. Zion Baptist Church. Adam Bond, *I've Been Called: Now What?* (Valley Forge, PA: Judson Press, 2012), 11.

[144] TED talk slogan. See https://www.ted.com/ (accessed October 13, 2018).

[145] Nathan Aaseng, "The Preaching Task," *Working Preacher*, workingpreacher.org, November 21, 2007, https://www.workingpreacher.org/craft.aspx?m=4377&post=2072, (accessed January 26, 2019). In the article, Aaseng explains how he reframed the task of preaching, thus resolving his dilemma of having to use the pulpit to communicate the gospel while knowing that "preaching is a terrible way of communication."

[146] Madonna, *Papa, Don't Preach*. Songwriters: Brian Elliot / Madonna Ciccone. *Papa Don't Preach* lyrics © Warner/Chappell Music, Inc.

their fingers in affirmation and respond out loud, "Preach it!," presumably when they recognize in the words of the poet inspiration, a source of life, or what Rubem Alves calls "the power of beauty that […is] able to resurrect the dead."[147] Another example are the call outs of affirmation in some black churches that might include, "That's preaching!" "Preach!" "Yea, that's good," or "Take your time."[148]

In addition, preaching as a scenario stays alive through various modes of transmission. Evidence from the archive and the repertoire collaborate to this end.[149] Take for example a movie in which a character is a pastor, vicar, priest, or minister and the movie includes a scene showing the character preaching. Some weekly preachers record their preaching moments in audio or video files that remain as archival evidence. Written archival memory join audio and video to keep alive preaching. For example, Toni Morrison in *Beloved* narrates a scene in which Baby Suggs preaches in the Clearing as she did every Saturday afternoon. Morrison paints the picture with words: "After situating herself on a huge flat-sided rock, Baby Suggs bowed her head and prayed silently. The company watched her from the trees. They knew she was ready when she put her stick down. Then she shouted."[150] Baby Suggs delivers her whole sermon sitting on this rock. Without an honorary title before her name and adopting a different body posture, Baby Suggs as a fictional preacher in literature keeps preaching alive. Similarly, Reverend Billy as a

[147] Rubem A. Alves, "From Liberation Theologian to Poet: A Plea That the Church Move from Ethics to Aesthetics, from Doing to Beauty," *Church & Society* 83, no. 5 (May 1993): 24. The stated presumption is my interpretation based on attending several spoken word events at Vanderbilt University between August 2013 and May 2018 and witnessing numerous re-enactments of the scene I describe here.

[148] Thompson, *Ingenuity*, 24.

[149] Lisa Thompson has also pointed out that preaching lives on through repeated practice that is particular to each community. See, Lisa Thompson, "Now, That's Preaching! Disruptive and Generative Preaching Practices," *Practical Matters*, April 2015, Issue 8, 75–86.

[150] Toni Morrison, *Beloved: A Novel*, Kindle Edition (New York, NY: Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group, 2004), 87.

fictional preacher in the flesh keeps preaching alive every time he enters a shop to bring salvation from evil consumerism or every time that he faces a camera to preach justice for the Earth.[151] Preaching as a meaning-making paradigm lives on through many modes of transmission from both the archive and the repertoire.

The notion of sermon also lives on through both archival and embodied memory. Sermons are transmitted orally in the religious ritual of preaching. Sermons are also transmitted through the archive in the form of audio and video recordings, manuscripts, and even published collections.

During any instantiation of pulpit preaching through public speech, preacher and parishioners may or may not be aware of how their actions perform political implications, transfer cultural memories, cite a specific preaching norm, and assist or resist imperial domination. If the preacher abstains from mentioning government officers, or structures, and avoids engaging in systemic analysis of political powers or root causes of the social ills that some churches work so hard to remedy, then the surplus of meaning and the performativity become lost and we think that this preaching act is not political even when it is. If the preacher delivers a prophetic sermon, the surplus of meaning and the performativity of the bodily discourse still become lost and we think that this preaching act is solely an action of liberation, even when it is also a way of re-producing and transferring Western culture, Christian supremacy, and Western epistemologies.

[151] See, Constance L. Hays, "Preaching to Save Shoppers From 'Evil' of Consumerism," *New York Times*, Jan 1, 2003, C1; Jill Lane, "Reverend Billy: Preaching, Protest, and Postindustrial Flânerie," TDR Vol. 46, No. 1 (Spring, 2002): 60-84; and Billy Talen, "Climate Changes Reverend Billy," YouTube, Oct 26, 2013, https://youtu.be/LHuZdmWaBUQ (accessed February 15, 2019).

A radical liberationist interpretation reveals that the preaching event, through the combination of two different systems of knowledge production and transmission (verbal language and performance, uttered words and body in action), holds in tension different political implications that render this preaching norm acceptable and desirable for most preachers in many contexts, but inadequate for other persons in other contexts.

Liberationist Interpretation: *Preaching is Always Political*[152]

Public speech turned preaching, as the dominant embodied preaching practice, is always political, simultaneously resisting and assisting imperial ideologies, especially when persons from minoritized groups reenact the practice. This is evident when drawing from both the archive and the repertoire in search of the cultural memories and embodied knowledge that this practice transfers and the preaching norm that it cites, and when interpreting the findings from a radical liberationist perspective.

When a person preaches through public speech from the pulpit, the person is reiterating Western culture and Christian supremacy and the preacher's body is citing the dominant norm for preaching while re-enacting Paul's embodied preaching practice[153] and his survival strategy

[152] Given the abundance of resources about pulpit preaching and about prophetic preaching in the United States of America, and particularly in the Black churches, this section has no intention to advance such scholarship. Instead, it intends to explain why radical feminists and womyn of color may disidentify with the dominant preaching norm. That was the case with two female students of color enrolled in the course *Oratory and Rhetoric for Proclamation* during the Fall semester of 2014 at Vanderbilt Divinity School, when I served as Teaching Assistant under the supervision of Prof. Dale Andrews. In the same manner, seemingly White students who self-identified as queer asked, "What is queer about this?" when the course was repeated in the Spring of 2017 and I served as guest instructor for the discussion of Hinnant's *God Comes out: A Queer Homiletic*. With the rise of posthumanism and of students committed with decolonizing themselves and eviscerating white supremacy, many students, this writer included, are no longer interested in establishing humanity and dignity through the strategy of performing the dominant narrative. This is a rejection of the politics of respectability that challenges this writer as teacher of preaching to offer other options for them/us.

[153] This notion is consonant with Diana Taylor's hauntology as well as with Judith Butler's citationality of the body.

of vindicating his humanity.[154] In retelling these histories, the bodies of preachers assist imperial domination even if their embodiment and speech are resisting it. In addition, when the preacher's body displays the identity of a minoritized group, in performing the role of the preacher the person is simultaneously assisting and resisting imperial domination. The preacher's body resists imperial domination through the presence of a marginalized body in a privileged space. The body also resists imperial domination in the reactivation of Paul's strategy for survival and subversion in which marginalized persons negotiates the recognition of their personhood through performing the dominant norm. In the same manner, the person is bringing to life once more a practice that is laden with histories that include Augustine's adoption and adaptation of Greek rhetoric for theorizing preaching and his complicities with Western cultural hegemony and Christian supremacy.[155] Given archival evidence of pulpit preaching and Christian preaching, this is true in all cases when the person is standing and preaching or preaching from the pulpit, regardless of the persons' embodiment as the next section demonstrates.

Ghosts of Imperial Preaching

Sermon delivery, that is, the performance of preaching, reactivates the Western value of Greek rhetoric as it carries memories of imperial preaching with remains of political purposes, classical Greco-Roman culture, and Christian supremacy. Scenario, as lens for analysis, makes visible the specters of Cicero the political orator, Paul the evangelist, and Augustine Bishop of Hippo.

Cicero, the Roman politician and orator, who in 63 BCE was addressing his equals in the ecclesia for the purposes of communal democratic deliberation, is present once again in pulpit

[154] This notion is consonant with Dale P. Andrew's defense of the politics of respectability.

[155] There is still space to evaluate this preaching norm as banking education, a task outside of the limits of this study. See in general, Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*.

preaching through public speech. His purpose was persuasion. Cicero's clothes reveal his gender and class. His posture communicates his expertise and his relationship with those gathered. The absence of his un-equals is telling of the social and political arrangements: democracy and oligarchy for rich male people. The architecture helps the spoken word travel farther clearly. His performance is a reactivation of Greek philosophy and rhetoric. The ghost of Aristotle is present in the newness of Cicero's performance. He transfers the now Greco-Roman rhetorical tradition as cultural memory. His performance embodies his cultural worldview, which includes a body/mind split anthropological understanding. His strategy is to convince others to join him in any specific political decision, and he does it through a preferential option for speech. These strategy and cultural memory traveled as Greek culture spread and Roman empire expanded.

Those acts of transference produced Saul, a Hellenized Jew with Roman citizenship.[156] Later renamed *Paul*, he ostensibly visited Athens where he encountered his audience: Epicurean and Stoic philosophers.[157] A Jew in pagan territory, Paul is at least bicultural, a knowledgeable practitioner of Jewish traditions as well as a Roman citizen acquainted with the art of oratory and rhetoric. At the live event, Paul stands before other men who have summoned him to explain his ideas better. He stands at the Areopagus, a place designated for debates, similar in purpose to

[156] Jewish communities encountered and were influenced by Greek cultures under the Seleucid rule that motivated the Maccabean revolt in the second century BCE. Herfried Münkler, *Empires: The Logic of World Domination from Ancient Rome to the United States*, translated by Patrick Camiller (Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 2007), 134. The influence of Greek culture continued and, in some places, increased under the Roman Empire, according to Peter Garnsey and Richard P. Saller. They conclude, "Rome reconciled the Greek East to its rule by protecting Hellenic civic culture and encouraging its diffusion…" Peter Garnsey and Richard P. Saller, *The Roman Empire: Economy, Society and Culture*, Second edition (Oakland, CA: University of California Press, 2015), 239. Part of the evidence that Garnsey and Saller offer to support their claim is the Hellenocentricity of Aelius Aristides' oration 'To Rome.' Aristides is a sophist and rhetorician from Asia Minor writing in the middle of the second century CE. Quoting and analyzing said oration, Garnsey and Saller conclude that Rome's great achievement in the eyes of the Greek world "was to promote a renaissance of Hellenic urban culture and civilization." Garnsey and Saller, *The Roman Empire*, 28.

[157] Acts 17:18. It is worth noting that we are examining the representation of Paul that the author of Luke-Acts archived in the biblical text.

Cicero's location. Paul's embodied preaching practice reiterates Greek rhetoric and Roman Empire, but it also shows a strategy of survival and subversion.

For when Paul adopts Greek rhetoric for preaching, he demonstrates a strategy for subaltern members of society to perform normative ways of communication to gain a hearing from privileged members of society. Paul preaching to the Athenians at the Areopagus constitutes a different kind of gathering; it is not like the political assemblies that Cicero attended. Orator and audience are no longer equals. They might all be Roman citizens, but these listeners are Pagans and the speaker is a Jew. Religiously, Paul is in the minority. His citizenship is arguably of second class. Paul, the Jew, therefore resorts to a tactical strategy. He knows how to perform the Greco-Roman orator.[158] This is a paradigm that the philosophers in his audience know well. His bodily utterances reactivate cognitive engagement and body passivity in a setting that encourages debate. Paul performs Greco-Roman rhetoric and public speech, in so doing simultaneously transferring religious beliefs through speech and socio-political structures and behaviors, and potential outcomes through bodily utterances. The portable framework of public speech in classical rhetoric fashion accumulates several repetitions and re-instantiations that travel through time and space to reach Saint Augustine of Hippo.

Augustine's embodied preaching practice, even if sitting down, reiterates Greek rhetoric and disdain for the physical body of the preacher, and it adopts and adapts Paul's strategy of survival and subversion to hegemonize and advance Christian supremacy.[159] The ghosts of

[158] Paul is a Jew body in a Roman space just like minoritized bodies today occupy the pulpit as a former white-males-only space.

[159] According to William Harmless, Augustine always remained seated while he preached. See, *Augustine and the Catechumenate: Revised Edition* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2014), 140, https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/vand/reader.action?docID=4546305 (accessed March 20, 2019). For Augustine's disdain for the physical body, see Augustine's *On Christian Teaching*, Book I.

Cicero and Paul are present in Augustine's embodied preaching practice at the end of the fourth century CE.[160] Now the North African Bishop of Hippo, but formerly a classic rhetoric teacher, Augustine plays the role of the preacher-teacher-orator inside a basilica. The church that made Augustine a bishop is now the official church of the Roman Empire. Augustine, a man in religious regalia, talks to a heterogeneous group of people, not his peers but his parishioners. The congregation plays the role of Christians-students-audience. The congregation's audience is the city, but they are excluded by walls. The content of his speech is religious. Given his background as teacher of rhetoric, and his development of the first homiletical theory in the fourth book of his *On Christian Teaching*, his preference for the discursive body of the sermon was classic rhetoric, though not all preachers necessarily used this verbal-linguistic structure. His body reproduces the posture of the orator. It reactivates cognitive engagement and body passivity and the formulaic structure of public speaking at the service of teaching and preaching.[161] His purpose has changed. Rather than persuading peers in a communal decision-making process, he is hegemonizing. More like Paul than like Cicero, he wants to persuade his audience to leave prior religious beliefs to embrace the one he offers. Unlike Paul's situation, Augustine's situation

[160] For a biography of Saint Augustine, see, for example, Eleonore Stump and Norman Kretzmann, eds., Introduction and Ch. 1 "Augustine: his time and lives" in *The Cambridge Companion to Augustine* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 1–25.

[161] Regarding cognitive engagement, Mikhail Mikhailovich Bakhtin has argued for the intrinsic dialogic orientation of any discourse and has challenged the notion of passive understanding of the listener, proposing an active and responsive understanding, even if the listener does not utter words. M. M. Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays* (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1981). This cognitive engagement does not negate the physical passivity expected of listeners during the sermon in a mainline historical denomination in the USA, especially in churches of Euro-descendants. Meanwhile, Paulo Freire has pointed out the problems of banking education that expects passive reception from students and helps in the formation of passive subjects, hoping they do not question the political system which the education system aids. Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. Similarly, Augusto Boal has pointed out that the passive bodies in the classroom and the passive bodies in the Aristotelian theater contribute to the formation of passive subjects. See Augusto Boal, Augusto, *Theatre of the Oppressed*, Translated by Charles A. & Maria-Odilia Leal McBride (New York: Theatre Communications Group, 1985). In addition, Augustine of Hippo's *On Christian Teaching* serves as an example of "baptizing" classical rhetoric for preaching.

suggests that he is not offering an alternative or a choice to add to their pantheon, he is offering *the* choice of the state, the only one. The dynamics have changed. The strategy of a talking head remains, along with a disdain for the body, and the privileging of mind and words. Collusion between church and state begins openly and imperial preaching is born.

