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The Body of Christ Worships in the Era of Biopower: Towards a Liturgical Somatics

By

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Doctor of Philosophy

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Jeremy D. Posadas
M.Div., Union Theological Seminary in the City of New York, 2006
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An abstract of
A dissertation submitted to the Faculty of the
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Abstract

This dissertation attends to the dynamics of embodiment in Christian worship on three levels: actual worship, the study of worship, and the relationship between worship and broader society. First, it considers what bodies do in Christian worship, what they are expected to do in Christian worship, and what presuppositions are at work in such expectations concerning bodily conduct. In order, however, to adequately account for the conduct of bodies in worship (and expectations concerning it), it is necessary to counter an interpretive bias, pervasive in the study of Christian worship, towards relations among symbols within systems of meaning. Bringing more balance to the interpretation of Christian worship requires establishing a framework that foregrounds relations among bodies within systems of conduct. The dissertation, therefore, illustrates the use of a new analytical tool — the "regimen" of a service — in re-examining several ethnographic accounts of actual worship. The assumptions at play in the regimen in these services are reinforced by several secondary liturgical theologians I explicate closely. The dissertation proceeds to relate the dynamics traced in both actual worship and in the second-order study of worship with a particular manner in which power governs contemporary Western societies, called "biopower," which was first thematized in the work of Michel Foucault. Having demonstrated where certain forms of Christian worship can reinforce or manifest mechanisms of biopower, the dissertation concludes by proposing an alternative regimen for Christian worship that has the potential to disrupt biopower.

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Dedication

To Kevin Lotz, who always believed; and
In profound gratitude to Heidi Neumark, Don Saliers,
Susannah Laramee Kidd, and Jay McCutcheon,
who also cared this work into being.

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This dissertation is an attempt to do justice to (and with, and out of) the work I did for three years as an associate to Pastor Heidi Neumark, at Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church of Manhattan. The worship I experienced under Heidi's leadership was my first, and thus far my greatest, taste of how Christian community is a worthwhile endeavor at all. I hope that she, more than anyone else, judges that this work, in however small a way, sings justice and breathes *shalom*. Along with Heidi, I thank the people of Trinity Lutheran, whose patience, openness, and solidarity-with-the-poor transformed me into the theologian and minister I have become.

As for the teacher and scholar I hope to be, I have had an astounding series of teachers who have trained not only my analytical skills but my moral and political imagination — all with compassion, incisiveness, and expansive dialogue. My first thanks are due to Prof. Teresa Fry Brown, who was always ready, as one of my co-advisers, to apply the steadiest hand to the helm when my doctorate came upon stormy waters or suffered engine failures. My training in the interpretation of the actual practices of religious communities came chiefly from Profs. Elizabeth Bounds, Joyce Flueckiger, Steven Tipton, and Gary Laderman, and I hope each of them will find some of the spirit of their research and pedagogy echoed at points herein. I enjoyed an extended dialogue with Prof. Laderman in his roles as director of the Graduate Division of Religion at Emory University, as one of my doctoral examiners, as the instructor who first allowed me to teach Foucault, and as a committee member: in all these roles, he has exemplified the graciousness of an established scholar calling an initiate into the discipline to his very best work. Profs. Carol Lakey Hess and John Blevins were, of course, inspiring role-models for the study of religious practices within the Christian discourse of practical theology, but even more influentially, they showed me what critical pedagogy and effective mentoring can truly be like. I have been similarly influenced by the work of and my conversations, outside the Emory context, with Profs. Thomas Beaudoin, Davina Lopez, and Anne Joh. And though I did not have as much time to collaborate with Prof. L. Edward Philips, as a committee member he helped keep my dissertation accountable to the “big ques-

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Prior to Emory, the crucible of my time at Union Theological Seminary in New York — particularly under the tutelage of Profs. Brigitte Kahl, James Cone, Alan Cooper, Larry Rasmussen, Barbara Lundblad, and Wyn Wright (now of blessed memory) — re-shaped my scholarship to fit more closely with the forms of justice, in a way determinative for the project I pursue here. And while this dissertation was completed long after my time in the College of the University of Chicago, the lessons I learned with Mrs. Amy Kass, Mr. Leon Kass, the late Mr. Bertram Cohler, Ms. Danielle Allen (who first encouraged my study of Foucault), Mr. Dennis Hutchison, Mr. Franklin Gamwell, Mr. William Schweiker, Ms. Susan Schreiner, and Mr. Edward Wasiolek, the late Mr. Karl Weintraub, and Ms. Pamela Bozeman-Evans have burned still brightly enough to power my work from then till now.

Two of my graduate teachers stand in their own category. Prof. Janet Walton and Prof. (now Dean) Mary Elizabeth Moore were relentlessly fierce in challenging me to think and argue ever more maturely and inclusively, and with ever greater nuance as well as ever deeper fairness to those from whom I differ. They gave me the great gift of rarely being totally satisfied (and never being merely satisfied) with my work, but always pushing me closer the highest standards to which I want to hold myself. At nearly every turn in the argument below, I have imagined one or both of them posing a question that re-directs the argument and brings it to greater clarity.

This dissertation relies heavily on the work of Michel Foucault, and my basic training in Foucault's disciplines was supervised by Profs. Lynne Huffer and Mark Jordan. Every conversation I have ever had with them — beginning with the excellent seminar on Foucault that they masterfully lead in fall 2004 — has illuminated yet more about Foucault's insights, about the questions I have been pursuing, and about life itself. I owe so much to their wisdom and faith.

Among my professors, my greatest thanks are due to Don Saliers, who co-directed my process from the examinations onwards. He consistently refused to let me hide behind my own fears, excuses, and tendencies to over-abstraction and circumlocution. He was the first one to convince me I had something to say, and up to the completion of this project he kept graciously demanding that I finally say it. Few academic distinctions mean as much to me as that I now join the illustrious roll of Don's doctoral students.

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I have offered this work partly in the hope that Christian worship can more fully be a practice of justice. During the preparation for and writing of it, I was privileged to work with a group of people working to transform certain liturgical (and other) practices of the Lutheran church, so as to realize justice more fully. This work could not have become what it is if not for my work with the now-defunct Goodsoil coalition and the organizations now known as Reconciling Works and Extraordinary Lutheran Ministries. In particular I thank, for their witness that has shaped my theologizing, Bradley Schmeling, Chris Berry, Emily Eastwood, Tim Fisher, Kim Beckmann, Amalia Vagts, Jen Nagel, Anita Hill, Jane Fahey, Erik Christensen, and my fellow members on the Goodsoil Legislative Team.

I learned how to dissertate from and with a writing group that instantiated all that is good about collaborative, liberative, and feminist scholarship. My gratitude for and love of each of them knows no limit and can barely be conveyed in words. Readers will likely find, as I did, the dissertations and further works of Thelathia “Nikki” Young, Harshita Mruthinti Kamath, J. Cayenne Claassen-Lüttner, Susannah Laramee Kidd, and Letitia Campbell much more interesting and certainly more edifying than my own.

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CONTENTS

Preface: Towards a Liturgical Somatics 1
    Chapter Outline 5

Chapter 1: The Elements of Regimen in Christian Worship 10
  A. Introductory matters 10
    About the ethnographic accounts examined 15
  B. Getting some bearings: worship in several Roman Catholic congregations 18
  C. Expanding the framework: worship in two Protestant congregations 27
  D. Seeming contradictions of the operating logic: Charismatic/ Free Church Worship 41
  E. Concluding matters: describing a regimen for the Body of Christ 62
    Definition of "regimen" 67

Chapter 2: The Expectation of Bodily Congruence in Secondary Liturgical Theology 76
  A. Introduction 76
  B. Geoffrey Wainwright 80
  C. Gordon Lathrop 93
  D. Simon Chan 118
  E. Conclusion 130

Chapter 3: Christian Worship and the Analytics of Biopower 133
  A. Foucault's analytics of power 134
    Foucault's substantive analytics — the framework of biopower 136
  B. Re-considering Christian worship through the lens of biopower 143
    Disciplinary mechanisms in congruence-oriented Christian worship 144
    Regulatory mechanisms in congruence-oriented Christian worship 153
  C. Why is enmeshment with biopower a bad thing? 163

Chapter 4:Imagining the Transformation of Congruence-Oriented Worship 171
  A. One possible starting point: the major prayer in a service 171
  B. Imagining prayer at Good Shepherd Church 181
  C. Some notes on Good Shepherd's experiments 191

Chapter 5: Canonizing and Improvising Our Way to Resurrection 195
    Is it acceptable to improvise? 198
    The interplay of congruence and divergence 202
    "Canon" and "improvisation" 206
    Brief normative considerations 212
    Liturgical dispositions and the disruption of biopower 215
    Conclusion: resurrection in regimes of biopower 225

Bibliography 234

Preface:
Towards a Liturgical Somatics

This dissertation is an inquiry animated by a rather simple question: What does the body *do* in Christian worship? In asking this question, I strive to take what the body does in Christian worship as seriously as possible. By this I mean that, as an interpretive approach, I will treat what the body does not as a derivative of some other, more salient thing in worship, nor as merely a means for understanding something else, but as something important enough to be understood in its own right. I postulate, for this inquiry, that what the body does in Christian worship can and should be the basis and provide the terms for explaining other things in Christian worship, rather than other things being the basis and providing the terms for explaining what the body does. The chief consequence of this reversal is to displace, as the fundamental framework for understanding the body in Christian worship, what the body *means* with what it *does*. Instead of thinking about the body as a *sign* that concentrates and conveys multiple meanings, on multiple levels, in relation to other, similarly multiple signs, I will pay attention to the body as a locus for forces — a node around which multiple forces circulate, a focal-point where these forces converge and clash, a relay where they are redirected. By "force" I mean both the actual physiological capacities of bodies (and the affective and cognitive states that these physiological capacities can induce), but also the force that comes from all the ways other bodies influence what one's body is permitted to do and what it actually does. Even though such influencing by other bodies is not a physical force, it has real physical effects, both in the physical actions it induces or elicits and those that it prevents or obstructs.

In construing bodies this way, I am explicitly *not* trying to maintain a high bar of "mind-body dualism," but am instead attempting almost to collapse that dualism, or at least work around it. In particular, I reject, as a framework for analysis, any construal of the body in which it is mostly just the instrument for the representation or expression or communication of the individual mind's ideas, or the body as inert material that is simply waiting to be controlled by the mind. Rather, the body is the interface at which various forces (in the sense I just described) coagulate into practices, which generate individual consciousness. Consciousness begins as an achievement and consequence of embodied practice, not the other way around. Thereafter, however, there is an endless interplay of reciprocal constitution: the body and its consciousness are constituted by social practices, even as social practices are only enacted in the first place by and through bodies; embodied consciousness only ever issues forth in forms of action that are given by social practices, and yet the conscious body, precisely because it *is* conscious, has critical capacities to resist and attempt to transform those same social practices.

These reflections on bodies and forces, practices and consciousness, are derived from an intense engagement with the work of post-structuralist thinker Michel Foucault (1926-1984), who has had some of the widest influence across the humanities and social sciences for fifty years now. Foucault's work, however, has had very little reception in the field of Christian theology, as well as in religious studies more broadly and Christian liturgical studies more narrowly. This dissertation is, then, an attempt to *deploy* Foucault's (and Foucault-inspired) ideas as tools to analyze the body's presence in worship — or, better, as tools for making the body into the basic unit of analysis in the interpretation of worship. Such a move is necessary, I contend, to create a viable alternative to a tendency of liturgical theology that is largely taken for granted: what we might call liturgical theology's fundamentally semantic paradigm, or, to put it more strongly, its fundamental privileging of the semantic over the somatic.[1]

If one pays attention to a wide range of theological reflection on Christian worship, from diverse (and sometimes clashing) confessional traditions, one will find again and again that *the* underlying framework common to the vast majority of liturgical theologies is a framework of worship understood as a system of symbols and the dense relations of representation, signification, and expression/communication that arise among them. For instance, Alexander Schmemann defines two of liturgical theology's three basic tasks as "first, to find and define the concepts and categories which are capable of expressing as fully as possible the essential nature of the liturgical experience of the church," and "second, to connect these ideas with that system of concepts which theology uses to expound the faith and doctrine of the Church."[2] Marjorie Procter-Smith describes worship fundamentally in terms of expression and communication: liturgy "makes claims of truth. To be precise this the liturgy claims that when its work is being done, participants are engaging in a dialogue with God."[3] And Gordon Lathrop, whom we will engage presently, says it directly, simply: "Still, what does this gathering mean? ... Liturgical theology ... asks ... how the Christian meeting, in all its signs and words, says something authentic and reliable about God, and so says something true about ourselves and our world as they are understood before God."[4]

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[1] It is certainly the case that theological or theologically oriented interpretations of Christian worship have engaged "the body" as a central analytic category for many years; I am not arguing that the body has been ignored completely. Rather, rarely has the body-as-such, rather than the body-as-symbol — that is, the body considered primarily with respect to its physically manifested *actions* rather than its *representations* — been deployed as the primary unit of analysis. (And, even when it has been deployed thus, dynamics of power have been treated in too under-theorized a manner.) Nonetheless, it is important to hold my work here in conversation with several good works connecting body and worship, especially the following: Marcia Mount Shoop, *Let the Bones Dance: Embodiment and the Body of Christ* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2010); Andrea Bieler and Luise Schottroff, *The Eucharist: Bodies, Bread, and Resurrection* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2007); Bruce T. Morrill, ed., *Bodies of Worship: Explorations in Theory and Practice* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1999); and various works by the authors who also contributed to the 1995 issue (no. 3) of the journal *Concilium*, edited by Louis-Marie Chauvet and François Kabasale Lumbala, on "Liturgy and the Body."

I do not gainsay whatsoever that Christian worship both (a) transpires in a constitutive way through the representation, signification, and expression and communication of symbolic meanings; and (b) is *understood* in a profound way when viewed through these kinds of symbolic relations. That is, worship in itself *is* a system of symbolic relations, and one of the most accurate and insightful ways to *perceive* worship is in terms of symbolic relations. But are symbolic relations the only things that can be described as simultaneously having both of these qualities (i.e., that they are a fundamental key both to worship in itself and the interpretation of worship)? This dissertation strongly answers in the negative. For, alongside relations among symbols within systems of meaning, this dissertation posits relations among bodies within systems of conduct as both (a) constitutive means by which worship transpires and (b) a set of fundamental terms by which worship is most accurately and insightfully interpreted. In distinguishing relations among symbols and relations among bodies — semantic fields and somatic fields — I am not trying to re-install a mind-body dualism. Rather, I am trying to collapse that dualism by saying that we must construe worship as always co-constituted by and in symbolic meaning and bodily conduct. It is, in fact, when we not only *distinguish* between these two aspects but also *privilege* one of them (and make the other subordinate to it) that we most reinforce a mind-body dualism. Thus, if this dissertation focuses on bodily conduct, it is for the goal of drawing liturgical theology overall further toward a more balanced approach, in which the field of semantic relations and the field somatic relations are equally privileged and engaged as co-fundamental and co-constitutive domains in which worship transpires and co-fundamental aspects in which worship must be analyzed.

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[2] Alexander Schmemann, *Introduction to Liturgical Theology*, trans. Asheleigh E. Moorehouse (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Press, 2003), 17.
[3] Marjorie Procter-Smith, *In Her Own Rite: Constructing Feminist Liturgical Tradition*, 2nd ed. (Akron, OH: Order of St. Luke Publications, 2000), 1.
[4] Gordon Lathrop, *Holy Things: A Liturgical Theology* (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Fortress, 1993), 2-3.

Each of the five chapters contributes to this overarching goal by capacitating (i.e., providing conceptual tools and analytical paths for) somatic approaches to liturgical theology that can stand alongside the great proliferation of semantic approaches. Chapter 1 models the analysis of actual worship services in terms of relations among bodies in systems of conduct. I re-examine six scholars' separate ethnographic accounts of worship services from a wide range of Christian traditions, paying attention in each service to what bodies are doing in relation to one another, and what they are *expected* to be doing in relation to one another. My substantive analysis is that these expectations, again and again, encourage *congruence* of each body's conduct with the conduct of all the others, and carefully manage *divergent* conduct.[5] The analysis of expectations then leads me to make a methodological proposal for a new analytical category, "regimen," that can function in a somatic approach to liturgical theology as *ordo*[6] functions in a semantic approach.

Chapter 2 moves from actual worship to secondary reflection on it, examining two of the most influential works in academic liturgical theology of the past thirty years, along with a more recent one that is significant because of the Christian communities and traditions with which it identifies. Here I trace how congruence, in various senses, is consistently privileged by these liturgical theologians. More specifically, each of these theologians invests much energy explicating Christian faith as a coherent (i.e., all the parts congrue with one another and the whole congrues with itself) system of meanings. They focus much less on bodily conduct, and simply assume, rather than argue for, the expectation that bodily conduct must closely congrue with the closed system of meanings as which they define Christian faith. In this way, we explore, substantively, how secondary liturgical theology naturalizes the congruence expected in actual worship — how it implicitly renders bodily congruence as "the self-evident way things are supposed to be" — and forecloses the possibility that congruence-oriented worship can be just one kind of Christian worship among multiple alternatives. Methodologically, this chapter discloses one of the underlying mechanisms by which liturgical theology fully subordinates somatic relations to semantic ones.

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[5] Conceiving of two of my main analytical categories as "congruence" and "divergence" is something that occurred in several fruitful conversations with scholar of religion Susannah Laramee Kidd.
[6] I discuss *ordo* extensively below, in chapter 2.

Chapter 3 models how to pursue a somatic approach to liturgical theology in a historically contextualized manner. Rather than construing “body” or embodiment” as an essence that transcends or is universal across time and place, the chapter considers a particular constellation of practices that constitute bodies and embodied experience in a particular time and place. This constellation of practices was first conceptualized and named as “biopower” by Michel Foucault, and Foucault’s analytics of biopower have spurred multiple lines of fruitful research on embodiment in modern Western societies (and other societies that are governed by or in the manner of them). After explicating some of the defining characteristics of biopower, I analyze how the “regimen” discerned in chapter 1 operates with, or else in a way that reinforces, techniques of biopower.

Given how certain widely practiced forms of Christian worship thus cooperate with biopower, in chapter 4 I envision what a *process* could look like by which a worshipping community could instantiate worship that actively disrupts biopower. I focus on a specific sub-rite, the long intercessory prayer that, in varying structures, is common in many instances of Christian worship. Briefly applying the regimen analysis of chapter 1 to the distinct structures known as the “Prayers of the People” / “General Intercessions,” “Pastoral Prayer,” or “Altar Prayer” — also including, in certain respects, Charismatic “praying in tongues” — I argue that while they may well be said to differ significantly in the aspect of words and rhetoric, they have strong homologies in the aspect of bodily regimen. I then suggest some ways a community could experiment with the manner in which they pray the major intercessory prayer of their service. This is not a comprehensive guide to the predetermined steps a community must take to achieve biopower-resisting worship. Rather, this is an attempt to stimulate the imaginations of communities in a way that opens them up to a process that in itself begins to dislodge Christian worship from biopower's clutch.

Chapter 5 briefly defines two terms that can evoke normative/evaluative frameworks for Christian worship which are oriented to somatic relations rather than to semantic relations. I say "evoke" rather than "establish" and "frameworks" rather than "framework" very deliberately, because invitation rather than imposition is the mode proper to an approach to liturgical theology that is not only somatically inflected (as distinct from semantically inflected) in a general sense, but is, in addition, somatically inflected in a critical posture vis-à-vis biopower. That is, there is no inherent contradiction in a somatic approach to liturgical theology that offers or proceeds on the basis of norms that function by way of imposing standards of meaning or conduct with which bodies and their practices must congrue. The congruence that somatic liturgical theology can describe (as I do in chapter 1) can also be what somatic liturgical theology *prescribes* for Christian worship. A *somatic* approach to liturgical theology can also, logically speaking, be a *congruence-oriented* approach, without thereby sacrificing its interpretive integrity. But it does not *have* to be so, on account of some (theo)logical necessity. Somatic liturgical theology can also propose standards as an invitation to engagement that could lead to both partial congruence with and partial divergence from those very standards. This is the intent with which I formulate the normative framework of worship as the endless, non-dialectical, non-pre-determined interplay of "canon and improvisation," and a definition of Christian worship that can lead the Body of Christ to explicit, effective, and creative disruption of biopower.

Thus, the five chapters together offer the rudiments of a somatic liturgical theology or, as I prefer to call it, a *liturgical somatics*:

- a constitutive object of analysis, namely, regimen (chapter 1);
- a mode of analyzing regimen as it has tended to be realized in first-order practice and naturalized in second-order reflection (chapters 1 and 2, respectively);
- a mode of historical contextualization (chapter 3);
- a process for transforming the regimen of worship in light of such historical contextualization (chapter 4); and
- a framework for inviting worshipping communities to join in this process (chapter 5).

As presented below, these do not add up to a complete, comprehensive liturgical somatics. But I hope that they sufficiently indicate *that* we need to create parity between the semantic and the somatic in liturgical theology, and suggest *why* and *how* we might do so.

Chapter 1:
The Elements of Regimen in Christian Worship

A. Introductory matters

About this chapter's project

In this chapter, I examine a collection of worship services that, at first glance, might seem quite disparate. The services are drawn from congregations that are identified with different confessional traditions, racial categories, geographies, and other aspects of communal identity. The services themselves involve different kinds of liturgical activities, orders, and styles. This lack of commonality in some of the most frequently invoked markers of communities' liturgical identity is important for the underlying task of this chapter. For I am trying to analyze these services as much as possible *without* relying on certain kinds of assumptions or frameworks that have, to be sure, been quite fruitful in previous scholarship for understanding many dimensions of Christian worship. The first is that I am strenuously seeking to *not* rely on any assumptions about what Christian worship is — that is, on any normative core that universally defines what counts as Christian worship and why. Such a normative core could take either a theological form or a sociological one, but with my analyses here of actual worship services, I am not seeking to enter any debate about what makes all or some of these services Christian or if we can find threads that unite them with all other Christian worship. It is hard to imagine that any liturgical scholar, at least, would dispute that the specific services I have gathered here are instances of Christian worship, however that is defined, and this is sufficient for my purposes. Instead of seeking to argue from or for a normative criterion of what Christian worship is, I am simply going to look at a number of instances of Christian worship, to track the issue that I raised at the outset: in each service, what do bodies *do* in relation to what other bodies *do*?

This focus on bodies has lead me away from three other patterns of analysis that are common in the study of worship. First, I will usually speak of "bodies" in worship, as opposed to "worshippers," "participants," "members," or even "people." This is not at all, of course, an attempt to impugn the humanity of those who are worshipping. Rather, I am trying to get a sense of what bodies actually *do* in worship, before the body is encrusted with any specific theological anthropology (whether of a liturgical-theological, ecclesiological, ethical, or any other sort). When we use terms such as "worshippers" or "members," we have already cast bodies into particular (and varied) theological understandings: for example, bodies full of worship, "many members, one body," and so on. Even the term "participants" can be part of entering particular theological debates (such as over "full, conscious, and active participation") about agency in worship. I am not suggesting that the theological anthropologies that have often arisen in liturgical studies are wrong or should be rejected, but I do think that important dimensions of the *body's* presence and performance of worship have gone under-analyzed when the agent of worship is already conceptualized in a particular theological framework. My goal is to explicate bodies in worship (that is, in certain concrete instances of worship, not worship in the abstract) initially outside of any explicitly theological framework, merely to observe *what bodies do*. I am trying to arrive at a "data-set" regarding bodies in worship out of which and with respect to which I can generate a properly theological account of worship as a system of power-laden relations among bodies.

Second, I do almost no textual, verbal-content, or linguistic analysis of what happens in these worship services: although I do have to rely on written ethnographic accounts of bodily action, I do not focus on (a) the actual words or linguistic content that was (b) spoken, sung, written, or otherwise expressed in or for the worship service, nor (c) on the relations of meaning among words or linguistic content in the worship service. Again, interpreting worship within the framework of words, language, and text has been extremely fruitful for liturgical studies, and I do not challenge its methodological validity. But I do think a textual or linguistic approach obscures dynamics of what bodies do in worship, and in what manners, on what grounds, and to what ends they so do. The relationship between bodies and language is complex and has generated massive amounts of scholarship, particularly in the past few decades; moreover, this relationship has occupied interpreters of Christian worship since the beginning. I am not able (or attempting), in this dissertation, to give a new model for the body-language relationship(s). Rather, I am trying to get a feel for bodies in worship that does not immediately perceive bodies through the interpretive lens of language, the relationships of words to one another, or the meanings to which these relationships give rise. Certainly I track with the notion in contemporary critical theory that there is no bodily existence that is not mediated by linguistic relations. But this does not mean that a linguistic approach is the exclusive, fundamental, or necessarily primary way to conceptualize the body's presence and practice: linguistic or verbal-content relations and dynamics are a necessary element in understanding the body, but not a solely sufficient one. So I am trying to discern what appears when we intentionally focus elsewhere than on the processes of language or relations of meaning within systems of words.

Third, my desire to get a sense of "what bodies do" also leads me away from perceiving and analyzing the actions in each worship service as already-defined units of "ritual." Now, ritual studies is one of the cutting edges of contemporary liturgical studies, and I do not for a moment dismiss the interpretive value of a ritual-studies approach. Moreover, bodily action is front and center in many ritual-oriented approaches, so it would seem especially relevant to my project. I find, however, that much ritual analysis, as it has been used in the study of Christian worship, proceeds in terms of relations of meaning within systems of symbols or theological constructs. For instance, ritual processes (or at least ritual dynamics) are important analytical frameworks in the vastly impactful work of both Louis-Marie Chauvet and Gordon Lathrop.[7] While they use ritual in very different ways, in both cases ritual is largely a matter of symbolic meaning. Again, symbolic meaning is a crucial dimension for making sense of worship, but it is not the only or necessarily fundamental such dimension, and I believe there are elements of the body's presence in and practice of worship that are obscured by a focus on ritual dynamics or processes. This does not mean that we should abandon ritual analysis, but we should add to it other kinds of analyses that can expand our understanding of what is occurring in worship.[8]

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[7] See Chauvet's *Symbol and Sacrament: A Sacramental Reinterpretation of Christian Experience* (Collegeville, MN: 1995); Lathrop's work is discussed extensively below, in chapter 2.

I am re-examining the ethnographic accounts of worship gathered here in order to trace a particular operational logic on which much Christian worship proceeds. By "operational logic," I mean a set of basic assumptions concerning what bodies, *as bodies*, should do (and what they should not do) in worship. I will attempted to demonstrate that certain assumptions about bodies operate in worship in a way that is more basic than the expectations one deals with when analyzing "ritual form," that is, the form of each ritual-unit, however wide or narrow the scale of analysis. I am going to consider ethnographic accounts of worship services at over a dozen different communities, and at any level of ritual analysis, one could draw sharp distinctions with respect to the forms of each community's ritual (or sometimes the forms of ritual that appeared in a cluster of the worshipping communities). Yet despite these clear differences in ritual form — from, for example, Roman Catholic Eucharist to Evangelical praise and worship to Charismatic or glossolalia — one can nonetheless discern some expectations about how bodies are supposed to act in worship that are common across all the worship services I (re)examine. Ritual form by itself cannot account for these expectations, which is why I offer initially the notion of an *operating logic* as a way to name something more basic than ritual form. (I am leaving aside the questions of whether or not there is a basic operating logic common to all ritual or to all Christian ritual: it is enough to bring into the analysis of Christian worship the notion that there *is* an operating logic at work in at least a good number of contexts that, viewed through the lens of ritual, appear entirely different from one another.)

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[8] The work of ritual theorist Catherine Bell is particularly good at foregrounding the body and bodily dynamics, yet I have not based my analysis on her theory of ritual because I want to analytically engage power in different ways from how she does. See Bell, *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992); *Ritual: Perspectives and Dimensions* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997).

I argue over the course of the chapter that one can discern the same operational logic at work in all the worship services described. I make, however, no claim either (a) that this is the only operational logic that one could discern for this particular grouping of worship services or (b) that the operational logic I have described will apply to all other Christian worship services. I leave it for subsequent work, by me and by other scholars, to trace out other operational logics at work in other (and perhaps wider sets) of Christian worship services and/or in the same particular set of services I have discussed. My goal here, rather, is to demonstrate simply the viability of studying worship at the level and from the perspective of what bodies, *qua* bodies, are expected to do in worship and on what terms and in what ways those expectations take force in Christian worship — that is, the level and perspective of what I shall provisionally refer to as an "operating logic."

About the ethnographic accounts I am examining

We are fortunate to have a number of in-depth ethnographic studies of worship available to consult, before turning to academy-based liturgical theologians' interpretations of worship. What they offer are snapshots of actual Christian communities actually worshipping. I cannot, of course, either speak about or analyze these communities' worship in the same way as the scholars who have observed them. However, to the degree that one accepts these descriptions as accurate, or at least not mis-representative, they give us real-life examples in which we can observe certain notions in operation.[9] The communities studied by these scholars differ from one another in a number of ways, two of the most significant of which are their racial composition and the theological/confessional traditions with which they self-identity (e.g., Lutheran, evangelical Protestant, Catholic).

We can think of these worshipping communities as occupying both "dominant" and "marginal" positions in complex ways, with respect to both the societies of which they are part and Christianity in wider frames. All of these communities are Christian communities in societies where Christianity (as distinguished from, say, Judaism or Islam) is the most widely practiced religious tradition. Many of the communities are Protestant congregations in societies in which Protestantism is the most widely practiced Christian tradition. Within this set, those that identify as evangelical Protestant communities can be characterized as both "dominant" and "marginal," depending on the frame of reference (theological, sociopolitical, geographic, national, etc.). Some of the Roman Catholic communities engaged here are located in societies where Roman Catholics are a religious minority, while others include a Catholic community in a Catholic-*majority* society (as well as a *Protestant* community in a *Catholic*-majority society).

Regardless of theological affiliation, a majority or significant number of worshippers in the communities studied in several of the accounts are racially identified as black or Latino, which are marginal identities with respect to structures of racism that govern the nations in which they are located; by contrast, the members of all the other communities are predominantly white, and therefore dominant within such structures of racism. Although socioeconomic status is not identified for all of the communities discussed here, among those for whom it is identified, there are communities whose members are primarily socioeconomically dominant (i.e., middle- or upper-class) as well as some whose members are socioeconomically marginal (i.e., working-class or poor). One of the worshipping communities studied by Fulkerson has an atypically large proportion of people identified as disabled.

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[9] Not having observed these worship services myself, I also cannot directly assess the accuracy of the way they were described (and, of course, any given worship occasion can be "accurately" described in multiple ways, based on different aims). However, these ethnographic accounts seem entirely adequate for the specific dynamics I am looking at here: given the careful, thorough observations they do offer, if something that flatly contradicts my claims here had actually occurred in the worship services, it seems highly likely that it would have registered with these observers.

Considering accounts of worship in communities that differ from one another across multiple lines of power-laden identities offers the possibility of discerning notions operating in worship that cut across such differences. While, again, I do not seek to articulate principles that, on account of logical or theological necessity, are universally valid for all Christian worshipping communities, I am trying to formulate certain notions that are present (and can be taken for granted) in a wide variety of Christian worshipping communities. The goal is to offer one framework for interpreting bodies in worship, which can be deployed in further scholarship. This means distilling patterns and dynamics in such a way that they might be recognizable in Christian communities other than the ones I consider here.

Each of the scholars upon whose work I draw identifies as a practitioner, in their own life, in the same tradition as the communities (or at least some of the communities) they studied. This is significant because it means that they are, to a large extent, more “insiders” than “outsiders” in relation to the practices they studied. I do not want to place too much weight on this, but at a minimum it means that each of them has much sharper senses than an outsider would for distinguishing what is considered typical from the atypical in the worship traditions they studied. In other words, they are more likely than not to take for granted the same sorts of things that other worshippers in the same tradition would take for granted, and to mark as strange or unexpected the same sorts of things that other worshippers in the same tradition would thusly mark. This is not inherent in the relationship between a scholar studying a tradition in which she or he is also a practitioner, but it is sufficiently true for the level of generality that characterizes the operating logic I am tracing in this chapter. The degree to which we can plausibly regard what these scholars take for granted (and what they mark as unexpected) as a proxy for what is taken for granted (or gets marked as unexpected) in a worshipping community — even if we impose the constraint of a certain level of generality — is important for my argument that the notions I am tracing are largely taken for granted in worship, operating as common expectations without needing to be asserted or discussed as such.

B. Getting some bearings: worship in several Roman Catholic congregations

Imagine, for a moment, that you did not grow up worshipping in Christian congregations, and as an adult have only participated in the regular weekly worship of a Christian congregation, as opposed to Christian weddings or funerals, a few times. (This may, in fact, be your actual experience, so that you do not need to imagine it.) Now, imagine that you attended the worship services described by Richard Wood in *Faith in Action: Religion, Race, and Democratic Organizing in America*, at Saint Elizabeth and Saint Columba, two Roman Catholic congregations in Oakland, Califonia, US; or that you attended the services described by Siobhán Garrigan in *Beyond Ritual: Sacramental Theology after Habermas*, at two Roman Catholic congregations in different parts of the Republic of Ireland.[10] If you had very little familiarity with Christian worship at all, what would you have observed as you worshipped with these congregations?

According to Wood's and Garrigan's descriptions, in each of these worship services, people sang hymns, prayed, read from the Christian Scriptures, gave money offerings, heard (or, in the case of the homilist, delivered) a homily, and ate bread and drank wine in a rite called Eucharist. In each of the services, these activities were accompanied by distinct other activities. The bodily conduct and verbal content[11] of which these activities were comprised varied somewhat among the congregations, but they would also be largely recognizable across them. There was a printed order of service indicating a specific sequence for these and other activities, though most people in the congregation did not consult it (and did not need to consult it) in order to participate in worship.[12]

Song, prayer, Scripture-reading, homily, offering, Eucharist: you could analyze worship by examining particular features of all these component activities of the worship services. With Garrigan you could consider them as speech-acts and assess the degree to which they were “communicative,” in Habermas’ sense.[13] Or you could sociologically interpret, with Wood, the symbols, beliefs, and ethos encoded in these activities, understood as comprising a “core religious culture.”[14] Alternatively, you could engage in historical analysis of each of these component activities, tracing when, how, and why they began to occur in Christian worship at all, and in these communities specifically. Or you could theologically interpret them, asking what meanings, claims about God and humankind, and values were enacted or manifested in the worship services.

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[10] In this section, unlike the sections that follow, citations will all be given in footnotes, so as to clearly distinguish between references to Wood and to Garrigan. The main descriptions of the worship services are as follows: Wood, *Faith in Action: Religion, Race, and Democratic Organizing in America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002), 205-13, 238-43; Garrigan, *Beyond Ritual: Sacramental Theology after Habermas* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2004), 125-37, 185-90.

[11] In referring to both "verbal content" and "bodily conduct," I mean only to invoke them as aspects by which worship can be analyzed, while at the same time refraining from any claim about whether they are mutually exclusive or if one incorporates (or is subordinate to) the other.

[12] Garrigan, 125, 186; Wood, 238.

But what if you were trying to understand the worship services at a simpler level, before demarcating specific kinds or clusters of activities in them (such as “prayer” or “Eucharist”)? That is, what if you wanted to say, in the simplest terms, “what the bodies were doing”? From Wood’s and Garrigan’s descriptions, you could include the following, among other things. First, at any given moment in the service, most bodies were doing the same thing. For instance, usually everyone sat down or stood up at the same moments, rather than individuals sitting or standing in random or idiosyncratic fashion. The same is true for keeping silence versus speaking, for speaking versus singing, and for moving around the worship space versus remaining at one point. Of course, it is not the case that *all* of the time, *all* of the bodies in worship were doing the exact same thing, and both Garrigan and Wood note moments when a perceivable number of worshippers were not doing what most other bodies were doing.[15] But almost all of the time, most of the bodies were doing the same thing.

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[13] Garrigan, 128-37, 187-91.

[14] Wood, 210-13, 239-43.

[15] See, for example, Garrigan, 125-26, 187; Wood, 209-12, 236-37.

Second, separate from the fact *that* most bodies were doing the same thing, almost all the time, there was the *expectation* that bodies *should* be doing the same thing in each moment. This expectation was implicit in the printed order of service, given that most bodies enacted the sequence of activities indicated therein. It was also made explicit at those points when a leader of worship gave a direction (e.g., "Please stand"), and most if not all bodies complied.[16] Neither Wood nor Garrigan reports individuals expressing uncertainty about whether the directions given were meant to be followed. Moreover, it was not at all remarkable to either Garrigan or Wood, both of whom identify as Roman Catholic practitioners, that everyone did the same thing: these scholars, familiar with the traditions of the congregations, made many careful observations about even small details in each worship service, like the arrangement of objects in the worship space, yet it did not strike them as odd or unexpected that everyone did the same thing. Instead, what were remarkable to Garrigan and Wood were moments when some worship participants were *not* doing what everyone else was (supposed to be) doing.[17]

Third, among the whole range of what bodies can do, there was a relatively small sub-set of actions that bodies actually did do, even including those that were outside of what was expected for every body to do. Standing, sitting, kneeling, singing (with varying manners of expression), praying (in various forms), closing eyes and bowing heads (in prayer), speaking set responses, listening and being attentive, placing money in an offering plate or basket, going to receive bread and wine and then ingesting them: this list covers nearly every bodily action that Garrigan and Wood describe in the worship services. Furthermore, neither of them describes moments when worshippers were directed or encouraged to do any action they wished or were inspired to do. One can assign many different kinds of significance to narrow range of bodily actions included in these worship services, for instance, seeing Christian worship as a ritual and these as the actions ritually acceptable in Christian worship; or understanding these bodily actions as expressions of the theological values of Christian worship, such as one's relationship to God or the worshipping community. However, even before interpreting the significance of what is included or not included in Christian worship, it is worth pausing to take note simply of the fact that not just any bodily actions are part of Christian worship — at least in these communities — but only certain actions.

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[16] See, for example, Garrigan 126, 186.

[17] See passages cited above, in note 6.

Fourth, given this relatively narrow set of bodily actions, there was a clearly set order for them to occur in. That is, not only was there an expectation that in each moment bodies would largely be doing the same thing, but there was a sense of a single sequence of actions that worshippers were expected to perform over the course of the worship service. To see what I am getting at, one can consider certain features that were *not* present in these worship services, at least as described by Wood and Garrigan. There were no moments when the worshippers were asked to decide or determine what would occur next in the service. Improvisation was not an intentional part of these worship services, and certainly not a major component.[18] There were no moments when worshippers were uncertain about what was supposed to happen next: reading Wood's and Garrigan's accounts, one cannot imagine someone who regularly worships in these congregations saying, "No one knew what would happen," or "It felt like anything could happen." And there was nothing suggesting that more than one sequence of bodily actions was simultaneously being enacted; in other words, it was not that one group of worshippers performed one series of actions unconnected to the actions performed by another group of worshippers. Different persons in worship (chiefly the priests, readers, musicians, and Eucharistic ministers) had different *roles* within the worship, but these roles were all integrated into the same series of actions — in fact, in almost every instance that a person played a distinct role, it was in connection with advancing to the next action that every other body then performed.

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[18] Though presumably there were improvisations for purely instrumental purposes.

Fifth, not only was there a sense of expectation that every body would do the same actions, in the same sequence, but, further, acting against the flow of the service was not a major feature of these services. That is, one can describe the bodies in worship as both fulfilling the sequence of actions set for worship and as *not disrupting* the worship service. Wood, for instance, describes "young children play[ing] in the aisles and parents striv[ing] futilely to keep them quiet," so that they did not disrupt what Wood characterizes as a very "solemn" part of the service.[19] Garrigan, though, gives three examples that allow me to distinguish "variation," "deviation," and "disruption," three terms that I shall use here consistently in a specific way as analytic categories for studying Christian worship. I am going to dwell for a moment on drawing distinctions between these categories, because they provide one major part of the framework I use to look comparatively at the worship of a number of congregations, in such a way as to perceive the dynamics of congruence that are central to my overall argument.

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[19] Wood, 209.

In one of the Roman Catholic congregations that Garrigan studied, the woman lay reader[20] said, contrary to what the printed order of service expected her to say, "It's the Alleluia" before reading the acclamation that would introduce the priest's reading of the Gospel; moreover, the congregation as a whole read this acclamation, which the order of service called for the reader to say alone. Neither the priest nor anyone in the congregation protested this departure from the expected actions, and it did not obstruct or impede advancing to the next action in the sequence.[21] By contrast, in the other Roman Catholic congregation Garrigan observed, a woman lay reader began to introduce the second scripture reading with the words in the printed service, which were intended (in this congregation, apparently) for the priest to read: "... the woman said, 'The...' but the presider stood up in his place and interrupted with, 'The second reading is from the book of the Apocalypse.' The woman then read it, ending as before with, 'This is the word of the Lord.'"[22] Given that, contrary to the printed order of service, the priest had also introduced the first scripture reading instead of the woman lay reader, Garrigan infers that the presider interrupts the woman because he believes that "only ordained people (and therefore only men) can introduce scripture."[23]

While one could draw out several differences between these two moments in worship, what is important for my argument is to understand how they are different *kinds* of divergences from the actions that were expected in the worship services. In the first case, while the reader's announcement ("It's the Alleluia") was not itself called for by the order of service, it was merely a redundant statement of an action already printed in the order of service, and it had the effect of advancing the sequence of expected actions in the expected way; moreover, when the whole congregation read the acclamation, rather than the reader alone, it still advanced the sequence of actions. In the second case, the priest judged that the reader was about to do something that would violate the expectations for actions in the worship service, and threaten the advancement of the sequence of actions: I say "threaten," because the priest felt the need to interrupt the reader, correct the error, and re-direct the flow of action in the service. The first is an instance of what I will call a *variation*: a divergence from an action expected in a worship service that nonetheless constitutes a performance of that action sufficient to fulfill the expected sequence of actions and advance that sequence. On the other hand, those divergences, such as the second example, that make it difficult to perform the expected actions or to advance the sequence of expected actions, I shall call *disruptions*. The distinction between variations and disruptions is a difference in kind, not merely in degree: a variation fulfills and advances what is expected of bodies in worship, while a disruption not only does not fulfill or advance what is expected of bodies in worship, but actually makes it difficult to do so. In other words, one kind of divergence goes "with the grain" of the worship service but in a slightly different way, while another kind cuts against that grain.

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[20] Gender and status with respect to the priesthood are significant in this example and the next.
[21] Garrigan, 186.
[22] Garrigan, 126.
[23] Garrigan, 130.

Now, a third example from Garrigan allows us to distinguish an additional analytic category. At another point in the worship service of the second Roman Catholic congregation, Garrigan says that “people were still arriving and walking up and down the side aisles of the church as the priest read ... the gospel appointed for the day...” and later, during the homily, “there was a lot of background noise: rustling of papers, coughs, children crying, brief conversations at the back all the time the priest was speaking.”[24] Walking up the side aisles (presumably to find and get to an available seat) was not at all what bodies were expected to be doing at that point in the service, but neither did it impede bodies from doing what was expected. Tellingly, while conversation during the homily likewise was not the expected conduct, by moving or remaining at the back of the worship space, it did not impede the performance (at least by other bodies) of the expected conduct. This third analytic category, divergence that does not fulfill yet also does not impede, I designate as *deviation*.

Along with variation, deviation, and disruption, there is one more analytic category of divergences that I want to name. It is, in fact, the sixth and last of the aspects I wish to draw out from Garrigan’s and Wood’s descriptions of worship for characterizing “what bodies were doing” in those services. Across all of these services, regardless of the variations and deviations (and some potential disruptions) that occurred, there were no situations reported when an individual worshipper or group of worshippers either explicitly challenged the expectations for bodily conduct in worship or sought to enact an alternative sequence of actions in worship. For instance, across many moments when every body or nearly every body was doing the same thing, no one perceptibly questioned why every body was doing the same thing. Moreover, no one questioned the fact that every body was expected to be doing the same thing. We can define *dissent* in a service as any action that either openly challenges the sequence of expected actions or explicitly enacts a sequence of actions different from the expected actions. The first three kinds of divergence (variation, deviation, disruption) all flow *with* the sequence of expected actions, but dissent flows against it. Both in the services we have just looked at and those that we now examine, dissent (in my specialized sense) was extremely difficult to perceive.

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[24] Garrigan, 126.

C. Expanding the framework: worship in two Protestant congregations

Thus far I have discussed worship services of congregations that all identify themselves as Roman Catholic, which could mean that the patterns I have been discussing are features not shared by worshipping communities in other Christian traditions, such as Protestant worship or Charismatic worship. So now I want to consider a series of worship services in congregations that either identify with a tradition (or traditions) other than Roman Catholicism, or identify as Roman Catholic but nonetheless worship in ways that are noticeably different from those I have explored above. Again, I am not building an argument that the features I am drawing out must, on conceptual or logical grounds, appear in all instances of Christian worship, nor even that they will be found empirically in all instances. But showing how these features occur in the worship of communities that identify with a broad range of Christian traditions implies that they are not markers of only a single tradition within Christian worship. The worship services I now consider differ in multiple and sometimes striking ways from the ones I have already discussed (as well as from one another). Despite these differences, however, the whole set of features I have pointed out above occurs in many of them; and even in those services where one or two of the features do not appear, the rest of the features do. Thus, these features do not constitute an all-or-none grouping, but a cluster of patterns that frequently occur together, though in various combinations.

Let us start with the Sunday-morning worship services at Good Samaritan United Methodist Church, as described by Mary McClintock Fulkerson in *Places of Redemption*. At the level of liturgical activities, aggregated from bodily conduct, one can see both resemblances and dissimilarities between Good Samaritan's worship services and those of the Roman Catholic congregations discussed earlier. For instance, bodies in Good Samaritan's services sing hymns and read or hear portions of the Christian scriptures in much the same order and form as in the Roman Catholic congregations (94-95).[25] On the other hand, one of the services at Good Samaritan included an activity to mark the observance of Martin Luther King, Jr., Day in the United States, which was not included in the Roman Catholic worship services (presumably because Wood did not report on worship services held on that national holiday). Perhaps the most obvious dissimilarity is that bodies at Good Samaritan did not enact a rite of Eucharist during the services McClintock Fulkerson observed (though she indicates that the congregations do enact this rite on a regular schedule).

Moreover, McClintock Fulkerson presents differences between the Sunday-morning services led by different pastoral leaders of Good Samaritan, since she participated over the course of a transition from the spousal team of Dan and Linda (a pastor and diaconal minister, respectively) to Gerald (a pastor). McClintock Fulkerson compares the services in terms of both the manner and the content of the sermon and other moments of liturgical leadership: "[Dan and Linda's] worship services typically include extemporaneous sermons ... and informality that some associate with evangelical worship.... Gerald's services are characterized by formal liturgies and sermons preached from a manuscript" (90).

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[25] Until indicated otherwise, parenthetical references in this portion are to Mary McClintock Fulkerson, *Places of Redemption* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).

Again, however, we can also consider Good Samaritan's Sunday-morning services at a different granularity, that of bodily action before it is demarcated into specific ritual activities. At this level, the services bear much similarity both with each other and with the services described by Wood and Garrigan. Relative to all that human bodies can do, the range of bodily actions that occurred in Good Samaritan's services was fairly narrow, largely the same as the range of actions that occurred in the Roman Catholic services.[26] Even if one were to list all the bodily actions that occurred in the services, whether or not they were called for by the order of service, it would still be a very small fraction of all that human bodies can do. (I make no judgment of this fact, but only wish here to take explicit notice of it.) In addition, there are clear indicators that at each moment, there was a specific thing all the bodies were expected to be doing. A printed bulletin was used in both services, conveying a set of activities to be performed in the single given order — that is, not options from which various orders of enactment could be selected (94, 105). Regularly during each service the leader (whether the pastor or the music leader) directs worshippers to do certain actions and they by and large do them; moreover, even in the absence of such direction, worshippers do not break into idiosyncratic or random action, but largely do what other bodies are doing.

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[26] One way to register this sense of narrowness is to call to mind a range of bodily conduct that is pervasive in ordinary life: throwing objects and breaking them, assembling objects and building things with them, cooking and all the motions associated with it, dancing, drawing or painting, holding a loved one close to one's body, touching another person's body, putting on items of clothing and taking them off.... This list itself is a small fraction of all that the human body can do, yet very few if any of the things on it are present, in the full range of their possibilities, as part of any of the worship services I am discussing in this chapter.

That there was an expectation that all or most bodies would be doing the same thing does not mean, however, a complete lack of variation: but this variation is highly regulated nonetheless. This is similar to the services described by Garrigan and Wood, yet the variations at Good Samaritan more fully illustrate the distinctions I drew above between variation, deviation, disruption, and dissent. For example, in the service led by Dan and Linda, during the sermon, "assenting noises come from many folks: nodding heads, whispered 'yeses' in the back.... 'Oh yes!' someone cries out.... A few arms wave"(97). And in the service led by Gerald, when the choir sang a post-sermon praise-song, a worshipper who is not singing with the choir "mouths the words and sings along as if it were the most natural thing in the world" (106). In both cases, individual bodies were conducting themselves in ways that most other bodies were not, but the conduct still allowed the bodies to fulfill the sequence of expected actions — even enhancing their fulfillment of it — without otherwise obstructing the fulfillment of the sequence.

Another kind of variation was exhibited during a service led by Dan and Linda. In response to Dan's invitation, immediately following the sermon, for worshippers to re-dedicate themselves to "Christian discipleship" (McClintock Fulkerson indicates this occurs every week), three people came forward. The third person, whom

McClintock Fulkerson calls “Mr. Jones,” asked, through Dan, to be able to tell his story during the worship service, to which the congregation replied with “murmurs of approval.” At the conclusion of his story, he then asked “if he might sing. Several voices respond ‘yes!’ and we are treated to the best music of the day...” (97-98). I find these two exchanges significant in two ways. First, the sequence of expected actions was interrupted. Mr. Jones’ telling of his story and singing were unplanned, and while they did arise at the invitation of the worship leader, they were a variation from how the preceding participants had responded to the invitation (they have “soft conversation” with Dan (98)). Indeed, Mr. Jones’ testimony extends the service past its usual ending-time, which, McClintock Fulkerson notes, is taken by the congregation “as an extension of the Holy Spirit, not the service’s running late as several white members would have it” (100). Second, however, permission is sought *both* times the sequence is varied. We cannot know from the ethnographic report whether the worshippers approved these requests merely to be polite or as a matter of reflex, or because they judged the proposed actions (testimony and song) sufficiently non-disruptive. But we can say that a potential divergence from the sequence was not something that either Dan or Mr. Jones felt he could just impose of his own volition. Rather, permission was explicitly sought and granted, and this permission made the divergence a variation rather than a disruption (i.e., one that advances rather than obstructs the fulfillment of the sequence).

Not every variation triggers the need for permission, but my point is that some divergences trigger a response to determine whether they advance or obstruct the sequence of the worship service. This is reinforced by contrasting the moment of

Mr. Jones' testimony with another moment, this one occurring in a service led by Gerald. At the time when the concerns of the congregation are being gathered for prayer, Kenny, one of the residents of the home for developmentally disabled people with which Good Samaritan is connected, "starts clapping. An attendant speaks gently to him, asking him to stop, but he keeps it up. Then Deborah *yells, 'Stop!'* and Kenny *goes silent*. Such *disruptions* have no effect on Gerald. Without pause, he offers a pastoral prayer..." (106, emphasis supplied). Here we have bodily conduct that was neither part of the service's sequence of expected actions nor engaged in at that time by any body other than Kenny. This very same conduct *was*, in fact, engaged in by every body at an earlier point in the service, right after Gerald finished preaching, so we know that clapping is not proscribed in a general sense in this worshipping community (105). But when Kenny begins clapping, all by himself, it constitutes a disruption (as McClintock Fulkerson herself calls it), and it evokes a response that is initially more reserved but, when that fails, becomes more confrontational. Kenny's conduct crosses the threshold from deviation to disruption — that is, from fulfilling the expected actions to obstructing the fulfillment of them — so the collective body of worshippers seeks to eliminate that conduct *without removing* the individual body called Kenny, in other words, to re-channel the conduct of the individual body so that it does not disrupt the conduct of the collective body. Moreover, Fulkerson reports no evidence that any body in the worship service challenged the attendant's and Deborah's interventions or even found them strange: we cannot say whether some worshippers disagreed with these interventions, but at a minimum we can say that the interventions did not themselves trigger any counter-intervention.

The difference between a deviation in and a disruption of the sequence of expected actions in a service is further illustrated by contrasting Kenny's clapping with a moment in a service led by Dan and Linda. One segment of the service is called "Children's Time," when "a number of children gather around Dan to hear a message just for them" (95). When the focus of the service shifts to the interactions of Dan and the children, it feels, according to McClintock Fulkerson, "like there are two realities in the room. One is Dan ... there is also the coming and going of individuals who consult one another and seem oblivious to the front of the room and Dan's performance" (ibid.). During this time, the bodies that have gone up front are expected to interact with Dan, while the bodies that remained seated are, presumably, expected to observe these interactions non-disruptively. However, the service allows these bodies a wider range of conduct, chiefly walking around and holding conversation with each another — so long as they do not disrupt the interactions with Dan at the front of the worship space. However, once Children's Time ends and the children leave for their a separate service, McClintock Fulkerson observes that "the travelling diminishes quite a bit ... there is quiet, as the remaining adults await the intensity of the sermon" (ibid.). Walking around and holding conversation, then, are not permissible deviations at all points in the service, but only in a certain portion. At other points, they would obstruct the fulfillment of the expected actions, thereby crossing the threshold from deviation to disruption.

In the Sunday-morning services of Good Samaritan, therefore, one can see examples of what I have distinguished as three different forms of divergence: variation, deviation, and disruption. They do not, however, include the fourth form of divergence, dissent. McClintock Fulkerson does not report witnessing any instance in which one or more bodies in the worship services acted in a way that either openly challenges the sequence of expected actions or explicitly enacted a sequence of actions different from the expected actions. Moreover, the fact that no body challenged the sequence or enacted a different one was not marked in the worship service as anything strange or odd. Indeed, McClintock Fulkerson's perceptions of the services highlight the expression of consensus, due largely to her adoption of Charles Foster's framework of worship as "a place to nurture and develop 'a common vocabularly and practices for congregational conversation'" (90 (repeated at 117), citing Charles Foster[27]). McClintock Fulkerson sees the forging of commonality through "incorporative practices of singing and ecstatic response to proclamation [that] produce experiences of joyful exuberance"; these practices "offer in the forging of commonalities ... a primary good of pleasure" (121).[28] We can, at the very least, say that the expression of dissent was not a defining or major expectation of the worship services.

I now want to consider the worship of a different congregation, St. John Progressive Baptist Church, in Austin, TX. Walter Pitts, in his in-depth analysis of the congregation's worship, has demarcated two different ritual-frames that comprise worship at St. John, and the first of these is "Devotion." Devotion chiefly consists of congregational song led by the deacons, alternating with prayer led by either a deacon or another worshipper (11-18). It does not rely on written materials, since the congregation "has memorized the basic melody [and] its variants" for the hymns sung during this portion of the service, and the prayers are delivered orally only (12, 15). Moreover, the specific hymns that will be sung and prayers that will be prayed are not chosen ahead of time, but rather the prayers are composed extemporaneously by the one speaking them, and each hymn is selected right at the conclusion of a given prayer, when one of the deacons begins singing the first line (14). The *verbal content* of the hymns and prayers, then, is more spontaneously determined in St. John's Devotion than at Good Samaritan and the Roman Catholic parishes that Garrigan and Wood visited. This spontaneity does not, however, extend to selecting which activities will occur, in what order, during the service — that is, to what I have been calling the sequence of expected activities. Pitts gives no indication that there is any variation from the pattern of alternating hymns and prayers. Devotion is not a ritual in which just "anything can happen," but rather only certain things are supposed happen — mainly, bodies sing and bodies pray. And while the sequence of activities in Devotion is quite different from any portion of the sequence of worship at Good Samaritan or the Roman Catholic parishes discussed earlier, Devotion and those other services are indistinguishable with respect to having a sequence of activities set for the service in the first place.

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[27] Charles Foster, *Embracing Diversity: Leadership in Multicultural Congregations* (Bethesda, MD: Alban Institute, 1997).

[28] Until otherwise indicated, parenthetical references in this portion are to Walter F. Pitts, *Old Ship of Zion: The Afro-Baptist Ritual in the African Diaspora* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993).

So the sequence of actions during Devotion does not spontaneously emerge but is set ahead of time, even though the specific verbal content is spontaneously selected (at least from a given repertoire). There is, however, an additional spontaneity in Devotion, and it would at first glance appear to allow, unlike the services I have already analyzed, an individual body to act differently from what every other body is doing. “Before the congregation finishes [a given] hymn ... a member of the congregation or deacon stands to let everyone know he or she will offer the next prayer” (16); the initiation of a hymn following each prayer occurs in the same fashion. Thus, for a brief moment at least, an individual body (the one that will pray or lead the next hymn) departs from what every body else is doing. But this also occurs in the services at both Good Samaritan and the Roman Catholic congregations discussed earlier: a lay reader reads while every other body listens (or is supposed to), the pastor gives a sermon or homily while every other body listens or otherwise acts non-disruptively, musicians perform while other bodies follow along. Devotion at St. John differs only in that it is not known *which* specific body will be the one to momentarily act differently until the exact moment when a body actually does so. In other words, there is spontaneity only regarding which body will momentarily act differently, not whether any body will do so.

But this only begs a larger question, which went unconsidered above: how should we account for the fact that regularly in all these services, individual bodies *do* act differently from what most other bodies are doing, in ways that are not marked as strange or out of place? How does this relate to my notion that, at least in the worship services I have been exploring, there is an expectation that every body do what every body else is doing? Before answering, it will be helpful to step back a bit in order to affirm the broad kind of argument I am pursuing here. Imagine, then, a spectrum of which one end is marked as “every body in worship does the exact same thing as all the other bodies, one hundred percent of the time,” and the other end marked as “every body in worship does something different from all the other bodies, one hundred percent of the time." If one were to argue that all Christian worship must (on logical or theological grounds) or will (in empirical observation) fall flatly *on* the "every body doing the same thing" end-point of this spectrum, then any divergence would falsify the argument. But my argument is, rather, that the specific worship services, ethnographically described, that I have gathered here are best characterized as both *significantly closer to and tending more towards* the "every body doing the same thing" end of the spectrum than the "every body doing a different thing" end. Divergences do not in themselves falsify this sort of argument, but they must be accounted for if the argument is to be sustained.

Explicating this tendency toward "every body doing the same thing" with respect to issues of power is the work of later parts of the dissertation, but right now the task is to account for moments such as when a deacon in Devotion begins the next hymn while every body else in the service is praying. There can be no denying that a moment like this permits, indeed calls for, an individual body to differ from all the other bodies in its physical movement and visual and auditory expression. Yet that individual body is not doing "just any old thing," but instead doing something that (a) indicates what all the other bodies, all together, should next be doing, and (b) encourages them to do that next thing. In other words, with respect to the *sequence* of expected actions, the individual body acts in a way that advances the sequence and encourages other bodies to fulfill it. Thus, moments of "leadership" in worship — such as a deacon beginning a hymn or a reader announcing a lesson from the Gospels or a presider asking everyone to stand — are part of the category of divergence I have defined as "variations," which actively promote the fulfillment of the sequence of expected actions. We can think of liturgical leadership as a specific subcategory of variation, namely, variation-in-role: variation between the roles of enacting the sequence of expected actions and of encouraging such enactment. Although these roles manifest different bodily conduct, they stand in the same relationship to the sequence of expected actions — a relationship of coherence with it and fulfillment of it. One most note, though, a characteristic of leadership specific to all the services I have thus far presented, including Devotion: *one* body only indicates what *all* the bodies are supposed to be doing. There are not, for example, two bodies acting differently from each other and thereby competing to lead the rest of the bodies in worship. The variations-in-role that we have seen so far do not introduce multiple sequences of expected (or possible) action, but promote a single sequence within a given worship service.[29]

In the Devotion service, there are very few variations other than the variation-in-role of a deacon initiating a hymn and a deacon or member leading a prayer. In fact, Pitts vividly describes the ways in which bodies act in unison as the service alternates between hymns and prayers. For instance, hymns are sung by being "lined out": "The deacon calls out the first hymn line in a singsong recitative, and the congregation repeats the line in a ... melody, each member carefully embellishing each syllable" (14). As they repeat the line first sung by the deacon, worshippers are "thumping the floor in time with the slow beat." This bodily synchrony is also manifest during the prayers, as congregants “sway to the rhythm of [the prayer-leader’s] voice, keeping time with their church fans and responsive Amens” (15.) In addition to this minimal variation, Pitts’ description of the service indicates ways in which the threshold between deviation and disruption is explicitly policed: mothers, for example, “gather their younger children to restrain their fidgeting, while giving older offspring reproachful glances should they move or talk” (14). (While I strongly suspect that such moments occurred in the services described by Wood, Garrigan, and McClintock Fulkerson, they did not describe them.)

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[29] In other words, for my observations here not to be tautological (i.e., how could worship *not* connote "leadership"), one does not have to imagine a worship service that lacked all "leadership" whatsoever, but only to imagine the possibility of worship that, at any given "leadership moment," features multiple leadership-roles promoting different sequences of action, some bodies following one, other bodies following another. What I am trying to draw attention to here is the expectation that, at any given moment, there should be *one* leader for a worship service, promoting a *single* sequence of actions.

However, the example that is most significant for my argument is the expectation that no body in Devotion will enter individual trance: “Although the hymn-singing and praying may swell in intensity, no one ‘shouts,’ that is, goes into trance, during this period.... Church members who feel on the verge of trance will run out of the sanctuary rather than let a premature ‘descent of the Spirit’ *disturb* Devotion’ (15, emphasis supplied). This expectation is not merely known, but physically enforced: “If a member ... should shout before removing himself, the ushers or deacons will carry the entranced congregant out of the sanctuary”; at least at the time it occurs, such behavior is “a terribly embarrassing incident” (15-16). While I will discuss shouting/trance below, it is important here to note the correlation that shouting/trance is a highly individualized state, and it elicits much stronger disruption-prevention measures — actually being expelled from the body of worshippers — than we have seen in any of the services examined thus far. That Devotion (the first ritual-frame of worship at St. John) maintains the same tendency towards every body doing the same thing as applies in worship at the other communities I have discussed sets up a particularly intriguing contrast against the second ritual-frame, which I discuss a little further below.