The specters of Cicero and Paul in Augustine demonstrate that during Augustine's time, the embodied practice of preaching was crystalized. The church adopted for preaching an embodied practice that had a history of various locations, dynamics, and purposes. The practice of public speech that Augustine adopted and for which he advocated, began as a means of political persuasion, and before him was typically practiced in places dedicated to philosophical debates (usually theaters or open spaces), and was used for communication between equals. When Christianity became the Church of the State, the embodied practice of preaching was stabilized to happen inside a church building, a place dedicated to communal worship and identity formation, and was stabilized for purposes of education through persuasion seeking homogeneity of religious thought.

Such a historical event had at least two effects that we can recover through the analysis of performance as episteme. On the one hand, the diversity of locations, purposes, relationships, and the possibility of back and forth active and explicit communication in the form of debate and/or deliberations between orator and audience were all lost; they fell out of the field of perception, forgotten. Since Augustine, in many church traditions the preacher teaches, and the congregation learns. There is no exchange as equals. On the other hand, the range of diverse embodied preaching practices existing both in Paul and in the Jewish and Christian traditions were excluded from the pulpit and thus from dominant conversations about homiletics. The meaning-making paradigm of imperial preaching—public speech from the pulpit stylized

through Greek rhetoric—crystalized during Augustine's times stayed consistent for centuries, to the point that the scenarios of Martin Luther and Jean Calvin in sixteenth-century Europe are virtually the same as Augustine in fourth-century North Africa and most Sunday morning preachers in the twenty-first-century United States and Puerto Rico.

Trans-Atlantic Impositions

Preaching is a European practice imported to this hemisphere by puritans and missionaries for the purposes of domination and the expansion of empires under the guise of evangelism. In the case of Puerto Rico, Spain imported Roman Catholicism in the fifteenth century, and the United States of America imported Protestant denominations into the island in the nineteenth century. Since the beginning of the conquest of las Americas, there was intentional cooperation between church and state.[162] For example, Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz recorded the practice in the Loa to her play *The Divine Narcissus*.[163] In the Loa, Military Power and Church are talking about the Amerindians and about their plans to take the Amerindians' religion away from them and give them Roman Catholicism. Military Power and Church decide on different methods to achieve their goal; the former will use its military force for coercion and the latter will use rhetoric for persuasion. The Loa implicitly denounces military power and rhetoric as complementary strategies of conquest that attempt to suppress the religion of the Amerindians and impose Roman Catholicism.

[162] See, for example, Rivera Pagán, *A Violent Evangelism*.

[163] Sister Juana Inés de la Cruz, *The Divine Narcissus = El Divino Narciso,* Patricia A. Peters and Renée Domeier, translators (Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press, 1998). In classical Spanish theater, a *loa* is a prologue, introitus, discourse, or dialogue at the beginning of a theater show, of a laudatory nature. See "loa" in *Diccionario de la Lengua Española*, www.rae.es (accessed January 8, 2019).

Their plan was partially successful. As Taylor demonstrates, the indigenous religious practices are still alive and well.[164] Taylor shows that despite all the attempts of the conquistadores to erase the cultural memory of the Amerindians, cultural memory in the Americas survived to this day because it was transferred through embodied culture. The Amerindian cultural memory, however, did not remain untouched. Today, the cultural memories of European, African, and Amerindian ancestors coexist and have influenced embodied preaching practices. While the formulaic structure of imperial preaching scenarios remains, there is at least one aspect that has changed slightly in the performance of preaching throughout time that is perceivable through employment of scenario as the analytical tool: the embodiment of the preacher.

Subaltern Resistance in Preaching

The embodiment of the preacher is one area that has seen expansion in the performance of the dominant embodied preaching practice. While other preaching practices have existed on the margins and outside of the pulpit (as diverse liberationist practices have shown and we will explore in the upcoming sections), in the performance of preaching that retains a church building as the setting and a congregation as the audience and that has a formulaic structure of one person talking to many from the pulpit using (in many cases) dominant Western rhetorical forms for the discursive body of the sermon, from the time of Augustine the main actor has been and continues to be in some places a [European or Euro-descendant seemingly heterosexual] man. The practice of pulpit preaching through public speech informed by Greek rhetoric eventually expanded to include men of color, women, and more recently, gay, lesbian, and queer preachers. People of color and queer folks constitute an example of this inclusion every time they stand up behind the

[164] Taylor, "Scenes of Cognition."

pulpit wearing a clergy robe and stole. The access that these human beings have to the pulpit in most mainline historic churches today has not changed the basic outline of action in the normative preaching scenario, but it has changed the visual message conveyed when diverse bodies with different skin colors, genders, sexual orientations, and ethnic heritages stand in the pulpit to preach.[165] Such a message communicated through bodily utterances is the product of political struggles and reproduces a political statement with each instantiation. Whenever a member of a minoritized group preaches like Paul and Augustine, their bodily discourse is communicating, "I can communicate in normative ways. I am as human as privileged members of society. I have survived. I have subverted the normative practice."

Todo depende del color del cristal con que se mire

The accomplishment that for minoritized groups represents access to the pulpit must be recognized and celebrated. During the twentieth century in the United States of America many persons from minoritized groups gained access to the pulpit for the purpose of destabilizing the system. Howard Thurman, for example, was the first African American "to ever be named the Dean of a University chapel in the United States"[166] when he became the Dean of Rankin chapel at Howard University's school of religion. In addition, he was the first African American dean of a Caucasian University chapel "when he accepted the position as the Dean of Boston University's Marsh Chapel."[167] He opened spaces for others.[168]

[165] Note that there are still Christian denominations that do not allow women to preach.

[166] Patrick Clayborn, "Preaching as Act of Spirit: The Homiletical Theory of Howard Thurman," *Homiletic (Online)* 35, no. 1 (2010): 3.

[167] Clayborn, "Preaching as Act of Spirit," 3.

[168] For example, Luke Powery serves as Dean of Chapel at Duke University Chapel, and Kenyatta Gilbert has preached there as well.

Various interpretations are possible for the practice of a member of a minoritized group to preach like a member of a more privileged groups. Some scholars may consider such practice an assimilationist move,[169] while others may consider it an indicator of upward mobility.[170] For example, if we were to apply to the act of preaching from the pulpit through public speech the arguments debated between James Cone and Dale P. Andrews about the prophetic stances of black churches in the USA, Cone implies that for a black person to preach like a Greco Roman orator is not enough black power in the pulpit. James Cone has critiqued the post-civil war black church for growing comfortable in their black churches as safe spaces, forgetting their origins as actions of liberation, and eventually adopting and transmitting white values. Cone asserts that the black minister operated like a "liaison man between the white power structure and the oppressed blacks," thus perpetuating the "white system of black dehumanization."[171] For Cone, black preachers who reenact the Greco Roman orator have potentially assimilated in body though not in verbal content.

By contrast, Dale P. Andrews, agreeing with the function that black churches play as safe spaces for black communities, disagrees with Cone's "misdiagnosis," which perceives the refuge function of the church as the cause for a "lack of liberation ethics and prophetic action." He contends that Cone did not recognize the impact that "American individualism asserts upon

[169] Such interpretation is consonant with Frantz Fanon's *Black Skin, White Masks* (London: Pluto, 2008), and other black liberationists in the United States of America, James H. Cone's *Black Theology & Black Practice* being the most notable.

[170] Such interpretation is consonant with Andrews's and Smith's diagnosis of the issue of class in black churches. The editors state, "black churches are not more inclined than mainstream society to upset the status quo in order to bring about a more just and equitable society." Dale P. Andrews and Robert London Smith Jr., introduction to section III, "Education, Class, and Poverty," in *Black Practical Theology* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2015), 57.

[171] James H. Cone, *Black Theology & Black Power* (New York: The Seabury Press, 1969), 106.

black churches."[172] Disagreeing with Cone's evaluation of the church as accommodationist, Andrews explains that "Even the uncritical adoption of white religious pietism is best evaluated" within the understanding of black churches of piety and its potential as a social force for overcoming dehumanization.[173] In other words, embodying pietism is a practice of liberation ethics in refuting and overcoming racism. Andrews asserts, "black churches sought to confront social racism by morally counteracting racist devaluation and characterizations of black humanity. Religious piety functioned along with the revivalist spirituality of black evangelical Christianity in both the survival and liberation of black personhood."[174] In other words, Andrews implies that the access of black preachers to the pulpit inside of churches is in itself an action of survival and the liberation of black personhood.

Olive Elaine Hinnant makes a similar argument regarding the presence of female and gay and lesbian bodies in the pulpit. In *God Comes Out,* Hinnant resorts to well-known tropes in homiletics such as "truth through personality" and "the medium is the message" to argue that the presence of a gay or lesbian preacher in the pulpit is whole body preaching because their bodies preach, even without speaking. Her teleological ethic for inclusion is actualized by the very presence of an-Other body in the pulpit.[175]

The way in which Andrews and Hinnant understand the presence of a marginalized body in a place previously reserved for privileged bodies is consistent with one of Taylor's categories of analysis, that of character and actor in metonymic relationship. Taylor is fond of parody as a

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[172] Dale P. Andrews, *Practical Theology for Black Churches: Bridging Black Theology and African American Folk Religion* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2002), 56.

[173] Andrews, *Practical Theology for Black Churches*, 57.

[174] Andrews, *Practical Theology for Black Churches*, 57.

[175] Hinnant, *God Comes Out,* 120–28 and 130–31.

means of reversal and change and offers examples of intentional use of different embodiment for established plots that allow subalterns to mock their oppressors in front of them.[176] In Taylor's words,

> Whether it's a question of mimetic representation (an actor assuming a role) or of performativity, of social actors assuming socially regulated patterns of appropriate behavior, the scenario more fully allows us to keep both the social actor and the role in view simultaneously, and thus recognize the areas of resistance and tension. The frictions between plot and character (on the level of narrative) and embodiment (social actors) make for some of the most remarkable instances of parody and resistance in performance traditions in the Americas.[177]

This is consistent with Homi Bhabha's notion of mimicry as constructed around ambivalence, as resemblance and menace at once, as "almost the same but not quite."[178] It is also the friction that Lisa Thompson points out when she says: "Black women are competing with an established image when they preach; the ideal image, in its maleness, is inherently other than who black women are." She also states, "The image of the black preacher remains a ghostly figure in the preaching ministries of black women." According to Thompson, even in the black churches black women are outsiders to the pulpit competing with the ghost of the "black preacher," a character in social imaginary, that lingers around black women preaching even as they develop their own authenticity in preaching.

Different interpretations are possible under consideration of other tropes such as respectability politics, radical liberation, and a queer take on parody. For example, according to Katie Geneva Cannon, black women adopted a Victorian model of womanhood to overcome stereotypes of black female hypersexuality, an argument consonant with Andrews' diagnosis of

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[176] Taylor, *The Archive and the Repertoire*, 31.

[177] Taylor, *The Archive and the Repertoire*, 30.

[178] Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*, [New ed.], Routledge Classics. (Routledge, 2004), 127.

black churches adopting white pietism. Drawing on the work of Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham and Darlene Clarke Hines, Cannon explains that this was a "defensive survivalist strategy" intended to "eradicate distorted images of the sexually immoral Black woman" and "put an end to negative stereotypes," a strategy now known as "the politics of respectability."[179] In its socio-historical context it is understandable to resort to such tactics of survival and resistance. In such a context, it is possible to conclude as well that the variations of the *why*, *what for*, *who*, *when*, *how*, and *where* of the action of *preaching* still requires such tactics for resistance. In other words, it is good for many but not for all.

From the perspective of some scholars who self-identify as radical feminists of color, it is the same plot with different characters. As we noted previously, radical feminists such as Anzaldúa and Lorde among others, are interested in a revolution, in going beyond a mere change of characters that leaves the same old drama intact. For the womyn of color and queer students in our preaching classrooms who reject the politics of respectability and are committed to disrupting binaries, their mere presence in the pulpit might not be sufficient to set in motion real change of oppressive systems.[180]

Their rejection is also possible when the researcher considers Butler's take on parody in "Gender is Burning."[181] There, Butler offers drag as an example of resignification and subversion of gender. Though drag serves as an example of a performance that exposes the

[179] Katie Geneva Cannon, "Sexing Black Women: Liberation from the Prisonhouse of Anatomical Authority" in *Sexuality and the Sacred: Sources for Theological Reflection*, Second Edition. Edited by Marvin M. Ellison and Kelly Brown Douglas (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2010), Kindle Location 1353.

[180] I use the term womyn to include cisgender women as well as transwomen and other persons who choose to perform the social norm that we have come to know as "woman" regardless of their anatomy and of the gender they were assigned at birth.

[181] Judith Butler, "Gender Is Burning: Questions of Appropriation and Subversion," in *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of "Sex"* (New York, N.Y.: Routledge, 1993).

constructed nature of gender, Butler is clear that not all parody is subversive. Butler explains, "that there is no necessary relation between drag and subversion, and that drag may well be used in the service of both the denaturalization and reidealization of hyperbolic heterosexual gender norms."[182] Drag is ambiguous: it can be subversive or it can reaffirm the normative. The same can be said about preaching and switching the embodiment of the actor of the social role we call preacher. Such a switch is not necessarily subversive. It may work towards denaturalization of who can be a preacher and towards the re-idealization of the normative embodied preaching practice.

Butler's analysis of the documentary "Paris is Burning" leads her to conclude that in the specific example of the documentary, drag is both appropriation and subversion. Wondering how to account for the ambivalence of a kind of drag that both appropriates and subverts, she explains that it "is not first an appropriation and then a subversion. Sometimes it is both at once; sometimes it remains caught in an irresolvable tension, and sometimes a fatally unsubversive appropriation takes place."[183] Preaching through an embodied practice that conjures Cicero, and Paul, performs the social norm *oratory*. Performing oratory simultaneously with social constructs such as person of color, female, gay or lesbian might be in such irresolvable tension, especially among persons who maintain an Amerindian worldview.[184]

Butler's suggestion to examine whether the performance of gender is subversive means to reflect critically "on the imitative structure by which hegemonic gender is itself produced" and to

[182] Butler, "Gender Is Burning," 125.

[183] Butler, "Gender Is Burning," 128.

[184] The preacher needs to evaluate these interpretations against the realities of belonging and of identifying with Western culture, personal gifts for oratory, and community's expectations, as we will see in chapter 4.

dispute "heterosexuality's claim on naturalness and originality."[185] The imitative structure by which preaching is produced comes to the fore both through reading about the history of preaching and homiletics and evaluating the normative embodied preaching practice as a scenario using Taylor's work. Taylor's work also allows the researcher to uncover the structure of the plot that is instantiated, reiterated over and over again, carrying histories through performance as a system of knowledge (re)production and transmission. This is why focusing on a single One of the six aspects of analysis that Taylor offers may lead to the binary thinking that posits accommodation or assimilation versus prophecy and liberation, rather than the complex thinking present in both Taylor and Butler that allows for the co-existence of these multiple and simultaneous doings. From such a perspective, when a person of color is preaching through the normative embodied practice, the tension remains more obviously than when a white man is preaching, with simultaneous appropriation and subversion, denaturalization and reidealization, accommodation and liberation. It is a paradox.

The paradox includes that switching the actor that plays the social role as a form of resistance, while an act of survival and subversion, it is an act that once again centers Western ways of being and acting in the world and contributes to the erasure of the ways of being and acting, as well as the cultural heritages, of other minoritized groups. Speech may talk about these suppressions and keep minoritized cultural memories alive, embodiment may testify to the political accomplishment that it is for minoritized groups to gain access to privileged spaces, but bodily discourse keeps alive Western epistemologies and cultural memories and suppresses or erases subaltern's ways of being, acting, and communicating in the world, even when subalterns tactically inhabit the spaces and practices of the oppressors momentarily through the duration of

[185] Butler, "Gender Is Burning," 125.

the event. It remains through repetition. By contrast, buying into the dominant norm is simply not queer enough for some of our students. It is too respectable, not sufficiently indecent.

To notice these tensions is not to put down the millions of minoritized persons (this writer included) that throughout history have resorted to this strategy for survival, and in the case of preaching, for negotiating a hearing. Rather, to notice these tensions and paradoxes is to denounce that minoritized persons, in a way "had" to adopt and adapt dominant ways of being rather than show the ones in which they were/are already adept because the church welcomed/welcomes them into the pulpit as long as they behave/d as the cisheteropatriarchal Eurodescendant man, as the archetype, the original of the practice, Cicero, the Roman political orator.[186] This remains an option for most, but not for all.[187]

In contradistinction, the way of affirmation would have not excluded women from preaching when the church went public in the fourth century CE.[188] The way of affirmation would have accepted people of color into the church and the pulpit with their own ways of being, thinking, doing, and communicating without requiring from them a riff off the expectation of Greco Roman oratory. The way of affirmation would have accepted as equally valid other preaching norms.

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[186] We do not know what the norm was that Cicero was bodily citing, what was his internalized original, but homileticians trace the history of preaching back to him mostly because of Augustine's homiletic theory.

[187] Drawing on the work of Paulo Freire and Christopher Bollas, PhD student in pastoral theology Eddie Journey has argued that banking education is not one more equally valid option among many others because it is harmful for human beings. Eddie Journey, "Stolen Dreams and Foreclosed Futures: Freire's Banking Model as 'Educational' Extractive Introjection." Paper presented at *Cátedra Paulo Freire*, Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary, Evanston, IL. March 15, 2019. The argument that preaching through Greco Roman oratory that resembles lecturing is banking education and thus equally harmful to human beings is beyond the scope of this dissertation, though admittedly part of the knowledge of this writer prior to admission to a doctoral degree and referenced in prior footnotes.

[188] See, for example, Eunjoo Mary Kim, *Women Preaching: Theology and Practice through the Ages* (Cleveland, OH: The Pilgrim Press, 2004) and Teresa Berger, *Women's Ways of Worship: Gender Analysis and Liturgical History* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1999), among many other scholars who have partially recovered the history of women in Christian preaching.

As both Taylor and Thompson know, there is more to mimicry in the context of colonization than just the visible tension of embodiment, character/role, and plot. Imitation is necessary to keep the practice of preaching alive. Taylor explains that traditions get constituted and contested through the citational practices that characterize both the live and the scripted, both scenarios and narratives.[189] Thompson explains that preaching "is a practice that is learned through imitation and mimicking."[190] Thompson conceptualized imitation as "the act of a preacher mimicking *the process* they seek to perform and carry out, as they have experienced it."[191] This is the basically fixed frame that is repeatable and transposable in Taylor's scenario, "formulaic structures that predispose certain outcomes and yet allow for reversal, parody, and change."[192] This underlying structure produces what Bourdieu called habitus, but when considering the scenario beyond the narrative, and as live event, it also refers to more specific repertoires of cultural imaginings.[193] Scenario carries memory in such a way that allows "commentators to historicize specific practices."[194] In other words, the practices carry their histories within themselves. Thus, while for Bhabha mimicry is a menace due its double vision of colonized/colonizer, human/not wholly human, and while it might be true that "mimicry conceals no presence or identity behind its mask," scenario reveals many other presences lingering over any given preaching act. Scenario as a broader lens allows this dissertation to show other formulaic structures, other fixed frames and paradigms that may serve as point of

[189] Taylor, *The Archive and the Repertoire*, 32.

[190] Thompson, *Ingenuity*, 34.

[191] Thompson, *Ingenuity*, 34. Emphasis added.

[192] Taylor, *The Archive and the Repertoire*, 31.

[193] Taylor, *The Archive and the Repertoire*, 31.

[194] Taylor, *The Archive and the Repertoire*, 33.

departure for any given preacher to riff off. This dissertation demonstrates that the Jewish and Christian traditions have a broader set of preaching practices than pulpit preaching through public speech.

Subaltern Resistance in Homiletics

Augustine's homiletic simultaneously assists Empire in reiterating Greek rhetoric and promoting Christian supremacy, and resists Empire in adopting and adapting Greek rhetoric and advancing Christian resistance. In the fourth book of *On Christian Teaching*, Augustine reiterates Greek rhetoric because he uses it as the foundation for his homiletic theory. This reality shows one dimension of Augustine, which represents many Christians who experienced the change from being the minoritized religion to becoming the religion of the state. Augustine changed roles and kept performing assimilation, thus reactivating another scenario. As we learn from Paulo Freire and others, the oppressed turned into oppressor.[195] The hermeneutics of suspicion and the decolonial gaze in employing scenario as the tool of analysis make it possible to perceive this assistance of empire in Augustine's strategy. Insofar as Augustine's homiletic reiterates Greek rhetoric and promotes Christian supremacy, it assists imperial power and colonization.

At the same time, Augustine's homiletic shows yet another dimension of subaltern resistance, thus resisting empire. When Augustine theorizes the adoption and adaptation of classic Greek rhetoric for preaching, he demonstrates a strategy for subaltern members of society to perform normative ways of communication to gain a hearing from privileged members of society. Such an approach parallels Paul's adoption and adaptation of performing the Roman orator and Greek philosopher to negotiate a hearing before the Athenians at the Areopagus. By

[195] See chapter 1 in Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*.

mimicking the broader culture, although for purposes of proclamation, Augustine was adopting what Audre Lorde calls the master's tools.[196] Augustine's story serves as more evidence in support of Lorde's argument that the master's tools will not dismantle the master's house. Paul and Augustine negotiated a hearing for Christianity and for their own dignity, but they did so while also keeping the master's house standing and even helping it grow. Insofar as Augustine's homiletic adapts Greek rhetoric for the purposes of preaching, it resists and assists imperial power and assists Christian resistance. In sum, Augustine's homiletic reiterates Greek rhetoric but also shows the strategy of adopting and adapting for preaching particular communication systems that society at large knows or that exist in the prevailing culture.

The analysis of *Pulpit Preaching through Public Speech* as one modality of the performance of preaching through the analytical lens of scenario demonstrates that imperial preaching is the dominant and normative embodied preaching practice, and that it is imbedded in cultural, political, and religious hegemonies that continue to be transferred and reproduced through the very act of preaching in this modality. The talking head tactic, the concept of the body/mind split, the preferential option for verbal speech, the cultural hegemony of the Roman Empire that protected and encouraged the diffusion of Hellenic culture, and the religious hegemony of the Christian church are all cultural memories that are being transferred through preaching, even as they coexist with resistance to imperial powers and with memory of other cultures in the same embodied preaching practice. These memories reproduced as physical discourse, as bodily utterances, constitute acts that have political consequences. Preaching always has political consequences, whether resisting or assisting the status quo, but most times,

[196] Audre Lorde, "The Master's Tools Will Never Dismantle the Master's House," in Audre Lorde, *Sister Outsider: Essays and Speeches*, The Crossing Press Feminist Series (Trumansburg, NY: Crossing Press, 1984), 110–13.

if not always, it is simultaneously both. As the prior analysis shows, regardless of the identity of the preacher, preaching is embodied knowledge transferred through repetition that retells complex histories through bodily citations. In the same way, regardless of the verbal content of the sermon, preaching is always political. Faced with this realization, several questions emerge regarding the appropriateness, value, and effectiveness of the diverse memories and strategies employed in the performance of preaching. I will return to such questions in the next chapter, after the analysis of two other scenarios.

Preaching Scenario Two: Prophetic Preaching Through Symbolic Action

Prophetic preaching through symbolic action is not as ubiquitous as preaching through public speech. Our point of entry into this practice as it exists in the collective memory of Jewish and Christian traditions is the story of the woman who anointed Jesus's feet (hereafter MM[197]). MM represents the embodiment of the marginalized concept of prophetic preaching through symbolic action. This MM, a woman from the city in the first-century Judea, represents any person that employs symbolic action to communicate religious beliefs at any given moment and in any given place.

MM washes, kisses, and anoints the feet of Jesus. According to Luke 7:36–38, Simon the Pharisee has guests at his table when she comes in to his home, uninvited, and Jesus is at his place at the table. She "brought an alabaster jar of ointment. She stood behind him at his feet,

[197] MM stands for both "Mary Magdalene" and "muchas mujeres." Though nowhere in scripture it says that Mary Magdalene is the woman who anointed Jesus' feet, there is a strong tradition that conflates the woman in Luke 7:36–50 with the woman in Luke 8:2, and calls her Mary Magdalene. See Jane Schaberg, "Silence, Conflation, Distortion, Legends," chapter 3 in *The Resurrection of Mary Magdalene: Legends, Apocrypha and the Christian Testament* (New York, NY: Continuum, 2004), 65–121. "Muchas mujeres," because many women have gone unnoticed as preachers or prophets due to their gender and sexuality, and their names and their words have been erased from our [his]tories.

weeping, and began to bathe his feet with her tears and to dry them with her hair. Then she continued kissing his feet and anointing them with the ointment."[198] This is the typical set of specific gestures that the pope reenacts when he performs the ritual of foot washing, but with MM the plot that is reactivated lies not in the specific gestures. MM is reactivating a plot in which an intruder interrupts, breaking social norms and communicating through action rather than speech. This is the formulaic structure of prophetic preaching through symbolic action. It is repeatable, transportable, and has long-lasting effects.

The repetition of this scenario shows ghosts of our pasts, and embodied images of disruption and prophetic proclamation. The scenario brings past and future together in the reactivation of prophetic symbolic action that both Jeremiah the prophet and Jesus the Christ employed. The scenario also points forward to the presence of Other unnoticed prophets in our present.

Preaching Scenario: *Symbolic Action Turned Prophetic Preaching*

Taylor's scenario as lens reveals the underlying plot of a marginalized person who transgresses social boundaries for the sake of delivering an urgent message. Insofar as MM's actions denounce an unjust system and announce an alternative possibility, she is achieving the tasks of prophetic preaching.

Thus, MM's actions in metonymic relation with the place suggest disruption and inappropriate behavior. In terms of space and actions, a table at a Pharisee's house is an appropriate place for the fellowship and commensality going on, but the actions that the woman introduces are not appropriate for such a time and space. In Luke's version, the event under analysis happens around the table at a Pharisee's house. The Pharisee as host has designated the

[198] Lk 7: 37b–38, NRSV.

space for some people (the guests) and for specific actions (such as fellowship and commensality).[199] The space, therefore, is intended for eating and speaking, for having a social meal. Such is the setting into which MM as an uninvited person introduces the actions of crying, washing, drying, kissing, and anointing. She disrupts commensality for what can be interpreted as an out of time act of hospitality or an out of place act of anointing of God's chosen one.

The interaction of social actor and role suggests reversals. The embodiment of the social actors and the roles they play present a very complex picture. The story in Luke reports as social actors Simon the Pharisee, Jesus, "a woman in the city who was a sinner,"[200] and others who were at the table. These actors are playing certain social roles. Simon plays host, Jesus plays guest, the woman plays the uninvited intruder or party crasher, and the others play the audience. After the woman's actions, which are related in verses 37 to 38, the roles change. In their new roles as narrated in verses 40 to 48, Jesus plays the teacher, Simon plays the disciple, the woman plays the teaching tool or the illustration of Jesus' point, while the others at the table are spectators of both dramas. If there were women other than MM there, they are not mentioned in the narrative. The fact that the narrative identifies Simon as a Pharisee and the woman as a sinner points to social and religious differences between them. Regarding economic status, Luke's version of the story does not comment on the cost or financial value of the ointment and alabaster jar that the woman brings in, as other versions do.[201] The very presence of an alabaster

[199] For information about how commensality is a fundamental social activity that generates and solidifies relationships but also sets boundaries, including some persons and excluding others according to social norms, see Susanne Kerner, Cynthia Chou, and Morten Warmind, eds., *Commensality: From Everyday Food to Feast* (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2015).

[200] Luke 7:37 (NRSV). Other versions read, *from* the city.

[201] Mark 14:5, Matthew 26:9, and John 12:5 all mention that the ointment or perfume could have been sold for a high price and the money given to the poor.

jar may have suggested to the original audience that the woman brought an expensive good.[202] Her luxurious ointment stands in contrast with her actions, which may have suggested to the original audience that the woman acted as a slave or domestic servant.[203]

Even if those implicit messages were not there for the original audience, they are certainly present for us as an audience today and for many parishioners, as all versions of the story have been conflated in the Christian imaginary of the Western church. Furthermore, the interpretation that Luke's author places on Jesus' words refers to their economic system, given his mention of creditor, debtor, debt, and number of denarii. Based on these references, the economic difference between Simon and the unnamed woman varies. Regarding expenses in offerings, she gave more than Simon. Regarding debts, Jesus implicitly identifies her as more indebted than Simon. Regarding sins, Jesus explicitly identifies her as a greater sinner, and implicitly identifies Simon as a lesser sinner. Regarding love, she is a greater giver than Simon, according to Jesus's words in the narrative. In sum, there are differences in the embodiments of the actors and in the roles that they play. These differences in gender, social, and economic status place Simon and the woman in stark contrast, while alternating who is at the top of each hierarchy, and even showing paradoxes and contradictions. Even Jesus is sometimes at the top and sometimes at the bottom of the hierarchy, holding similarities and differences with both Simon and the unnamed woman. In any case, for an uninvited woman as the social actor to play the role of the host or the host's servant by displaying the hospitality that the real host does not

[202] That is, if it is true that "The ancients considered alabaster to be the best material in which to preserve their ointments." "Alabastron" in the KJV New Testament Greek Lexicon, Bible Study Tools, http://www.biblestudytools.com/lexicons/greek/kjv/alabastron.html (accessed January 5, 2019).

[203] Carol A. Newsom, Sharon H. Ringe, and Jacqueline E. Lapsley, *Women's Bible Commentary* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2012), 505. Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, "The Jesus Movement as Renewal Movement Within Judaism" in *In Memory of Her: A Feminist Theological Reconstruction of Christian Origins*, 105–59 (New York: Crossroad, 1983), 148–149.

offer constitutes a reversal. Likewise, for a woman from the city or a sinner, rather than a man of priestly or prophetic lineage, to play the role of the prophet who anoints the Lord's chosen one would also constitute a reversal.