D. Seeming contradictions of the operating logic

The second of the two ritual-frames that comprise worship at St. John is referred to by the congregation as “Service,” and it differs from the Devotion frame in some major ways. The contrast between these two frames is linked to a series of worship services that collectively would seem to overturn the assertions I have made thus far in the chapter regarding the tendency toward “every body doing the same thing” in worship. Or they would seem, less damagingly for my argument, to suggest that there are at least two operating logics on which Christian worship proceeds, of which “every body doing the same thing” is only one option. In taking up the next set of services, I hope to show that differences between them and the services I have already discussed are differences in degree more than in kind, such that we can arrive at a more nuanced framework for the operating logic I have already been delineating. Along with the Service frame of worship at St. John’s, I will analyze two other kinds of services, described and analyzed respectively by Sarah Koenig and Thomas Csordas.

The services I gather in this section have each been variously labeled as “charismatic” or “Pentecostal” or “evangelical” forms of worship, or some combination of these terms. I shall intentionally avoid using these terms in my discussion here, not because they are not meaningful, but because they involve so many different (and often overlapping) layers of meaning that trying to define them systematically and fit the services within such definitions would require more effort than the interpretive clarity it would bring to my project. Instead of focusing on these categories, I am merely going to describe some features of each service that are pertinent to the dynamics I have been probing here. I am not seeking to join debates about what evangelical, charismatic, or Pentecostal Christian worship means or is: I am only trying to consider certain relationships among bodies in a number of particular concrete instances of Christian worship, including some that have been identified by others (or by the worshippers themselves) as Pentecostal, evangelical, or charismatic.

What justifies analyzing these services together is that they can all be characterized by the presence of a certain pattern of bodily conduct that was not observed in the services I have already examined: namely, during much of the service, many if not most of the individual bodies diverged in their conduct from most of the other bodies. That such divergence is so frequent, in terms of both time and number of bodies, would seem to indicate that, on the spectrum I described earlier, these services do *not* tend more towards total congruence (the “every body doing the same thing as every other body” end of the spectrum), but rather tend towards total divergence (the “every body doing something different from every other body” end). This would, in fact, be tenable if one only focused on the frequency of divergence. But when one looks more closely at the specific *kinds* of divergence that occur so frequently, one can find in each service a scheme for regulating divergence that (a) significantly resembles the regulation of divergence in the services discussed in the first two sections and (b) is oriented to promoting the overall collective congruence of individual bodies.

Although it would make sense to continue the discussion of worship at St. John, moving from the first ritual-frame identified by Pitts to the second, I am actually going to delay that for a bit. This is because the second ritual-frame combines several different dynamics that are more clearly understood when examined in conjunction with other worship services. So I will begin with the kind of service presented by Sarah Koenig, which she, following the usage in the worship tradition of which she is part, calls “Praise and Worship.” Like worship at St. John, the “Praise and Worship service” consists of two ritual-frames (though Koenig does not use this term): a song-focused frame of “Praise and Worship time” proper, after which comes a sermon-focused “teaching time” (143).[30] The teaching time “generally consists of a sermon that is both prefaced and concluded with prayer,” and during this time “participants take notes ... follow along in their books (Bibles) and occasionally raise their hands or murmur agreement with the teacher (pastor)” (146). In other words, the teaching time, with respect to bodily conduct, is similar to the preaching segments in the Roman Catholic services attended by Garrigan and Wood and the Methodist ones attended by McClintock Fulkerson.

The Praise and Worship time is of much greater interest for my argument. During Praise and Worship *time* (that is, the first frame of a Praise and Worship *service*), “several songs are sung one after another in a ‘worship set,’“ which is “prefaced with a greeting and opening prayer and concluded with pastoral prayer and the offering” (143, 146). The songs usually featured in Praise and Worship time are drawn from a sub-culture that Koenig describes as “evangelical” (and that, from my own observation, tends to be divided between African and European American traditions): “Evangelicals sing Praise and Worship music at church on Sundays, but they also listen to Praise and Worship music in their homes, cars, and workplaces Monday through Saturday. They attend [Praise and Worship] conferences and concerts, and they purchase [Praise and Worship] music at Christian bookstores" (155). Koenig identifies several overarching themes of Praise and Worship songs: they "describe encounter with God in highly tangible terms"; ask "the Holy Spirit to dwell directly in [the congregants'] hearts"; revisit the paschal event so that it "becomes current again as its effects spill over into the present"; and "invite the congregation to praise and serve as the act of praise itself" (149, 150, 152, 153).

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[30] Until indicated otherwise, parenthetical citations in this portion are to Sarah Koenig, “This Is My Daily Bread: Toward a Sacramental Theology of Evangelical Praise and Worship,” *Worship* 82.2 (March 2008): 141-161.

The goal of singing these songs, Koenig asserts unambiguously, is to have an "intimate encounter with God," a kind of encounter that Praise and Worship time "facilitates" but does not "produce" or "provide" in an instrumental way (143, 149). This "intimate encounter" manifests in the bodily conduct of the worshippers, who "may raise their hands in the air, stand, kneel, clap, sway, and in some churches, even dance" (147). Here, then, is the element of Praise and Worship time to which I want to draw attention: while singing the *same* song, individual bodies perform *different* expressive actions. From Koenig's account (and also from my own experiences of Praise and Worship, in several congregations that identify as evangelical and Baptist, evangelical and Lutheran, evangelical and non-denominational Protestant, or as part of the Vineyard movement and network), none of the observed bodily actions is the single preferred or correct one relative to which the others are aberrations; during Praise and Worship, there simply is no *single* correct action. This does not mean, however, that anything goes: although bodies are permitted to act in different ways, they are expected to act within a narrow set of possibilities (as indicated in Koenig's list). Praise and Worship time, in fact, is indistinguishable from any of the services I have already discussed with respect to the narrowness of the range of bodily actions — relative to all that a body is capable of — that are acceptable in the worship service.

So, then, can one accurately characterize Praise and Worship time as worship in which every individual body is not doing the same thing as every other body? The question challenges us to complexify the notion of what it means for every body "to *do* the *same* thing" as every other body. One can distinguish, at a first pass, the physical *form* of what bodies do in Praise and Worship time from the *function* the body is supposed to fulfill or perform in worship. The form, in Praise and Worship time, includes several options: bodies may "raise their hands in the air, stand, kneel, clap, sway, and in some churches, even dance." Yet the physical form of bodily conduct also includes the sounds that the body expresses, in this case the same Praise and Worship song. Thus, even strictly with respect to the physical form of what bodies do, there is both divergence (in gestures and postures) *and* congruence (in sonic expression). Indeed, the congruence of bodies' sonic expressions provides one boundary to what is allowable divergence in gesture and posture, insofar as gestures and postures that interfere with the singing of songs or clash with the emotional themes of a given song (for example, clapping during a somber song) are not allowed.[31]

Even if bodies diverge from one another, to a certain degree, in the physical form of their conduct during Praise and Worship time, they are largely congruent with one another in the function that their conduct seeks to perform. Now, this notion of function as one of the aspects of bodily conduct in worship is a little tricky to define. For now, I will stick with the functions that are evident in Praise and Worship time specifically. Koenig's account offers two different, nested layers of function. The overall purpose of Praise and Worship time is for each worshipper to experience an "intimate encounter with God," in which "Christ is made present in the congregation through the work of the Holy Spirit" (143, 149): we could refract this purpose into a function by saying that the function of bodily conduct is to act in such a way that the worshipper can experience this kind of encounter. Moreover, each song in the "worship set" — while it supports the overall purpose of facilitating the intimate encounter — also provides for a particular function for the body: to recall the paschal event or to give thanks for the blessings of God are two major examples that Koenig discusses. These two layers of function (overall and song-specific) work in harmony, and they determine what physical forms of bodily conduct are acceptable in the worship service. After all, for any of the functions Koenig mentions, one could generate an extensive list of physical conduct that could, plausibly, express or fulfill that function; yet in actual Praise and Worship time, as bodies fulfill the functions set for them in worship, their actions take only a very small number of physical forms. Koenig's own description aptly illustrates this: " ... clap, sway, and in *some* churches, *even* dance" (147, emphasis added). The qualifier "even" suggests that there is a line that demarcates physical forms of conduct that sufficiently enact the functions of Praise and Worship time and those that do not — since it connotes that for many congregations dance (as an example) would be beyond that line.

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[31] Koenig does not directly say this, but I can confirm it from my own experience of Praise and Worship.

It does not matter, for my argument, either (a) which specific physical forms of conduct are linked with which functions in any particular congregation's Praise and Worship practice or (b) in what terms the functions of bodily conduct are or would be (variously) articulated by the members of any particular worshipping community. What I am driving at is simply the pattern *that* variations in the form of bodily conduct are bounded by the need to cohere with the functions of bodily conduct in Praise and Worship time. Or, to state it negatively, the form(s) in which bodies conduct themselves are expected not to violate or contradict the functions bodies are supposed to perform in worship. Whatever (locally specific) variations there are in physical form during Praise and Worship, they are expected to be within the range of conduct linked (however locally and perhaps arbitrarily) to the functions of the body's conduct established by the Praise and Worship time. In other words, bodies in Praise and Worship time *are* expected to "do the same thing" when considered from the aspect of function. Furthermore, divergence in form is subordinate to congruence in function, in the sense that the physical form of the body's conduct in worship cannot, by itself, establish new or other functions for the body, but instead it is supposed to fulfill the functions expected of the body in Praise and Worship. The limited range of forms of bodily conduct — defined by the functions bodies are expected to fulfill in worship — means that an expectation of congruence still obtains. For when individuals' bodies are allowed to be not completely congruent with *all other* bodies (in the aspect of form), they *are* still expected to be congruent with a definite, relatively narrow set of functions.

This relationship between form and function is not, in fact, unique to Praise and Worship: all of the services I have examined previously manifest the same dynamic.

The difference is that in the services considered earlier — for example, in the scripture-readings in the Roman Catholic congregations or the manner of singing songs during Devotion at St. John — the number of forms that were acceptable expressions of a given function was limited to one. On the other hand, in Praise and Worship, it is more than one (generally less than a dozen, but in any case vastly less than the number of forms that could express a given function). In both cases, though, the form of conduct is limited to what is acceptable in the community as an expression of the functions (however understood) that bodies are supposed to fulfill in worship, and bodies are expected to be congruent with some element within that limited set of forms.

Distinguishing the aspects of form and function in the way I have suggested allows for a more precise understanding of the notion of a variation that I offered. Up to now my discussion of variations has been framed in terms of a set of *actions* expected to be performed in a specific *sequence*: a variation is an individual body's divergence from the *action* of other bodies that nonetheless is sufficient to fulfill and advance the expected *sequence* of actions. Now, however, we should see that each "action" expected in the sequence has two aspects, the form(s) in which bodies act and the function(s) they are expected to perform by thus acting. In some of the worship services I am examining in this chapter, the sequence of expected actions includes a single form for each function; in other services, there can be multiple (though still specified, not totally open-ended) forms linked with each function. So the sequence of what bodies are expected to do in worship needs to be conceptualized as a sequence specifically of functions (that is, a sequence of functions-bodies-are-expected-to-perform). With this shift, variations, deviations, and disruptions (which I have defined relative to each other) remain defined in terms of their effect on the fulfillment of the sequence, but now it is the sequence of functions at issue. This more exact sense of a sequence makes it more possible to argue in favor of an operating logic that can sufficiently account for the patterns of congruence and divergence in bodily conduct across worship services that might, at first, appear as incommensurate as Roman Catholic Eucharist and Praise and Worship in a Vineyard Fellowship congregation. In this operating logic, there is a sequence of functions that bodies are supposed to perform in the service — such as "to partake of the holy meal instituted by Christ" or "to experience an intimate encounter with God" — and bodies act in congruence with one another with respect to these functions, regardless of any degree of divergence permitted with respect to form.

So far, the variations we have observed fall into three types: variation in the expected sequence of functions (which is actually quite rare); variation between the roles of enacting the sequence and encouraging its enactment; and variation in the physical form of bodily conduct. There is another kind of variation that is important to explicate, on that is related to but meaningfully different from variation in the form of conduct. Let us envision again the Praise and Worship time that Koenig describes, and contrast it with the teaching time that follows it. During the former, there are several different forms that bodily conduct can take; during the latter, there is really just one form, sitting and listening to the sermon, with a small degree of variation (i.e., taking notes or reading along when the Bible is cited) extending the form. However, the degree of variation in form is not the only aspect in which the two portions of the service differ from one another: they also differ in the degree to which bodies' actions are synchronous, that is, occurring at the same time. During the teaching time of the service — as well as during most of each of the services discussed previously in this chapter — there is one form of bodily conduct, and all bodies are expected to perform this *at the same time*. However, during the Praise and Worship time, there are *multiple* (though limited in number) forms of bodily conduct, and bodies perform them *at different times*: when one body is clapping, another is raising the hands, while a third may be swaying with eyes closed, and then they can switch among these forms of conduct.

This divergence of the timing of bodily conduct — individual bodies performing the same actions (or from the same set of actions) at different times — is not, however, entirely unique to Praise and Worship time. For example, in the Roman Catholic services attended by Garrigan and Wood, bodies do not eat the bread and drink the wine of communion at the exact same moment, but serially, one after another. Among the services encountered in this chapter, there is a range in the degree of synchrony of bodily conduct, from concurrent action to serial action to more idiosyncratically timed action. In other words, in the temporal aspect of bodily conduct, no less than in the formal aspect, not every service is marked by complete congruence. However, before inferring from this that there really are at least two different operating logics at work in worship, one based on congruence and one based on divergence, we should consider two dynamics that are determinative for the degree of synchrony that is expected in worship, at least in the services I have thus far engaged. First, when bodies do not act in perfect synchrony (that is, complete temporal congruence), their divergent actions are limited to the forms that are acceptable as ways of performing the expected sequence of functions. In Eucharist, there is still only one form for eating and drinking in a given community (or at most three, if a community offered a common cup, individual cups, *and* intinction all in the same service), even though bodies perform that conduct one after another; likewise, in Praise and Worship time, bodies are expected to perform actions that lie within a relatively small set of actions linked to the functions of the body's conduct in Praise and Worship time, even though they may do these actions with idiosyncratic timing. Divergence in *timing* does not introduce new acceptable *forms* of bodily conduct, but rather relies on congruence with an already-determined set of forms. That is, temporal divergence proceeds only under the locally prevailing conditions of formal (and, thereby, functional) congruence.

Second, divergence in the timing of bodily conduct is by and large contained within distinct portions of a worship service. None of the services examined so far features pure divergence in the timing of bodily actions across the entire service. Rather, there is alternation between segments during which a high degree of synchrony (i.e., bodies acting at the same time, temporal congruence) is expected and those during which a lower degree of synchrony is expected. For example, while Praise and Worship time features fairly idiosyncratic timing of actions, it is followed by a teaching time in which bodies are expected to act concurrently. And in the Roman Catholic services that Wood and Garrigan describe, Eucharist is perhaps the only part of the service in which a serial timing is expected, while concurrent timing is expected for the rest of the service (e.g., readings from Scripture, prayers, hymns).

By contrast, Good Samaritan's Sunday-morning services and Devotion at St. John can be characterized as almost entirely concurrent in their expected timing of bodily conduct. Thus, periods of temporal divergence are bounded by periods of temporal congruence, and the boundaries around temporal divergence are set prior to the service and maintained during it: bodies do not spontaneously start acting with different timings just whenever they wish, but rather only during certain parts of worship, according to a regular and pre-set pattern.

To return to the notion of sequence, we can say that, in whatever sequence of functions obtains in a given service, certain functions may be expected to be performed more synchronously, while it may be expected that other functions will be performed less synchronously. Over the course of the sequence of functions, in other words, there can be variation in the expected degree of synchrony. But at each moment in the sequence, there *is* still a pre-determined expectation of what degree of synchrony is acceptable *at that moment*. Precisely insofar as temporal divergence (i.e., a lower degree of synchrony) is so closely *regulated*, rather than allowed to occur whenever it will, we can at a minimum say that, with respect to the timing of bodily action, worship does not proceed on a logic of divergence. Moreover, while there can be a mixture of segments when bodies are expected to be temporally congruent with one another and times when they are expected to be more temporally divergent, there is an overall pattern to this mix, and bodies *are* expected to be congruent with *that* pattern.

The preceding analyses of form and synchrony will now aid us in interpreting two kinds of worship that we have not yet looked at. In everyday discourse of professional practitioners and scholars of Christian worship, they are among the kinds of services that are frequently represented as the very opposite of "high church" worship, which is characterized by adherence to written liturgical texts containing fairly unchanging ritual forms. On the spectrum I suggested earlier, these services (or rather, the two segments I am highlighting, one each from two different services) would seem to exemplify a tendency more towards "every body doing something different from the other bodies" than towards "every body doing the same thing." They will test, therefore, the interpretive reach of the operating logic I have been tracing in this chapter. Moreover, the communities from whose worship these segments come identify themselves with different confessional traditions (one Catholic, the other Protestant) *and* racial categories (one is near-exclusively white and the other near-exclusively black), so that any commonalities in the operation of worship cannot be reduced simplistically to those primary fault-lines of Christianity. I have already introduced one of the communities, St. John Progressive Baptist Church, when I discussed the first ritual-frame of the congregation's worship, called Devotion; I now examine the second ritual-frame, called Service (the capitalized form will always refer exclusively to this second ritual-frame at St. John). The other community is called The Word of God / Sword of the Spirit, and it has been extensively studied by Thomas Csordas, who situates it within a wider community that he categorizes as "Catholic Charismatics" (or, occasionally, "Catholic Pentecostals").

In the example Csordas gives of worship that would be "typical" for The Word of God and other Catholic Charismatic groups, the service occurs "in the gymnasium of the parochial school in a suburban Catholic parish. About one hundred folding chairs are arranged in concentric circles with a small open space in the center ... in contrast to ... church pews in straight pews oriented toward an altar above and in front of the congregation" (163).[32] The core liturgical event for Catholic Charismatics is the "prayer meeting," which can involve whole local communities or smaller household groups; the prayer meeting can also as a standalone occasion of worship or be incorporated within a Catholic Mass similar to the ones described by Wood and Garrigan (163). Directly out of Csordas' description of the prayer meeting, we can heuristically lift out a basic sequence of activities: bodies

(1) exchange various greetings as they settle into the service;
(2) sing several songs;
(3) "pray";[33]
(4) experience and respond to an individual body offering a "teaching";
(5) experience and respond to individual bodies "prophesying" or "sharing";
(6) "pray" again;
(7) hear an individual make announcements; and
(8) sing a closing song (163-65).

Now, if one were to translate this into a sequence of *functions*, in the sense I demonstrated above, one would need to divide item (5), because Csordas identifies prophecy and sharing as two of the chief genres of Catholic Charismatic ritual, along with teaching and prayer; each of these four activities has a distinct function, particular to Catholic Charismatic communities, which Csordas explicates at length (169-83). Further functional analysis might combine items (1) and (2) into something like "entering the worship service," and possibly items (7) and (8) into "concluding the service." All of these functions would be subsumed within the explicitly stated "sole purpose" for gathering in the service, "giving praise and glory to God," corresponding to explicitly stated expectations for the function of bodily conduct: "'worship the Lord' in a relaxed way" and "be open to what the Lord might have to say to the group in prophecy" (165).

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[32] Until otherwise indicated, parenthetical citations in this portion are to Thomas J. Csordas, *Language, Charisma, and Creativity: The Ritual Life of a Religious Movement* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997).
[33] I place this in quotes because "prayer" is one of the four main ritual-genres Csordas identifies in Catholic Charismatic worship.

While Csordas' careful explication supports a fairly strong *functional* distinction among teaching, sharing, prophecy, and prayer, assessing these activities with respect to the *roles* bodies play in performing the functions — as well as the *timing* with which and *forms* in which bodies perform them — yields more complex connections between them. First, in regards to role, we can see that teaching, sharing, and prophecy all involve one body speaking and all other bodies listening to that body, without speaking: "Everyone sits down .... Another member of the pastoral team who will deliver a 'teaching' ... stands and speaks for about ten minutes..."; "The room is silent with anticipation.... The silence is broken by a woman's voice [prophesying]..."; "When the chant subsides, a man rises and 'shares' an incident from the past week..." (164). In all of these activities, one body is divergent from all the others, but those others are all expected to be congruent with one another. Moreover, the divergent action (in this case, speech) of one individual body creates the condition for the congruence of all the other bodies; it is not divergence for its own sake, but divergence for the sake of provoking congruence. On the other hand, in both of the periods of prayer narrated by Csordas, the bodies were all congruent in their role: "Participants sit quietly murmuring prayers to themselves..." though a few moments later, "the room is filled with a hubbub of voices and clapping" [in what Csordas makes clear is a form of prayer]; later still, "all once again join in collective prayer, some speaking in English and others in tongues" (164-65). Thus, if one looked only at a transcription of the words uttered in the prayer meeting, one would judge teaching, sharing, and prophecy as more *congruent* relative to prayer, because only one set of words is spoken in each of these activities versus the multiple sets of words spoken in prayer. Yet from the perspective of the roles bodies play, teaching, sharing, and prophecy are slightly more *divergent* than prayer, since in prayer there is only one role, which all bodies are expected to play.

By contrast, if we turn to the *timing* of bodily conduct in Catholic Charismatic worship, we actually find fairly little variation across the service. During both the singing and the praying in the early part of the service, bodies act with a high degree of synchrony; even if they are praying different words, Csordas gives the sense that they are all praying at the same time (164). Then, during both the teaching and the sharing portions, the timing of bodily conduct is more sequential, in that the bodies that speak do so one after another. The voicing of prayer-requests after the sharing is similarly sequentially timed (165). Throughout these activities, bodies that are not actively leading sit quietly, and it is not the practice that a body can just jump up and interrupt when another body is already speaking. The announcements and song that conclude the service return it to concurrently timed bodily conduct (165). Csordas does not describe a single instance in which bodies initiated conduct other than when all the other bodies were doing the same thing, or when no other body was (i.e., in moments when a body assumed a role of leadership). Bodies maintained complete congruence with the *expectation* of either concurrently or sequentially timed actions.

Finally, the range of divergence with respect to the *form* of bodily conduct seems even narrower. Almost all the variation in form observed by Csordas is variation in the manner of speaking, from the "hubbub of voices" with which glossolalic prayer begins to the "fabric of harmony" to which it modulates, and from the "authoritative tone" in which a woman delivers prophecy to the "reverential murmurs" of worshippers as they reflect on her prophecy (164-165).[34] In terms of movement and posture, Csordas largely describes near-total congruence: "The leader rises again, suggesting that everyone stand and praise God. Everyone does so.... Everyone sits down.... The room is silent with anticipation, many sitting in the characteristic palms-open prayer posture...." (164). At least in the communities that Csordas studied, the absence of moments when bodies improvised movement or gesture was not at all problematic: the expectation falls against such random occurrences of divergence in form. Thus, if one were able to see worship at The Sword of Truth but *not* hear any of the words spoken — that is, if one could not know what linguistic variations were being spoken (which nonetheless have their own logic of congruence) — one might well not perceive too wide a gulf, with respect to bodily congruence, between it and, say, worship during the Sunday-morning service at Good Samaritan or Devotion at St. John.

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[34] The words spoken during the service are not my focus, but they are, in fact, Csordas' main concern, and he analyzes a great deal of verbal regularity, within several major genres of speech (see, for example, the section on "The System of Ritual Genres," 169-201). Hence, even the primary manifestation of divergence in Charismatic Catholic worship turns out to be highly regulated. To the degree that there is divergence in this worship tradition, it is nonetheless strongly oriented towards and held within congruence.

Let us now, in fact, return to St. John Progressive, but this time to the Service that follows Devotion. Although the Service at St. John is a unified ritual-frame, in Pitts' description of it we can see a clear alternation between segments characterized by lesser divergence and segments characterized by greater divergence. Yet one of the ways St. John's Service is distinct among the examples of worship we have considered is that the shifts between more-congruent and less-congruent segments are not marked by a shift from one kind of activity to another. Rather, a shift in bodily energies in the midst of certain activities is the cue for a shift in the degree of expected divergence. The service begins with several hymns that the bodies all sing in unison, followed by a scripture reading (18);[35] in both of these activities, there is little variation in form, role, or timing. Next is an altar prayer, during which "the choir and congregation together sing [the song] 'Thank You Lord'" (18-19). However, as this altar prayer proceeds, the pastor's language and vocal delivery become more energized, and in response to this heightened energy, variations in form begin to emerge: "Deacon Sims cries out, 'Yeah! That's right!' while Sister Pearson, nodding her head, merely utters, 'Yes, yes. Sho' nuff.' Tears, whether of joy or sorrow, start rolling down the cheeks of several faces" (19). This variation in form eventually expands from manners of speaking to shouting and jumping up — the full onset of "trance." These actions are also variations in timing, since bodies do them at different times, in an idiosyncratic fashion. After the prayer has concluded, Pitts observes that

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[35] Until otherwise indicated, citations in this portion are to Pitts, *Old Ship of Zion*.

"[f]ollowing the *emotional tension* of the altar prayer the congregation has *regained composure*" (ibid., emphasis added). This shift in bodily energy marks a shift to activities with little variation in form or timing: the making of announcements and the collecting of offerings. Then the pattern is repeated (20-21): during the last hymn in a series of hymns sung by the choir and heard by the congregation with little variation, the energy elevates, leading to shouting and trance — activities in which individual bodies diverge fairly significantly from other bodies, with respect to the form and timing of conduct.

The third segment of greater divergence begins similarly, though it follows a different course. Again, an activity begins in a mode of high congruence, in this case the sermon: at first, the bodies are mostly listening, with little variation. Slowly, however, various verbal affirmations are given — variation in form (22-23). As the sermon reaches its emotional and intellectual apogee, the call-and-response pattern widely practiced in a number of black Christian worship traditions emerges: the pastor exclaims the next line in his thought or point, and the congregation responds with a variety of affirmations. Unlike the two previous periods of low divergence, the variation in form during the sermon is *not* joined to a variation in timing: instead, an "*antiphonal rhythm* between preacher and congregation has settled into a *predictable pattern* that allows the preacher to begin chanting his lines" (23, emphasis added). So variation in form is held fairly tightly within a congruence of timing. What this shows is that, overall, Service is not some free-for-all, in which divergence breaks out and flows uncontained. Rather, divergence is perceptibly contained within certain portions of the service, and even within those portions, the kinds of permitted divergence are highly regulated.

Two further nuances in the regulation of divergence during Service should be appreciated. First, the wider range of divergence that occurs during certain segments of Service is not just permitted, it is *anticipated and expected*. Pitts reports that "members at St. John Progressive are fond of saying, 'Don't give me no religion I can't feel,'" and there is a sense that something has gone wrong when the energy does not rise sufficiently to elicit divergence: "'The choir can kill the church service or they can help it.... If your choir is not in the Spirit when they're singing, the members out there are not gonna get It'" (25, capitalization in original). In other words, although the precise action that an individual body performs is spontaneous in the sense of being spontaneously chosen from the bounded set of forms which are acceptable during Service, *that* some or many bodies will choose to diverge in one of these forms is not spontaneous. A certain range of divergence, is, in fact, the way to congrue with defining function of Service, which is for "the Holy Spirit [to] enter the sanctuary by manifesting through individual congregational members" (25). However, although there is the expectation that there will be divergence during Service and that such divergence can manifest the Spirit's presence, there are, nonetheless, regular forms of conduct that are expected, and, conversely, those that would be excluded. The range may be wide enough to include crying, shouting, shrieking, jumping up and down, feverishly tapping one's feet, throwing one's hands around, jerking one's body, and running down the aisle (all of which Pitts observed), but it presumably would not include starting a camp-fire in the worship-space or removing all of one's clothes, and Pitts explicitly says that glossolalia is not a part of the tradition in which St. John's worship stands (28).

Even the conduct that is permitted is policed fairly closely by the deacons and ushers. Every time Pitts describes a body beginning more ecstatic conduct, the ushers and deacons are close at hand, waiting to intervene: "Several members, seemingly on the verge of convulsions, are restrained by the ushers, who grab their arms" (20). For the most part, their interventions are focused on physical safety. For example, when Brother Davis "shoots up a hand that catches in the ceiling fan, and droplets of blood sprinkle," even though he is "[a]ware of no pain" because he "has gone into trance," the ushers and deacons, "alarmed at the sight, rush to his side to carry him out" (19). At another point, when a choir member's "jerking movements are moving her precariously close to the edge of the dais, the ushers hurry to prevent her from tripping and falling"; and as "one usher fans the face of a convulsive member, another removes a pair of eyeglasses that may get broken in the frenzy" (21). Now while these interventions may seem undeniably necessary to permit bodies to continue worshipping in their ecstasy, what is interesting is that there actually *is* disagreement among the worshippers as to how much conduct should be policed: seeing the ushers restraining a body, one worshipper "yells out, 'Let her go! She can't hurt herself in the Spirit'"; in another instance, a worshipper says, "'Let Him have His way!' ... referring to the free movement of the Holy Spirit" (21). In the face of these disagreements, we should see the efforts of the ushers and deacons as maintaining a threshold dividing divergent conduct that manifests the Holy Spirit (and therefore congrues with the core function of Service) from divergent conduct that leads to bodily harm: the latter crosses the threshold to become disruption.

Furthermore, the ushers and deacons do not immediately remove all such conduct from the worship-space: instead, they act on bodies so that they can *continue* worshipping ecstatically, so long as they stay just below the threshold of disruption (e.g., restraining arms to allow continued jerking). Only in rare instances do they remove a body, such as Brother Davis, with his bleeding hand. Thus, even in the instance of worship in which, among those considered in this chapter, there is the greatest divergence as to form and timing, bodily conduct is precisely regulated so as not to disrupt the overall congruence of the service.

E. Concluding matters: describing a regimen for the Body of Christ

We have now made a survey of worship as it was actually observed in eight distinct Christian congregations, which included seven distinct types or sub-types of worship (counting, as different sub-types, worship at Good Samaritan led by Dan and Linda and by Gerald, as well as the Service and Devotion frames at St. John). These communities identify with different historical confessions and have widely differing compositions in terms of race, gender, class, and disability (among other dimensions of identity). I make no claim that they so contain or represent the diversity of Christianity as to collectively suffice as a proxy for *all* of Christian worship. Yet from my own first-hand experience and study, I suggest that worship as it is actually practiced in a very large portion (perhaps a plurality) of Christian congregations is, *specifically with respect to the dynamics of bodily conduct I have analyzed*, significantly more like than not like the worship we have considered here. But now it is necessary to articulate, in a more precise and usable formulation, those dynamics themselves.

Despite their multiple diversities, one commonality among all the instances of worship we have re-examined is that, in each of them, there operate certain expectations regarding how bodies are supposed to conduct themselves, especially in relation to how *other* bodies conduct themselves. Some of these expectations are shared across most or all of the services, while others are particular to one or two communities. Nevertheless, *every* community has a number of expectations concerning how bodies are supposed to conduct themselves. Sometimes they are articulated explicitly during the worship, as when a body in the role of leader tells the other bodies to rise, or when a bulletin indicates a specific song to be sung. Many times, however, they are only implicit, evident from observing what the rest of the bodies are doing at any given moment in the service. Yet whether or not they are explicitly stated, they are definitely enforced, by various means, including one body directing another when an expectation has been violated (e.g., Deborah yelling, “Stop!” at Kenny during worship at Good Samaritan); one body preventing another from violating an expectation (the priest who interrupted a lay woman reading scripture in one of the congregations Garrigan observed); or one body guiding another to correctly fulfill an expectation (mothers at St. John glaring at their adolescent children to direct them to pay attention).