Similarly, the many layers of bodily utterances and audiences in this story present a very complex and entangled picture. At one moment, the woman is the performer and Jesus is her audience. At the next, Simon is the audience of Jesus' storytelling. To add another layer to the scenario, those persons at the table with Jesus were the audience that witnessed the entire scene (the woman's actions and Jesus' storytelling). To add yet another layer, the woman was the audience of Jesus' performance of a declaration of pardon. Finally, Luke's intended audience and we today serve as very different audiences of the performances as Luke archived them, of the scene as filtered through Luke's lens. And Luke himself was another audience to an original performance that was unavailable to him personally.

The woman's actions reactivate judgmental attitudes in Simon, and perhaps even anger or exasperation; possible feelings of pleasure in Jesus; and of awkwardness, confusion, and shame in the host and the others at the table. Her bodily utterances also reactivate strategies of transgression and risk-taking. The interventions by Simon and Jesus suggest that she also reactivated a need to restore a sense of normality. The scenario reactivates past situations of interruption of social norms for the sake of communicating an urgent message.

This repeatable plot constitutes a pattern, a framework that is transferable and that constitutes the formulaic structure of prophetic preaching through symbolic action. It is portable and inherently flexible, working for different actions and words. This scenario or meaning-making paradigm presents a pattern of interruption of social norms, and the introduction of an alternative discourse. When used to communicate religious beliefs, particularly Christian ones, it

is a formulaic structure of *transgression and proclamation*. The once-againness of this scenario is perceivable in the woman's interruption of the social meal to introduce her proclamation through symbolic action. Social norms pre-determined the host's social circle and informed his decisions about whom to invite. The woman-sinner was not part of his guest list. In the social drama that unfolded, the woman was an outsider entering a space to which she had not been invited, doing something that was not allowed at that time and place. Despite these obstacles, MM physically expressed messiahship, gratitude, care, and affection. This message of hers elicited a type of prophetic preaching through symbolic action alone, not words. Her human action is an act of transfer. She transfers the formulaic structure of *transgression and proclamation*. In so doing, she reactivates dynamics of risk and discomfort, awkwardness and pleasure, and many other complexities.

MM's specific gestures can be found in other contexts too. The gestures of washing feet are found in cultic and domestic settings, in stories in the Bible, and in occasional church rituals. Specifically, in the Roman Catholic pope's practice of foot washing. Similarly, her acts of kissing and anointing Jesus are actions that Samuel enacted in anointing Saul as king. To look at the reenactment of the specific gestures, however, is to look at the surface level. The use of performance studies allows the researcher to look under the surface to perceive the plot that is repeated and transferred. In this case, the reenacted plot is the story line of a marginalized person interrupting and disrupting for the sake of delivering an urgent message. In the case of a minoritized, unwelcomed or (here) uninvited person, oftentimes the messenger does not have access to a microphone in order to be heard, or faces an audience unwilling to hear and must resort to symbolic action as an appropriate language or form of communication.

Prophetic preaching through symbolic action as an embodied practice that is centuries old is reactivated in each instantiation, whenever a minoritized person transgresses norms and proclaims an alternative future.[204] Prophetic preaching through symbolic action reactivates this disruption of an existing social structure and the possibility and actualization of an alternative reality. This reactivation operates in the same way that symbolic action is used to perform a political and/or religious intervention.[205]

Symbolic action as a scenario stays alive through various modes of transmission. Proof from the archive and the repertoire cooperate to this end. The biblical texts previously discussed constitute archival evidence as well as any written description or recorded event. The live event, however, offers embodied memory, enfleshed evidence of the concept of symbolic action. Symbolic action as a meaning-making paradigm lives on through many modes of transmission from both the archive and the repertoire.

Similarly, the prophetic as a scenario stays alive through various modes of transmission as evidence from the archive and the repertoire suggest. Again, the biblical texts previously discussed constitute archival evidence as well as does any written prophetic sermon. Recorded songs, videos, photos, paintings that denounce injustice and proclaim divine liberation, all constitute archival memory of the prophetic. For example, a photo of a bird covered in toxic waste or a photo of fishes dead due to oil spills. Meanwhile, live events offer embodied memory, evidence in the flesh of the prophetic. Examples include one young person standing in front of a huge war tank or in front of a line of police officers armed with batons and body shields or in

[204] Lisa Thompson discusses this kind of disruptive, vulnerable, and risk-taking proclamation, though not necessarily through symbolic action, in her essay "Unauthorized: Pastoral and Prophetic Utterances on the Ground," in *Preaching as Prophetic Care*. Phillis-Isabella Sheppard, Dawn Ottoni-Wilhelm, & Ronald J. Allen, eds. (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2018), 99–109. Also, in her book *Ingenuity*.

[205] See, for example, Taylor and Costantino, *Holy Terrors*.

front of a bulldozer to protect liberty, rights, or land. Another example would be Bree Newsome's body climbing a pole to protest white supremacy.[206] The prophetic as a meaning-making paradigm lives on through many modes of transmission in both the archive and the repertoire.

In the event under analysis, MM and her multiple audiences may or may not be aware of how her actions perform prophetic discourse, have political implications, transfer cultural memory, cite a specific preaching norm, and assist or resist imperial domination. If we focus on the content of her bodily discourse or on the specific gestures, and if we interpret her actions only through pre-existing dominant definitions of what a sermon is without delving beneath the surface, then the surplus of meaning and the performativity in her actions are lost, and we do not recognize her as a prophet, even when she is.

Liberationist Interpretation: *Intruders Proclaim*

The use of scenario as a lens of analysis reveals the use of symbolic action as the form of communication used in the act of anointing Jesus to accomplish the tasks of prophetic preaching. When MM anoints Jesus' feet, her body cites the marginalized norm of prophetic preaching through symbolic action and reactivates a strategy sometimes employed by the prophets Jeremiah, Isaiah, and Jesus of Nazareth. Yet she is seldom recognized as a prophet. In human action that proclaims the presence of Christ, MM's prophetic bodily discourse transgresses proper commensality. Her actions challenged gender, economic and social hegemonies, and

[206] See, for example, Taylor and Costantino. For an example closer in time and space, consider the political intervention mixed with Christian language of Bree Newsome. "Bree Newsome Risks Life to Cut Down Confederate Flag" posted by The Young Turks Network, Published on Jun 29, 2015, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hEj6Swnp2YI (accessed March 17, 2018).

transferred cultural memories of Hebrew prophetic practices. Through its symbolic action, the reactionary nature of prophetic preaching simultaneously resists and assists imperial domination.

Ghosts of Hebrew Prophets

The performance of prophetic preaching through symbolic action reactivates the basic structure of prophetic preaching to denounce and proclaim, as it carries memories of prophets who communicated through symbols and signs. Scenario, as lens for analysis, makes visible the specters of Jeremiah and Isaiah in MM's bodily discourse.

MM's bodily discourse, as she carries out her prophetic symbolic action, brings to life the specter of Jeremiah the prophet, who in the seventh century BCE was addressing his equals in the streets for the purposes of moral suasion. According to Jeremiah 27, the prophet wears a yoke to symbolize that the Lord would give the kingdoms of Edom, Moab, Ammon, Tyre, and Sidon to Nebuchadnezzar King of Babylon. Jeremiah's purpose was persuasion, not for the enactment of laws or jurisprudence, as in Cicero's case, but to persuade the listeners to submit to the yoke of the king of Babylon.[207] Jeremiah encourages his listeners to "serve the king of Babylon and live."[208] Jeremiah's actions communicate his message from the Lord. The reluctance of his equals to listen shows that not all prophets had the attention of their audience or even access to the king. The streets serve as the place where Jeremiah can address an audience that is not willing to come to him to listen for a message from the Lord. Jeremiah's use of objects and symbolic action help to grab the attention of the unwilling audience, and the visual message travels farther, clearly without the need of a particular architecture or sound system to help the speech reach reluctant ears. His physical discourse is a reactivation of symbolic action as a

[207] Jeremiah 27:8.

[208] Jeremiah 27:17b (Common English Bible), biblegateway.com (accessed November 29, 2018).

communication strategy. The original action that his body is citing is lost to us. The newness of his actions will constitute a new original. This new original is one of many preaching norms to be cited by other bodies to come; it is another original equally unavailable because each new original lasts but an instant.

Symbolic action is available to other kinds of prophets to transmit other ideologies. For example, Jeremiah 28— when the prophet Hananiah re-signified Jeremiah's yoke—illustrates the possibility for multiple meanings in symbolic action. Hananiah took the yoke off Jeremiah's neck and broke it to symbolize that the LORD would break the burdensome yoke that Nebuchadnezzar had placed on all the nations. Prima facie, Hananiah announced liberation whereas Jeremiah announced oppression. The book of Jeremiah, however, portrays Jeremiah as the authentic prophet because his message comes from the Lord, whereas Hananiah's comes only from himself. The contrast between the two prophets then suggests that the ideology of liberation is not divine unless its source is God. Jeremiah's embodied preaching practice reiterates symbolic action and transfers a strategy of disruption and proclamation. His story also shows that the same set of actions may be re-signified, and that symbolic action can maintain the status quo while seemingly announcing liberation.

We find another example of symbolic action turned prophetic preaching in Isaiah 20, where the prophet walks naked and barefoot to dramatize or signal the conquest of Egypt and Ethiopia. Unlike Jeremiah, Isaiah is not using an object to illustrate a point. Rather, his symbolic action in body alone *is* the point. With or without objects, symbolic action can deliver messages with and without words and may employ the same symbols to announce subjection or liberation.

The ghosts of Jeremiah and Isaiah are present in the newness of MM's performance. She re-produces and transfers the prophetic tradition of *transgression and proclamation*.[209] Her bodily utterances perform the task of prophetic preaching, only that she preaches with her body rather than her speech. Her actions embody several cultural practices while reenacting the basic plot of prophecy. Her strategy is to address one audience in the presence of another audience, thus communicating a message to Jesus while letting the others overhear the message. She is showing a doing. She transferred all these messages, memories, and strategies to her multiple audiences. Some of these audiences repeat her specific gestures, such as Jesus, when he washed the disciples' feet and the Pope when he washes the prisoners' feet. Other audiences repeat the basic plot of what she did, which was to transgress and deliver an urgent message of liberation, as I will demonstrate in the next section.

Foreshadowings of Street Theater and Political Interventions

MM's specific gestures of washing and drying feet traveled in time and space, and were echoed by Jesus washing the feet of the disciples,[210] by widows washing the feet of the saints when Christianity was emerging,[211] and by the foot washing ritual that several Christian

[209] The phrase "denounce and announce" is how I first learned it from Rev. Marissa Galván-Valle in a sermon delivered at Beechmont Presbyterian Church in Louisville, KY sometime between August 2008 and May 2012. Since then, I have found that Walter Brueggemann calls it "criticism and energizing," in *The Prophetic Imagination*, Second Edition (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2001). Charles Campbell calls it "exposing and envisioning" in two of his books: *The Word Before the Powers: An Ethic of Preaching* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2002), and also in Stanley P. Saunders and Charles L. Campbell, *The Word on the Street: Performing the Scripture in the Urban Context* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co. 2000). Ched Myers calls it "unmasking and resisting" in Myers, *Binding the Strong Man*. Cornell West referred to it as "critique and transform," according to Michael Brandon McCormack. See McCormack's essay, "The Cornell West Theory: Prophetic Criticism and the Cultural Production" in *Religion, Culture and Spirituality in Africa and the African Diaspora*, William Ackah, Jualynne E. Dodson, and R. Drew Smith, editors. (New York, NY: Routledge, 2018), 129-144.

[210] See John 13.

[211] See I Timothy 5:10.

denominations practice today.[212] The underlying plot of MM's actions, however—that of transgressing and proclaiming—emerges in a variety of times and spaces when the conditions are similar or the same. When social norms or political situations exclude or marginalize a certain population, some folks from said population may disrupt the norms to announce a different discourse and enact a different world. Jeremiah's and MM's symbolic actions foreshadow such divinely inspired political interventions. Jesus of Nazareth, and Rosa Parks illustrate this.

The Symbolic Action of Jesus of Nazareth Challenges the Roman Empire

The specters of Jeremiah, Isaiah, and MM come to life again in the newness of Jesus' triumphal entry into the city of Jerusalem, enacting and foreshadowing street theaters that serve as political interventions. Scenario as an analytical tool helps us to understand the symbolic action as well as to perceive the reactivation of the plot of prophetic preaching in Jesus' triumphal entry. Homiletician Charles Campbell and political theologian Ched Myers have explored Jesus' actions as political street theater thus offering additional tools of analysis.

Campbell analyzes Matthew 21:1–11 by offering a sermon for Palm Sunday in a public space in downtown Atlanta.[213] Myers analyzes Mark 11:1–11, offering a political reading of Mark.[214] Both Campbell and Myers analyze a text that constitutes archival memory. Comparable to what Diana Taylor's performance theory calls forth, Myers approaches the actions described

[212] See, for example, Keith A. Graber Miller, "Footwashing" in *The Sacred Actions of Christian Worship*, edited by Robert Webber, 341–47, The Complete Library of Christian Worship (Nashville, TN: Star Song Pub. Group, 1994); Peter Jeffery, *A New Commandment: Toward a Renewed Rite for the Washing of Feet* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1992); John Christopher Thomas, *Footwashing in John 13 and the Johannine Community* (New York, NY: T&T Clark International, 2004).

[213] Charles L. Campbell, "Street Theater" in Stanley P. Saunders and Charles L. Campbell, *The Word on the Street: Performing the Scripture in the Urban Context* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2000), 108-113.

[214] Ched Myers, *Binding the Strong Man: A Political Reading of Mark's Story of Jesus*, Twentieth Anniversary Edition (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2008).

in the narrative as theater, even though it is not. Drawing upon the work of these three scholars, we find that Jesus' symbolic action constitutes both prophetic preaching and a political intervention because it reenacts prophetic political interventions from the Hebrew Bible, is a precursor to modern day political interventions, and is twice disruptive.

Jesus' triumphal entry is archived in various gospels. According to the narrative in Luke 19:28–40,[215] per Jesus' instructions two of the disciples brought him a colt, "and after throwing their cloaks on the colt, they set Jesus on it."[216] People spread their cloaks on the road as Jesus rode along and a multitude of disciples praised God "joyfully with a loud voice for all the deeds of power that they had seen saying, 'Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven, and glory in the highest heaven!'"[217]

On a surface level, that is the specific gestures, Jesus' actions (in Matthew) in what has come to be known as his triumphal entry are a dramatization of words from the Hebrew Bible per Charles Campbell's analysis. In Campbell's interpretation, the specific gestures point to fulfillment. Campbell notices that Jesus performs the words of Zechariah 9:9, cited in Matthew 21:5, and turns them into a living drama. He concludes that Jesus' actions fulfill the prophetic words of Zechariah announcing a King for Zion who will come "humble and mounted on a donkey."[218] Jesus' actions or bodily utterances enact "the subversive reign of God in the midst of

[215] Other versions of the story: Matthew 21:1–11; Mark 11:1–11; John 12:12–19. Here, I offer the version according to Luke for the sake of consistency as the version of the woman who anointed Jesus that I used is from Luke.

[216] Luke 19:35, NRSV.

[217] Luke 19:37–38.