Another common feature of these expectations is that they do not come to be during the worship service in which they operate, but always prior to the service. From one worship service to another, they may well be created, revised, or negotiated, but the services considered here each proceed on the assumption that the expectations concerning bodily conduct are definitely set and fully in effect. One can also say that the creation, revision, or negotiation of the expectations operative *in* worship is not considered an act *of* worship, but external and incidental to that act. Yet one cannot necessarily say that these expectations are "decided," in the sense of a body or several bodies explicitly and self-consciously specifying and choosing these expectations for worship. We do not have any evidence related to how the expectations were decided in the communities we have engaged in this chapter, but it seems likely that in most cases the expectations were gradually established — for multiple reasons — relatively far back in time, so that they have become simply "the way things are done" in each community. Why the kinds of expectations we have been tracing have become widespread is, in part, an issue for chapter 3, but for now what matters is that, through whatever processes and on whatever grounds they come to have force, during actual instances of worship they *are* indeed enforced.

In this chapter I have repeatedly spoken of expectations concerning bodily conduct collectively, as a set of elements that work together or interact as a whole, initially referring to a sequence of expected actions, and later to a sequence of functions correlated with expected roles, forms, and degrees of synchrony (timing). I now want to bring more conceptual clarity to this matter of how expectations concerning bodily conduct operate collectively in a worship service. We can say that each of the services we have re-examined here, proveeds on the basis of a *regimen*, a program that prescribes how bodies are supposed to conduct themselves in worship.[36] The term is useful because of the two denotations it joins.[37] In present-day usage, a regimen usually denotes a course of actions by or on the body towards a therapeutic aim — that is, towards the achievement of a desired improvement in one's bodily condition or vitality. Although nowadays the improvement of vital functions lies, in Western societies at least, predominantly in the purview of biomedical practices, discourses of health, sickness, and healing remain pervasive in Christian worship. Many Christians believe that worship can bring actual physical healing, not only represent or convey it symbolically. And even many Christians who are skeptical of faith-healing nonetheless confess, as an act of worship, belief in "the resurrection of the body and the life everlasting," and/or they pursue worship (and other practices constitutive of Christian life) in order to enhance the quality of life in their present, embodied state.

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[36] The link between "operating logic" and "regimen" is that the operating logic describes how bodies are supposed to act with respect to the regimen (primarily in terms of a spectrum of congruence with or divergence from it).

This meaning of regimen as a health-improving program of bodily conduct derives from an earlier denotation, now rare in English, of regimen as a particular system or manner of governing, ruling, guiding. This sense — which persists in English in its etymological sibling, "regime" — emphasizes not so much the aim toward which bodily conduct is guided as the process of guiding itself. It encompasses not only health-related conduct, but all of the body's conduct. And it places the body's conduct within a broader context, not only that of the individual body, but the systems by which whole groups of bodies are collectively governed. There is, moreover, a former Christian usage that makes "regimen" felicitous for the analysis of worship:

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[37] See the *Oxford English Dictionary*, 3rd ed.: sense 1a. — "The regulation of aspects of life (diet, exercise, etc.) which have an influence on a person's health (freq. without article). Also: a mode of treatment; (now more commonly): a particular course of diet, exercise, medication, etc., prescribed or adopted for the restoration or preservation of health. Cf. 'regime,' 'regiment' "; sense 2a. — "The action of governing; governance, rule. Also figurative. Now rare." (The etymological note makes clear, however, that in the Latin and Old French from which the word comes, the "government" sense was the foundational one, and the "health" sense derives from it.

regimen animarum, usually translated as the "direction" or "government of souls." *Regimen animarum* was used especially in medieval Western Christian writings to designate a priest's responsibility and authority to comprehensively guide the spiritual life of his (all male priests, in this historical instance) congregation. Indeed, in one of the *loci classici* about *regimen animarum*, the Fourth Lateran Council (1215) — not coincidentally the same council that made confession at least once a year mandatory for all Christians in the West — called it "*ars artium*," "the art of arts" or highest art.[38] The more power-laden connotation of *regimen* is clear in contrast with another term that is frequently used to describe the same priestly work, *cura animarum*, the "cure" or "care of souls." Yet although both *regimen animarum* and *cura animarum* are often associated with what is presently called "pastoral care"[39] (usually distinguished from worship), the Fourth Lateran Council associated *regimen* specifically with (1) the church's authority to govern through properly authorized and trained agents and (2) the liturgical activities of the church: "Since the direction of souls is the art of arts, we strictly command that bishops ... diligently prepare and instruct those to be elevated to the priesthood in the *divine offices* and in the *proper administration of the sacraments* of the Church."[40]

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[38] Fourth Lateran Council, canon 27, 1215: "*Cum sit ars artium regimen animarum*, ..." in Giuseppe Alberigo, ed., *Conciliorum Oecumenicorum Decreta*, 3rd ed. (Bologna: Instituto per le Scienze Religiose, 1973), 208.

[39] See, for example, Alexander Murray, "Counselling in Medieval Confession," in *Handing Sin: Confession in the Middle Ages*, ed. Peter Miller and A.J. Minnis (Rochester, NY: Boydell and Brewer, 1998); Anton Weiler, "The Requirements of the *Pastor Bonus* in the Late Middle Ages," in *The* Pastor Bonus*: Papers Read at the British-Dutch Colloquium, Utrecht, 18-21 September 2002*, ed. Theo Clemens and Wim Janse (Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill, 2004);

[40] Fourth Lateran Council, canon 27, 1215, in Henry Schroeder, ed. and trans., *Disciplinary Decrees of the General Councils: Text, Translation, and Commentary* (St. Louis: B. Herder, 1937), 236-296; reproduced in "Medieval Sourcebook: Twelfth Ecumenical Council: Lateran IV 1215," The Internet Medieval Source Book, ed. Paul Halsall, 1996, accessed March 22, 2012, http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/basis/lateran4.asp (emphasis supplied).

In multiple ways, then, the notion of regimen fits well as a category and conceptual tool for analyzing the expectations of bodily conduct in worship.[41] Let us define a regimen as

> (1) a set of modes or manners of, and parameters for, bodily action that (2) operate collectively in a worship service[42] as a program for (3) generating each body's conduct and (4) governing that conduct in relation to the conduct of all the other bodies in the service. In its most general sense, a regimen selects, out of all that bodies *can* or *could* do, certain things for the body to *actually* do in the service, offering its own grounds for why the body should do those things and not others. A regimen attempts to establish the limits of bodily conduct in worship, setting out a basis for distinguishing conduct that belongs in a worship service from conduct that does not. With respect to conduct that, under a given regimen, belongs in a service, that regimen indicates, as we have seen, a sequence of functions for bodily conduct to fulfill, as well as various roles and forms in which and timings with which bodies can fulfill these functions.[43] Conversely, with respect to conduct that, under a given regimen, *should not* occur in a service, that regimen provides a grid for distinguishing the degrees to which and the manners in which the conduct that *actually does* occur in a service diverges (if at all) from the regimen. Additionally, a regimen may target certain degrees or manners of divergence and (on whatever grounds the regimen itself may provide) for intervention, likewise specifying the functions, roles, forms, and timings for appropriate intervention.[44]

A regimen does not exist apart from its actual enactment by physical bodies: there is no regimen to speak of (from an analytical standpoint) unless there are bodies actually acting with respect to one another in real time. But this does not mean that the regimen is necessarily or even often something that bodies self-consciously intend to enact or explicitly demand that others enact. In each of the case-studies we have considered, most bodies seemed to enact the regimen not as a deliberate, intention-laden choice, but rather without much self-consciousness at all.[45] Often bodies are trained to enact the regimen by simply trying it out and being corrected by other bodies. A regimen acts, that is, mostly through the circulation of social force, expressed through implicit authorization and, when necessary, explicit intervention. Yet a regimen needs neither to be abstracted from bodily conduct nor put into words nor explicitly intended in order for it to both govern bodily conduct and to initiate bodies into its enactment. Nevertheless, a regimen *may* be thus abstracted and put into words, which is, in fact, what I have tried to do with the services re-presented in this chapter. But such an abstracted verbal account is a derivation, a distillation, even a reduction of the regimen — the verbal explanation *of* the regimen is not the regimen itself.[46] The regimen itself comprises all the concrete actions in a service by which bodily conduct is governed, guided, generated, regulated, limited, and the like — along with the relations among all these conduct-generating, -limiting, -governing actions that allow them to cooperate and amplify one another.

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[41] Of course, *regimen* for the Fourth Lateran Council involved much more in addition to worship, and, moreover, I make no claim that the usage I am proposing for regimen here is anything more than a faint echo of some common concerns across long and multiple historical transformations, and with a modulation from the prescriptive aims of the Council to my primarily descriptive aims.

[42] I stress that the concept of regimen, as I am proposing it, is *not* a history- or context-transcending universal category, but rather something that is predicated of and discerned in concrete instances of actual worship. Moreover, although two or more services may each operate with a similar regimen, we should assume that every service has its particular regimen and then note any similarities and differences across services, instead of assuming a common regimen that has variations.

[43] These four aspects of bodily conduct are, of course, the minimum that a regimen indicates; a given regimen will likely specify other aspects of conduct, and there might be some further aspects that appear widely in regimens of diverse Christian worship services.

[44] Although I have not, in this chapter, analyzed in much detail the expectations at work in the various worship services concerning the functions, roles, forms, and timings of *intervention* in divergence (primarily for lack of ethnographic data), it should be an element in any comprehensive analysis of a regimen for worship.

Therefore, when I say that a regimen “selects,” “attempts,” indicates,” and so forth, I mean that these are the overall *effects* that are induced in a worship service by the aggregated actions of the worshipping bodies as they are linked and coordinated by a regimen. A regimen is a collection, particular to a given service, of modes or manners in which bodies can move, touch, sense, feel, and express relative to one another. Whenever one body does something in a worship service, the regimen is the particular scheme of action-possibilities (a certain subset out of all the actions bodies could take) that mobilizes other bodies' responses to that body. Now, if we are using regimen as an *analytical* tool, then we should not assume that there is anything necessary (that is, necessary on epistemic or metaphysical grounds) about how a regimen configures these action-possibilities into a scheme. Nonetheless, we can plausibly refer to a logic inhering in each regimen, if by "logic" we mean whatever principles or dynamics give cohesion to an otherwise arbitrary grouping of possible actions.

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[45] Some will think that this last point should lead me to adapt from ritual theorists (particularly Catherine Bell) or from the sociological theory of Pierre Bourdieu (one of Bell’s major sources) the concept of “bodily disposition” or “habitus.” For a number of reasons into which I do not have time to go, that is not the path I have chosen. See Bell, *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice*; Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977), and *Pascalian Meditations* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000); and McClintock Fulkerson, *Places of Redemption*, chapter 2.

[46] I intend here a parallel with what liturgical theologians have referred to as the difference between “primary liturgical theology” and “secondary liturgical theology.” See Gordon Lathrop, *Holy Things: A Liturgical Theology* (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Fortress, 1993), 4-6; Aidan Kavanagh, *On Liturgical Theology* (New York, Pueblo, 1984), 74-75, 89-90.

It is my hope that the concept of "regimen," as I have defined it here, can become a serviceable tool for the analysis and interpretation of Christian worship. With it we can perceive what happens in worship on a level that can sometimes be obscured when the focus is on the words spoken (or meant to be spoken) or the order of activities or the structure of symbolic meaning in a service. These are, as I said at the start of this chapter, valuable ways of thinking about and through worship. But they do not exhaust what we need to understand about worship. The analysis of words spoken or meant to be spoken tells us almost nothing about how bodies conduct themselves and are supposed to conduct themselves, or, more importantly, *why*. And a concept like *ordo*, as defined by Gordon Lathrop — which, as we shall explore in chapter 2, analytically privileges symbol and meaning in liturgical action — can reveal much about what it means when a body does those things that, in a particular worship service, it is expected to do. But *ordo* is not the best analytical tool for answering other questions: What happens when a body does *not* do the things that it is expected to, and why? Moreover, why do bodies elicit the responses they do, from other bodies in a service, both when they do what is expected and when they do not do what is expected? To interpret worship at the level of regimen is to try to account for all the ways the body matters in worship, all the effects that are induced when a body does *this* and not *that*, or vice-versa.[47]

The facets or elements of a regimen that I have delineated thus far are those with which one could describe the ordering of bodily conduct in any Christian worship service. That is, although every service will have its unique regimen, every regimen, I maintain, will minimally deal with the sorts of things I have laid out in the preceding paragraphs.[48] Yet from the services that we have examined in this chapter we can also derive some more specific features of regimen, which are particular to those services but not necessarily all Christian worship services. The most basic element of regimen that these services have in common is that the sequence of functions that bodies are expected to enact is set prior to the service. However the sequence is set and whatever range of divergence is permitted for the fulfillment of each function, the schedule of functions that are to be enacted is not created during the service, but is in effect from the start of the service.[49] Nor is it abandoned or replaced during the service, and in the rare instance where it is adjusted, the adjustments are slight shifts, not radical breaks. Moreover, the pre-set sequence of functions is an anchor for whatever divergence will be permitted: a service permitting a moderately wider range of divergence in form and timing can only be regarded as "spontaneous" to the degree that the stability of the sequence of function is overlooked.

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[47] By contrast, analyses that emphasize *ordo* or other systems of symbolic meaning can by and large get along without much discussion of what real bodies actually do in a worship service. Symbolic-meaning interpretations begin from the (unacknowledged) assumption that bodies are mostly enacting the given *ordo*, and thus these interpretations have little capacity for apprehending the conditions under which bodies do or don't enact the *ordo* as expected.

[48] I strenuously note that I do *not* mean that there is a universally discernible minimal regimen or a fundamental *Ur*-regimen. What I mean is that regimen, as I have discussed it thus far, is a *framework* for describing what bodies do, but that framework is filled-out with all manner of particular expectations (relatively arbitrary in comparison to one another) operating in a given worship service. So in what follows I identify the particular main expectations that operate in the worship services we have explored in this chapter.

Such a pre-set sequence of functions then undergirds several other expectations, which we have discussed in depth and which I now summarize as the core of an overall regimen. Bodies cannot, in their conduct, dissent from the regimen: they can neither begin to pursue an alternative regimen nor openly challenge the propriety of the operative regimen. Dissent, then, is the outer boundary of bodily conduct, which, under the regimen we are now discussing, merits exclusion. One step within that hard boundary begins the range of conduct that the regimen considers disruption, conduct which threatens the orderly enactment of the sequence of functions. Unlike dissent, disruption does not provoke immediate ejection *from* the service, but rather correction *within* the service (in manners that are themselves indicated by the regimen). By contrast, deviations do not incur correction, because they neither obstruct nor promote the enactment of the sequence of functions. Instead, deviations must be contained, so that they are prevented from crossing the threshold that separates deviation from disruption. Crossing that threshold is the trigger for correction. Finally, the regimen permits a fixed number of variations, that is, conduct that (1) diverges in role, form, timing, or any combination thereof but that, nevertheless, (2) is considered an appropriate way to enact the sequence of functions. Dissent, disruption, manner-of-correction, deviation, variation: in the analysis and interpretation of worship, these function as *descriptive* categories that constitute the core of a regimen, even as they exert, in the act of worshipping, *prescriptive* force for realizing that regimen.

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[49] Nothing in my definition of regimen as a tool for analytical *description* requires this expectation of a pre-set sequence.

Two additional expectations not directly derived from the expectation of a preset sequence of functions are, nonetheless, part of the regimens practiced in the services discussed in this chapter. First, in each of those services, the bodily conduct that was permitted (i.e., the combined range of both variations and deviations) was fairly narrow relative to all that bodies are capable of doing. Just how narrow is a matter open to dispute, but at a minimum we must recognize that the vast majority of what bodies can do — from simple acts like running or throwing things around to complex activities like crafting an object or disrupting injustice with one's whole body (rather than only speaking words) — are not called for in the regimens we have been studying.[50] We need to take special notice of four kinds of conduct that are consistently restricted by services similar to those in this chapter: conduct that is considered silly, frivolous, or playful, done for the sake of being silly, frivolous, or playful; physical contact that is associated with sex or that is perceived as generating pleasure (sexual or otherwise) for its own sake; angry conduct; and conduct by which bodies adorn themselves for social life (changing the body's appearance by dressing it, marking it, altering or hiding or protecting its features, and so on). I here make no claim that these things *should* be permitted in worship to a greater degree under all or certain circumstances. But these four kinds of conduct constitute a great deal of what bodies do in their everyday lives, yet all of them are allowed in worship only in highly restricted ways. The regimens discussed above largely expect bodily conduct to be non-frivolous, non-angry, non-sexual, not generating pleasure for its own sake, and not focused on changing its appearance. But one could imagine uses of these kinds of conduct, at least in certain forms, that could advance Christian aims in worship.[51]

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[50] Now, a good amount of what these regimens omit may well be things that most people would agree do not belong in Christian worship. But there is also a good amount of conduct that could (and perhaps should) belong in Christian worship, for various reasons. Dance may be the best example, given that, on the one hand, the Bible consistently urges it as an expression of worship, but, on the other hand, so few congregations practice dance regularly.

Finally, although I have not commented on it much, there is an expectation of longer temporal continuity for the regimen in each service: not only does the regimen not change *during* a service, but it also remains fairly stable *between* one service and the next and *across* long series of services of given community. This is not to say that it never changes on those time-scales: we saw, for example, an example of such change in the transition at Good Samaritan from Dan and Linda to Gerald. But there is the expectation that change must be rationally *justified* in some way (e.g., a new pastor) — the regimen does not usually change simply for the sake of change. The regimen, in other words, is ultimately ordered according to reason rather than will or pleasure: a community cannot do something different just because it wants to or because it feels good, but only because it has a legitimate *reason* to do so. This is, in fact, the extension to the level of the whole worshipping assembly, the collective Body of Christ, of a value-scheme that we have thoroughly explored at the level of the individual Christian body, namely, that divergence is not valued for its own sake, but has value only with respect to, and on the condition of, its being oriented toward congruence. The collective Body of Christ congrues over time with its own regimen, and reason alone, not will or pleasure, is what justifies any divergence from that regimen.

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[51] To put it even more strongly: all four of these kinds of activities already *do* occur, in various ways and to varying degrees, in worship — but they are expected to be kept hidden. Making this already implicitly present conduct more explicit may well advance Christian aims, but this possibility is foreclosed by the sort of regimen we have been examining.

We have distilled, then, a kind of regimen, operating in worship services from a diverse range of Christian traditions, that through and through privileges congruence over divergence for the Body of Christ — collectively and in its members. We can name this regimen that of "congruence-oriented Christian worship," because divergence is neither wholly banished from worship nor intrinsically cherished in it, but instead must be consistently *managed* so that it unfolds in a way that ultimately maintains congruence. Divergence has no value in itself, but only in relationship to the stable achievement of congruence; and divergence that threatens to upset congruence must be corrected. This orientation to congruence is the "operating logic" that I have traced throughout this chapter.

Must Christian worship, however, always and everywhere be thus, and if so, on what grounds? The work of this chapter has been to distill a certain kind of regimen, a set of expectations regarding the body's conduct — a task that required, in part, proposing the very concept of regimen as an analytical category — in order to able to even raise the question of whether that regimen is the only one possible or necessary for all Christian worship. That question takes on great urgency if it turns out that the regimen of congruence-oriented Christian worship is geared into mechanisms of societal domination that are at odds with definitive Christian values, a possibility I explore in chapter 3. Before that, though, I want to examine one of the discourses that most serves to make the privileging of congruence over divergence in Christian worship seem natural or inherent; this is the next chapter's task. Only when we have questioned the inherency (and maybe also the inerrancy) of congruence can we open ourselves to seeing how it might be otherwise, which we do in chapters 4 and 5.

Chapter 2:
The Expectation of Bodily Congruence in Secondary Liturgical Theology

A. Introduction

In the first chapter, I examined accounts of actual instances of worship in order to observe how bodies conducted themselves, thence to discern what expectations exist concerning how bodies *should* conduct themselves. In this chapter, I consider accounts of worship at a more abstract level, namely, interpretations offered as liturgical theology. One major line of contemporary liturgical theology supplies a way of distinguishing the tasks of the two chapters. Chapter 1 can be seen as exploring things that are connected with the "primary liturgical theology" of Christian worship, "the communal meaning of the liturgy exercised by the gathering itself"[52]; specifically, the chapter considered elements of "primary liturgical theology" that govern bodily conduct. This chapter, then, is concerned with "secondary liturgical theology," "written and spoken discourse that attempts to find words for the experience of the liturgy and to illuminate its structures...."[53] Secondary liturgical theology is discourse *about* worship, the systematic, analytical reflection *on* worship rather than the first-hand experience *of* worship or the reflections that arise *during* worship. One of the benefits of reading actual observations of worship alongside analytical reflections on worship is that analytical reflections on worship often make explicit certain things that are only implicitly at play in the actual practice of worship. This is especially the case because most secondary liturgical theology is written by people (mostly though not exclusively scholars) who are themselves regular practitioners of the kinds of worship on which they reflect.[54] Secondary liturgical theologians, then, occupy an excellent vantage-point for articulating formally, for the sake of critical analysis, understandings in worship which they themselves have known implicitly through their own worship-practice.

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[52] Gordon W. Lathrop, *Holy Things: A Liturgical Theology* (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Fortress, 1993), 5 (citing the work Aidan Kavanagh).

[53] Ibid., 6.

Such positioning of most secondary liturgical theologians makes it all the more striking that the dynamics of congruence and divergence in bodily conduct that I schematized in chapter 1 — which had to be distilled from their largely implicit operation in the worship services discussed — remain more implicit than explicit in secondary liturgical theology as well. One of the overarching claims this chapter will demonstrate is that *the expectation that bodily conduct be oriented towards congruence is strongly operative in secondary liturgical theology, yet this expectation is not explicitly argued for in its own right, but is necessarily entailed by the conceptual frameworks adopted for the interpretation of Christian worship.* The secondary liturgical theologians I discuss here do not, for the most part, treat the congruence of bodily conduct as a matter that needs to be explicitly argued. And where they discuss bodily conduct at all, it is on the assumption that bodily conduct should be ordered to congruence — rather than with argumentation why this should be so. These scholars do not need to take up the matter of bodily conduct directly, because their respective frameworks for interpreting worship take the form of (and focus on) systems of symbolic meaning and the relations of signification that obtain within them, rather than patterns of bodily conduct and the relations of bodies to one another and to themselves that these patterns enact. Although each of the liturgical theologians I discuss here adopts different terms for the interpretation of worship and uses those terms to address different questions concerning worship, I will trace how all of them, nevertheless, offer *a theology that privileges systems of signification over patterns of embodiment*.

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[54] There is nothing inherent in secondary liturgical theology that prevents non-practitioners from writing it, but for largely institutional reasons, it is mostly the work of people who have deep first-hand experience in the worship on which they reflect (and, oftentimes, who also identify as members of the same communities on whose worship they reflect).

I have chosen, as a method, to read a few authors very closely, rather than to review many authors all at once. This is because I am arguing the point that the expectation of bodily congruence arises from the very way that problems are framed in secondary liturgical theology, as well as the way in which concepts are articulated for thinking through these problems. It may seem that I go into too much detail in discussing each author, but my intention is to make more apparent features of these authors' way of thinking that might otherwise go unnoticed, and a certain immersion is useful in order to not let these features slip past our awareness. Above all, one must get a sense for the intense anxiety that is provoked for liturgical theologians by the possibility of divergence — not only divergence in bodily conduct, but divergence in just about any form, from meanings to materials and more. Again and again, one will see how *divergence, far from being something valued in itself, is, for liturgical theologians, a threat that must be contained*. Moreover, liturgical theologians consistently tend to envision that, absent strong intervention by secondary liturgical theology, the only form that divergence can take in worship is chaos, utter disorder. In other words, secondary liturgical theology assumes from the outset that divergence is in itself a bad thing that can only be present as a good thing in worship when it occurs within a framework of (and is ordered towards the maintenance of) unambiguous congruence.[55] The possibility that divergence itself, or the interplay of divergence and congruence, could be the basis for defining how worship ought to operate is simply ruled out from the beginning — axiomatically rather than by compelling argument.

One might also wonder why I spend so much time explicating what may seem like minor points in the author's argument or how an argument is framed, rather than focusing on the substance of the author's main argument. It is my contention, however, that minor turns in an argument or points where an author opts to express a point in this way rather than that are precisely the means by which the expectation of bodily congruence comes to be installed in secondary liturgical theology. Most secondary liturgical theology is not in any major way speech about the body and its conduct, so one cannot really pursue the question, "What is the conduct of the body in Christian worship?" by focusing on the main substantive claims of liturgical theologians' interpretive schemes — but only by focusing on incidental points along the way (as well as points where argument could be voiced but one hears only silence).

Additionally, one might question whether the specific secondary liturgical theologians I have selected are representative enough to permit the inference of conclusions about the field as a whole. But I make no claim that these three secondary liturgical theologians are "representative" in the sense of covering, among themselves, the full range of what secondary liturgical theology says or might say about worship. Rather, I am trying to thematize certain ideas that operate as "common sense" in much of secondary liturgical theology, so that we can pause and see them in operation in a way that secondary liturgical theology typically does need us to see them, for it to do its interpretive work. A major portion of the data from which *my* argument proceeds are those points where these secondary liturgical theologians, each of whom is fluently in conversation with many other secondary liturgical theologians, do not feel any need to advance an argument for their fellow liturgical theologians. They are “representative” only in the sense of indicating what issues and concerns a secondary liturgical theologian, thoroughly conversant with multiple streams of thought across the field, considers necessary to address in order to make a compelling case — and, more importantly, which issues and concerns can go un-addressed *without* diminishing the cogency with which one’s case will be received by other secondary liturgical theologians. Now, within this narrow kind of representative-ness, I have chosen works in liturgical theology that were first published in different decades (1980, 1993, 2006), by authors who identify with fairly divergent liturgical traditions and draw their chief inspiration from various clusters in the history of secondary liturgical theology. In this way, similar assumptions and implications among the authors concerning bodily conduct can point to features of secondary reflection on worship that are not reducible to the interpretive idiosyncrasies of a single author or tradition. I hope to make it possible to ask questions that, in these examples of liturgical theology and many others, go un-asked *and* have pre-determined answers.

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[55] I am not going to make too much fuss trying to differentiate between congruence as self-congruence, as consistency or continuity over time, as coherence, as orderliness of action, as unity in a relational sense, as consensus in a communicative sense, etc. What matters in this chapter is that a general, multi-faceted kind of congruence is consistently preferred (for reasons not explicitly argued) over various kinds of divergence.

B. Geoffrey Wainwright

Geoffrey Wainwright’s *Doxology: The Praise of God in Worship, Doctrine, and Life* has been one of the seminal works in liturgical theology over the decades since its publication. It is intended to be read as both a “systematic theology written from a liturgical perspective" as well as a "theology of worship" (ix).[56] He begins with a theoretical account of the tasks of the Christian theologian, and the framework he articulates commits his work *a priori* to privilege congruence over divergence. Wainwright asserts that the basic claim of which "the rest of the book" is a "practical illustration" is that the Christian Church "can transmit a vision of reality which helps decisively in the interpretation of life and the world" (2). One should note that there is *a* vision, not multiple visions — Wainwright consistently refers to the church's vision in the singular. Nowhere does Wainwright explain why it should be assumed that there is only one vision, rather than several; it simply does not arise as an issue that has to be explicitly argued. This does not necessarily undermine the plausibility of the system Wainwright proposes. At the same time, it is equally plausible to conceive of "the Christian Church" as animated by multiple visions, but Wainwright neither advances any argument why the church should not be so conceived, nor indicates any reason that such an argument is unnecessary.

Within this construct of a historical community (the Christian church) transmitting its single vision, worship has a unique function as "the place in which that vision comes to a sharp focus, a concentrated expression" (3). Wainwright returns consistently to the metaphors of "focus" and "concentrated expression" when theorizing about worship, as when, for instance, he speaks of the sacraments as "but *focal* instances within the continuing relationship between God and his creatures..." or when he asserts that it is "through [Christ's] remembered, experienced and anticipated presence, *concentrated* in worship, that God reaches us" (83, 86, emphasis added). This establishes a high degree of congruence between the Christian vision and Christian worship, in that the latter is a more distilled form of the former; they diverge in degree but not in essence. And since Wainwright assumes that there is only one Christian vision, the possibilities for worship are definitely bounded, further grounding worship in a logic of congruence rather than divergence.

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[56] Parenthetical references in this section are to Geoffrey Wainwright, *Doxology: The Praise of God in Worship, Doctrine, and Life* (London: Epworth Press, 1980).

This logic carries forward in the way Wainwright links Christian life with worship. Worship is "the point of *concentration* at which the whole of the Christian life comes to ritual focus"; it offers a "vision of the *value-patterns* of God's kingdom, by the more effective *practice* of which [Christians] intend to glorify God in their *whole life*" (8, emphasis added). Worship, in other words, discloses patterns with which Christian lives are to be congruent. It does not, however, do so only cognitively (i.e., providing a mental representation), but through bodily conduct. For worship brings Christian life into *ritual* focus, and Wainwright understands ritual "in the descriptive sense of *regular patterns of behavior* invested with symbolic significance and efficacy" (ibid., emphasis added). Wainwright draws on ideas about ritual prevailing in the social sciences when he wrote, and I am not interested here in the issue of whether this reliance on ritual theory is tenable or appropriate for liturgical theology.[57] But the consequence of relying on such a notion of ritual is that, on grounds *outside* of Christian theology, Christian worship is understood as requiring congruent bodily conduct. Wainwright does not need to assert, as a claim to be demonstrated, "Bodily conduct in Christian worship must be congruent." But this is logically entailed by Wainwright's assumption that the ritual patterning of bodily behavior is the mechanism by which worship brings into focus the pattern of how Christians are to live.

The framework of congruence that aligns the vision, worship, and life of the Christian community — and implies congruent bodily conduct in both worship and life — also enfolds Christian theology and theologians.[58] Worship and theology are both, according to Wainwright, "expressions" of the Christian vision. Worship, as we have seen, is the "concentrated expression" of the vision; theology, on the other hand, aims at "a coherent intellectual expression of the Christian vision" (3). That theology is an expression of something else implies a minimum of congruence that is expected of theology, which is also evident when Wainwright suggests that, while each individual theologian presents a "version" of the Christian vision, each version can be evaluated as "a more or less adequate version" of it (3, 4). Moreover, because worship and theology are both expressions of the same thing (the Christian vision), they are able to stand in a relationship of mutual correction of one another. On the one hand, worship is a main source for theological reflection, and also orients the work of the theologian, who is "duty bound to contribute to it." On the other hand, even as theologians participate in and learn from worship, they do so "in order to propose to the worshipping community any corrections or improvements which [they] judge necessary" (3). By thus mutually correcting one another, worship and theology each hold the other in congruence with the Christian vision.[59] Their interplay sustains a configuration of congruence that is centered on the

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[57] See Wainwright, 119-122. See also chap. 2, "Beyond Rituality," in Siobhán Garrigan, *Beyond Ritual: Sacramental Theology after Habermas* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2004).

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[58] Wainwright notes that "faith, doctrine, and theology" all "cover a whole range of meanings within which it is sometimes necessary to make distinctions.... It is their mutual involvement which in fact makes possible the comprehensive use of any one of the terms on its own" (9). I here focus on "theology" ("the more individual but still ecclesial activity of reflecting on faith and doctrine with a view to their intellectual clarification") because it has the *least* logical necessity of congruence with the Christian vision and worship — and yet Wainwright's analysis of theology still holds it to a rather high bar of congruence.

[59] At another point, Wainwright elaborates the tests on the basis of which worship can appropriately correct doctrine: "One test is that of origin. Most weight will be given to ideas and practices which go back to Jesus.... Another test ... is that of spread in both time and space. The closer a liturgical item comes to universality ... the greater will be its importance as a doctrinal locus.... [Third,] a liturgical practice which is matched with some directness by holiness of life makes a weighty claim to be treated as a source of doctrine..." (242-45). Each of these three tests works through the preservation of congruence: congruence with the origin, congruence across time and space, and congruence between

(single) Christian vision and seeks to encompass all of Christian life. Finally, one can see one more layer of expected congruence in Wainwright's claim that his version is offered "from faith to faith." To write "from faith to faith," according to Wainwright, means counting "on the agreement of readers within the community that the Christian vision ... does correspond to reality" (4). Wainwright posits consensus as the initial condition from which theology proceeds. What lie un-considered are possibilities for an impetus for theology that begins with non-consensus — which could involve contention or even simply multiple distinctive, incommensurable elements of vision.

At first glance, the consensus of the community upon which the theologian counts seems fairly minimal — only agreement *that* the Christian vision corresponds to reality — and almost tautological: the Christian community agrees about the Christian vision. However, because Wainwright also assumes that there is only a single Christian vision, this consensus encodes an expectation of a certain range of congruence, which will be wider or narrower depending on how much, substantively, is included in the single Christian vision.[60] The work of determining just what and how much must be considered part of the single Christian vision is one of the central tasks of the theologian. This brings us to the most distinctive aspect of the logic of congruence at work in Wainwright's liturgical-theological system: the need to actively manage divergence below a certain level so as to maintain a fundamental congruence. Wainwright lays out this task in a passage whose forceful repetitions allow the reader to grasp the logic of congruence *as* a logic, which necessitates quoting in full:

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bodily conduct in worship and outside worship.

[60] Although the basic consensus that Wainwright invokes (upon which the theologian relies) involves the Christian vision, which is a set of ideas, we must remember that these ideas necessarily play out in "regular patterns of behavior" produced by worship. "Consensus" and "congruence" should not be parsed into "mental" and "bodily" aspects, but should be seen as involving both.

> Now for the diachronic and synchronic identity of the Christian vision and community. Diachronically, the question is posed by the developments and vicissitudes of ecclesiastical and cultural history. It is a matter of discerning an abiding identity through all the failures in quality and all the adaptations which have taken place in changed circumstances. It is a matter of discerning, ever again and with whatever continuity is possible, the true expressions of the original and normative vision centered on Jesus Christ. Synchronically, the difficulty is to decide where, at any given time, the line should be drawn between the clash of different but symphonic voices and the clash of contradictions which becomes cacophony. It is a matter of deciding where a unilateral emphasis amounts to a distortion; where additions are enrichments, where dilutions; where simplification is purification, where truncation. It is a matter of deciding where tentative exploration opens up new vistas and where it misses its way and passes into error or nothingness. (11)

One should first note how, throughout the passage, identity is framed in terms of self-congruence: it is "abiding," marked by "whatever continuity is possible," and remains true to its origins. Now, in introducing this passage, Wainwright had referred to identity as "problematic" (10). But it turns out that the problem is not really identity per se, but how to *maintain* identity over time (diachronically) and space (synchronically). Insofar as identity is a phenomenon defined by self-congruence, the problem with which theology must be concerned is really a problem of *divergence*. Wainwright calls, in various ways, for divergence to be assiduously managed: "failures in quality" and other historical adaptations must be distinguished from that which is abiding, additions must be evaluated to see whether they enrich or dilute, and so forth. Indeed, he imagines a very precise examination, at each moment, to determine where "the line should be drawn" between acceptable divergence ("different but symphonic voices") and unacceptable divergence ("the clash of contradictions which becomes cacophony"). This line between acceptable and unacceptable is framed in terms of normal and abnormal: unacceptable divergences are not simply equal alternatives that are not preferred, but "distortions," "dilutions," "error or nothingness." Divergence, therefore, has no value in itself, but individual divergences are acceptable only if they are oriented towards congruence.

Making the determinations as to normal or abnormal divergences is a process of rational examination ("a matter of discerning"). The passage above suggests that theology is, in significant part, a practice of exercising a particular form of reason that emphasizes the careful measuring and weighing of divergences against a single standard (the Christian vision) and judgment calls as to whether they remain sufficiently congruent. It is important to recognize that this form of reasoning is not about *eliminating* divergence in any form possible, but instead precisely measuring the degree to which each divergence is problematic with respect to congruence, and then *correcting* that divergence so that it falls within the bounds required by congruence. We can say that divergence must be precisely *regulated*. Yet this should remind us that the theologian's work is not an exercise of reason by itself, but a joint exercise of reason and power: it is a matter of "deciding," not merely "discerning." [61] I turn now to two of areas of concrete liturgical practice where Wainwright demonstrates this very form of reasoning (joined with power): creeds and hymns.[62]

Creeds, Wainwright says, allow for both the "achievement and maintenance" of Christian "identity" (189). The practice of confessing the creed achieves an identity between the individual Christian and the Christian community: "The liturgical use of the traditional creeds is a sign that it is indeed the Church of Jesus Christ to which the believer belongs..." (190). Moreover, creedal confession maintains the identity of the

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[61] I do note that Wainwright calls for "discerning" with respect to diachronic identity but "deciding" with respect to synchronic. I suspect this is simply because decisions can only be made in the present.

[62] It may seem odd not to make an extended foray into the more properly "systematic" foundations Wainwright lays — the chapters on God, Christ, Spirit, the Church, and Scripture. These chapters primarily articulate the substance of the Christian vision, in Wainwright's version. But I am interested in how theology deals with divergences *from* the vision in concrete liturgical practice, and Wainwright's examination of the creeds, hymns, and ecumenism are the place where one can best see that.

Christian self with itself *over time*, for “as long as the believer goes on recapitulating his confession, he may be assured of his own identity in the identity of the Christian people” (190). Note here the reciprocal identity: confessing the creeds achieves the identity of the Christian community itself as much as the individual member of the Christian community, since “the traditional creeds are the concise verbal forms of the Christian community’s identity in time and space” (189-190). (That is, they are the most concentrated expression of the Christian vision.) The creeds maintain this communal identity over time, allowing “successive generations of Christians to find their identity in [the] Church,” and among all Christians at any given moment in time: “Synchronically the use of common creeds is a sign of Christian identity throughout the inhabited earth” (190). The creeds thus work through congruence on two levels: the individual in congruence with the whole community, and the whole community in congruence with itself. At one point Wainwright makes a more explicit assertion of the congruent nature of identity: “The maintenance of Christian faith-identity with the past appears to require the use of the traditional creeds...” (192). In other words, the act of establishing congruence (“the use of the traditional creeds”) is taken to be necessary (“appears to require”) for the continued production of Christian identity. Again, however, the reliance on a logic of congruence to define identity is neither explained nor defended.

Wainwright understands the modern world as raising a major challenge to this picture of congruent Christian identity: “The ‘plausibility structures’ of contemporary society are felt to militate against the ancient faith — or even to exclude it as a present possibility altogether” (191-192). He further specifies the problem as a paradox related to modern *culture*: “The achievement of an honest identity in the present appears to require that a life-commitment, even if it went in some respects *against the stream* of contemporary culture, should nevertheless be verbalized in a way that was intelligible *in* that culture" (192, emphasis added). This cultural framing of the problem is significant because it resonates well with the approach Wainwright prefers for the solution. Drawing on Nicholas Lash's scheme of "creedal unanimity *and theological pluriformity*" (191, emphasis original). Wainwright repeatedly analyzes the present situation with various metaphors conveying a distinction between *substance* and *form*: "the same creedal *core* can *tolerate* a certain range of theological *explicitations*"; "the risk is that the new *formulation* will fail ... to match the *substance* which the old formulation expressed"; the creeds (as well as the New Testament itself) have a "*substantive* referent," namely, "the revelation of God in Christ," which is "linguistically transmitted" through translations and "theologians and preachers in their interpretive work between the primary texts and the later hearers" (191, 192, 195, emphasis added). The *substance* of faith provides a "fixed referent" for the many varieties of *forms*, which arise specifically because human beings are culturally conditioned: "There is much to be said for a variety of 'alternate' confessions [sc. several developed by church-bodies in the late 20th century] corresponding to the variety of culture(s)" (198).

Although Wainwright acknowledges the inevitability that multiple human cultures will proliferate multiple forms of expressing Christian faith, he does not see this proliferation as good in itself. Rather, the generation of multiple forms is a problem to be solved: "... how far can the limits of theological interpretation be stretched before the 'distance' between the new interpretation and the old formulation becomes *intolerable*?" (192, emphasis added). We have, in other words, a familiar kind of problem: how much divergence is permissible before it disrupts the expected congruence? We see again that Wainwright is not opposed to divergence (i.e., variations in "formulation") in all instances, but that divergence must be carefully regulated. The standard, of course, is the "substantive" core of Christian faith, and to grasp the proper relationship between this core and the cultural variations, Wainwright turns to a model of concentric circles from Edward Schillebeeckx: "At the outer and superficial level of 'ephemeral' history," the speed of change in our understanding is rapid, expressing itself in fleeting 'fashions....' The profoundest centre is 'structural history,' where there is scarcely any change at all" (194, internal citations omitted). The challenge, then, is to ensure that newer confessions of Christian faith, in order "to be *Christian* confessions," "match the classic creeds at the level of deep structure" (198). Schillebeeckx' model allows Wainwright to account for the continual emergence of a wide variety of cultural innovations, which arise because of a difference of the "rhythm" or speed of change at the "ephemeral" and "deep structural" levels. Yet at the same time, the concentric-circle image suggests a high threshold for differentiating acceptable from unacceptable kinds of divergence, because the "ephemeral" and "deep structural" levels are locked together rotating in the same *direction*, even if the speed feels different at the outer level versus at the innermost level. Wainwright's use of the model implies that one of the circles at the outer level could move at a slower or faster rate without problem, but moving counterclockwise when the core is moving clockwise would be destructive chaos. The possibility of "retrograde rotation" — i.e., of variations that disrupt the harmonious rotation of all the circles together — is simply not considered or defended against by Wainwright, because the idea that variations in form *should* ultimately be brought into congruence with a substantive core is in some way self-evident.

Hymns possess a "creedal character," Wainwright finds, that merits their consideration alongside creeds and analysis along similar lines (214). Most basically, hymns are creedal because “the public praise of God is *eo ipso* witness before the world also”: in the singing of hymns Christians publicly confess their faith (198). Wainwright maintains, though, that creeds are “doctrinally primary” and hymns, whose “special qualities ... centre on [their] flexibility,” are complementary, not equivalent, to them (214). Although Wainwright does not explicitly say that it is *because* there is such great variety in Christian hymnody that hymns are subordinate to the creeds, he does characterize that variety in terms of Schillebeeckx’ model: “New individual and communal visions of the faith can come *rapidly* to liturgical expression, in newly composed hymns ... many turn out to be *ephemeral*...” (ibid., emphasis added). Hymns “highlight particular features of the faith and relate to particular contemporary circumstances,” thereby bring a “freshness” to the confession of Christian faith, “a sign of vitality in the faith.” Yet such freshness is permissible, for Wainwright, only insofar as it is contained “within the framework of the classical creeds.” In other words, a certain amount of divergence is acceptable in hymns, but the variations overall must remain congruent with the creeds.

Along with their creedal character, hymns are also defined for Wainwright by their realization through bodily performance: singing hymns bears “the character of *drōmenon*, a complex drama of words and actions...” (199). This drama plays out in the singing of hymns in patterns of worship that are as divergent, formally and stylistically, as an “unforgettable,” highly percussive offertory processional during a Catholic mass in Cameroon and “the more sedate worship familiar to Protestants” (200). There is, however, only one plot wherever this drama is liturgically performed: Wainwright frequently and consistently frames hymn-singing as a practice of uniting body and mind. The processional hymn, for instance, “allows the *synchronization* of mental and physical movement”; hymns in sedate Protestant worship foster “the *union* of mind and voice in rhythmic praise"; in hymns "the sharpest, most poignant expressions *match* the believer's amazement at being included in the mystery of God's saving purpose..." (199-200, 205, emphasis added). This unity of the individual worshipper's mind and body is then linked to the unity of all the worshippers in a given service with one another: "Familiar words and music ... *unite* the whole assembly in active participation to a degree which is hardly true of any other component in the liturgy"; "[m]usic ... readily *unites* among themselves the members of a single social community..." (200, 215, emphasis added). One must note here that Wainwright does not advance any argument as to *why* the singing of hymns, as a bodily practice, should be normed towards intra- and inter-individual unity — that is, towards congruence — but rather describes *that* this has happened throughout Christian history and assumes that it *should* be so.

It is simply taken for granted, in other words, that bodily capacities in worship (i.e., those physical capacities used to generate song, as well as movements expected to accompany song) should operate in a congruent manner, and whether it could be liturgically legitimate for bodily capacities to be directed towards the production or experience of divergence, either within the individual or among individuals, is not something Wainwright feels any need to address. The one concern in this regard that he does address arises from the musical divergence across the myriad cultural-historical contexts of Christianity. After all, Wainwright draws together many examples of hymnody from the first century of Christianity to the twentieth, in order to suggest some common substantive themes.[63] But this implies a problem: given differences in rhythm, tonality, and other musical elements, in what sense can a congregation singing the *Monogenēs* hymn, attributed to Justinian, and one singing "With Glorious Clouds Encompassed Round," by

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[63] See Wainwright, 201-213.

Charles Wesley (#172 in the 1780 *Methodist Hymn-Book*), to take two examples that Wainwright presents together, be said to be in unity in their bodily performance of these songs? Hence, Wainwright delimits the unity that hymns create to "the members of a *single* social community." Again, the issue is understood in terms of variations arising from differences in cultural context: "The hymn may range from the rhythmic prose of ... the Eastern odes, to the regular metre, rhyme and strophe of the characteristic Western type.... The Indian churches have developed their own 'lyrics' and the Afro-Americans their 'spirituals'" (199).

Each cultural context of Christian worship is not, however, completely sealed off from all others, and "mutual borrowings easily take place across ecclesiastical and *cultural* frontiers," as evidenced by the many modern hymnals comprised of "historically, geographically, ecclesiastically, and *culturally* variegated collections" (215, emphasis added). Nevertheless, these mutual borrowings are not innocent, but must be regulated: in a phrase that conveys the core principle of the kind of reasoning that Wainwright calls for theologians to engage in, he says, "*Here multiform expressions are felt to cohere into an acceptable unity*" (ibid., emphasis added). Acceptable to whom? Felt to cohere by whom? And in what sense? Wainwright does not answer explicitly on these specific points, though presumably the Christian faith expressed in the creeds provide the standard for judging whether an acceptable degree of unity has been attained, and church authorities make such judgments. Wainwright does not further elaborate on this comment, nor does he present it as a central step in his argument — which allows us to appreciate two assumptions on which Wainwright relies and takes as non-controversial. First, multiform expressions must exist in a relationship of *unity*; the possibility that, gathered side-by-side, they could stand in, say, a relationship of "acceptable non-coherence" or of "discord that is nevertheless acceptably fruitful for Christian faith" is excluded from what is plausible. Second, in a situation in which actual bodily congruence is not readily available (due to culture-generated differences in patterns of bodily performance), the desired unity does not arise inherently or spontaneously, but must be *managed*. Judgments must be made as to whether variations in bodily performance are felt to cohere into a unity and whether that unity is acceptable. Divergence is not regarded as good or useful in itself, but as something that must be contained and put in order.

C. Gordon Lathrop

Gordon Lathrop's work, beginning with *Holy Things: A Liturgical Theology*,[64] has had a wide reception in liturgical theology. Though he is a Lutheran, like the Methodist Wainwright, he draws on an ecumenical range of sources (though his fundamental conversation-partner is Luther). Wainwright and Lathrop have sometimes been characterized as representing significantly different approaches to liturgical theology,[65] and a crude comparison of their works might hold they differ significantly in that, for Wainwright, *lex credendi* is independent of and prior to *lex orandi*, whereas Lathrop essentially derives *lex credendi* from *lex orandi*. My overall argument does not require adjudicating this issue between them, but rather paying attention to the fate of the body under both *leges*; and, regardless, their starting-points for the interpretation of worship are quite similar. Lathrop, from the very outset and consistently throughout his work, articulates the central problem the analysis and interpretation of worship as a problem of "meaning": he repeats the question "What does this meeting mean?" no less than four times in his theoretical overview alone, and "meaning" is one of the most frequently occurring words in the whole text (as throughout his trilogy). Lathrop asserts, as a foundation, Alexander Schmemann's definition of liturgical theology as "the elucidation of the meaning of worship."[66] This echoes over the whole of and to the very end of his argument: "The commerce of the assembly is meaning, and the theme of that meaning is God's mercy for the life of the world" (208).[67] And meaning should be the concern as much of participants in worship as of scholars of it: "How should one, whether coming new to such an assembly or long a participant, understand what the meeting is about?" (3). In this Lathrop follows Aidan Kavanagh's insistence that both worship itself and the study of worship constitute theology, the latter derivative from the former.[68] (I pause to note here the resonance between Lathrop's "meaning" and Wainwright's "vision," at least in the sense that both of these are more evocative, poetic ways to imagine the core ideas of Christianity rather than, for example, as abstract rational propositions.)

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[64] Although *Holy Things* is the first volume in a trilogy (with *Holy People: A Liturgical Ecclesiology* and *Holy Ground: A Liturgical Cosmology*), space and time do not allow me here to treat those later works.
[65] See Michael B. Aune, "Liturgy and Theology: Rethinking the Relationship, Part I — Setting the Stage," *Worship* 81.1 (January 2007).

Lathrop posits meaning as the constitutive concern in the interpretation of worship not only on theoretical grounds, but on a particular assessment of the context in and for which he writes. "The fullness of the central signs is to be accentuated," he says, in words that he applies to his own work, "... in order to *communicate the meaning* of Jesus Christ to *present* human need" (172, emphasis added). Such present-day need is characterized, again and again, in terms of meaninglessness, disorder, chaos, as, for example, when he re-articulates the fundamental question for the study of worship: "[T]o go back to our first question: Why? How do these words and symbols, even if they are reformed, make any sense or offer any help amidst the flood of modern conditions?" (179). These modern conditions include “warring diversities that cannot find common ground,” raising the question “whether real diversity can admit the possibility of common values for the ordering of society” (219). The problem is not diversity per se, but diversity that produces conflict, and the solution is to bring order to that diversity through common values: here again we have a problem of divergence that is not sufficiently oriented towards congruence. The sense of a bringing order to divergence that has gotten out of control is intensified specifically by Lathrop’s use of the metaphor of “chaos”: “[p]opular culture remains replete with examples of quests for ... things that will hold our experience together in chaotic times” (3); “... whether the assembly ... is open to the chaos and the hope for order...” (163); “[f]or many people whose lives are painful and chaotic, the countervailing order of the liturgy is experienced as a great gift” (207). In whatever senses Lathrop, as we shall examine, emphasizes the breaking of symbols, the basic situation that the worshipping body confronts is chaos in need of order. Chaos and order, in fact, are the only two options Lathrop presents: the lack of order means the presence of chaos. Put in such terms, order is not merely a complement to its opposite, but its necessary resolution and relief.

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[66] Alexander Schmemann, *Introduction to Liturgical Theology* (New York: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1975), 14; cited in Lathrop, *Holy Things*, 3.
[67] Parenthetical references in this section are to *Holy Things*.
[68] Aidan Kavanagh, *On Liturgical Theology* (New York: Pueblo, 1984).

The threat of chaos is to meaninglessness as form is to content, at least with respect to the problems of contemporary social life to which worship responds: “Word and sign in the assembly ... suggest meanings where there had been *only* meaninglessness.... The deepest concern of liturgical renewal is this recovery of meaning in a thirsty time” (173, emphasis added). Lack of meaning is the fundamental lack of order plaguing contemporary society, and it, too, is a problem of too much divergence not sufficiently oriented to congruence. For meaninglessness is due to what Lathrop characterizes as a severe deficiency in the meaning-generating symbolism by which society lives: “The need for public symbols has not abated.... We seem to have forgotten the idea ... useful in all democracies ... that volunteer gatherings of diverse people in local communities can enact a shared vision that has public and communal meaning" (3). Instead of a symbolism that conveys such vision and meaning, life in contemporary society offers only the ties of family, ethnic group, popular culture, and brand names to be widely consumed (ibid.). Note, though, how the crisis, for Lathrop, is the loss of that which establishes, out of "diverse" people, a "shared" vision and "communal" meaning (presumably more communal than those meanings held within particular ethnic groups). In a conceptual pattern that will be repeated in several ways throughout the book, diversity is not in itself a bad thing — indeed, Lathrop elsewhere values it greatly — but its value depends on whether it disrupts or promotes forms of over-arching order. Familial and ethnic systems of symbolic meaning would be fine if they were harmonized within a broader system of public symbols. Already, the problem of meaning is pursued in response to a need for congruence that is assumed as an initial parameter within which liturgical theology works.[69]

This grounding in congruence is deepened by several features of "meaning" as Lathrop construes it. Meaning is, first of all, defined by its stability: "... the Christian meeting says something authentic and reliable about God, and so says something true about ourselves and about our world..." (3); "[i]f the gathering has meaning for us, if it says an authentic thing about God and our world..." (5); worship proposes "the idea that there is a world, an ordered pattern of meaning and not simply a chaos" (90; note the "chaos" language). Here we see the impact of situating worship in a social/historical context of threatening chaos. Recall that from Schmemann, Lathrop takes up the project of analyzing worship in terms of its meaning. In principle, and quite plausibly, one could define the meaning of worship plurally — multiple meanings, sharing in truth but contradictory in different ways (perhaps deeply so), jostling tensively and coming into particular configurations only temporarily, based on a whole set of factors. However, because, for Lathrop, the meaning of worship must be curative for the problem of chaos in contemporary social life — a problem that he himself posited — such plural meanings are excluded. Instead, the kind of meaning that is needed is meaning "reliable" enough to propose an "ordered pattern" for the chaos. Meaning, in other words, must be self-congruent, because it must be a corrective for times in which too many things diverge in chaos-generating ways.

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[69] After all, there are (and were, when Lathrop first began writing what became *Holy Things*) plenty of societal dynamics that could furnish the grounds impetus from which the meaning of liturgy takes on new urgency (rather than the lack of a common vision): patterns of racist, sexist, ableist, and poverty-inducing policy and social practice, for instance. Responding to these dynamics would require challenging the power of a "shared" vision that privileges few over many, calling the value of congruence into question.

Moreover, although various elements of worship (and their relationships with one another) allow for multiple interpretations, "the meaning of worship" — that which can fundamentally and rightly answer the question "What does this meeting mean?" — is not an open-ended or ambiguous or many-different-possibilities thing. Lathrop applies notions such as "chains of images" (24, citing George Steiner) and "polysemous meaning" (81n23, citing Northrop Frye) only to the things of which worship is comprised, not to the meaning of worship in itself. That meaning is definitely fixed: "the intention of the whole complex" of worship is to "call us to trust in the biblical pattern, reinterpreting our world from and living out of this: God is the one who brings something out of nothing, life out of death, the new out of old" (32); out of the "particular Christian interest in speaking of God by speaking of Christ ... all these patterns are turned to this christological end" (79-80); "[a]nd the whole tension-laden complex means Christ-among-us" (82).

God and Christ and life out of death are certainly weighty matters, with many layers of meaning. Yet however complex they are, they are still the exclusive substantive core of what worship, in itself, means. Although in worship individual worshippers may *experience* this meaning as a new thing, as though they were discovering or re-discovering it, in itself the meaning is a fixed and closed system, determined before worship even begins.

Not only is the meaning of worship stable in these ways, it is also something that can be definitely stated, and what we might call its "stateability" is also an element of congruence, although this is not intuitively clear. Recall that, according to Lathrop, "the Christian meeting *says something* authentic and reliable about God..." (3, emphasis added). This characterization of what happens in worship, in the most basic sense, as "saying something about God" is made by Lathrop so frequently and so exclusively as to constitute his fundamental explanation of worship as an act: "These are the ways Christians have communally and ritually spoken of God" (53); "... a pattern of ritual broken in order to speak of God's grace" (80); "[t]o see what the assembly actually says about God, go into the gathering place" (87, setting out the challenge of discerning primary liturgical theology); "... access to the primary ways the liturgy speaks of God" (139); "... symbolic, ritual, and mythic material used to speak the new grace of God" (162); "... words about God are paired with the shared signs ... [and] this whole complex is used to speak the meaning of Jesus Christ ..." (217). No other description of what Christians do when they worship has, in Lathrop's usage, the same valence as "saying (speaking) something about God."

I will consider some implications of this general preference for discourse in explaining worship, at the end of this chapter. But here I want to point out that inasmuch as worship, for Lathrop, is fundamentally an act of speaking about God, it is also the act of a single speaking subject saying a single thing: "The goal ... is to have us *all* participate in the liturgy itself as the clearest expression of what we are trying to *say together*..." (8, emphasis added). In nearly every instance, Lathrop refers to speech uttered by a single subject ("the assembly," "the meeting"), and nowhere does Lathrop imagine this single subject saying different things at the same time (and certainly not contradictory things). There is nothing in the act of speaking, in itself, that requires a group of bodies together to speak the same thing, largely in the same manner and at the same time — but this is how Lathrop primarily metaphorizes worship. Nor does he argue that, given the many possibilities of divergence in speech among a group of bodies, congruence is either interpretively or ethically the preferable framework. Speaking about God — that is, worship itself — is simply assumed to operate by way of congruence.

Finally, along with the *stability* and *stateability* of "meaning" as Lathrop construes it, a third feature makes it particularly well suited to address the problem of the threat of chaos — namely, its basis in *structure*. At first, Lathrop implies the (not-unreasonable) assumption that form and meaning are intertwined, in vague terms: "This book ... is an attempt to discern the form and articulate the crucial meanings of the Christian assembly" (7). But then Lathrop asserts this as a general principle: "The thesis operative here is this: Meaning occurs through structure, by one thing set next to another" (33). Formulated thus, structure is a process for meaning more than a container of it: meaning "occurs" through structure, it is not simply reflected in it. Structure is not only the medium in which meaning happens to be expressed, it is the form in which it comes to be at all. On the one hand, this suggests that meaning is a more active, emergent thing, arising out the dynamic process of structure; such process-generated meaning could, potentially, be open ended, not already determined before the process itself plays out. On the other hand, however open-ended the meaning that emerges in structure may be (an issue we shall examine shortly), to say that meaning occurs in structure implies a basic congruence between them — meanings flows from, rather than against, structure.

Lathrop says that meaning-from-structure is the thesis for his whole work, and we should not miss that in this he is choosing a particular interpretive option for how to construe meaning, over against a major alternative. Rather than explicating "authorized or idealized model texts for the words of the liturgy," Lathrop opts to examine "the descriptions of patterned actions, the models and designs of an event" (34). He has chosen to focus, in other words, not on the substantive content of words in themselves, but on the relations between the words as they exist in a system — namely, a system called "worship." Not only this, but he is also focusing not just on "the words of the texts," but on "patterned actions," which would presumably include words but also non-verbal elements and the ways in which words and things other than words are *used* together. It would seem, then, that Lathrop is in fact trying to get outside of verbal or linguistic content as his underlying framework for construing meaning, so that meaning is *not* an abstract entity that (a) is inherent to words in themselves and (b) exists or can be mentally apprehended outside of the way words are concretely used ("patterned actions"). This seems to be the case when he declares, late in the book, that "[t]he holy things of Christians are not static, but come to their meaning in action, as they are used" (164).

However, far from abandoning language and linguistic relations as the framework for conceiving meaning, Lathrop asserts that the very structure that generates meaning in Christian worship (a structure which we might take as moving beyond a linguistic framework) is itself exclusively a reproduction of the structure of a certain system of *language* — namely, the linguistic system called "the Bible": "... the setting of one liturgical thing next to another in the shape of the liturgy evokes and *replicates* the deep structure of biblical *language*..." (33, emphasis added). Lathrop does not say that the structure that generates meaning in worship is *like* the structure of (biblical) language, he says that it *replicates* that linguistic structure (and one must note the high degree of congruence involved in replication). So even if the units that comprise the meaning-generating structure of worship are not only words but non-verbal elements, the *relationships* among these units are to be understood as structured in the same way that the words of scripture are structured. Moreover, Lathrop conceives of and analyzes the units of words and non-verbal elements — "words and actions," "language and actions" — as "symbols" (3, 5). Hence, to the degree that Lathrop moves beyond a linguistic framework at all, it is only into a broader framework of signs and signification (which he explicitly applies at 164-74). I will comment later about what it means that meaning is about signification, but for now it suffices to see how meaning, for Lathrop, emerges out of relationships among signs that are structured in congruence with the relationships that inhere within that particular sign-system that is biblical language.

We can say, then, that there is an expectation of congruence between the structure of biblical language and the structure of worship. But another kind of expected congruence becomes apparent when we look at how Lathrop imagines the structure of worship as it concretely operates. For there is a subtle conflation in Lathrop's work of the notions of "structure" and "pattern." The two are used interchangeably throughout the text. For instance, while the basic thesis is phrased in terms of structure, the first part of the book is divided under headings related to pattern ("The Biblical Pattern of Liturgy"; "Basic Patterns..."; "Developed Patterns..."). One of Lathrop's earliest articulations of the book's basic question is likewise phrased in terms of patterns: "How do these patterns of words and actions, of ritual communication, carry that meaning?" (3). And in the passage distinguishing secondary and pastoral liturgical theology, Lathrop defines secondary liturgical theology's task as both "to illuminate [worship's] *structures*, intending to enable a more profound participation in those structures" and "to illumine the symbols and *patterns* of worship-as-it-is, so that people may participate better..." (6-7, emphasis added). This is echoed throughout Lathrop's work up to the very end: "The exploration of these patterns and their social meanings has been the purpose of this whole book" (210). But why does this matter? So what if Lathrop uses "form," "structure," "pattern," "order" as so many synonyms to name the same aspect of worship? The problem is that structure and pattern do not mean precisely the same thing. Everything has a structure — but not every structure is a pattern. A thing's structure may well be idiosyncratic to the thing itself, and at the very least, to speak of a thing's structure does not require that some other thing(s) have a similar structure. On the other hand, a pattern indicates (or at a minimum implies) a relationship between two or more things — and more specifically, a relationship of *similarity* between those things. To say that one sees a pattern never means other than that two or more things share a similar trait or quality. A pattern connotes some kind of congruence between two things, whereas a structure *may* involve such congruence, or it may not. Or, to put it in greater contrast, a structure may indicate how a thing *diverges* from other things, while a pattern indicates that a thing does *not* diverge from at least one other thing (or more).