[218] Zechariah 9:9, NRSV.

the city," says Campbell.[219] Campbell's conclusion that Jesus is the fulfillment of a prophecy is based on the specific gestures which dramatize the words of the scriptures that preceded Jesus.

Under the surface, Jesus' actions in his triumphal entry reenact prophetic political interventions from the Hebrew Bible per Campbell's analysis of the underlying genre. In his interpretation Charles Campbell classifies the underlying genre of this story as subversive street political theater. Following Ched Myers, Campbell notes the attention the text gives to the preparations, which exceed the attention given to the parade itself. He argues that this is a carefully planned piece of street drama, more specifically a form or performance of political satire.[220] Campbell perceives the use of symbolic actions—for example, how the people spread palm leaves and cloaks as symbols of honor—precisely as actions a victorious military king would expect. Based on these observations, Campbell affirms, "Jesus is turning the world's notions of power and authority and rule on their head[s]."[221] In other words, Campbell is noticing how Jesus' actions enact reversal.

Reversal and the formulaic structure of transgression-proclamation affirm the prophetic character of Jesus' actions. As Campbell further suggests, Jesus is lampooning the powers of the world and their pretensions to glory and domination and enacting an alternative world order.[222] Insofar as Jesus' actions are denouncing the powers of the world and proclaiming an alternative world, Jesus' actions are consistent with the formulaic structure of prophetic preaching and are, for a moment, actualizing or effectuating the tasks of prophetic preaching. Campbell's

[219] Campbell, "Street Theater," 110.

[220] Campbell, "Street Theater," 108–109.

[221] Campbell, "Street Theater," 109.

[222] Campbell, "Street Theater," 109–10.

interpretation, however, downplays the political aspect of the story that is depicted in his source of inspiration, that is Ched Myers' *Binding the Strong Man*.

Myers's book affirms the use of symbolic action and the political nature of Jesus' actions. His analysis of the triumphal entry is based on Mark 11:1–11 and identifies this entry as the first of three initial symbolic actions by Jesus in a direct-action campaign against the "temple state."[223] Myers prefers to call it the "Jerusalem entry" rather than the "triumphal entry," "for the procession is neither unambiguously 'triumphal' nor does it actually enter Jerusalem (until the anticlimactic 11:11)."[224] Like Campbell, and indeed inspiring Campbell, Myers considers the performance a "carefully choreographed street theater" that is "designed to give intentionally conflicting messianic signals" of military might and of meekness.[225] Myers concludes that Jesus intends his actions to be "a satire on military liberators,"[226] "a parody, contrasting Jesus' destiny of the cross with the popular messianic expectations of the disciples/crowds/readers."[227] In Myers' political reading of Mark's story of Jesus, this procession is the "opening round of the struggle over the character of messianic politics."[228] Furthermore, Myers find the power of Jesus' performance not in the procession itself but in the anticlimax in 11:11 which reads, "Jesus entered Jerusalem and went into the temple courts. He looked around at everything, but since it was already late, he went out to Bethany with the Twelve."[229] Myers observes that the power of

[223] Myers, *Binding the Strong Man*, 291.

[224] Myers, *Binding the Strong Man*, 294.

[225] Myers, *Binding the Strong Man*, 294.

[226] Myers, *Binding the Strong Man*, 295.

[227] Myers, *Binding the Strong Man*, 296.

[228] Myers, *Binding the Strong Man*, 296.

[229] Mark 11:11, NIV, Biblegateway.com.

this verse lies precisely in nothing happening. He explains how Jesus resignified messianic symbols: "Mark has drawn the reader into traditional messianic symbolic, only to suddenly abort them. This prepares us for the shock when Jesus does 'intervene' in the temple—not to restore, but to disrupt, its operations."[230] In this way, Myers points to the double disruption of Jesus' political intervention.

Jesus' symbolic action is twice disruptive because it disrupts both the Roman Empire, and the strategies of subversion known by his peers. Jesus disrupts the Pax Romana, and the Roman Empire by introducing the possibility of an alternative world order: a peasant Jew performing the role of victorious king in times of peace. Conjuring memories of military entry of triumphant rebels and kingly processions into Jerusalem,[231] Myers points out that the strategy Jesus employs against the hegemonic powers is unique in two ways: it both resembles and rejects the military might of the Roman Empire and of Jewish revolts, and it is still political and confrontational as it addresses the powers directly.

As for the second disruption, the disruption of known strategies of subversion, Jesus' actions show what Myers names as nonviolence. Aware of his anachronistic use of the term nonviolence, Myers employs it to interpret Jesus' actions as a strategy that is unique and alternative in being alienated, confrontative, and nonaligned.[232] In other words, Jesus' disruption of the Roman Empire was political but unlike other strategies of political resistance, Jesus used nonviolent rather than violent or military means.

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[230] Myers, *Binding the Strong Man*, 297.

[231] Myers suggests that Mark is portraying Jesus as leader of a sedition, especially since Mark was composed only a few years after Sicarius lea Menahem's procession related to the Maccabean revolt. Myers, *Binding the Strong Man*, 294–95.

[232] Myers, *Binding the Strong Man*, 414–44.

Jesus' symbolic action foreshadows modern day political interventions. If Jesus' symbolic action constitutes both prophetic preaching and a political intervention because it reenacts prophetic political interventions from the Hebrew Bible, with the twist of being twice disruptive, introducing nonviolence as protest while dramatizing words from the Hebrew Bible, then Jesus' symbolic action is a precursor of present-day street theaters that serve as political interventions. The next sections examine some examples.

Political but not Religious Symbolic Action

Symbolic action also serves for non-religious political interventions. For example, Diana Taylor and Roselyn Costantino have published a collection featuring Latin American women, cultural revolutionaries, who the authors call holy terrors. These holy terrors defy the ways the world is, which makes them "every macho's nightmare, every politician's headache, every clergyman's despair."[233] Yet Taylor and Costantino do not refer to the activists or actresses' bodily utterances as symbolic action. Furthermore, they describe two kinds of human action that they include in the collection, namely "performance art, in which the artist uses her body as the stage, or political demonstrations that physically put the body on the line."[234] The acts collected in *Holy Terrors* choose a stage and time with symbolic meaning to reach the biggest audience possible with a specific ideological statement.

Political symbolic action allows marginalized communicators to express suppressed narratives. Dedicated to highlighting similar interventions to the ones previously discussed, educator, visual artist, and Ph.D. Candidate Yohana Junker[235] explains that public performances

[233] Taylor and Costantino, *Holy Terrors*, 23.

[234] Taylor and Costantino, *Holy Terrors*.

[235] Yohana Junker is educator, visual artist, and Ph.D. Candidate at the Graduate Theological Union, Berkeley, "a presidential Scholar in the Art and Religion program, as well as a Louisville Institute Fellow (2016-

of this kind "stage acts of resistance while allowing for a praxis of collective testimony in the face of political oppression. Their artistic accomplishments reinsert suppressed narratives into the public sphere, establishing an inescapable relationship between artwork and viewers as witnesses."[236] It is worth noting that Junker is writing about a broad range of artistic expressions including visual and performing arts, ones mostly done in collaboration. The main difference between these political interventions through symbolic action and symbolic action for religious prophetic proclamation seems to be the actor's belief that the action is divinely ordained.

Political Symbolic Action, Implicit or Explicit, Religious or Not

Symbolic action as a political intervention may be implicit or explicit communication for religious or nonreligious purposes. It is the framing that suggests that political symbolic action is God-ordained, thus becoming prophetic proclamation.

Jeremiah used the formulaic phrase "thus says the Lord" when sharing the sign of the yoke and its meaning.[237] Isaiah does not say the phrase; the narrative does. Twice the narrator of Isaiah 20 tells the listener/reader that the Lord spoke, first to Isaiah instructing him on the actions and then to an implicit audience explaining what the symbolic actions mean.[238] In contrast, the motivation behind MM's symbolic actions of anointing Jesus' feet remains implicit, thus producing an ambiguity that generates many conjectures, as I have previously discussed. Similarly, many symbolic actions during the civil rights movements were political, and while the

2018) and a Hispanic Theological Initiative Scholar (2018–2019)." See http://www.yohanajunker.com/about-1/ (accessed December 1, 2018).

[236] Yohana Junker, "Michelle Angela Ortiz: An Aesth-ethic of Combat," in *Yohana Junker on Art, Religion, and the Poetics of Resistance*, http://www.yohanajunker.com/poetics-of-resistance/ (accessed December 1, 2018).

[237] Jeremiah 27: 1, 2, and 16.

[238] Isaiah 20: 2–3.

actors may have been people of faith, their actions were not framed as religious discourse through stating "thus says the Lord" or any other indicator of religious intention. Take, for example, Rosa Parks, "whose courageous decision in 1955 to refuse any further compliance with segregation in public transportation launched the bus boycott in Montgomery, Alabama."[239] The lack of any explicit affirmation of belief that the actions were divinely ordained did not deter Marvin McMickle from counting Rosa Parks in the list of prophetic women in the movement. Inspired by the words of Mark Lewis Taylor, who said that being prophetic is a function that can be shared by many inside and outside of the Christian traditions, McMickle included many activists among those who can act and speak prophetically, people who act "out of the values of the biblical prophets."[240] For McMickle, as for Taylor, these people were prophets whether they stated it or not, because they functioned as such.

Symbolic action as a discourse from a marginalized person centers the normative discourse when it is reactionary. As a response, it resists the status quo, but to the extent that it centers the dominant narrative, it assists the status quo. Symbolic action both assists and resists at the same time; it reiterates the very thing that it wants to subvert.

Analysis through the analytical lens of scenario of *prophetic preaching through symbolic action* as one modality of the performance of preaching (delivery) demonstrates that symbolic action is a public communication form that has been employed as an-Other embodied preaching practice, a practice mostly employed by those in the margins to accomplish the task of prophetic preaching or otherwise effectuate the change they want to see in the world. Those who may feel

[239] Marvin Andrew McMickle, *Where Have All the Prophets Gone?: Reclaiming Prophetic Preaching in America* (Cleveland, OH: The Pilgrim Press, 2006), Kindle locations 1993–1995.

[240] McMickle, *Where Have All the Prophets Gone?*, Kindle locations 1973–2600, quoting Mark Lewis Taylor, *Religion, Politics and the Christian Right* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2005), 10–11.

unheard by established systems have used symbolic action in lieu of voice. Prophetic preaching through symbolic action is a marginalized embodied preaching practice full of political reverberations, and it comes to life again when oppressive conditions motivate the prophet to intervene. Symbolic action is not for the exclusive use of prophets, just as public speech is not for the exclusive use of preachers. While Jeremiah and Hananiah were both prophets announcing opposite messages through the same communication system of symbolic action and through the very same symbol (albeit displayed differently), other communicators use symbolic action for religious but not-Christian discourses or even for non-religious purposes.

Scenario Three: Preaching Through Theater

Like symbolic action, preaching through theater is not as ubiquitous as preaching through public speech. Our point of entry into this practice is Francis of Assisi, who represents the embodiment of the marginalized concept of preaching through theater, through an aesthetic representation of a play or drama. A mendicant in the Middle Ages, Francis of Assisi represents any given actor or group of actors that employs theatre to communicate religious beliefs at any given moment in any given place.

Francis of Assisi resorted to the use of drama as part of the "revival of preaching" that the Franciscan mendicant order launched.[241] He was one of many monks who were leaving the closed life of monasteries to preach, "to convert hard hearts and move souls to penance."[242]

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[241] Hugh Oliphant Old, "Franciscan Preaching," in *The Medieval Church*, vol. 3, The Reading and Preaching of the Scriptures in the Worship of the Christian Church (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1998), 342.

[242] Daniel R. Lesnick, *Preaching in Medieval Florence: The Social World of Franciscan and Dominican Spirituality* (Athens, GA: The University of Georgia Press, 1989), 37, quoting Alfredo Galletti, *L'eloquenza dalle origin al XVI secolo* (Milan, 1938), 27–38 and 41.

Francis's contemporary, the author of *Legend of Perugia*, reports one occasion on which the Saint preached through drama. Said author "recounts not a word of the sermon itself. Instead he devotes the entire chapter to Francis's actions at the conclusion of the sermon, when the saint goes down into the crypt of the cathedral and reemerges, to the astonishment of the crowd, led by his moaning confreres, stripped of his tunic, and with a rope around his neck."[243] Francis chose to enact his warning of the deadly consequences of not converting, which for mendicants meant joining a monastery. The repetition of this scenario brings to life ghosts of our pasts, and embodied images of preachers finding alternative ways to share the gospel. The scenario brings past and present together in the simultaneous reactivation of Aristotelian theater and missionary preaching. The scenario also discloses the presence of actor-preachers in our present.

Preaching Scenario: *Theater Turned Preaching*

The analysis of Francis' enactment of deadly consequences to ignoring a call for repentance through Taylor's analytical tool of scenario reveals that it is the framing and the purpose which turns theater into preaching. Aside from these two aspects of Francis' actions, the description is recognizable as the genre of Aristotelian theater and it activates the same dynamics and potential outcomes of any other theater presentation in an explicit way.

Place and action in metonymic relation take the audience to a different place, an imagined reality due to suspension of disbelief. The specific place of the presentation is a cathedral, but the actions of Francis conjure a place of public executions.

The interaction of social actor and role or character establishes multiple layers of performed identities. Francis plays the social role of preacher and actor, in interaction with the

[243] Lesnick, *Preaching in Medieval Florence*, 139.

aesthetic character of a dead man. The confluence of these roles generates distance between the preacher and the audience with the character in between.

The multiple audiences of Francis' actions include the original attendees to the cathedral and us as the readers of the published book. The formulaic structure that is repeatable and transferable is the use of theater for preaching. With the use of theater, there is reactivation of suspension of disbelief, the dynamics of Aristotelian theater with its concomitant development of passive subjects through catharsis,[244] and its didactic force that addresses the whole being of persons at once.[245]

Theater as a meaning making paradigm stays alive through various modes of transmission. Evidence from the archive and the repertoire attest to this fact. Scripts and written descriptions in history and theory books constitute archival evidence of the existence of theater. Each live event, offers embodied memory, and is part of the repertoire as a mode of storing and transferring knowledge.

Similarly, didactic preaching and evangelistic preaching are scenarios that live on through various forms of transmission. The archive stores scripts, written descriptions, audio and

[244] See Augusto Boal's critique of Aristotelian theater in Augusto Boal, *Theatre of the Oppressed* (New York: Theatre Communications Group, 1985). Boal argues that the catharsis that Aristotelian drama operates in the audience serves the purpose of developing passive subjects. As an alternative, Boal draws on Paulo Freire's pedagogy and the Hegelian dialectic to propose the removal of the "fourth wall" that separates actors from spectators, and he develops a method to turn the audience into spect-actors to active citizens. Boal's work intends theater to be a rehearsal of revolution. Similarly, Diana Taylor critiques Victor Turner for imposing a lens based on Western Aristotelian drama to interpret behavior in an African village society. Her critique has more to do with Eurocentric cultural anthropology and the framing of social behavior as having a beginning, middle, and end. She removes these brackets and implies her rejection of "Aristotelian notions of discretely developed genres, audiences and ends." See Taylor, *The Archive and the Repertoire*, 8.

[245] The mechanics of theater have the power to transform primarily the actors playing a role, but also the audience that is watching a performance. See Jonathan Shailor, *Performing New Lives: Prison Theatre* (London; Philadelphia, PA: Jessica Kingsley Publishers, 2011).

video recordings, illustrations and drawings. The repertoire offers a range of embodied practices including sitting, standing, dramatizing, singing in addition to public speech.

The theatricality of theater turned preaching is evident in a way that the theatricality of public speech is not. Francis' actions serve as an example of theater turned preaching, activating the dynamics and potential outcomes of attending the theater. Though this is equally true of preaching through public speech, the main difference lies in the explicitness of theatricality. In preaching through public speech, theatricality is present and generating effects but invisible to those involved in the event. In theater turned preaching, the theatricality is explicit. Theater turned preaching allows for other preachers/characters to come to life in an explicit way, in this case, a dead man.

Liberationist Interpretation: *Prophetic and Evangelistic Dramatizations*

Preaching through theater from the pulpit or elsewhere reiterates and transfers cultural practices and/or personal artistic gifts while holding together and sometimes in tension two layers of performance – the social and the artistic. The body of the actor cites the marginalized norm of preaching through dramatization (theater plays) employed by Joab and the wise woman of Tekoa during David's kingdom and by Missionaries during the Conquista of the Americas.[246]

This embodied preaching practice reiterates the use of aesthetics for proclamation and, simultaneously, it reproduces passive subjects in the audience in most cases. In preaching through theater, the preacher-actor re-enacts Augustine's strategy of adopting and adapting

[246] See 2 Samuel 14, Oscar G. Brockett, *History of the Theatre* (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1991); Kenneth G. Davis and Jorge L. Presmanes, *Preaching and Culture in Latino Congregations* (Chicago, IL: Liturgy Training Publications, 2000); and Daniel R. Lesnick, *Preaching in Medieval Florence: The Social World of Franciscan and Dominican Spirituality* (Athens, GA: The University of Georgia Press, 1989).

communication systems known by society at large or existing in the audience's culture to serve the purpose of preaching.

Invisible Theater

The story of Joab and the wise woman of Tekoa during David's kingdom illustrates the use of theater for moral suasion, specifically here for accomplishing the task of calling persons to repentance when the subjects/actors are not recognized as prophets. In 2 Samuel 14 we have an instance of what Augusto Boal calls invisible theater.[247] Joab, noticing that David is concerned about his estranged relation with his son Absalom, sends for a "wise woman" from Tekoa to play a character before David. Joab functions as the play director. According to 2 Samuel 14:2–3, Joab develops the character and instructs the woman regarding what to wear, what demeanor to present, and what words to say, "'Pretend to be a mourner; put on mourning garments, do not anoint yourself with oil, but behave like a woman who has been mourning many days for the dead. Go to the king and speak to him as follows.' And Joab put the words into her mouth."[248] The woman enacts the play before King David and he rules the way Joab wanted him to rule, in favor of Absalom who had been banished. The woman makes the theater visible and discloses, "For in giving this decision the king convicts himself, inasmuch as the king does not bring his banished one home again."[249] David figures out that Joab was behind the woman's actions and sends for Absalom to come back, though not to come before his presence.

[247] In invisible theater, the audience is not aware that the actors are performing a play. The play is performed "in a place which is not a theatre and for an audience which is not an audience." Augusto Boal, *Games for Actors and Non-Actors*, Translated by Adrian Jackson, Second Edition (New York; London: Routledge, 2002), 277.

[248] 2 Samuel 14:2–3 (NRSV).

[249] 2 Samuel 14:13.

Joab functions as a prophetic preacher who employs theater to communicate his message to effectuate forgiveness and eventual reconciliation. Joab's story comes barely two chapters after Nathan tells David the story of the rich man who takes the only lamb the poor man has to convict David of his wrongdoing of killing Uriah and taking his wife Bathsheba for himself, yet we readily recognize Nathan's prophetic storytelling, and barely recognize Joab's prophetic story-doing. The parallels between 2 Samuel 12 and 14 are striking. In both stories someone tricks David into unwittingly judging himself by judging a hypothetical situation that is similar to his. In both stories the strategy works. David honors his own judgment, repents and/or offers reparations to the extent possible. The differences in the stories include the genre and the framing. Nathan chooses storytelling and Joab chooses invisible theater. 2 Samuel 12 frames the story as prophecy through phrases such as "and the Lord sent Nathan to David" and "Thus says the Lord."[250] There is no such framing of Joab or the wise woman in 2 Samuel 14. Consequently, the reader is left to conclude that the message comes from a man, Joab, through an actress, the woman of Tekoa. The fact that both strategies effectively lead David to perceive, acknowledge, and to the extent possible, correct his wrongdoing suggests that both Nathan and Joab were doing God's work and acting as prophets. The framing of Joab as prophet and of the woman of Tekoa as God's instrument is thus implicit rather than explicit as in 2 Samuel 12. At the very least, Joab's story introduces the possibility of prophetic moral suasion from a person who is not broadly recognized as prophet and through a genre that is not broadly recognized as prophetic.

Missionary Preaching

The embodied practice of preaching through drama is present in the Christian tradition for the purposes of evangelization as well. Francis of Assisi used different delivery styles, each

[250] 2 Samuel 12: 1 and 7, respectively.

of which showcased different ways of using his body. As we discussed earlier, sometimes he used theater. Other times he used "political or religious harangue," which aimed at persuasion through public speaking in the same way that citizens address their equals in public assemblies.[251] In Francis' embodied practices, the preacher's body and the body of the verbal content of the sermon aligned with each other but varied according to the audience.

Francis of Assisi is not an exception. Archival evidence demonstrates a long and broad tradition of theatrical plays as embodied preaching practice. For example, liturgical drama, mystery plays and morality plays were common genres for proclamation in Europe during the Middle Ages.[252] In addition, the religious drama and the *auto sacramentale* were common in Spain during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.[253]

The genre of religious drama was imported to the Americas as missionary preaching during the conquest of América. As Jaime Lara has argued, the theatrical homily has double origins from Catholic European traditions and indigenous traditions in Latin America.[254] Diana Taylor also writes about the importation of religious theatre, brought about early during the conquest of the Americas as a tool to "convert native peoples," which resulted in the creation of a new genre, that of "missionary theatre."[255]

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[251] Lesnick, *Preaching in Medieval Florence*, 137.

[252] Oscar G. Brockett, "European Theatre and Drama in the Middle Ages," chapter 4 in *History of the Theatre, Sixth Edition* (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1991), 83–123.

[253] Brockett, chapter 7, "The Spanish Theatre to 1700," 189–206. An auto sacramentale is a Spanish religious drama, the use of plays for religious teaching that gained distinctive traits after 1550. It combined characteristics of the morality and the cycle plays. These plays probably gained their name due to their close association with Corpus Christi, "a festival which emphasizes the power of the church's sacraments." Brockett, *History of the Theatre*, 190.

[254] Jaime Lara offers various ways in which Hispanic proclamation has been characterized by the use of images and dramas. Jaime Lara, "Visual Preaching: The Witness of Our Latin Eyes" in Kenneth G. Davis and Jorge L. Presmanes, *Preaching and Culture in Latino Congregations* (Chicago, IL: Liturgy Training Publications, 2000).

[255] Taylor, *The Archive and the Repertoire*, 45.

A fitting example is Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz's play, *El Divino Narciso*.[256] The play is an *auto sacramentale*. In it, Sor Juana combines multiple sources, the most evident being sacramental theology and the Western myths of Echo and of Narcissus. In the play, Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz portrays Echo as the Fallen Angel in disguise. Echo tries to tempt the Divine Narcissus. Grace wants the Divine Narcissus to fall in love with Human Nature, so both hide in the trees in front of the font, so pure that it reflects them. The Divine Narcissus sees Human Nature in the reflection and he falls in love with his own reflection in her. He decides to die for her. Human Nature mourns the death of the Divine Narcissus and then discovers he has been resurrected. Echo, Self-Love, and Pride are happy that Divine Narcissus is going to the Father because now they can hurt Human Nature again. The Divine Narcissus and Grace explain that she is not alone and vulnerable because she has Grace, and the Sacraments, particularly the Eucharist – the body and blood of the Divine Narcissus. Human Nature worships so she can embrace Grace again.[257]

The Divine Narcissus shows a variety and masterful combination of Sor Juana's sources, the denunciation of the violence of the colonization process and against nature, as well as a wonderful love story of divinity and human, with layers of literature behind it. Sor Juana portrays strong, smart, and graceful female characters in contradistinction to evil and violent male characters. Echo is a particularly interesting character because it is a character in disguise, a character playing another character. Through it, Sor Juana shows her ability to offer a text and a subtext, to make it seem as if she is in favor of the status quo through her text while offering an alternative discourse through the subtext.

[256] De la Cruz, *The Divine Narcissus*.

[257] De la Cruz, *The Divine Narcissus*.

The theatrics of Francis of Assisi, the plays of Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, the genres of liturgical drama, morality play, religious drama, and *auto sacramentale* are all examples of the marginalized embodied preaching practice of theater turned preaching, an embodied preaching practice in which the body offers its histrionic capacities, not to increase the preacher's virtuosity as public speaker, but rather to convey a message through the enactment of the story that the preacher is telling.

The ghosts of Joab, the wise woman of Tekoa, Francis of Assisi, missionary preachers among the Conquistadores, and Juana Inés de la Cruz come to life in the once-againness of any actor(s) that preach through theater today. The efficacy of theater to make a point more poignantly than using words alone is reactivated in all these instantiations of preaching through theater, whether in the chancel, the streets, a classroom, or any other venue.

Three Among Many Other Embodied Preaching Practices

I have shown the repetition of at least three different preaching scenarios, each of which cites a different preaching norm. The dominant embodied preaching practice of public speech for pulpit preaching brings to life the Pauline preaching norm, Western culture, and Christian supremacy, and produces and transfers embodied knowledge of assistance and resistance of imperial ideologies through reenactment of performed assimilation for the purposes of gaining a hearing from the dominant culture, a reenactment that may become oppressive when the subaltern becomes powerful. The marginalized embodied preaching practice of prophetic preaching through symbolic action brings to life one of various Hebrew prophets' preaching norms and produces and transfers embodied knowledge of assistance and resistance of imperial ideologies in transgressing social norms and proclaiming an alternative God-intended reality,

while centering the status quo through its reactionary nature. The marginalized embodied preaching practice of theater-turned-preaching brings to life Western Aristotelian theater and missionary or evangelistic strategies and produces and transfers embodied knowledge of assistance and resistance of imperial ideologies in challenging dominant preaching norms by offering an alternative, thus potentially aligning liberationist verbal content with enacted content and developing passive subjects through the reactivation of the dynamics of Aristotelian theater. The embodied practices that this chapter offers constitute a sample of the many other embodied preaching practices that are yet to be welcomed and affirmed as valid and as long traditions in the repertoire of Christian preaching. Other possibilities include: preaching through ecstatic speech, collaborative preaching in the pulpit, and preaching through song, through visual arts, through musicals, through experimental theater, through performance art, through burlesque, quilts, and so on. The evidence that this chapter has analyzed invites homileticians to consider that Christian preaching is the sharing of an interpretation of a sacred text, regardless of the number of preachers, regardless of the communication genre that the preacher employs, and regardless of the place in which the event happens.

Chapter 4

Implications and Applications: Affirmation and Evaluation Without Assimilation

Acknowledging the existence of many embodied preaching practices and valuing the Others as much as the field has valued pulpit preaching through public speech has implications for preaching in the pulpit, the street or public square, and in the preaching classroom. In this chapter, I suggest that we might imitate what lies beneath the surface, reframe preaching, and affirm rather than assimilate diverse embodied preaching practices. I then begin to sketch a matrix that shows the interaction of multiple factors in the critical evaluation of and preparation for preaching as live event. I also suggest that teachers of preaching can evaluate all these embodied preaching practices using the same evaluation criteria they are using now. To close the chapter, I offer some suggestions regarding future research.

Some Implications: Repeating What is Under One's Own Skirt and Reframing Christian Preaching

The previous chapter offered three different scenarios that repeat themselves over and over in different places and different times. In Taylor's words, "Scenarios change and adapt, but they don't seem to go away."[258] Each scenario brings to life a different preaching norm: pulpit preaching through public speech, street prophetic preaching through symbolic action, preaching through theater. Each scenario uses a different communication system, a different genre if you will: oratory, symbolic action, theater.

[258] Taylor, *The Archive and the Repertoire*, 33.

The three scenarios together have shown that preaching has multiple dimensions: the sermon, the preacher/s, the immediate and secondary audiences, the verbal system of knowledge transmission and the performance system of knowledge transmission, the visible gestures and persons and the (in)visible plots, characters, and ghosts. They have also shown that preaching brings to life collective memory that by now is mixed, carrying multiple cultures and religions, reenacting many histories at once, re-membering the past, and creating the present. Considering them together, we have explored multiple embodied practices in which preaching exists: in the pulpit, in the street, in the classroom, and anywhere, standing, sitting, speaking, silent, alone, or with others.

The bodily discourse on the surface and the (in)visible scaffolding that sustains the bodily discourse and lies beneath the surface offer different plots to bring to life. On the surface, we perceive gestures, embodiment, and plainly preaching. Beneath the surface, however, if we pay close attention, if we are open to the mystery, we can find ourselves, others, and possibilities. Beneath the surface we saw Paul baptizing Greco Roman rhetoric, the common practice of his context, for the sake of proclaiming the gospel. Beneath the surface we saw Augustine adopting and adapting for preaching communication systems that society at large knows or that exist in the prevailing culture, adopting and adapting Greco Roman rhetoric, well known in his context and also being his personal expertise, to produce homiletic theory. Beneath the surface we saw that Jeremiah resorted to symbolic action to transgress the limits that impede communication, to deliver a message that his audience did not want to receive. If we perceive these undercurrents, then we can re-cognize many particularities in present-day embodied preaching practices. We can consider that if a rhetor used rhetoric for proclamation, adopting and adapting a practice previously used for political discourse in the ekklesia, then an activist may use civil disobedience

and nonviolent resistance for proclamation and we can call that practice preaching as well. If we perceive these undercurrents and imitate them, then we can bring to life these other scenarios. We can generate new particularities for the sake of proclamation. That is how we can imagine that a quilt, a painting, poetry, burlesque dance, among many other communication forms, can preach.

With this evidence and changing roles back from cultural anthropologist to homiletician, it is possible to conclude that multiplicity remains. Preaching has for centuries been a promiscuous incarnation. Some preachers use their words to preach and other use their bodies. Some preachers preach in church and others outside of it. All of them play a role and contribute. There is no need to make them all the same or to impose a single preaching norm in an introductory course to preaching when we know that all these other options exist. This is how we value all these embodied preaching practices in our classrooms even as we remember that not all of them have enjoyed the same privilege and not all of them are welcome or affirmed by all communities of faith. Most important, being open to this abundance of locations, communication systems, cultures, memories, and political implications of diverse embodied preaching practices means that we can focus on the Word as that which needs to remain. Beyond the words, the sermon, cultures, acts of resistance and domination, and beyond specific preaching practices, The Word remains.