To think in terms of patterns is to think about structure as it establishes congruence among things. This, at least, is what pattern consistently means in Lathrop's usage. For example, Lathrop says that books like his "can work at sorting out the root patterns that may be discerned, at least potentially, in all Christian assemblies" (8). The liturgical patterns in which Lathrop is interested are those that establish congruence between different instances of Christian worship — but especially those that establish congruence among *all* such instances, across place and time. Indeed, these patterns are the most significant (for Lathrop) aspect of what defines the church *as* the church: "From the viewpoint of liturgical theology ... the 'catholic faith' is best perceived as the deep, biblically grounded structure that links these churches and comes to expression in their gatherings" (9). Here, though, we see a dual congruence, between the Bible and worship (as discussed above) and then between worship in one place and time and worship in every other place and time: the former congruence is the sufficient condition for the latter. And along with these, the liturgical patterns Lathrop describes effect a third kind of congruence: namely, congruence between worship and life. This point first emerges when Lathrop recommends that "pattern," not "imitation," should be used to translate *mimesis* as it appears in Justin's *Apology*, one of Lathrop's historical touchstones (32). With the translation thus adjusted, Lathrop says that "all the liturgy 'invites us into the pattern of these good things'" (ibid.). Lathrop elaborates the relationship between the Bible, worship, and life in a way that implies high congruence of them all to one another: "All the juxtapositions of the liturgy call us to trust in the biblical pattern, reinterpreting our world from and living out of [it]..." (ibid.). *Three* things congruing in *one* pattern, from Bible through worship to life: this may be a not-unfair (if highly simplified) reformulation of the basic argument of Lathrop's whole book.

But we must not fail to notice the precise kind of congruence Lathrop claims liturgical patterns create with life: "That pattern is *not so much about things to do* as it is an utterly new way to *understand* the world, and so an utterly new way to *conceive* and *thus* to live our lives" (ibid., emphasis added). Thinking comes first ("understand," "conceive," or, in the preceding quotation, "reinterpreting"), and then comes doing, living. Such priority for thinking is affirmed at the conclusion of Lathrop's presentation of his secondary liturgical theology: "'Meaning' is an abstract idea. In fact, what the people grasp in the liturgy ... is a palpable order and pattern, an order of service. Habits of heart and mind then are formed in that pattern" (82). Even as Lathrop attempts to construe "meaning" in less abstract terms, he nonetheless portrays it as patterning (that is, congruing) mental operations, which precede bodily action. Granted, he does join "heart and mind," so presumably the affections are patterned alongside reason. But "heart and mind" (or the equivalent "head and heart") is a phrase that typically does not denote "body and mind," but rather "reason and emotion" or "reason and will" — that is, "thinking and feeling" or "thinking and willing" — in contradistinction to the physical actions of the body, which they guide. Let the mind (and heart) be congruent with the patterns of worship — themselves congruent with the Bible — and, it is implied, congruence of such bodily action as constitutes "living" will follow.

Now, "structure" and "pattern" are only the first two links of a chain of substitutions by means of which Lathrop's argument is, in the most basic sense, made. And both of this chain's remaining links ("*ordo*" and "juxtaposition") are defined by congruence, as against divergence, as much as the first two. Lathrop uses the concept of *ordo* to analyze the biblical and liturgical patterns we have been discussing as they are concretely manifested in history: "[t]he pattern of the Bible in Christian worship is the pattern of the *ordo*..." (33). *Ordo* consists of both "*directions* about what service to schedule at what time or what specific rite, scripture readings, or prayers to use," as well as "the presuppositions active behind such scheduling" (ibid., emphasis added). However, two presuppositions he does not explore lie in the definition of *ordo* just cited. First, Lathrop does not consider it controversial to treat worship as something that involves directions concerning what actions should occur and in what sequence; indeed, he recommends such directions as a better starting-point for the analysis of worship than the actual words that are prescribed to be spoken (and sung) in worship (34-35). That the dynamics of directing and, by implication, following directions should define what one is studying when one studies worship is an interpretive preference, but one that Lathrop does not feel a need to justify. It is nevertheless a *preference*, and it would be equally plausible to ground the interpretation of worship in the dynamics of directed action and improvised action, or even of directed action and the *failure* to follow such directions.

The second unexamined presupposition is related to this: the privileging of what is directed for worship rather than what actually occurs (directed or not) in concrete instances of worship.[70] Whether the directions for worship are regarded as prescriptive designs for or descriptive models of worship, Lathrop never really argues why "the models and designs of an event" (34) are more significant data for interpretation than actual, specific liturgical events themselves. At most, Lathrop states that these models and designs disclose "the most basic and widespread characteristics of that pattern" (35). But that does not address why it is preferable to distill such "most basic and widespread characteristics" from the directions for worship rather than direct observation of (many instances of) actual worship. More importantly for the present analysis, though, Lathrop's privileging of models and designs should be understood as a privileging of source-data that will, by definition, reinforce the perception of worship as a practice of congruence rather than divergence. For models of or designs for worship will necessarily evince congruence more than divergence, if for no other reason than that models and designs, as data, are not affected by the vagaries of the concrete actions of specific human bodies in worship. One can examine any given "schedule" for worship, and infer from it things that do not depend on whether actual bodies did or did not follow the directions in that schedule. The degree to which such an approach will privilege congruence over divergence is in direct proportion to how widely spread the schedule is: the greater the number of particular communities worshipping with any given schedule, the greater the number of actual bodies participating will be, and therefore the more permutations of divergence from the schedule will very likely arise — yet all these permutations will have no consequence for what one deduces from the one schedule itself.

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[70] Immediately one might counter: "But that — rather than an ethnographic approach such as McClintock Fulerkerson's, 20 years after Lathrop — is just how liturgical theology was done at the time Lathrop was writing; he was merely upholding the conventions of the craft of liturgical theology." Which, in fact, is part of my basic point. Moreover, Lathrop himself recognizes that he is opting for a "lumper's" approach over a "splitter's" approach — without arguing *why* he does so (see 35n9).

Indeed, Lathrop argues that the *ordo* as he interprets it has the widest spread throughout Christianity: "... these chapters will propose one reading of the core Christian meanings ... the root elements of an *ordo*, of a pattern of scheduled ritual ... widely, if not universally, observed in the churches" (35). This near-universality extends over the present day: "In the diverse churches, the outline of the assembly's actions may differ slightly.... Still, something like this assembly occurs weekly throughout the churches and is treasured as the very heart of Christianity" (2). In this we can hear Lathrop valuing the *ordo* as it draws divergence among the "diverse churches" into a fundamental congruence with one another. Indeed, Lathrop's use of *ordo* as a category rules out any possibility other than that *ordo* serve as a guarantor of congruence. For Lathrop speaks of *ordo* exclusively in the singular ("the" *ordo* of Christian worship) and never in the plural.

Nor does he argue why *ordo* couldn't be a plural phenomenon. Even as he recognizes that he is lumping together liturgical patterns that others have split up analytically, he does not show why it is interpretively more effective or accurate to do so — he simply operates on the assumption that there is only one *ordo*. Hence, for example, Lathrop does not argue why "the loss of preaching ... among Roman Catholics and the Orthodox, or ... the disappearance of the weekly meal among Western Protestants" should not be understood as the emergence of multiple *ordines*, but just asserts that in these instances the single "*ordo* has decayed" (51).

The same pattern of assumption rather than argumentation that *ordo*, as an analytic category, should privilege congruence over divergence is at work with regard to the relationship of *ordo* and time. The performance of the *ordo* week in and week out allows each individual worshipping community to be in congruence with itself over time. Moreover, the *ordo* is a manifestation of congruence *among* worshipping communities over history: "It has been practiced, more or less in this form, for a long time, being traceable to the earliest centuries of the Christian movement" (2); it is "the essential schema of Christian liturgical action that can be traced in both Eastern and Western liturgical developments throughout the centuries" (47). Historical continuity is, in fact, the basis for assigning "a certain priority" to some components of the *ordo* over others, "because of their presence ... near the origins of the tradition" (53). Yet Lathrop is careful not to press this historical claim too strongly, admitting that "[w]e do not know how widespread among Christian groups of the early two centuries any of these practices were." What matters is that, "[i]n whatever way it came about, this *ordo* has now become the model of the Christian faith itself" (52) and has been so longer than any period when it was not so.[71] While Lathrop does feel compelled to articulate his understanding of the *ordo*'s historical basis with some nuance, he does not feel any need comment on why historical continuity (that is, congruence over time) should be taken to be one of the defining qualities of an *ordo* in the first place.[72]

Throughout much of *Holy Things*, Lathrop's discussion of the *ordo*'s historical basis (however much it must be qualified) suggests that he is taking a merely descriptive approach — "This is just how worship has played out historically." Thus, it could simply have been a historical accident that, as Lathrop contends (liturgical historians' qualms notwithstanding), the worship of myriad Christian communities, across time and place, *does*, in fact, manifest a high degree of such congruence. (That there is only one *ordo* rather than multiple *ordines* could similarly have been just a historical accident.) But as Lathrop proceeds, one increasingly gets the sense that the way things happened to turn out is actually, for Lathrop, the way they *ought* to have turned out: that is, the *ordo* is not only an accurate description of how Christians have worshipped throughout history, but the authoritative prescription for how Christians are expected to worship. The *ordo* as Lathrop elaborates it turns out to be simultaneously model of *and* design for worship.

By the end of the book, he makes this explicit, in a brief comment on Luther's "Treatise on the New Testament, that is, the Holy Mass," in which Luther says: "'And that Christ might not give further occasion for divisions and sects, he appointed ... but *one law and order* for his entire people, and that was the holy mass.... And, indeed, the *great-*

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[71] Further: "Our concern has not been to set out a history as if origin were meaning. Our limited inquiries after origin must be used only to illuminate the structural phenomena of *ordo* as they continue to be alive in the churches" (80).

[72] My concern is different from those of liturgical historians who contest Lathrop's suggestion of uniformity across the majority of Christian traditions over most of Christian history: rather than disputing, on empirical grounds, whether there was a single *ordo* at a certain point in Christian history, I am questioning why, on theoretical grounds, one of the main qualities we should valorize in an *ordo* (even if it was only one among several many contemporaneous *ordines*) is its congruence over time.

est and most useful art is to know what really and essentially belongs to the mass, and what is added and foreign to it'" (217, emphasis added).[73] In this statement, Luther asserts a theologically prescriptive basis for the *ordo*, not only a historically descriptive one, and Lathrop joins his own project to Luther's pronouncement: "... we have been attempting the same business, 'the greatest and most useful art,' in this book. The *ordo* we have thereby discerned is the 'one law and order' for the church..." (218). Yet at the same time that Lathrop concurs with Luther's conviction that there is, on normative grounds, "one law and order for the church," he remarks that he "would not necessarily come to the same concrete liturgical conclusions Luther reached" (ibid.). This opens up several problems. First, if Luther and Lathrop can come to different "concrete liturgical conclusions," then is there really "one law and order" for worship? As long as the liturgical conclusions on which they disagree fall into Luther's category of "what is added and foreign" to the mass, and not the category of "what really and essentially belongs" to it, then there is no challenge to the one law and order. But does this not simply remove the issue to another layer of analysis — namely, who or what determines what essentially belongs to worship versus what is added to it? Luther himself says that knowing the difference is an art, suggesting that it is not self-evident (at least for the human mind).

At any rate, Lathrop actually does disagree with Luther as to what essentially belongs to worship: "... we would include the simple structures of bath, prayer, and timekeeping, along with those of the word-table service, in what is meant [by Luther] here by 'mass'" (217-18). Even if word and table have "a certain priority" over bath, prayer, and timekeeping, Lathrop regularly asserts all five as a unified, closed set that collectively define Christian worship: "The five patterns we have discussed here are sufficient to indicate the root structure of Christian worship" (80); they "are not simply matters of taste," but matters "of Christian identity. Certainly a meaning is proposed to us even when [these patterns] are lost, but it may not be a Christian meaning" (162, 164). Certainly Luther would not dispute baptism, prayer, and the weekly and annual cycles of time as part of Christian worship alongside the proclamation of the word and celebration of Eucharist: but he nowhere thematizes these five as a specific, single unit that defines Christian worship as such, in the way that Lathrop strenuously does. What all this points out is, at the most, that it is not clear whether there is "one law and order" upon which the expectations of congruence in worship could be founded; and, at a minimum, that if there *is* such a law and order, it is something that secondary liturgical theologians contend over, rather than some self-evident or universally defined thing.[74] These points make it even less obvious why a structural interpretation of worship must or should opt for categories of analysis that privilege congruence over divergence.

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[73] Lathrop's citation is to the English edition of *Luther's Works*, vol. 35, ed. E. Theodore Bachman (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg, 1960), 80-81.

Thus far I have deliberately held off from much discussion of the specific content that Lathrop defines for the structure, pattern, or *ordo* of Christian worship, in order to make some observations about structure, pattern, and *ordo* as analytic categories, regardless of their substantive content. But now it is time to focus on that content. Recall that an *ordo*, for Lathrop, consists of both a schedule of activities to be performed as well as the principle(s) on the basis of which those activities are scheduled as they are. Lathrop delineates that schedule in terms of the five patterns just referred to: "Christians meet on Sunday while maintaining a lively sense of the week. The Sunday meeting is marked by both word and meal. Christian prayer is thanksgiving and beseeching.

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[74] This is similar to Wainwright's sense that liturgical theologians have to carefully discern how much divergence is too much divergence (as discussed earlier in this chapter).

People are brought into the community by instruction leading to the bath and meal. In the spring, 'Christ our passover [*pascha*]" (cf. 1 Cor. 5:7) is proclaimed" (79). And the constitutive principle of this fivefold schedule, by now well known, is "juxtaposition," "the setting of one thing next to another in the shape of the liturgy" (33). Lathrop's concept of juxtaposition should first of all be understood a *mechanism* — a means of accomplishing something — rather than something that has meaning in itself: "There is a design, an *ordo*, and it is one that is especially marked by juxtaposition as *a tool of meaning*" (79, emphasis added). And while juxtaposition is evident in five main patterns, Lathrop suggests that nearly every component of Christian worship is an instance of juxtaposition: "Fasts set next to feasts, psalter collects set next to sung psalms, 'holy, holy, holy' set next to 'blessed is he who comes' ..." (80); with respect to liturgical leadership, "the people and their leadership" (198); with respect to injustice, "human suffering ... juxtaposed to ritual beauty" (163); with respect to cultural diversity, "both diversity and unity as another of [the liturgy's] remarkable pairs" (220). Juxtaposition is the mechanism by which all of worship makes (Lathrop would say "proposes") meaning: the means of meaning, one could say.

Lathrop's account of how this liturgical mechanism of juxtaposition makes meaning would seem to place divergence at the very heart of Christian worship, and thereby of Christian identity, *contra* features of Lathrop's construal of meaning, structure, pattern, and *ordo* that, as I have argued, privilege congruence over divergence. For "the structural phenomena of *ordo* ... evidenc[e] a pattern of ritual broken in order to speak of God's grace, [and] [t]he principal instrument of the breaking is juxtaposition" (80). Juxtaposition is Lathrop's extension of Paul Tillich's concept of "broken myth" to both myth and ritual, the classic conceptual pair in the field of history of religions. A myth is broken, in Tillich's sense, when "the terms of the myth and its power to evoke our own experience of the world remain, but the coherent language of the myth is seen as insufficient and its power to hold and create as equivocal" (27). Lathrop argues that the Bible constantly re-stages the breaking of mythic language: not that the Bible itself is mythic language, but that as a linguistic system, the Bible features "the rhetoric of the broken myth" again and again (31).[75] And just as the Bible presents the breaking of mythic language, so Christian worship re-presents (and represents) this breaking of mythical language in ritual form: "... [P]reaching is to cause a crisis in those words: the words are broken.... It is not just reading and preaching that propose this pattern. So do the sacramental actions.... So does ritual action set next to ritual word" (32).

The breaking of ritual words and ritual actions, then, is what generates meaning in Christian worship: "For Christians, all texts and rituals ... have to be broken to speak the Christian faith..." (50). Lathrop brings ritual action and ritual word together into one category of "symbols," the "symbolic ... material used to speak the new grace of God" in Christian worship, and one of the critical tasks of liturgical theology is to investigate, in specific instances of worship, "whether these symbols have been sufficiently brought under tension and broken" (162). Now, to break a symbol is to make it diverge from itself, at a minimum in the sense of diverging from the meanings it has had. Lathrop's constant refrain throughout the book of "the new" which "the old" is made to speak indicates a basic divergence whose inducement constitutes the task of Christian worship as such. Moreover, his use, at several points, of the language of "disorder," "destruction," "crisis," and "chaos" intensifies one's sense of the degree of divergence that liturgical juxtapositions are supposed to achieve: "this traditional order is opened to disorder, being required to say a new thing" (30; see also 32, 40, 81, 163, 206). Therefore, can we not say that, since juxtaposition is the driving mechanism of Christian worship, worship is, in Lathrop's vision, fundamentally a practice of *divergence*, rather than congruence?[76] Further exploring how juxtaposition proceeds will make clear why we cannot.

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[75] Lathrop provides several examples from both Testaments (27-31).

Because "juxtaposition" is a novel concept for interpreting Christian worship, and because it is the term that Lathrop uses most frequently, it is the part of his account that has received the most attention. We would have an incomplete understanding of Lathrop, however, if we did not see juxtaposition as only part (the major part, to be sure) of a larger process. This the process of "liturgical dialectic," and Lathrop is clear that it is the proper context within which juxtaposition is understood: "The meaning of the assembly is first of all resident in the experienced dialectic of the liturgy itself" (80-81; see also 82, 163, 214). The dialectic is a three-step process involving a thesis to which an antithesis is put forth, yielding a synthesis.[77] For example, "the week and the course of its days," which "stand for ourselves and our lives," are a thesis, and "to this thesis the juxtaposition of the meeting [on Sunday] is antithesis.... [T]he radically new conception of God that results is the ongoing synthesis" (81). Seen through the lens of the liturgical dialectic, "juxtaposition" is merely Lathrop's particular name for the relationship between thesis and anti-thesis. I say "merely" because it juxtaposition is *not*, it turns out, the most important thing in worship — the synthesis is the most important thing. Juxtaposition is not *what* Christian worship means, but only *how* Christian worship means what it means. That is, Christian worship as Lathrop interprets it does not value juxtaposition for its own sake, but only insofar as it is the correct means to the true meaning of Christian worship. Hence, divergence (which juxtaposition introduces in the symbols that Christian worship uses) is likewise not valued in itself, but only as a temporary state that will be resolved in the synthesis that emerges through the liturgical dialectic. Divergence only exists in worship on the condition that it will be subsumed within a higher order of congruence.

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[76] Along with the points I am about to make, it should also be remembered that juxtaposition in worship is supposed to replicate juxtaposition in the Bible: "The pattern is itself biblical; the liturgical pattern is drawn from the Bible" (19). The divergence that juxtaposition induces, therefore, is not, in the first place, part of Christian worship because it has some intrinsic value, but only because worship is expected to be *congruent* with the Bible. If Lathrop had discerned a determinative pattern in the Bible that did not involve divergence, then presumably it (i.e., divergence) would not be necessary for Christian worship.

[77] See also Kavanagh, *On Liturgical Theology*, 76.

In light of the centrality of the liturgical dialectic for Lathrop's interpretation, one can speak of "divergence" in worship at all only in a limited sense: divergence is the relationship in which thesis and antithesis stand to one another. In other words, divergence exists in Christian worship in the form of "two things juxtaposed in the *ordo*" (81), which diverge from one another; but this divergence is only *permissible* in Christian worship insofar as it is contained within the *ordo* (and thereby resolved by the liturgical dialectic). Divergence outside the *ordo* is not permissible, as Lathrop makes clear in his considerations of possible variations in each of the five core patterns that comprise the *ordo*. I noted above how divergence between, on the one hand, Catholic and Orthodox traditions and, on the other, Protestant traditions with respect to the linkage of preaching and Eucharist ("word and meal") is considered by Lathrop to be a form of "decay" subject to "liturgical criticism" and the full restoration of both preaching and Eucharist (51, 162, 166-171). With respect to "timekeeping on some new planet or space platform," "whatever pattern of meeting was adopted would have to be a pattern of juxtaposition ... gather[ing] up all the universe as it is suggested in the experience of timekeeping in this place ... [and] propos[ing] to us that surprising grace beyond the universe..." (43). And with respect to the two main variations in baptism, long heatedly debated — infant baptism and believer's baptism — Lathrop says that the "[t]he bewildering number of variations of these patterns, however, are best seen as an elaboration of the primary pairing of teaching and bath," and that the "tension between Christians on their exact sequence ... ought never to lead to the breaking apart of ... the two parts of the process" (66-67).[78]

The regulation of divergence at work in these examples reaches a boiling-point when Lathrop tries to square cultural diversity of real Christian contexts with the authority of an *ordo* for which he has claimed universality, resulting in what is arguably the shrillest and least coherent passage in all of *Holy Things*. Lathrop begins by asserting the contradictory impulses: "The liturgy welcomes both diversity and unity as another of its remarkable pairs.... The meeting's one center, its one purpose, can only be spoken in this diversity"; and yet, "[t]his pattern is not license to do whatever we want, in a diversity that becomes disorder" (220). We can see here a threshold separating acceptable divergence ("diversity") from unacceptable divergence ("disorder"): variations in the language used, in the hymnody, sense of ceremony ("what makes for centered solemnity and what creates welcoming hospitality"), and architectural arrangements all lie below the threshold; but variations away from the juxtapositions of Sunday/week, teaching/bath, word/meal, thanksgiving/lament (*pascha*/year is curiously omitted) explicitly exceed the threshold (ibid.).

Lathrop then asks, "Is this *expectation* an imposed uniformity?" (emphasis added). He answers no, with two reasons: the *ordo* is a pattern for *local* action, and the *ordo* never allows any one thing, word, or action to be absolute, because it always works through the *juxtaposition* of two things. But neither of these reasons actually justifies

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[78] Similar points concerning the juxtapositions of praise and beseeching in prayer and of *pascha* and the rest of the year can be found at, respectively, 57-59 and 78-79.

Lathrop's claim that his expectation of congruence (i.e., "the pattern is not license to do whatever we want, in a diversity that becomes disorder") is *not* an "imposed uniformity." That the *ordo* is only realized through *local* action is simply a consequence of the fact that human bodies are (for the most part[79]) geographically localized; local action may well be both imposed (from near or far or both) and uniform (with other bodies near or far or both). And if the juxtapositions in the liturgical dialectic ensure that no "one thing" is absolute, they do not, for all that, allow a large or unspecified number of things to share ultimate significance: three, and only three, things — the thesis, antithesis, and synthesis of the liturgical dialectic itself — *are* absolute over everything else in worship.[80] They are not God, but they are the norm by which what is Christian and what is not-Christian can be differentiated in worship.

Lathrop again attempts to refute the charge of "imposed uniformity" by responding to a second question, "Why must we do this particular *ordo*? Who said so?" (221). He says these questions might "angrily arise from us when we are in a mood to protect the prerogatives of diversity" — they are not, that is, rational questions proper to liturgical theology. Somewhat surprising, Lathrop flatly answers, "No one said so," noting his departure from Luther's principle of divine institution. Instead, "this *ordo* is simply what the churches have together. It is one form of the trans-local connection each meeting needs as a balance to locality" (ibid.). So the authority of the *ordo* is not because it has been authorized by someone, but only in its widespread practice. But this simply begs two questions: If the *ordo* is just "one form of the trans-local connection each meeting needs," why couldn't there be several *ordines*, so long as each of them created some form of the necessary trans-local connection? And why is one *ordo* the best means of establish trans-local connection, anyway?

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[79] "Virtual" worship, mediated by internet technologies, complicates things some.

[80] Nor is it the case that these "three things" of the liturgical dialectic are open terms that can be filled by any two contradictory elements in worship combined with a third element that resolves them in paradoxical tension. The *ordo* (the concrete form which bears the liturgical dialectic) is neither multiple nor any random set of actions that a Christian community might happen to practice: it is a *single*, definite sequence of actions (and the presuppositions that order the sequence) that can claim congruence over both wide space and long history.

Lathrop considers neither of these, instead tacking on an argument from naturalness: "The *ordo* is ... an order that follows naturally from the fact that Christians gather around a bath, the reading of the scriptures, prayers, and a meal" (ibid.). But hasn't Lathrop been arguing all along that "a bath, the reading of scriptures, prayers, and a meal" are what constitute the *ordo* in the first place? If so, then Lathrop's answers from natural-ness is a tautology: the *ordo* follows naturally from the *ordo*. So Lathrop explains further that "[f]aith calls these things *gifts from God*" (emphasis added): in other words, Christians do them because God told instituted them. Yet this is precisely the reason Lathrop rejects barely a few sentences earlier.[81] That Lathrop cannot mount a compelling defense against the charge of "imposed uniformity" suggests further how his liturgical theology axiomatically permits divergence only insofar as it is oriented towards congruence. Especially in view of the long list of questions (162-174) by which the *ordo* acts as a "remedial norm" (174-179) — presumably remedial for those who "angrily" or "petulantly" question the presumption for congruence — and to each of which Lathrop calls for an affirmative answer (169), divergence is something to be strictly managed rather than freely embraced.

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[81] Lathrop concludes the passage by, effectively, calling childish those who charge him with "imposed uniformity": "For an assembly to refuse the bath, the word, and the meal on the grounds that they are imposed uniformity is a little like my petulantly refusing to eat a graciously presented supper on the grounds that it might violate my unique individuality, when my independent existence is possibly only as I also eat with others" (221). But is the only option not to eat the supper at all? What if one only eats part of it? Or what if one is asking to eat a different meal, in an entirely different manner, while still enjoying the company of fellow diners? (Note also that the choice is presented only in terms of everyone eating the same meal, or utter atomization ("unique individuality," "independent existence").)

D. Simon Chan

Simon Chan's *Liturgical Theology: The Church as Worshipping Community* is significant because it is one of the only attempts to do a systematic liturgical theology (à la Wainwright)[82] explicitly from the perspective of evangelical Christianity.[83] There is, of course, a significant amount of literature about evangelical worship, which Chan engages thoroughly; but his work is distinct in its attempt to also engage much of the broader conversation[84] in Christian liturgical theology, from which he feels evangelical considerations of worship have been cut off. Chan's approach is somewhat eclectic, in that he tends to treat all of Christian liturgical theology as a single source from which to draw as he needs, acknowledging but not strictly observing boundaries between historical periods or confessional traditions: moving briskly, for instance, in an argument about worship and divine glory, from the Shorter Westminster Catechism, to Roman Catholic Romano Guardini, to Lutheran Frank Senn, to Methodist Will Willimon (53-55).[85] This sometimes creates a sense of coherence where others might find theological disjunctions. Relatedly, while Chan does make clear what qualifies his liturgical theology as an evangelical theology in general, he does not then argue definitively as to what would or should distinguish an evangelical liturgical theology from, say, a (non-evangelical) Lutheran or Orthodox liturgical theology. But these do not detract from what is important for my purposes. For even if (from the perspective of non-evangelical liturgical theologies) Chan's liturgical theology might appear to be a hybridization of evangelical and non-evangelical thought on worship, we can still observe how Chan deals with congruence and divergence — especially what he takes to be self-evident with respect to them.[86]

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[82] We can helpfully contrast Koenig's and Chan's projects by means of David Fagerberg's concepts of "theology of worship" and "theology from worship." David Fagerberg, *Theologia Prima: What is Liturgical Theology?* (Mundelein, IL: Hillenbrand Books, 2004).

[83] Although Chan inter-changeably uses "evangelical," "charismatic," "free church," and occasionally "Pentecostal" to name his theological orientation and the communities of which he is part, he most often uses "evangelical," so that is what I will consistently use in my discussion of his work.

[84] With two exceptions: Chan does not engage feminist or multi-culturalist / anti-racist work on worship in any significant way.

[85] Parenthetical references in this section are to Simon Chan, *Liturgical Theology: The Church as Worshiping Community* (Downer's Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2006).

We first see the dynamics of congruence and divergence in worship in the problem with which Chan begins, which he explicitly wants to address through his work: evangelicals' "capitulation," in various forms, "to the ways of the world" (10). While acknowledging David Wells' diagnosis of the problem as a consequence of the "professionalization of ministry" and Mark Noll's analysis of the rise of individualism and a "free-market economy" in church life (9-10), Chan believes that the problem lies in evangelicals' inadequate sense of what the church is: "... the tendency is to see the church as simply one of a number of entities whose legitimacy is to be established solely based on their abilities to serve a higher, all-transcending goal — a goal largely defined by modern secular reason..." (26). This kind of goal-achieving rationality leads the church "to model its mission on the mass-production factory," churning out as many "saved souls" as possible (45). In such salvation-factories, "ministry becomes departmentalized ... mission is left to church-growth specialists, counseling is done by professionally trained counselors, and the pastor serves as the CEO" (ibid.). Why is this a bad thing, according to Chan? First, because it creates fragmentation where there should be unity: "... the various 'ministries' of the modern church are to achieve coherence, to become the one ministry rendered ultimately to God..."; in other words, the various activities of the church — the conduct of the body of Christ — are not sufficiently congruent, in the sense that they do not fit together in a unified whole.

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[86] At a minimum, *we* can assume that if there were, in the non-evangelical liturgical traditions from which Chan draws, assumptions concerning congruence and divergence that were problematic for evangelical theology, Chan would feel the need to address them.

Confusion about the church's mission and fragmentation of its ministries, however, are indications of an over-arching problem: the church is not adequately distinguishing itself from "the world": "The church ... existing in the eschatological tension between the 'already' and the 'not yet,' shows itself to be basically oriented toward the new creation and therefore not-of-this-world" (42). For Chan, then, a sort of divergence is at the heart of the church's identity — namely, divergence from the ways of the world. And worship is the place where this divergence is most clearly displayed: "But in its worship, [the church] especially shows itself to be opposed to what the world stands for...." This means that worship is fundamentally defined, at least in part, in terms of divergence. But this divergence is properly manifested only through the church's *congruence* with itself, since "the church's most basic identity is to be found in its act of worship," and, moreover, worship "not only distinguishes the church as church, *it also makes or realizes the church*" (42, 46, emphasis in original).

In worship the church becomes more fully what it is intended to be — this is a form of self-congruence — and for Chan, this notion of the church's fuller realization is grounded in what he thinks is a more fitting way to understand the relationship between church and creation. Rather than seeing the church "as another entity within the larger creation," Chan wants the church to be seen as "prior to creation. The church precedes creation in that it is what God has in view from all eternity and creation is the means by which God fulfills [God's] eternal purpose in time" (23).[87] Chan wants to reverse the means-end relationship: the church is not the means to fulfill God's intentions for creation, but instead creation is the means to fulfill God's intentions for the church, "in order that [God] might enter into a covenant relationship with humankind" (22). The church is not, therefore, an instrument, but an end-in-itself, and this allows Chan to reject any approach to the church's mission and worship, such as the "salvation factory" model, in which the church serves as a means to rationally realize a goal external to it-self. The church's conduct is to congrue with God's intention for it (before creation) and nothing else.

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[87] On this topic, Chan draws from the work of Robert Jenson, as well as, interestingly enough, a trajectory of interpretations of the relationship between biblical Israel and the Christian church that seek to be non-supersessionist.

This understanding that the church should be unambiguously divergent from the world and exclusively congruent with God's intention sets worship within a general expectation of congruence. And one of the main metaphors by which Chan conceptualizes worship as an activity deepens that expectation, namely, the metaphor of call and response: "The coming of God's word to gather a people and the people's response to that word — that is the basic dynamic of worship and the constitution of the liturgical assembly" (42). This call and response, which constitute worship (which, in turn, constitutes the church) is, for Chan, participation in God's own triune life, "no less than the continuation of the work of the triune God in the church until the eschaton" (61). In the most basic sense, God has called to humankind most fully through Christ, and the church responds to this call by gathering in worship.[88] But Chan complexifies the matter, adopting Edward Kilmartin's work on the trinity and liturgy. Jesus prayed for God to send the Spirit, and, in response, "the returning prayer of the church is for the Spirit to be given in its eucharistic assembly" (60). And since God does, in fact, bestow the Spirit on the church, in response "the church's prayer is essentially the return of love by the power of the Spirit...” (59).

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[88] Chan is careful, however, not to suggest that the church's "response" is not solely a decision by humans on their own motion: "We don't decide: now that God has spoken, what should we do?" (47). Instead, it is the Holy Spirit, acting in the church as the Body of Christ, who makes the response.

In worship, in other words, the church’s conduct is supposed to be wholly congruent with the conduct of God. Indeed, this congruence with the Triune life of God is, according to Chan, *the* fundamental theological norm for worship (and the only one Chan offers explicitly as a norm): “Worship is true to the degree that it corresponds to the work of the triune God and continues and extends the work of the triune God” (61). Now, it is entirely plausible that, among a group of bodies gathered in worship, there could be multiple forms of conduct that satisfy this criterion — that is, they are congruent with the Triune work of God — but are not congruent with one another. But this is a possibility explicitly ruled out by Chan: “What we call the liturgy is the people’s *common* response to that word, their acceptance of the Word, which constitutes them as the covenant people” (41). I shall in a moment illustrate further how Chan excludes the possibility of divergent human conduct that nevertheless congrues with God’s conduct, but here it must be noted that, among several issues related to worship as response and specifically the intricacies of responding to the Triune God, Chan does not feel the need to make any case why the conduct of different humans, in order to be congruent with the conduct of God, must be congruent with each other.[89]

The mention of a theological norm for worship leads us to Chan’s understanding of the relationship between theology and worship. In his initial discussion of the principle *lex orandi est lex credendi*,[90] Chan certainly seems to view this relationship as one of mutual influence: “Historically, it could be shown that *lex orandi* and *lex credendi* sustain a dialectical relationship with each other: liturgy shapes doctrine, and doctrine shapes liturgy” (49). However, at several other points, Chan seems to revert to a more typically Protestant emphasis on the precedence of doctrine over liturgy: “That is, whatever the liturgical norms may be, they must *conform* to certain theological norms” (57, emphasis added). Chan repeatedly voices concern that liturgical decisions in many evangelical congregations do not properly flow from theological considerations: “Often the structure of worship is changed without much thought given to its theological consequence” (41); “[t]he real issue is whether the form adopted is consistent with the norm of revelation, the gospel of Jesus Christ” (127). Chan regularly envisions liturgical practice being changed on account of theological interpretation: indeed, the project of the book as a whole is to intervene in liturgical deficiencies (and the missional deficiencies that, he judges, flow from them) by bringing greater theological clarity. But he does not conversely imagine theology being changed on account of liturgical practice (except in the period of the early church[91]). We can say that, in general, Chan expects the liturgy to be in congruence with theology, much more so than the other way around.

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[89] This congruence is actually twofold, in the sense either (a) that the church’s conduct must congrue with both God’s conduct with respect to humankind (the economic Trinity) and the conduct of the persons of the Trinity in their relations with each other (the immanent Trinity); or (b) that the church’s conduct must congrue not only with God’s conduct with respect to humankind, but also with the congruence that obtains between the economic Trinity and the immanent Trinity — congruence with God’s conduct *in its self-congruence*. (See Chan’s discussion of Kilmartin on this point at 58-59.)

[90] Chan acknowledges that this version is a reformulation of the original statement by Prosper of Aquitaine: *ut legem credenda lex statuat supplicandi* (48, 174nn15-16). Cf. Michael Aune, “Liturgy and

Yet is there any sense, for Chan, in which theology would appear to be determined by liturgy? His discussion of *ordo* seems, at first glance, to suggest that at the level of “deep structure,” liturgy is controlling of theology. Borrowing from Alexander Schmemann and, to a lesser extent, Aidan Kavanagh, Chan says that *ordo* is the “deep, abiding structure which expresses the living faith of the church.... It is this basic *ordo* that must set the standard for belief” (49-50). Thus, liturgy as a whole is not, in itself, determinative for theology, but only one aspect of liturgy — its *ordo*. And Chan assumes,

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Theology,” 65-68.

[91] See Chan, 49 and 105-106.

like Lathrop, that there is only one *ordo*, congruent with itself across all of Christian history unto the present: "This *ordo* ... has been show to be more or less consistent throughout the history of the Christian church..."; "[t]here is general agreement among liturgiologists [sic] today that for all the variations in liturgical expressions, there is nonetheless a basic shape or *ordo* underlying these expressions" (50, 62). Such congruence-over-history is, in fact, the grounds for the theological authority of the *ordo*: "In this sense *lex orandi* is the liturgical equivalent of the apostolic witness to the paradigmatic encounter with Jesus Christ and *is the basis of all subsequent belief*" (49, emphasis added).

Chan defines the *ordo* most basically in terms of two broad patterns of conduct, Word and sacrament. But Chan is not interested in understanding Word and sacrament in terms of bodily conduct (as bodily conduct and with respect to other kinds of bodily conduct). Instead, his explication of Word and sacrament — that is, of the *ordo* — proceeds through conceptual analysis and symbolic interpretation, in order to distill three "orientations" of liturgy — "eucharistic," "eschatological," and "missiological" (63).[92] The substantive content of these three orientations is not really at issue for me, but rather their status: "These orientations provide the *theological criteria* by which any liturgical order must be evaluated. *Only* as the liturgy meets these criteria can it be said to be able to truly form the church" (84, emphasis added). So the *ordo*, in fact, is authoritative for theology insofar as it *already is* theology.[93] In the relationship between "worship" and "theology," as it is analyzed by Chan, there is nothing in worship (*qua* worship) that is authoritative for theology: the *ordo* is the only thing in worship that is authoritative for theology, but what is authoritative about the *ordo* is the theological propositions that it expresses. By contrast, what is authoritative about the *ordo* for Lathrop is the *dynamic* that it effects (a dynamic admittedly framed in largely cognitive rather than bodily terms) — namely, transformation, by juxtaposition, of the old so that it speaks the new. And where Wainwright envisions a constant input of culture driving the experimentation with new liturgical forms, some of which will be permitted to endure on account of their sufficient congruence (which is carefully judged over time), Chan implies a much more exclusionary process, in which new forms should only be attempted once their congruence with theology is certain.

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[92] See Chan, 70-84.

[93] Chan would perhaps say that I have collapsed the distinction he was careful to observe (following Schmemann and, he would claim, even Kavanagh): the theology-embedded-in-the-*ordo* is "primary theology," which makes it authoritative over "secondary theology." But what he offers to fill the role of "primary theology" — the "eucharistic," "eschatological," and "missiological" "orientations" of worship, particularly in the form in which he lays them out — are, in fact, propositions of the order of secondary theology. Moreover, Chan effectively reverses the relationship between "primary" and "secondary" when he asserts, as part of his explanation of Kavanagh on primary and secondary the-

So the *ordo* provides the basis for worship's congruence with theology, and if the Word and sacrament which comprise the *ordo* are interpreted primarily in terms of their eucharistic, eschatological, and missional orientations,[94] then potentially many forms of conduct could belong in Christian worship. Indeed, Chan gestures toward this possible multiform openness even as he calls for the activities that occur in worship to be congruent with the *ordo*: "Unless our respective orders of service (*and there could be many*) conform to the basic *ordo*, we are not being shaped into the community we are meant to be" (63, emphasis added). Hypothetically, activities that proclaim the Word and sacramental action that manifests it could take many forms, so long as they were appropriately eucharistically, eschatologically, and missionally oriented. However, what

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ology, that "it is only when the experience [of worship] is [critically] reflected upon and made explicit that it can function effectively as a norm, that is, become liturgical *theology*" (51, emphasis in original (and insertions are from the previous sentence in original)).

[94] Along with the understanding that "both have their basis in the *incarnation*, the Word becoming flesh (Jn 1:14)," an aspect that grounds the three orientations but which Chan does not denote as a separate orientation (63).

Chan actually argues for is a much narrower range of liturgical conduct. Chan conveys a second set of expectations alongside the theological norms of the *ordo*, which guarantee congruence of bodily conduct within worship, in addition to congruence between worship and the conduct of the triune God and congruence between worship and theology. Unlike the theological norms of the *ordo*, these additional expectations are neither articulated as such nor argued for very extensively. They form a background of what is necessary for worship, against which Chan explores the richness of specific liturgical structures and practices. But there is never a compelling argument as to why they should be regarded as necessary, even if one upholds the general principle that worship should conform to the *ordo* in the theological terms Chan has offered.

In the first place, Chan relies on the assumption that there must be a fixed set of activities for a given worship service, determined outside of the service. At the start of his discussion of the *ordo*, Chan says: "This normative response, however, must be given concrete expression if it is to be actualized in practice; the way to actualize our theology of worship is through the liturgy. The liturgy maybe described as *embodied* worship. It is worship expressed through a certain visible order or structure (thus the phrase 'order of service')" (62, emphasis added). In these lines is a dense collapsing of several notions onto one another. That worship is the actualization of theology is no surprise, given what I have laid out above. But then the link is made between (1) the actualization of theology and (2) embodiment: true worship takes places in and through the body. This, too, may make some sense intuitively, since human beings necessarily (if not exclusively) exist in bodies. Immediately, though, (2) embodiment is then equated with (3) "*a* certain *visible* order or structure." Why should the fact that worship must be actualized in and through human bodies require that there be a (single) definite order of service?

Chan provides no answer — and the conflation of theology's actualization, human embodiment, and single order of service is unremarkable to him.

The connection between embodiment and the necessity of a single order of service may perhaps be found in a separate comment: "The worship of the church, *normalized in the liturgy*, is what makes the church the church" (91, emphasis added). Earlier in Chan's argument, when he was establishing that the church's worship is what most marks its proper divergence from the world, he did not qualify it as "normalized" worship, but here he does, in a section in which he is reflecting on how communal practices function to form human subjectivities. Liturgy is defined as both the embodied form of worship and the normalized form of worship: that is, *liturgy is bodily normalization*. Again, no reason is given why worship can be (and, moreover, must be exclusively) understood on these terms, but Chan's reliance on the notion of bodily normalization (in the sense of conformation) appears at points throughout the work. In worship, for instance, he says that Christians are "imbibing [the] truth" of the Christian story: "We are not merely repeating some ideas from the past but are engaged in a 'rubric' or pattern of actions of re-presenting them in the here and now" (98).

Or take Chan's response to one of the concerns raised by the "new ecclesiology." Chan cites Nicholas Healy's claim that "[r]epeated performance of behavior patterns does not, of itself, issue in the right formation ... unless they are performed with appropriate intentions and construals" (87).[95] To this concern, Chan responds: "The issue is not whether we are doing it with 'right intention and construals' ... [A]s long as Christians are practicing a normative liturgy, that is, praying the prayer of the church, one may rightly assume that spiritual formation is taking place, notwithstanding their inadequate understanding and motivation" (98). In other words, bodies will be properly formed if their *conduct* is congruent with the order of service, even if their will or understanding is not likewise congruent. Chan reinforces the importance of congruent bodily conduct when, at the end of the work, in his consideration of active participation, he asserts that "[a]ctive participation also means that the *way* things are done is just as important as what is being done.... For the liturgy to be done well, certain *disciplines* are needed" (154-55, emphasis added). The examples he gives all concern proper bodily performance of the conduct expected in the order of service.

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[95] The quotation is from Nicholas Healy, "Practices and the New Ecclesiology: Misplaced Concreteness?" *International Journal of Systematic Theology* 5.3 (November 2003): 295.

The normalization of the body in worship that Chan envisions occurs not only through each body congruing its conduct with the order of service, but through all bodies congruing their conduct with one another. This point emerges when one considers the different (and somewhat contradictory) ways Chan characterizes worship in terms of play and free action. As part of his critique of the goal-achieving rationality mentioned above, Chan invokes Guardini to the effect that "[l]ike play, the liturgy has no purpose, yet it is full of meaning" (54). He further draws on Johann Huizinga's work on play and culture to suggest that worship is a time of play in that we can practice being "most truly ourselves, because we no longer need to present a 'nice front'" (56). So, for example, in the work-place, service-workers "need to appear nice and friendly" towards customers, and bosses "have to appear caring toward their staff" (ibid.). In worship, by contrast, Chan imagines that we are not "compelled to play the game of 'let's pretend' ... we can truly open [sic] to one another..." (ibid.). If worship is like play-time in the manner of children constructing with blocks or dressing up and enacting roles or stories, then presumably what bodies do in worship would not be a largely pre-determined set of actions; instead, there would only be broad categories of action (drawn from social-cultural practice) within which worshipping bodies would improvise their conduct. Moreover, if worship is a play-space in which participants need not hide behind a "nice front," then their interactions would likewise be pegged to whatever emotions or concerns occupying them at the moment, and their speech and responses to one another would flow in a more spontaneous, unscripted manner.

Yet Chan does not favor worship of that kind, as one can see in his critique of "free church" and charismatic traditions that would resist the imposition of a pre-set order on worship. He questions whether there is any worship that is "genuinely unpredictable" or spontaneous: "Even the most 'unstructured' charismatic service has a form ... prophecies and tongues occur at predictable moments.... There is an unwritten structure within which such 'spontaneous' expressions are allowed to take place" (127). Further, he suggests that more spontaneous conduct is appropriate to services "outside of Sunday morning," such as healing services; the implication is that spontaneous conduct is not properly part of the Sunday worship of a community, which he calls "the epitome and summit of worship" (ibid.). Although Chan declares that "[t]rue worship juxtaposes order to freedom," he does not outline or call for forms of liturgy in which order and freedom are equally valued as dynamics of worship: the value is placed on the ordering of freedom, not the freeing of order. Or, to put it another way, the problem in which Chan is invested is not how to ensure that order and the breaking of order both occur in worship; the problem is how to make sure that freedom ultimately does not break order. This is reflected later in Chan's analysis, when he returns to the metaphor of "play" in presenting approvingly the relationship of ordinaries and propers in written rites: "The whole liturgy with its interplay of fixed and variable elements may be compared to play.... Within play, the rules of the game are *strictly observed*, yet there is an infinite number of moves, and this makes each game different and exciting (160, emphasis added). “Aimless” forms of children’s improvisatory play have been replaced by the strict following of the rules of a game, and the “infinite number of moves” involves in reality only the degree of freedom that one finds in varying the texts of the propers from one week to the next.

E. Conclusion

I have tried, in this chapter, to maintain the distinct and multiple ways in which Wainwright, Lathrop, and Chan account for congruence and divergence in worship. Because each of them utilizes different analytic categories for interpreting worship and relates different elements of worship in different ways through these categories, congruence takes many forms for each of them: for example, the congruence of contemporary creeds with the core theological vision of the church, for Wainwright; or the congruence of the worship of many congregations with one another in the five core patterns of the *ordo*, for Lathrop; or the congruence of worship with the eucharistic, eschatological, and missiological orientations that Chan delineates. It is hard to deny, though, that they share an overall presumption that congruence is the norm for worship, and that, moreover, divergence is not something to be equally valued alongside congruence, but rather a threat to congruence that must be brought into conformity with it. Within this general preference for congruence, they more specifically share the assumption that bodily conduct must, likewise, be marked by congruence over against divergence. Although Chan *expresses* this more explicitly than Wainwright or Lathrop, none of them *argues* why this should be so. Instead, it is in each case simply a consequence of the congruence expected for other aspects of worship.

These liturgical theologians do not need to directly address the need for congruence for another reason: each of them has adopted a framework for interpreting worship that is defined by the relations of signification (in which I include relations of representation and linguistic communication) that arise between concepts or symbols. For Wainwright, the Christian vision and the substantive core of Christian faith provide the norm for worship, and worship (and various elements thereof) are judged according to their faithfulness in expressing the vision and substantive core. For Lathrop, the interpretation of worship is exclusively defined as the search for the meaning of worship, and that meaning arises from the interactions between constitutive Christian symbols (i.e., the "holy things"). And for Chan, the basic metaphor for worship is the normative response to God's call — that is, worship must signify the correct response to the call — and the norms by which the response is evaluated are explicitly conceptual ones. Now, I am placing in one category a number of dynamics and relations — signification, representation, linguistic communication, expression, signs, symbols, words, concepts — that are each complex, multifaceted, and not necessarily equivalent with all the others. Yet all of them have resonances with each other, and all of them can be fairly unambiguously distinguished from the physical relations — interactions of position, motion, contact, sensation — that exist between bodies. One does not need to formulate or assume a comprehensive theory distinguishing between and relating the symbolic and the material (or the discursive and the non-discursive, or the mental and the corporeal) in order to plausibly claim that the relationships between a symbol and its referent, or between concepts or meanings and their expressions, are not the same kind of thing as the relationships between two (or more) bodies moving relative to each other, touching each other, sensing each other — or a body moving, touching, sensing itself — and that the differences between these kinds of relationships are analytically significant.

If, however, one accepts even a heuristic distinction between relations of signification and relations of embodiment, then we can see that the liturgical theologians I have discussed here, in company with many liturgical theologians, interpret worship exclusively by means of analysis of relations of signification. What bodies are supposed to *do* in worship is entirely a derivative of what worship (as a system of signs or symbols) *means*. Ultimately the function of the body is simply to express, communicate, or represent the meanings proper to worship. To convey it another way: one need not ever have observed (or seen images of or heard recordings of) actual bodies actually worshipping to comprehend Wainwright's, Lathrop's, or Chan's interpretations of worship. If one knew absolutely nothing about what bodily actions were involved in bathing or praying, this would not at all change the meaning of "juxtaposition" for Lathrop or his claims about "juxtaposition" as a norm for worship. (Similar points hold for Wainwright and Chan with their respective concepts and claims.)

But what if one were to define and interpret Christian worship — and even construct norms for it — in terms of relations of embodiment, rather than relations of signification? This would be an account of worship in which what bodies did was not only central, but constitutive. Such an account would seem entirely plausible in a religion and faith whose founding act was the incarnation (the em-bodi-ment) of God and the killing and resurrection of God's human body. To the challenge of re-interpreting worship in this way, in light of the body-politics of the present day — that is, the challenge of a liturgical somatics adequate to contest the era of biopower — this dissertation now turns.

Chapter 3:
Christian Worship and the Analytics of Biopower

In the previous chapter we observed how secondary liturgical theology operates with a variety of implicit assumptions concerning the body's conduct in worship, which are often not openly acknowledged and only rarely argued for (relative to the major topics for which strong argument is made). We saw how expectations of congruence in bodily conduct arise in and are a consequence of the logic of congruence embedded in the different interpretive frameworks adopted by secondary liturgical theologians from a variety of confessional/liturgical traditions. Further, in the first chapter, we also discovered, distilling from instances of worship in a number of traditions, an implicit set of expectations that the body's conduct be ordered towards congruence. These expectations were seen to operate in the actual practice of worship, as described by liturgically fluent participant-observers of it. Again, however, they were rarely asserted *as* formal rules, but were enforced as such — particularly in relation to a threshold separating deviation from disruption — by the conduct of various bodies in worship. Yet isn't it true that my own observations of the body's conduct, as it is treated in liturgical practice and second-order interpretation of that practice, have themselves been informed by a framework for interpreting bodies that has largely lain implicit? Indeed they have, and now is the time to make that framework explicit, thereby to open the way to both diagnosing worship's enmeshment with contemporary societal structures of power, as well as imagining a practical logic of embodiment with which worship could operate so as to disrupt and transform those very structures. The former task is the work of the present chapter, the latter the work of the final two chapters.

A. Foucault's analytics of power[96]

As I noted in the preface, my fundamental construal of bodies is as nodes within networks of various social practices, which are both constituted in and by these practices yet simultaneously constitute these practices as practices in the first place. Again, I am not concerned here with the question of whether practice-constituting bodies or body-constituting practices came first, in some primal position "before" there were bodies and practices: what matters is that we now find our bodies co-constitutively embedded in multiple networks of practice, and I take it as axiomatic that we cannot, in this life, return to or create a time or space in which bodies are not co-constitutive with practices. This construal of bodies flows from post-structuralist thinker Michel Foucault's analytics of power,[97] in which the body has a central conceptual role. In laying out this analytics, I distinguish between the "methodological analytics" and the "substantive analytics" that one finds in Foucault's work and in various appropriations of it.[98] Foucault's methodological analytics of power involves questions of how, where, and for what one should look if one wants to see power in actual operation; his substantive analytics is a specific account, by means of the methodological analytics, of the operations of power in a specific time, place, and sociopolitical context — namely, mostly Western European societies (along with the lands and societies colonized by or governed in the manner of Western European societies), mostly from the sixteenth century onwards.[99] I do not here give a comprehensive explication of either the methodological analytics or the substantive analytics, but present those features that are most relevant to and salient for the interpretation of the body in worship (both the individual bodies of Christians and the collective Body of Christ).

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[96] The account in this section synthesizes several key works by Foucault and major explications of Foucault.

Michel Foucault (see the Bibliography for complete citations of Foucault's work), *The Abnormals* (1975); *Discipline and Punish* (*DP*, 1975); *"Society Must Be Defended"* (*SMD*, 1976); *History of Sexuality*, vol. 1 (*HS*1, 1976); *DE* #192, "Truth and Power" (1976); *Security, Territory, Population* (*STP*, 1978); *DE* #291"'Omnes et Singulatim': Towards a Critique of Political Reason" (1979); *DE* #306, "The Subject and Power" (1982); *DE* #363, "Technologies of the Self" (1982); *DE* #344, "On the Genealogy of Ethics: An Overview of a Work in Progress (1983); *DE* #356, "The Ethics of the Concern of the Self as a Practice of Freedom" (1984).

Cressida Heyes, *Self-Transformations: Foucault, Ethics, and Normalized Bodies* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007). Ladelle McWhorter, *Bodies and Pleasures: Foucault and the Politics of Sexual Normalization* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1999); *Racism and Sexual Oppression in Anglo-America: A Genealogy* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2009). Nikolas Rose, *Powers of Freedom: Reframing Political Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999); Nikolas Rose and Paul Rabinow, "Biopower Today," *BioSocieties* 1 (2006): 195-217, doi:10.1017/S1745855206040014.

The methodological analytics of power, according to Foucault

Methodologically, Foucault sought to analyze power outside the critical paradigms, drawn chiefly from the political theory of liberalism and Marxian social theory, that have dominated both actual political struggles and contemporary social and political thought for at least the past century and a half. First, power, according to Foucault, is not a commodity possessed in a zero-sum fashion, where one can only gain power by decreasing the power of others. It is, instead, a relationship in which individuals and groups seek to lead one each other to act in specific ways: to "con-*duct* the *con*duct" of one another, to use a Foucaultian phrase.[100] Thus, power is not solely a matter of endless violence or oppression, but about all the different techniques in which people seek to get other people to act in specific ways. By implication, then, power (that is, not oppression, but attempting to con*duct* one another's *con*duct) infuses every interpersonal and intergroup interaction, because in every interaction people are trying to lead one another to act in particular ways. Finally, the notion of conducting each another's conduct presents a relation of power as much more nuanced than simply the giving of consent or the wresting of coercion: power is about shaping the fields of action available to one another, constantly in reaction to another, to make some actions more likely than others, but always liable to the other person's seeking to counter-conduct the situation.

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[97] "Analytics" is a term commonly employed by Foucault users, particularly in reference to Foucault's work on power, because Foucault insisted that he was *not* trying to articulate a general, pan-historical "theory," but rather was undertaking the investigation of socio-historically specific practices and rationalities.

[98] These are not (yet) standard terms among Foucault users, but my own formulations.

[99] One should understand that neither the "methodological analytics" nor the "substantive analytics" in Foucault's work is meant as a universal or pan-historical framework. Although, on my read, the methodological analytics is used to generate the substantive analytics of a particular society for a particular period, nothing in Foucault says that in or for other periods, power would need to be modeled in the same way in order to see its operations with the greatest critical impact.

Foucault's substantive analytics of power

Foucault's substantive analytics of biopower identifies a "general economy" of power which he names in at least three different ways: "biopower" (*HS*1 and *SMD*), "security" (the beginning of *STP*), and "governmentality" (the end of *STP*, as well as *DE* #306). For clarity, I have chosen to consistently use the name "biopower," without meaning to deny the distinctions among these three terms. Biopower congealed as a general economy of power over several centuries, with initial rumblings as early as the Reformation and beginning to assume its present form in the 18th century, that is, in proximity to both the Enlightenment and the Industrial Revolution. Its emergence was the result of two major shifts in Western societies. The first was the shift from two "totalizing institutions" — the Church and the Empire (Roman, then Holy Roman, and then the multiple imperial sovereignties of the medieval period) —to one, the modern state. A different form of power operated each of the totalizing institutions, "pastoral power" for the Church and "political power" for the Empire. Pastoral power works through a concern for "all and each," for the total well-being of a group of people (the "flock" cared for by the "shepherd" (Latin: *pastor*)) and for the individual welfare of each member of the group. Pastoral power's techniques of ascertaining the truth (primarily forms of confession and autobiography) allow it to individualize each sheep in the flock. At the same time, pastoral power must ensure that the total health of the flock overall is maintained. Thus, in Foucault's oft-repeated phrase, pastoral power is simultaneously "individualizing and totalizing."

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[100] In his last years, Foucault tended to refer to the conducting of conduct as the overall field of "government." *DE* #306, "The Subject and Power" (1982).

The shift from Church-and-Empire to modern state is its own story (whose details do not bear centrally upon my argument), but by the 16th century the modern state had begun to incorporate the two modes of pastoral power for its own uses. This appropriation was rapidly advanced by the emergence of an entirely new domain of knowledge: the study of humans as systems comparable to the system of physical and natural forces and phenomena that modern physics was beginning to comprehend around the same time. In this domain of knowledge, human individuals were organisms whose birth, vitality, development, decay, and death were all scientifically knowable. And collective human endeavors, from families to tribes to towns to whole societies, could likewise be determinately understood by science. This domain of knowledge has come to comprise, in the present day, the immense range of life sciences, human sciences, and social and behavioral sciences, along with all the forms and structures of intervention, therapeutics, policy, and services generated by the application of these sciences.

The life, human, and social and behavioral sciences have enmeshed themselves within the structures of the modern state, such that these sciences have become the basis for the state's program of governing all of society.[101] These sciences have provided the state (and other networks of agency) with new ways to analyze the overall field of societal life as well new techniques for managing it. (Indeed, Foucaultian biopower might be most concisely defined as the rational management of human life, on the basis of the human sciences, towards the optimal functioning of human society.) The state, in turn, has adapted the two modes of pastoral power — individualizing and totalizing — that it assumed from the church. Foucault and other analysts of biopower have adopted several different names for the joint operation of individualizing and totalizing power: "anatomo-politics" and "bio-politics"; "discipline" and "bio-politics"; or "discipline" and "security." I am going to consistently use "disciplinary biopower" and "regulatory biopower" to name, respectively, the individualizing and totalizing modes of power derived from pastoral power. Biopower is the general situation of modern Western (and West-governed) societies in which discipline and regulation are the pervasive, predominant techniques for government on the basis of contemporary life, human, and social and behavioral sciences.

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[101] Foucault discusses the relationship of state and society extensively in *The Birth of Biopolitics*, in which the liberal/neoliberal imperative to *limit* the state's interference in society is, fascinatingly, construed as the necessary condition for the emergence of biopower.

In its disciplinary mode, biopower involves all those processes through which people's bodies are trained to act, speak, and feel in particular ways matched to particular identities: trained, for example, to act in the way that is considered normal for a woman, a worker, a black person, a poor person, or, more precisely, normal for a "working-poor black woman," versus an "affluent white man." Biopower works continuously through life, human, and social and behavioral science and governmental policy to authorize certain ideas of what it means "to be" a woman, worker, black person, poor person, etc. On the basis of these sciences and policies, biopower then secures multiple systems of social rewards that incite, excite, induce, and seduce people to embody these ideas as fully – and as *normally* – as possible. Thus, if one considers individual human life from the perspective of biopower, bodies do not have "identities" by nature, but identities are created through the process of being trained to act the way a woman (worker, black person, poor person, etc.) "*would normally act*."[102]

Disciplinary biopower consists of numerous techniques that manage all the capacities of the body, from physical movement to verbal and non-verbal expression. One of the dynamics that distinguishes disciplinary biopower, as a form of managing bodily capacities — from, say, sovereign power that imposes the penalty of death (thereby overriding all bodily capacities) or slave-owning power that extracts a person's bodily capacities to the point of exhaustion — is that the logic of how disciplinary biopower aims to manage bodily capacities is actually a paradox of utility and docility. Disciplinary biopower aims to *maximize* the range of things bodies have the capacity to accomplish (utility) and, simultaneously, to *minimize* the range of things that bodies have the freedom to accomplish (docility). Foucault says that disciplinary biopower "increases the forces of the body (in economic terms of utility" and diminishes these same forces (in political terms of obedience)."[103] In other words, it trains bodies so that they are as close to *unlimited* as possible in how effectively they accomplish a set of ends that is as close to *completely limited* as possible.

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[102] See Ian Hacking, "The Looping Effect of Human Kinds," in *Causal Cognition: An Interdisciplinary Approach*, ed. Dan Sperber et al. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995); and "Making Up People," *London Review of Books* 28.16 (17 August 2006).

In its regulatory mode, biopower seeks to statistically manage all the life-outcomes of the populations defined by the "identities" created through biopower's disciplinary practices. These life-outcomes include such demographic basics as birth-rate, fertility, life-expectancy, and conditions of healthiness and disease. But they touch on all aspects of human "development," from educational success or non-adequate yearly performance to patterns of residential separateness to the growth or decline of sectors of the economy and the "labor-forces" associated with them. In its regulatory mode, biopower seeks coordinate all such life-outcomes of all the populations that constitute society, so as to reach whatever is considered an "optimal" level of society overall: decreasing the death-rate of this population, increasing the income-production-rate of that population, to the exact degree necessary to maintain what we might call a "Healthy Economy in a Healthy Society" – however "healthy" is defined.

The pursuit of a normally functioning economy and society means that society must be defended against anything that might threaten its proper development. That is, society must be defended against every body that constitutes a menace to society or threat to security (national, homeland, otherwise). How, though, does society defend itself? Through the same disciplinary and regulatory practices that it uses to produce and reproduce itself in the first place. Regulatory biopower determines the amount of menace to society or threat to security that can be safely tolerated, and seeks so to coordinate population life-outcomes as to maximize the chances of consistently achieving that minimum threshold. And then menaces and threats that exceed the threshold are treated through disciplinary biopower: criminals are placed in systems where their criminality can be contained and made unthreatening to — possibly even useful for — biopower; insane people are placed in systems where their insanity can be made likewise unthreatening or useful. Indeed, each and every kind of "abnormal" folk is placed within systems that will make their abnormality able either to meaningfully contribute to a society governed by biopower, or minimally disrupt the social equilibrium biopower aims to stabilize.

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[103] *DP*, 138.