Imagined Snapshots of Affirmations:

Embodied Preaching Practices in Pulpit, Street, Public Square, and Classroom

One practical application of recognizing that delivery brings to life ideologies, social constructs, histories, and cultures while bodily citing preaching norms is the affirmation of a

multitude of embodied preaching practices in the pulpit, the street, and the classroom. As I showed in the previous chapter, there are other embodied preaching practices in the Jewish and Christian traditions beyond that of public speech from the pulpit created in the image of the Roman political orator. The affirmation of these practices means valuing them on their own terms rather than welcoming and assimilating them into the pulpit so that these practices may be recognized as extant and as valid.

The affirmation of a multitude of embodied preaching practices in the pulpit implies that public speech like a Roman political orator is simply one among many other forms of public proclamation in the context of worship. Symbolic action and theater, among other genres of embodied communication, become accepted genres for the ritual of preaching and accepted forms of proclamation in and outside the context of a worship service. With such acceptance, the activist, the actor, the mystic, the poet, and the storyteller are welcomed and affirmed, even celebrated, as they preach from the pulpit (or elsewhere) through symbolic action, theater, ecstatic speech, poetry and story. When homileticians remove the Eurocentric and heteropatriarchal expectations that have been embedded, assumed, and unquestioned for centuries in Christian preaching, we finally stop imposing on all bodies a narrative that was generated from and for only certain bodies. We stop imposing specific cultural expectations on people from all cultural backgrounds. We stop imposing specific strategies of survival and resistance on all bodies, when those bodies subscribe to diverse ideologies and purposes for preaching. We stop imposing the skills of some on all. We stop colonizing our students. We stop colluding with imperial logics of One and of expansionism through assimilation and erasure of diversity, which are characteristic of inclusion and welcoming attitudes but challenged by the logic of multiplicity, plurality, and affirmation.

Such affirmation of multiple embodied preaching practices does not necessarily imply confusion about the nature of preaching. The very worship order can frame the preaching moment so that symbolic action, theater, and other forms of public communication become acceptable and recognized means for preaching. Such acceptance and recognition come with repetition over time, in the same way that Greco Roman public speech became standardized as the one and only preaching norm centuries ago. Witnessing a diverse repertoire of embodied preaching practices in the context of worship results in the affirmation of difference, as a variety of ways of producing and transferring knowledge take turns at the pulpit. No longer will the poet have to perform the orator, nor the dancer the rhetor.

Neither does the affirmation of multiple embodied preaching practices necessarily imply that we get rid of the Greco Roman political orator as a character to bring to life in the preaching moment. It simply reminds us that this paradigm is one among many. It decentralizes but continues to honor the currently privileged One paradigm as part of the repertoire of embodied preaching practices. Public speech, embedded with Greco Roman assumptions and possibilities, remains *an* acceptable option but no longer *the only* nor necessarily the best option. The best option for which preaching norm to bring to life arises from the variations of the *why*, *what for*, *who*, *when*, *where*, and *how* of the live event.

Outside of the context of the worship service, the affirmation of a multitude of embodied preaching practices in the street or public square implies that prophetic preaching through symbolic action is one among many other modalities of public proclamation. Similarly, it implies the decentering or exportation of the pulpit preacher to the street, which moves from being *the* acceptable modality to being *one* acceptable modality *among many others*. These two practices conjure different specters; the former calls to mind Jeremiah and many other prophets who use

symbolic action to convey messages that most do not want to hear, and the latter relocates the preaching action, like that of Martin Luther King, Jr., to public spaces as if it were inside the church building, for example.

Street preaching through symbolic action and the exportation of the pulpit preacher to the street are two different and equally accepted, valued, and affirmed embodied preaching practices. But they need not be the only ones practiced beyond the confines of a church building. Whenever a religious person shares religious beliefs either for the purpose of enacting what the person believes is God's will for the world, or in order to bring more people to subscribe to such beliefs, or to move people to behave in accordance to what the person believes is God's-willed behavior for humanity, we have preaching in the public sphere.[259] Whenever human communication accomplishes the tasks of preaching, we have preaching. Offering a diverse range of embodied preaching practices outside the context of worship will result in the affirmation of difference, as a variety of ways of producing and transferring knowledge take turns at preaching in the public square. Whenever and wherever a form of public communication effectuates one of the many purposes of preaching, we have preaching, and people recognize it as moral exhortation or as life-giving inspiration or as something else still.

[259] Such actions, when performed in the public square constitute what some persons call proselytism, and others call evangelism, depending on their ideologies and theologies. The question remains as to the appropriateness of such endeavors in times of religious pluralism and the responsibility that the Christian church has to stop, repent from, and repair damages caused by Christian supremacy in society and by White supremacy in Christianity. Though such considerations are beyond the scope of this study, I find in the work of Marion Grau and Jared E. Alcántara a point of entry to that conversation.

Grau challenges the "development" approach to mission that ultimately serves to make "them/Others" more like "us/White." Grau embraces polydoxy as a friend and proposes hermeneutical circumambulation, the examination of complex issues and missionary encounters from several directions and multiple methods. Marion Grau, *Rethinking Mission in the Postcolony: Salvation, Society and Subversion* (London: T&T Clark, 2011).

Alcántara begins to articulate the need for both decentering Western homiletical discourse from "hegemonic and totalitarian constriction" and crossing "borders of difference for the sake of the Gospel." Jared E. Alcántara, *Crossover Preaching: Intercultural-Improvisational Homiletics in Conversation with Gardner C. Taylor* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books, 2015), 303–305.

In the preaching classroom, the affirmation of a multitude of embodied preaching practices implies that Greco Roman rhetoric is only one among many other paradigms of public communication that preaching professors teach or at least accept as valid forms of expression from their students. I can imagine a student performing a play or reciting a poem or singing a song written by the student in lieu of a speech and the professor evaluating it like any other sermon.[260] The Roman politician addressing an assembly of equals does not need to be the only preaching norm accepted and valued. Teachers of preachers can value—and assess—the communicative strengths of the playwrights, poets, and songwriters present in their classrooms.

The affirmation of multiple genres of public communication rather than the imposition of public oration as the only and real or true or valid preaching practice avoids epistemic violence typically reiterated in many introductory courses to preaching that force all students to conform to a single norm, erasing their diverse ways of knowing, ideologies, social constructs, histories, and cultures. Some people of color may want to re-enact the strategy of negotiating personhood and a hearing by performing the dominant narrative, and some people of color may want to subvert the dominant narrative by performing during the preaching moment other marginalized ways of being, doing, and communicating in the world. Some seemingly white persons may identify with the dominant narrative of what constitutes preaching while others may identify with other existing narratives in the Jewish and Christian traditions. Some women may want to live

[260] Here I am imagining Jerusha Matsen Neal or Leah Schade as if they were my students performing one of their sermons as published respectively in Jerusha Matsen Neal, *Blessed: Monologues for Mary* (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2013), and Leah Schade, *Creation-Crisis Preaching: Ecology, Theology, and the Pulpit* (St. Louis, MO: Chalice Press, 2015). I am also remembering two students from the course *Pilgrimage in Faithfulness* (McCormick Theological Seminary, Fall 2018) who recited their original poems in lieu of a "sermon" during community worship, two different dates of the course. In their poems, these students interpreted scripture/s using a hermeneutical lens that they had recently gained in the course in ways that both convicted and inspired their classmates to action. A similar accomplishment is Erin Minta Johnson's song *Mary to Elizabeth*, interpreting Luke 1:39-45 for the *Advent Collective* in Nashville, TN, winter of 2014. See http://lisvalle.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/The-Advent-Collective-2014.pdf

into masculine ways of bodily communication in preaching to prove they are equals while others may want to live into feminine ways of bodily communicating to prove that they are different but equally valuable, especially if we consider that masculinity and femininity are social constructs that come to life only by socialization and re-instantiation. To impose on a brown womyn who disidentifies with the Roman Orator, a white masculine model is a colonial imposition. To impede a white man who wants to decolonize Christianity, stepping out of a white masculine model for preaching also reiterates imperial logic. These possibilities, however, need to be carefully considered due to identity politics and power imbalances. A brown womyn does not enjoy the same privileges of a white man in society or church. The possibility for seemingly white persons to perform other paradigms or embodied preaching practices also needs to be weighed against the risk of inappropriate cultural appropriation.

The affirmation of a multitude of embodied preaching practices is desirable in the context of public worship, in the street or public square, and in the preaching classroom because it offers a way of moving from assimilationist welcoming to celebratory affirmation of ethnic, cultural, gender, and sexual diversity while rejecting the injustice of epistemic violence and of colonial, imperial, and expansionist logic.

Re-cognizing and affirming a multitude of embodied preaching practices, as well as the ways in which each practice assists or resists imperial logic and colonization, leads to the question: How then shall we choose a preaching norm to cite with our bodies when preaching? There is no static or single answer to such question. Rather, the answer lies in the interaction of multiple factors, as the following section demonstrates.

The Interaction of Multiple Factors of Preaching as a Live Event

Teachers of preaching need to offer students of preaching the tools with which to analyze the multiple meanings that come through our bodies when we preach. Students of preaching need tools to assess their underlying assumptions about preaching and they also need criteria to decide what to mean and do through both speech and body in each instantiation of preaching. Together, the *what*, *what for*, *where*, *when*, *who*, *for whom*, and the repertoire of embodied preaching practices constitute an excellent matrix that students, who best know their contexts, may populate with their particularities. This matrix is formed by the many factors that interact when we consider preaching as a live event and is distilled into seven such factors.

Considering preaching as a live event is to analyze it in context – real and imagined (for example, the classroom and the student's intended audience or the pulpit and the location of the scripture story or the illustration in the sermon), by pondering how the *what*, *what for*, *where*, *when*, *who*, *for whom*, and the repertoire of preaching norms play a role not only in what the preacher is *saying*, but in what the preacher is *doing* through the preaching event. This matrix can be a useful framework through which to examine the surplus of meaning in preaching where ideologies, cultures, and collusions with empire hide in plain view and also to examine the world-making aspect of preaching itself.

Considering preaching as a live event allows preachers to make more informed and contextually appropriate decisions on how will they communicate bodily when they preach. While Diana Taylor's *scenario* as a tool for analysis allows preachers to locate themselves and identify the many ghosts they bring to life and the embodied preaching practice they reiterate, there are other factors to consider critically. In the same way that preachers exegete scripture and

audience to determine what and how to *say* in the sermon, preachers may critically analyze the interaction of several factors to determine what and how to *do* during the preaching moment.

The Matrix of Preaching as a Live Event

Factors that interact in preaching as a live event include: the *what* (verbal messages), *what for* (purposes of preaching), *where* (real and imagined spaces), *when* (real and imagined times, converging times), *who* (the preacher's particularities), *for whom* (audience's particularities), and the relationship between preachers and audiences, as well as the repertoire of embodied preaching practices (preaching norms that exist or not in the imaginaries of the persons involved). Together, they comprise what I call the matrix of preaching as a live event.

The *what*, understood as the messages in the verbal content, have been the focus of homileticians' attention for centuries. When we reframe preaching as a living event and focus on the body of the preacher as the one who produces and transfers knowledge, we may ask several questions regarding the messages. Yet these questions are far more numerous than the classical questions of: *What will I say? What will I preach*? *What verbal structure should I use to preach?* In addition to those questions, preachers also need to evaluate the following: To what culture does the verbal structure I am using belong? What does the verbal structure *mean* and *do* to the listeners/witnesses of the sermon? What kind of world am I painting with my verbal content? What messages am I sending through my body? What is my nonverbal communication doing to support, to complement, to compete, or to get out of the way of the verbal message? How might diverse members of my intended audience perceive my nonverbal cues and embodiment? What class, gender, sexual orientation, ability or lack of it, ethnicity, and culture am I bringing to life? What other messages are coming through my body?

The *what for* refers to the many *purposes* that there are in preaching. These vary by faith community and by person/preacher. Some questions that it is helpful for preachers to ask in preparation for the preaching moment include: How is my body helping, hindering, or hiding from achieving the purpose that I and/or my denomination have for preaching? How is my body helping, hindering, or hiding from achieving the purpose that I have for this specific sermon? Which genre of public communication might be best suited to advance or actualize the purpose and/or function of this specific sermon?

The *where* of preaching refers to multiple places or *spaces* at once. The preacher can usefully ponder which ones are more important and what are the best ways to inhabit those spaces. For example, some questions to consider about the "real" spaces include: What messages is the physical arrangement of the preaching event communicating? Where will I preach? Will I deliver the sermon in a church, a conference center, a classroom, a public square, a community center, a street, a theater, a federal or state building? Will I preach from a pulpit, from a chancel, from a stage, from the floor, from the same level as the community or intended audience, from a higher or a lower level, from behind or in front of them? How big is the space? If from a pulpit, what does the pulpit look like? Of what material is it made? What messages does the arrangement of the space communicate? What messages does the interaction between my body and the space communicate?

Other questions to consider about the "imagined" *spaces* include the following. How close or far from the audience's imaginary are the imagined spaces alluded to in the sermon? How easily is the audience able to recreate the scene given such proximity or lack of it? How important is it in the sacred text being interpreted, in the text of the sermon which interprets, and/or in the live event of preaching that the audience understand the limitations and possibilities

of the imagined spaces? How would talking about or symbolizing or recreating the imagined spaces help, hinder, or hide from communicating the messages in this sermon? How would talking about or symbolizing or recreating the imagined spaces help, hinder, or hide from achieving the purpose that I have for this specific sermon?

Similarly, there are "real" and "imagined" *times* that relate to the *when* of the preaching event. The "real" time may be Sunday morning at 11 a.m. while the imagined times included in the sermon may refer to past events or to possible futures. In addition, preaching as part of a worship service includes re-enacted or imagined times, depending on the faith tradition or the theology of the audience. Furthermore, the sharing of the sermon operates in a linear fashion with a beginning, middle, and end, and simultaneously operates in cyclical or permanent time by virtue of the reiteration of the actions. Critical consideration of times may include questions such as the following: How long is this community expecting me to preach? What reasons do I have to meet or challenge their expectations regarding the sermon's length? How much time do I have to prepare this sermon? How would talking about or symbolizing or recreating the imagined times of the act of worship help, hinder, or hide from communicating the messages in this sermon? How would talking about or symbolizing or recreating the imagined times help, hinder, or hide from achieving the purpose that I have for this specific sermon? How would talking about or symbolizing or recreating the imagined times of the sacred text under interpretation help, hinder, or hide from communicating the messages in this sermon? How would talking about or symbolizing or recreating the imagined times help, hinder, or hide from achieving the purpose that I have for this specific sermon?

Likewise, critical consideration regarding the who of preaching, that is the *preacher/s*, may include questions such as: How many preachers will there be? If more than one, did I

choose my preaching partners or did someone else assign that/those person/s to me or me to them? What are the expectations that the preacher/s bring with them to the preaching moment? What is my culture and worldview? What is my level of education, my perceived or real class, gender, sexual orientation, ability or lack thereof? Where do those factors place me in relationship to the (perceived) audience? Do the audience/congregation and I have (at least most of) those factors in common, thus generating a sense of preacher and audience being equals? Is/are the preacher/s assumed to have more power than the audience? Is there a possibility that the audience will perceive the preacher/s to have less power than the audience? What social and/or aesthetical roles is/are the preacher/s playing? How do those interact?

Critical consideration regarding the "for whom" of preaching, that is the *audiences*, may include questions such as the following. What is the ethos of the intended audience? Are they expecting and wanting the preaching moment? Is the intended audience unaware of the preacher/s intentions to deliver a message? What reasons are there that might make the audience/s friendly, hostile, or indifferent to the preacher/s? What are the audiences of which the preacher/s are aware? In what respects are the members of each audience homogenous? In what respects are the members of each audience diverse? What expectations do the audiences bring with them to the preaching moment? What reasons do the preacher/s have to meet or challenge such expectations? How similar or diverse are the specific needs of the different audiences? What physical location, body postures, comforts or discomforts are important for the audiences to experience before, during, or after the preaching moment to increase understanding and efficacy?

Critical consideration regarding the *repertoire* of embodied preaching practices or otherwise preaching norms may include questions such as the following. What is the breadth of

the repertoire in the preacher/s' imaginary? What is the breadth of the repertoire in the audiences' imaginary? Do preacher/s and audiences share their understandings of what preaching *means* and *does*? Which preaching norm/s do/es the audiences assume and/or expect? What reasons would there be to meet or challenge the audiences' expectations of what preaching norm to employ? Are considerations of the other factors calling for a specific preaching norm more than another one? How would each particular preaching norm help, hinder, or hide from achieving the purpose that the preacher/s have for the preaching moment? How would each particular preaching norm help, hinder, or hide from achieving the purpose that the preacher/s has or have for the specific sermon?

Considering preaching as a live event allows teachers of preaching to locate their students in their own context rather than the teacher's context. Leaving behind the assumption that what works in one space and community works for all spaces and communities, teachers of preaching may use the same criteria they typically employ for the analysis of preaching and thus, the evaluation of their students—minus the Eurocentrism and phallogocentrism that requires all students to perform the Roman political orator. Based on their contexts, ideologies, cultures, and preaching purposes, as well as personal gifts, education, and skills, each student may choose an embodied preaching practice to employ. Each student will still be expected to meet the teacher's evaluation criteria, regardless of the public communication genre that they use. Given that the student is the expert in their own context and culture, the teacher of preaching may also invite and include student-introduced criteria for evaluation.

Does the affirmation of a multitude of embodied preaching practices necessarily result in a lack of criteria for instructing and assessing students in the art and science of preaching? Not at all. Teachers of preaching may evaluate students against the same criteria they use now for the

analysis of preaching, regardless of the public communication genre that the students use and of the space where they preach. The next section develops this possibility.

Many Embodied Preaching Practices, Same Evaluation Criteria

Teachers of preaching may evaluate students against the same criteria they use now for the analysis of preaching, regardless of the public communication genre that the students use. In other words, the teacher of preaching removes the assumption that the sermon ought to look like a speech, focuses on the content of the sermon (that is, the "message"), and evaluates it accordingly.

For example, John McClure, in his introductory class, assesses the verbal content of his students' sermons according to his four codes of the sermon. Under such a rubric, a teacher of preaching determines the content of the sermon, then identifies and assesses the interpretation of scripture that the student makes by employing the semantic, scriptural, and theo-symbolic codes. The teacher of preaching also identifies and assesses the appropriateness of the cultural codes in the sermon by examining both the verbal and the bodily discourses.

Another example is to employ the criteria that Kenyatta Gilbert offers in *Exodus Preaching*. The teacher of preaching evaluates the content of the sermon against Gilbert's criteria: unmasking, hope, naming, and beauty.[261] All of these aspects are present in the content of the message regardless of the bodily form that the preacher chooses, that is, regardless of the preaching norm that the student's body cites.

The same is true for several other combinations of evaluation criteria. One teacher of preaching may evaluate the students against the criteria of scripture, lived experience, orality,

[261] Kenyatta R. Gilbert, *Exodus Preaching: Crafting Sermons about Justice and Hope* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2018), 124.

imagination, delivery.[262] Another teacher of preaching may evaluate the students by considering the quality of "specific preaching strategies that strengthen congregational vision, practices, and tactical imagination."[263] Regardless of the communication system that the student employs, the teacher may discern and evaluate the content as the teacher does of any other sermon.

When it comes to evaluating delivery, many teachers of preaching may feel lost when the student chooses poetry or theater or symbolic action instead of Greco Roman oratory. In these cases, the teacher of preaching has a few options including avoidance, research, or resorting to a neutral focus. As it is, many teachers do not even evaluate delivery. They are already avoiding the question of performance in preaching and the evaluation of the skillful or virtuous oral presentation of the sermon. Avoiding the evaluation of delivery is one option that teachers of preaching already practice broadly.

A second option is for the teacher of preaching to research the communication genre and find guidelines for the assessment of such communicative style. This would require that the student announces ahead of time what preaching norm the student's body will cite. Modern technology allows for any teacher of preaching to have to dedicate only a few minutes to find a rubric by which to evaluate a play, poem, song, quilt, painting, etc. Student-introduced criteria could also be useful in this task. The teacher could also work together with the student(s) to come up with an appropriate rubric—assuming here that the student may have more experience in the style they choose and may have thought about it more.

A third option allows the teacher of preaching to resort to "neutral" foci, that is, criteria that will work with the bodily citation of any preaching norm. For example, the teacher of

[262] Cleophus J. LaRue, "From Text to Sermon" Syllabus. Princeton Theological Seminary, Fall 2012.

[263] Sally A. Brown, "Preaching to Shape a Practicing Church" Syllabus. Princeton Theological Seminary, Fall 2013, p. 1.

preaching may choose to focus on the purpose and efficacy of the sermon. In this case, the teacher evaluates the adequacy of the preaching norm cited for advancing or accomplishing the purpose of the sermon. Similarly, the teacher evaluates what the preaching moment as a whole accomplished in the listeners and in the world, regardless of the intention of the preacher. These are just some ways in which teachers of preaching may evaluate all sorts of embodied preaching practices, recognizing that embodiment and delivery are loaded with cultural and ideological biases, and thus that one embodied preaching practice does not fit all preachers.

Preaching, Proclamation, or Something Else?

It is highly probable that many people reading these pages will disagree with my choice of calling the use of symbolic action, theater, ecstatic speech, spoken word, poetry, visual art, and other forms of human communication to convey religious beliefs *preaching*. Most times, practitioners of the marginalized and less known embodied preaching practices may not call what they do *preaching* at all. Many times, if they even know that these practitioners of less known embodied preaching practices are preaching, the experts in the field or persons in other communities who have different practices and different worldviews may not agree with such nomenclature. If I were to agree that only the use of Greco Roman oratory is valid as the physical form that constitutes preaching, what then shall we call the other embodied practices that have been used for proclamation in the Jewish and Christian traditions?

Similarly, some homileticians may disagree with my choice of describing *as preaching* the proclamation that happens in the public square, or outside of a worship context, or simultaneously in the public square, without a worship service framing it, and through communicative delivery styles different than the re-enactment of the Greco Roman orator. These

phenomena exist nonetheless. What then shall we call each of those instantiations of public proclamation?

Toward Trauma-Informed Pedagogy in the Field of Homiletics

A trauma-informed pedagogy uses the repertoire of embodied preaching practices, among many other concepts, to accompany students in their recovery journey through the stages of safety, remembrance and reconnection. This consideration is important because sometimes students come to our preaching classrooms to study the very thing that caused them harm. When this is the case, and a student from an oppressed group expresses a connection between the course content and their life-long experienced oppression, we can draw on the multitude of embodied preaching practices to offer alternatives. Drawing on Judith Herman's conceptual framework for recovering from trauma, this section begins to outline some directions toward trauma-informed pedagogy in the field of homiletics.

Having students in the classroom who are bearing the burden of colonization and postcolonization, it is important to pay attention to the abundance of scholarship emerging around trauma healing.[264] One of the most prominent voices in trauma theory is that of Judith Herman. Drawing on over 30 years of experience providing therapy to survivors of sexual violence, the holocaust, and wars, Herman developed a framework for recovery consistent in three non-linear stages: restoring safety, remembering and mourning, restoring social

[264] Franz Fanon is one of the scholars who have pointed out the traumatic effects of colonization in the psyche of human beings. Fanon, Frantz. *Black Skin, White Masks*. Translated by Richard Philcox. Kindle Edition. New York, NY: Grove Press, 2008.

connections.[265] Restoring human connection and agency is a central principle of the recovery process.

A trauma-informed pedagogy in a preaching course may contribute to restore a sense of safety by providing options so that the student may control their body and their environment. For example, when a student expresses that learning to communicate like a Roman political orator or a Greco-Roman public speaker is like the expectation of behaving in white ways of being in the world, an oppressive expectation that they have experienced their whole lives and are now rejecting, we can offer the other models available in the Christian and Jewish traditions. Allowing the student to perform the poet, the prophet, the actor and so on, would contribute to restore the student's sense of agency and bodily safety that is crucial in the recovery process. Rather than imposing that the student stands up and speaks, the student may decide to sit down like Augustine, or to tell a story like Nathan the prophet, or to dramatize a story like the woman of Tekoa.[266]

Similarly, if a student expresses rejection of religious practices that have been harmful, in this case, preaching, we can provide accommodations so that we minimize the probability of inflicting more harm or re-traumatize the student. In a higher education institution this may look like allowing the student to write academic papers about the topic without necessarily practicing it. The student may take a stance in opposition to preaching while still meeting high academic standards.

A trauma-informed pedagogy in a preaching course may contribute to remembering and mourning by remembering the minoritized preaching norms that this study has exposed and by

[265] Judith Lewis Herman, *Trauma and Recovery: The Aftermath of Violence – From Domestic Abuse to Political Terror* (New York: BasicBooks, 1997).

[266] See a more detailed discussion of these examples in chapter 3 of this dissertation.

mourning their suppression. Including these minoritized preaching norms in a preaching course allows students to identify with other models when they disidentify with the ubiquitous one. Such an approach also offers students the opportunity to re-member the other models and bring them to life by performing them. Doing so is on itself an act of remembrance.

A trauma-informed pedagogy in a preaching course may contribute to restore social connections by reframing the educator's role to that of guide or companion. The power differential inherent to a teacher-student relationship may trigger the sense of powerlessness and lack of agency that characterizes traumatic events. The educator, however, may nurture different dynamics in the classroom by taking a posture of guide or companion, encouraging a community of co-learners, present to one another and open to learn from one another.[267] In addition, the negotiations on course content and specific ways in which students may reach the course goals discussed in the prior paragraphs may generate a different kind of teacher-student relationship. This kind of relationship moves away from top-down ways of teaching through depositing knowledge into the students' "empty" brains and into roundtable ways of producing knowledge. Some models to consider include the problematizing pedagogy of Paulo Freire, the liberationist pedagogy of teaching to transgress that bell hooks suggests, or the relational pedagogy of Ann Morgan and others.[268] Whichever the model that the educator chooses, relating to students in connective ways rather than as distant expert contributes to the reconnection needed in the trauma recovery process of the students.

[267] For a more detailed discussion on the parallels between inflicting trauma and the power differential in a teacher-student relation, as well as the strategy of covenants of presence see Stephanie M. Crumpton, "Trigger Warnings, Covenants of Presence, and More: Cultivating Safe Space for Theological Discussions About Sexual Trauma," *Teaching Theology & Religion* 20, no. 2 (April 2017): 137–147.

[268] See, Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*; bell hooks, *Teaching to Transgress*; and Ann Morgan, et. al., "Relational ways of being an educator: trauma-informed practice supporting disenfranchised young people," International Journal of Inclusive Education, 19:10 (2015), 1037-1051.

In sum, the repertoire of embodied preaching practices broadens the toolkit of teachers of preaching who want to partner with the students in their trauma recovery process. A trauma-informed pedagogy uses those tools and many others to support students in regaining agency over their own bodies, remembering and celebrating minoritized preaching norms that may feel more adequate for some students, and promoting social reconnection through horizontal relationships.

For Future Study

Beyond the question of naming these practices, other questions arise regarding the field of homiletics and its methods. If there is such diversity of modalities for proclamation, and if these practices are not preaching but "Other" forms of proclamation, then what academic discipline has the task of theorizing and teaching them? Whose job is it to practice these "Other" modalities of proclamation? Whose job is it to generate "new" practices? Whose job is it to evaluate them—to ascribe value to them? What is the difference between human proclamation and the proclamation of the environment?[269]

Furthermore, if homileticians are only concerned about sermon composition through verbal knowledge and linguistic systems of knowledge production and transmission, whose job is it to theorize, teach, and/or practice the other forms of knowledge production and transmission present in the dominant narrative of what constitutes preaching (stand up and speak, reenact the Roman political orator)?

[269] That is, for those who believe as true the words of Psalm 19:1, "The heavens declare the glory of God the skies proclaim the work of his hands." NIV, Biblegateway.com, (accessed January 28, 2019).

Many other related questions emerge, even for this writer. What is the difference between preaching and proclamation? What is the difference between a Bible Study and collaborative preaching realized during a worship service? What other norms, social constructs, ghosts, and embodied knowledge does the act of preaching transfer and produce? How does Amerindian rhetoric shape definitions and functions of preaching?

Conclusion

If preachers practice only one way of preaching, they are keeping alive that one practice while invisibilizing and thus condemning to extinction the other practices (or perhaps the practices of Others). Every new opportunity to preach is a new opportunity to make visible other practices. A single preacher cannot and probably should not embody the broad variety of embodied preaching practices that existed, exist, and will exist. Fortunately, there are many preachers in this world, each one with personal gifts and communal belongings. If all of them bring their personal gifts, cultures, and situated knowledges to life taking turns in each preaching instantiation, faith communities and their audiences will not only hear about affirmation of diversity, but they will also see it and experience it in the flesh. Instructors of preaching can help make this vision a reality by acknowledging and promoting the existence of different preaching norms, diverse ways of bringing the word to life.

Preaching is a multidimensional religious ritual that transfers collective memories and takes shape through many embodied practices such as public speech, symbolic action, and theater. This list is not exhaustive; other examples include ecstatic speech, spoken word, visual art, song, and stand-up comedy, among many others. To move from inclusive to affirming preaching classrooms, we could teach and encourage the rhetor to preach like a rhetor, the

activist like an activist, the actor like an actor, the mystic like a mystic, the poet like a poet, the visual artist as a visual artist, the singer like a singer, the comedian like a comedian, and so on, as well as to teach and encourage the non-preacher to critique and not practice preaching at all. As teachers of preaching, we could affirm the choices of those who do not belong to any faith tradition and inhabit our classrooms, whether that choice is to practice better public speech or to learn to proclaim atheism, Gnosticism, and any other message that is more life-giving to them than religion. To do so will affirm the world's plurality that has reached the preaching classroom. To do so will exit the logic of One and enter the logic of multiplicity.

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