So, in both its disciplinary and its regulatory modes, biopower's defining task is to normalize bodies and populations within the identity-categories it creates. This normalization takes the form of patterns of normal conduct, that is, patterns of interaction made to conform to a sense of what is "normal." These patterns begin in inter-individual interaction, in which each individual seeks to conduct the conduct of the other: into such a situation, biopower inserts a sense of what it would mean for the actors to "act normally" for the identities ascribed to them by biopower. These inter-individual patterns are then linked up with other inter-individual patterns to generate whole inter-group and inter-population patterns, which are again concatenated into wider and wider structures, of increasing complexity, until they pervade all of society. Cressida Heyes puts it thus: "Norms come to define populations, and consequently individuals — everyone has some relationship to the norm.... In some cases degrees of deviation from a norm cluster and crystallize to permit a a convenient reductionism in which the relationship to the norm becomes and identity."[104] Instead of something that is unique and "deep within" an individual, "identity" can be conceived of as a series interlocking crystal-lattices in which each individual is held and by which each individual is related to other individuals.

These patterns of normal conduct crystallized into identities are the way one can understand identity-based structures of injustice such as racism, sexism, heterosexism, and nativism/xenophobia, but also capacity-based structures of injustice such as poverty and ableism. Both forms of injustice involve the attempt to position all kinds of abnormality into a crystal-lattice of normalcy, so that the society-wide crystal-structure of biopower can be maintained *ad infinitum*. The metaphor of the crystal is helpful, however, in reminding one that Foucault and other analysts of biopower never imagine it as a force that cannot be resisted or disrupted in any way. In fact, they are, to a person, concerned with understanding biopower precisely in order to identify the points where it *can* be disrupted and resisted. It is a question of raising enough de-crystallizing energy, at a sufficient number of points within the crystal-lattice, to induce de-stabilizing effects on the structure. The intended result is not the opening up of chaos, but the freeing up of bodies to act in new ways, ways that resist re-normalization by biopower. This disruption of biopower, generating de-crystallizing energies, can occur at every level on which biopower organizes patterns of normal conduct, from inter-individual to inter-population. In very rare circumstances, disruptions dispersed across society link up sufficiently to induce de-crystallizing across a whole society. But even outside these moments, resistance to biopower's identity-normalizing techniques of discipline and regulation is possible. Christian worship may well offer a site for generating enough energies that can de-crystallize biopower. But in order to see how that might happen, it is necessary first of all to see where and how biopower operates or is reinforced in Christian worship.

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[104] Heyes, *Self-Transformations*, 6.

B. Re-considering Christian worship through the lens of biopower

Once one has admitted biopower, the normalization and optimization of life through disciplinary and regulatory strategies, mechanisms, and techniques, as a conceptual framework useful for tracing the government of bodily conduct in contemporary Western societies (and, increasingly, in non-Western societies in their interactions with Western societies), one can then diagnose the degrees to which and manners in which Christian worship, at least of the congruence-oriented sort,[105] is geared-in with biopower. Gordon Lathrop provides an initial cue in a passage from *Holy Things*, in which he contrasts Christian worship with other public gatherings in contemporary Western society: "The contemporary analogy will not be Kiwanis or Rotary meetings.... Nor can the analogy be concerts or lectures.... Nor can it be sporting events or election rallies or rock concerts ... or — worse yet — a television talk show."[106] Christian worship is supposed to be different from these other types of gatherings because it involves active, inclusive participation in the making of symbolic meaning, yet in a non-ideological way. But when we investigate worship at the level of bodily conduct — what bodies *do* rather than what symbols *mean* — then congruence-oriented Christian worship is seen to have more commonalities with association meetings, sporting events, lectures, concerts, rallies, and talk shows than differences from them. In all of these settings, there are definite and similar expectations for what bodies should be doing, and bodies are encouraged or policed, to varying degrees, so that they fulfill these expectations (though the range of permissible conduct is often much wider at sporting events and rock concerts than in Christian worship). Or, to state it negatively, there is not a regimen for bodily conduct that is both proper to congruence-oriented Christian worship *and* so significantly different from these other kinds of meetings that it marks a bright line between them and worship. The differences with respect to regimen are mostly in degree rather than in kind.

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[105] In remainder of this chapter, I will frequently refer to "congruence-oriented Christian worship." This is my shorthand for any Christian worship that is similar to the services discussed in chapter 1 or the secondary liturgical theologies discussed in chapter 2 in expecting or assuming that divergence in worship should ultimately be oriented toward congruence. Although I suspect that a very large portion (perhaps a plurality) of actual worship fits in this category, my diagnosis here of the operation of biopower in congruence-oriented Christian worship neither assumes nor entails that *all* Christian worship is, on ontological or statistical grounds, oriented toward congruence.

Congruence-oriented Christian worship through the lens of disciplinary biopower

In chapter 1, I discussed several different worship services that operate according to a regimen that orients bodily conduct towards congruence. The regimen in each of these services prescribes what a body is supposed to be doing at every moment in the service. Moreover, the regimen specifies the form in which a body is supposed to conduct itself, with what timing, in what role, and fulfilling what function. We can speak of such a regimen as a mechanism of disciplinary biopower on account of the way in which the body is supposed to relate to it: the regimen is not a proposal from which a body is invited to improvise, nor a set of a possibilities with which the body is called to experiment, but a pre-determined program of action that the body is expected to fulfill, as precisely as possible. The regimen establishes certain ends towards which the body's capacities are to be put and for which they are shaped. For instance, during the sermon at Good Samaritan or the teaching at The Sword of Truth, bodies are supposed to be attentively receiving the message being offered that day; or during Eucharist in the Roman Catholic congregations Garrigan and Wood studied, bodies wait reflectively until it is their turn to eat the bread and drink the wine. In these activities, as we have seen, bodies are expected to perform certain movements, assume certain postures, and say certain things — all in a characteristic manner; more importantly, bodies are required *not* to perform movements, assume postures, or say things outside of what is specified for the service. Out of all that a body can accomplish (including the emotional and mental states it can put itself in by means of motion or stillness, speaking or silence, and so on), bodies are trained repeatedly to only do a specific subset of things, and only these things.

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[106] Gordon W. Lathrop, *Holy Things: A Liturgical Theology* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 1993), 113-14.

In both the services and the secondary liturgical theologians we have considered, there is an assumption that each body should conduct itself in congruence with the regimen established for a given instance of worship. This regimen, therefore, functions as a norm with respect to which each body's actions can be evaluated, so that any sort of divergence can be clearly perceived; and this evaluative function further manifests disciplinary biopower in congruence-oriented Christian worship. Under a congruence-oriented regimen, when divergent bodily conduct occurs, it provokes the question, "Is that conduct correct?" and not, for example, "Is that conduct useful?" or "Is it beautiful?" or "Is it worth trying out further?" And, as we have seen, there is a constant *correction* of aberrant behavior in worship, such as when, in one of the congregations Garrigan observed, the priest corrected words inappropriately spoken by the lay woman reading Scripture, or when a mother glares at her child to elicit quiet behavior. At the level of secondary theological reflection, Wainwright suggests that, in contrast to the individual reformer — "rare in the history of the church," who "seek[s] to alter the worship ... of the community with which he is associated" — "the individual may judge it wiser to let the inherited and continuing pattern of the community's worship and belief impress itself 'correctively' on his own tentative position."[107] The fundamentally disciplinary idea that worship involves a process of training the body, constantly correcting its errors in movement, speech, attitude (at least as attitude is externally perceivable), and so on would not be controversial either in the actual worshipping communities or the secondary liturgical theologians we have encountered; in fact, it would cohere well with their common sense about worship.

Two techniques that are defining features of disciplinary biopower are present in those services that practice a congruence-oriented regimen and deserve special mention.[108] The first is the disciplinary partitioning of the worship space. In all but two of the worship services described in chapter 1, the basic arrangement of the space was regularly spaced rows of pews or chairs for non-leading bodies, all facing the altar, pulpit, and space for musicians, which were clustered at one end of the sanctuary. By contrast, in the Charismatic Catholic worship described by Csordas, the arrangement was chairs in concentric circles, centered on an open space for teachers and musicians.[109] The usual interpretation of the difference between linear and circular seating is that the latter creates a feeling of more intimate or more holistic community, because each body can see the rest of the community, rather than only watching the leaders. But this distinction obscures several commonalities that are crucial to the governing of bodily conduct. First, both arrangements assume that each body occupies a fixed position, sitting and standing in the same place and only moving from that place when the regimen calls for or allows it. Roaming around is not a permissible way to inhabit the worship space. Moreover, the fixed places that bodies are supposed to occupy are distributed throughout the worship space in an ordered fashion, whether in the shape of lines or circles (or the increasingly common hybrid, gently curving or generously angled rows). Bodies do not divide up the space randomly or whimsically for each worship service, but distribute themselves over a pre-defined grid of fixed places.[110]

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[107] Geoffrey Wainwright, *Doxology: The Praise of God in Worship, Doctrine, and Life* (London: Epworth Press, 1980), 58.

[108] In this paragraph I am augmenting the ethnographic accounts in chapter 1 with my own practice

Finally, in both linear and circular arrangements, bodies are positioned so that

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and observation of worship, as a participant, leader, and designer.

[109] Koenig does not specify either a linear or circular arrangement for Praise and Worship services, and my own experience has been that both kinds of arrangement are used.

[110] Of course, one can point out that, when the worship space's seating area is not very full, bodies can freely choose where to sit, and can fairly randomly distribute themselves into clusters of various sizes. What they generally cannot do, however, is rearrange the lines or circles in which the seating-places are arranged. Moreover, the choosing-a-random-spot effect is diminished by the tendency of many worshippers to "choose" the same seat week after week.

their front sides all face towards the same focal-space (either one end of the room or the center of the circles). This renders the posture, gestures, and facial expressions of each body visible[111] to the body(ies) that occupy that focal-space. What one does in worship can largely be seen by the leaders of worship, which would seem unproblematic if worship is defined as a public rather than private activity. But what is significant is how being rendered visible permits the working of disciplinary mechanisms. The arrangement of the space activates the second disciplinary feature that I want to emphasize, one which I did not present above: a "panoptic" effect that allows for the effective policing of divergence from the regimen. Panopticism, according to Foucault, involves the arrangement of space so that every body located so that they can be survilled by — Foucault says under the gaze of — numerous others, often unbeknownst. Such arrangements create a sense that one is constantly being watched, which eventually leads to an internalized gaze by which one constantly watches one's own conduct.[112] Because Christian worship is fairly widely understood, by both practitioners and scholars, as acting before God (*coram deo*) or in the presence of God (or else seeking for God to become present), all bodies worship under the fundamental gaze of God. Bodies that are not in leadership roles then face the gaze of those who are, generally gathered up front. But the gaze further permeates among those who are not in leadership roles. A circular arrangement actually increases the panoptic effect, because a body is exposed to the gaze of most of the other bodies. On the other hand, in a linear arrangement, even though bodies in one row face the back of bodies in the next, they are gazed upon by bodies in the rows behind them, which still permits a high degree of observation (as any child who has sat in front of parents well knows).[113] At the smallest grain of observation, a body faces the gaze of those immediately next to it.

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[111] In this and the next paragraph, I speak exclusively in terms of visibility and vision. I do so because much of bodily conduct (in worship and in broader society) is judged by visual inspection: whether a body is in the right position, whether it is moving (or not moving) correctly, and so on. I do not mean to dismiss other sensory modes of perception and judgment — especially auditory ones — and much of what I describe here in terms of vision is also experienced in those other modes as well. Moreover, I do not mean, in the *interpretation* of worship, to abnormalize or delegitimize the experience of those whose visual capacities are made into disability by the privileging of the visual in worship.

[112] See Foucault, *DP*, 195-228.

But why does all this gazing matter? It creates a setting in which most bodily divergence cannot be hidden, but instead is readily observable and thereby knowable. This increases the ease with which divergence can be both identified and *corrected*. Divergence does not have to occur in close proximity to a single authoritative body in the service in order to be caught; rather, wherever it occurs, nearby bodies can mark it as divergent and intervene to bring it back to congruence. Hence, the number of bodies that must be involved to correct any particular divergence can vary according to how far past the threshold of disruption the divergence reaches. A fairly minimal disruption, such as children's fidgeting, needs only the intervention of the nearest adult, as Pitts describes.[114] Kenny's outburst in a service at Good Samaritan, on the other hand, was disruptive enough to merit intervention by multiple others, in multiple forms.[115] Now, whether bodies actually *do* intervene in any given divergence also depends on whether those bodies choose (for whatever reasons) to be momentarily marked as divergent for the sake of correcting divergence: some bodies may not wish to stand out by making an intervention, or they may not know the proper form for correction in that instance. But the panoptic effect in congruence-oriented worship not only makes it easier to intervene: it also makes it less frequently necessary, because each body can police itself to a certain degree. That every body's actions are (at least potentially) observable and open to intervention by other bodies can generate an underlying self-consciousness in each body as to the correctness of its actions. Because one is constantly aware that others may be observing, one begins to evaluate one's own conduct as it appears through others' gaze: in Foucault's phrase, the body internalizes the gaze of other bodies upon it. Hence, most bodies in congruent-oriented worship actively police their own conduct rather than needing to be policed. Moreover, this is not taken to be an oddity, but the way worship is supposed to work.

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[113] In addition, if there are deacons or ushers behind the last row, they serve as a second set of leader-observers, as was the case in, among others, worship at St. John.

[114] Walter F. Pitts, *Old Ship of Zion: The Afro-Baptist Ritual in the African Diaspora* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 14.

[115] Mary McClintock Fulkerson, *Places of Redemption: Theology for a Worldly Church* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 106.

That *correction* is the main response to divergence is itself a key indicator that disciplinary biopower is at work in congruence-oriented Christian worship. For biopower is fundamentally a kind of power that seeks to *productively include* rather than to *repressively exclude*. In congruence-oriented Christian worship, divergence is steadily managed, not instantly removed: across all the worship services we considered in chapter 1, we saw many instances when a body strayed from the regimen and the bodies around it tried to draw it back into congruence; but there were almost no instances in which a diverging body was expelled or removed from a worship service. The goal is to get and keep bodies worshipping in congruence with the regimen as much as possible — to *include* as many bodies as possible who are producing (i.e., fulfilling, enacting) the regimen as fully as possible. In this we can see a form of the docility-utility paradox of disciplinary biopower at work in worship: worship, as it occurs in congruence-oriented services, aims to maximize the body's effectiveness[116] in worship, but it does so in a way that also maximizes the body's docility.

What, however, does it mean to say that the body in congruence-oriented worship is a "docile" body? In the simplest sense, congruence-oriented worship inhibits the body's capacities to dissent from the regimen of a service: there is no room, in congruence-oriented worship, for bodies to act in a way that challenges or rejects what the regimen expects. The body is meant only to receive the regimen and faithfully enact it in that service. Moreover, there is what we might call a differential sense of docility in congruence-oriented worship: out of the vast panoply of all the things a body could possibly do — all the ways it can move, touch, sense, express, and so on — the regimen is a selection of a relatively very small subset. The body becomes highly adept at the conduct that is contained in a regimen, but this means it also becomes differentially more adept at this conduct than at conduct not called for by the regimen. I make no claim here regarding whether conduct *not* included in a regimen (even the specific regimens we have considered) is desirable or not — and, thus, whether it is a good or bad thing that bodies become differentially less adept at that conduct. But in a descriptive mode, we must recognize that, by training the body so that it is *more* adept at a very small range of things, congruence-oriented worship actually diminishes the body's overall capacities *qua* body.[117] Finally, congruence-oriented worship specifically diminishes the body's capacity to explore, discover, and create new kinds of conduct that could be included in worship. I do not mean that congruence-oriented worship cannot ever be modified, but that the body's capacities to create such modifications are greatly constricted. Although the body, with all the forces and potential actions it contains, could offer abundant materials for creating in worship, instead it is trained primarily *not* to change worship. Even as congruence-oriented worship increases the body's ability to worship faithfully, it decreases multiple other abilities, some of which could be very valuable for worship itself.

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[116] "Effectiveness" in this sense means things like "right worship," "total praise," "full, conscious, and active participation," "worshipping with all of one's being," "worshipping with one's whole self," and so on. Each community has its own language and concepts of what it means to fully worship in the way God intends, which is all I mean by saying "effective." One could possibly use "faithfulness" as a general form of bodily effectiveness proper to worship.

There are, of course, some differences between disciplinary biopower and the power-relations by which bodies are governed in congruence-oriented Christian worship; the analytics of biopower does not explain everything about such government in such worship. I do not find that any of the following differences undoes my broad argument,[118] but it is important to acknowledge them: (1) The "examination," which is central to Foucault's account of discipline, is much rarer a feature in Christian worship (evident mostly in rites of Christian initiation and, in more charismatic kinds of worship, the act of giving "testimony," as well as, somewhat more loosely, the distribution of the Eucharist). (2) As touched on above, whether bodies disciplinarily intervene in one another's divergent conduct is not automatic, but is influenced by the would-be intervenors' own willingness to potentially disrupt the regimen. In most accounts of biopower, the disciplinary impulse is constant (although it can be and often is resisted). (3) The degree of individualization sought in Christian worship is, in some ways at least, not as severe as Foucault describes in other disciplinary apparatuses — particularly when contrasted with other congregational activities, such as pastoral care or religious education (though worship does foreground the reciprocal relationship between the individual body and the collective body, which *is* at the heart of biopower.) And (4) the bodily capacities that are disciplined in congruence-oriented Christian worship are targeted primarily in the name of spiritual rather than biological states of being. (Yet such metaphorization is also a feature of discipline in biopower power, as in the "criminal predispositions" of bodies committing crimes, or the "educability" of pupils.[119])

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[117] That is, congruence-oriented worship makes the body less adept at most of the things of which it is capable. Again, a small or large amount of the conduct left out of a regimen may well be left out justifiably (the many forms of harming another body are obvious examples). But surely there is also other conduct that, in fact, is or would be *valued* by the regimen, of which the body becomes differentially less capable because it is omitted from the regimen? Some examples worth considering further in this vein would be the capacity to approach and engage someone who appears to be in emotional distress, versus keeping one's distance; or the capacity of hammering a nail, which is necessary to build a unit of quality housing for low-income families; or the capacity of helping someone whose body, for reasons of social marginalization, evokes a (socially conditioned) reaction of disgust in one's own body. One could become adept at these entirely without worship — by actually practicing hammering a nail, for instance. But the same is true of all the capacities that *are* included in worship. My point is for us to question more rigorously and caringly bases on which only a very small range of capacities are included *in* worship, even among only those capacities that would be valued *by* worship.

[118] It would be different if I were arguing that congruence-oriented Christian worship is directly derived from or the result of biopower. But I am arguing instead for functional resemblances and operational alignment — and that body-governing power in worship is *best analyzed* through biopower (versus other models of power), not that it *is* biopower in every sense.

Congruence-oriented Christian worship through the lens of regulatory biopower

Thus far I have been arguing that mechanisms of disciplinary biopower are at work in congruence-oriented Christian worship. However, we can also see the other of biopower's two "poles" operating in Christian worship. Indeed, the foundational discourse of "body" in Christian worship, though it originated long before biopower, nonetheless strongly resonates with biopower's dual structure. I am referring, of course, to the discourse of the worshipping assembly as "the Body of Christ": "... the body of Christ which is the church"; "... every liturgical celebration ... is an action of Christ the priest and of His Body which is the Church...."[120] The usage of the term "Body of Christ" to refer to Christians as a single collectivity is one of the oldest traditions in Christianity, and I have not the space to delve into all the complexities of how the term is used conceptually and practically.[121] But it will suffice for my argument (at least at a first pass) to consider its everyday or common-sense usage, which we can glean from two ubiquitously invoked statements by Paul: "For as in one body we have many members, and not all the members have the same function, so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members one of another" (Romans 12:4-5, NRSV); "Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it" (1 Corinthians 12:27, NRSV). What we need to note here is the basic notion of reciprocal constitution: individual Christians, joined with or in Christ, constitute the Body of Christ, as it is present in the world until Christ's return.

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[119] See Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, 16-31.

In the commonsense usage of the term, then, the Body of Christ always exists in two aspects and can be understood on two levels of analysis: as an aggregation of individual bodies and as a single entity; and, reciprocally, an individual Christian body always exists in the dual aspects of its own physical boundedness as a distinct body and its connectedness as a member of the Body of Christ. The relationship of reciprocal constitution is homologous with the relationship between the individual and the population in biopower: biopower regulates the life of whole populations by disciplining the living bodies of individual members of the population, yet at the same time, individual bodies are targeted for particular disciplines on account of the various populations with which they are associated. This homology should not surprise us much, since Foucault understands biopower to be a transmutation of pastoral power, in which a shepherd must care for his flock as a whole and for each individual sheep in the flock. (Curiously, though, Foucault never, so far as I can find, engages the Christian discourse of "the Body of Christ" as a second stream of the each-and-all reciprocity that defines pastoral power.[122]) Although the each-and-all logic of "the Body of Christ" far pre-dates and did not at all originate from biopower, it is nevertheless the case that one of the most basic ways Christian communities practice embodiment is structured in a way that easily aligns with biopower. This should raise alarms when one recognizes that, at least in the modern West, the broader society in which Christian bodies move when they are not in worship is pervasively administered by means of biopower.

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[120] World Council of Churches, *Baptism, Eucharist, and Ministry*, Faith and Order Paper no. 111 (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1982), para. 19; Second Vatican Council, *Sacrosanctum concilium* (1963), in *Vatican II: Constitutions, Decrees, Declarations*, ed. Austin Flannery (Northport, NY: Costello, 1996), no. 7.

[121] In particular, I will not here address the complexities of (a) what "body of Christ" and incorporation into it mean for Paul; (b) the long history of "Body of Christ" as an ecclesiological concept; (c) the connection between "Body of Christ" in its ecclesiological usage and in its eucharistic / liturgical-theological usage; or (d) the relation between the literal body of Jesus and the figurative body of Christ and the Church.

Yet if the underlying each-and-all structure of the Body of Christ is not an artifact, but a precursor, of biopower, the manner of maintaining the coherence of the Body of Christ can very much be read through the lens of biopower in its regulatory register. In chapter 1, I argued that each of the services re-presented there operated with a threshold separating deviations (those divergences that do not advance the sequence of functions but are not perceived as threats to its fulfillment) from disruptions (those divergences that are perceived as threats to the sequence's fulfillment). This is an example of regulatory biopower, because rather than simply banishing any body that diverges at all, a certain amount of divergence is permitted to remain, namely, deviations. Disruptions, on the other hand, must be met with clear correction. Such correction is itself a disciplinary mechanism, but the threshold that triggers it is a regulatory mechanism. On its own, discipline would seek to correct every last deviation, but discipline harnessed to regulation focuses on the disenabling things that *threaten* the system as a whole. Congruence-oriented worship services often permit different degrees of deviation (that is, the threshold of disruption is set "higher" or "lower") at different moments. For example, in a Roman Catholic service of the sort described by Garrigan and Wood, during the collection of the offering, bodies may well do any number of things unrelated to the functions called for by the regimen; yet during the distribution of the bread and wine in Eucharist, very little deviation is permitted. (A similar example could be found in contrasting the degree of deviation during Devotion and Service at St. John.[123]) What makes the difference has to do with how much or little deviations threaten to disrupt the enactment of the service. The greater a threat posed, the fuller the corrective response: this pattern evinces regulatory biopower in its basic form.

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[122] See Jeremy Carrette, *Foucault and Religion: Spiritual Corporality and Political Spirituality* (New York: Routledge, 2000). This omission is strange in part because Foucault, as a child in a loosely practicing Catholic family, would have at least occasionally received "the Body of Christ" in the Eucharist. David Macey, *The Lives of Michel Foucault* (New York: Vintage, 1993), 4.

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[123] Note that we are here talking specifically about the permitted degrees of *deviation* (those things that neither advance nor obstruct the sequence of functions); in chapter 1, much of the analysis focused on the degrees of *variation* (alternative ways to fulfill the functions).

The containment and prevention of threats to the overall body — the kernel of regulatory biopower — is also a frequent concern of secondary liturgical theologians, at least congruence-oriented ones such as those we engaged in chapter 2. Lathrop sounds the most anxious alarm in his worry that worshipping communities will presume a "license to do whatever [they] want, in a diversity that becomes disorder."[124] In light of such a threat, Wainwright calls for those responsible for worship to soberly "decide where, at any given time, the line should be drawn between the clash of different but symphonic voices and the clash of contradictions which becomes cacophony."[125] Chan affirms this effort in stronger terms: "These orientations provide the theological criteria by which any liturgical order must be evaluated. Only as the liturgy meets these criteria can it be said to be able to truly form the church."[126] Even the Nairobi Statement, which has become a touchstone among liturgists for promoting cultural diversity in Christian worship, refers to contextualization as a "challenge" (though also an "opportunity"), in the face of which it goes to great lengths to secure, à la Wainwright, a core of Christian worship: "The recovery in each congregation of the *clear centrality* of these transcultural and ecumenical elements ... gives all churches a solid basis for *authentic* contextualization."[127] Seondary liturgical theology that is committed to congruence-oriented worship involves the continual exercise of a certain kind of rational examination and judgment, with the express goal of protecting the integrity of worship from too much divergence. In this regard it bears a strong functional resemblance to regulatory biopower's basic technique, in which rational knowledge and judgment provide the grounds for interventions that both protect a population against threats and normalize it towards the attainment of an optimal state of existence.[128]

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[124] Lathrop, *Holy Things*, 220.

[125] Geoffrey Wainwright, *Doxology: The Praise of God in Worship, Doctrine, and Life* (London: Epworth Press, 1980), 11.

[126] Simon Chan, *Liturgical Theology: The Church as Worshiping Community* (Downer's Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2006), 84.

[127] Lutheran World Federation, "Nairobi Statement on Worship and Culture: Contemporary Challenges and Opportunities," in *Christian Worship: Unity in Cultural Diversity*, ed. Anita Stauffer (Geneva: Lutheran World Federation, 1996), para. 2.3, (emphasis added). See also para. 3.4: "[C]reative assimilation ... consists of adding pertinent components of local culture to the liturgical *ordo* in order to enrich its original core."

The statement I just made may seem too great an interpretive stretch to some readers: is it *really* the case that the form of rational judgment for whose exercise secondary liturgical theology calls functions, with respect to worshipping communities, analogously to how the human and biomedical sciences function in the management of populations under biopower?[129] So for those readers especially, I now make a very brief excursus into another theological discourse concerning worship, one that, if it speaks in less majestic terms than academy-based secondary liturgical theology, nevertheless has the virtue of actually being used by real worshipping communities, more widely (if we are being honest) than secondary liturgical theology of the sort we considered in chapter 2. This other discourse — being mainly produced and, in recent years, extensively adopted by creators of worship and those who supervise them — floats between primary and secondary liturgical theology, a layer Lathrop calls "pastoral liturgical theology."[130] For all its applied-ness, however, the discourse of vitality, health, and development to which I now turn still deserves to be analyzed as theology, and not something alien to it, because it represents a way in which local communities (as well as church bodies of various scales) make sense of their existence and activities as the Body of Christ.

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[128] That the judgment these secondary liturgical theologians are calling for is usually exercised between worship services, rather than in a service, deepens the sense in which we can see it as a project that works through regulatory biopower, because it concerns the overall, continuing life of a worshipping community as a single, integrated entity (i.e., a population), rather than as a collection of diverse elements.

[129] I note that my aim in analyzing secondary liturgical theology in chapter 2 was *not* to demonstrate that secondary liturgical theology is directly a form of biopower, but that it reinforces a presumption towards congruence of the same sort as we saw, in actual worship services, in chapter 1. That is, in chapter 2 I sought to demonstrate how secondary liturgical theology takes it for granted that Christian-worship-as-such should be oriented towards congruence. Here, however, my point is that the judgment called for by secondary liturgical theology — on the basis of that presumption towards congruence — achieves effects (intended or not) that are similar to those that *are* intended by biopower.

We can enter this discourse through the words of John Witvliet, a liturgical scholar who, as director of the Calvin Institute of Christian Worship, greatly influences the worship of many local communities, by means of the Center's funding, conferences, and publications. Witvliet writes: "We can identify several specific factors that contribute to spiritually *vital* worship and thereby strengthen congregational *life*."[131] In this statement, worship is a "vital" matter, improving which is the key to enhancing the "life" of a congregation. Now, ever since the earliest days of Christian communities, "life" has been a key theological concept, so speaking of the life of a congregation hardly seems significant. What *is* significant, though, is the characterization of congregational life in specifically biomedical terms: "The strength of Christianity in North America depends on the presence of *healthy*, spiritually *nourishing*, *well-functioning* congregations.... Congregations are the *habitat* in which the practices of the Christian life can *flourish*. As *living organisms*, congregations are by definition in a constant state of change."[132] Witvliet assumes that his biomedical interpretation of Christian congregations and worship will be un-controversial, since he neither marks his biomedical language as atypical nor justifies its use. Moreover, a biomedical framework defines the book series whose introduction I have been quoting: “Vital Worship, Healthy Congregations”; the biomedical language, in fact, is intended to make the series more attractive to potential buyers of its volumes.

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[130] Lathrop, *Holy Things*, 7 (and see 159-225).
[131] John D. Witvliet, "Vital Worship, Healthy Congregations," *Alban Weekly*, no. 193, March 31, 2008, http://www.alban.org/conversation.aspx?id=5894, accessed March 25, 2012.
[132] Ibid., emphasis added.

So there is a discourse operating in which worship and congregations are defined in biomedical terms like vitality, health, and development. More specifically, the *vitality* of worship is a key part of ensuring or improving the *healthy development* of congregations. This approach to worship and congregations has been adopted by a wide range of Christian institutions, across the spectra of theo-political stances and confessional traditions.[133] For example, the unit of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA, the largest Lutheran body in North America) that supports congregations “strives to equip congregational leaders in the development of *healthy*, missional communities of faith.”[134] The ELCA then calls for congregational systems to be “evaluated and improved,” a task for which it has “selected a proven and effective tool to assess the health of a congregation. It comes as a result of a research [sic] and process called the Natural Church Development (NCD).”[135] Natural Church Development was created by Christian Schwartz in the late 1990s, and has been adopted by tens of thousands of congregations around the world, according to its website.[136] A central tenet of Natural Church development is that by "applying observable laws and paradigms of nature,"[137] one can arrive at a "natural" model of church growth, including the identification of a set of factors that differentiate growing, "healthy" congregations from declining ones: "This emphasis on *church health* has proven to be the key to ongoing growth and multiplication [i.e., in congregations]."[138] One of these eight factors is "inspiring worship," defined as the degree to which, whatever the style or tradition of a worship service, worshippers feel they have encountered God during it.[139] In a very similar way, the "Vital Congregations" project of the United Methodist Church (UMC) has identified 16 [m]inistries/[s]trategies that were termed '*drivers of vitality*.' ...[I]f churches worked on all 16 they would *move toward vitality or become more vital*."[140] The 16 drivers of vitality are grouped into four main areas, one of which, again, is "inviting and inspiring worship."

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[133] In addition to the following examples, the Vital Churches Institute (in Allegheny, PA) tends to work with more theo-politically conservative or traditionalist Christian congregations. Maintaining that “[g]rowing a vital church is always the work of God in our midst, the Institute “encourages increasing vitality centered on,” among other things, “worship services that ‘engage’ the mind and spirit.” See Vital Churches Institute, “For Congregations,” accessed March 25, 2012, http://www.vitalchurchesinstitute.com/pages/for-congregations.

[134] Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Congregational and Synodical Mission Unit, “Natural Church Development,” accessed March 25, 2012, http://www.elca.org/Growing-In-Faith/Discipleship/Natural-Church-Development.aspx, emphasis added.

[135] Ibid.

This discourse of vitality, health, and development in Christian worship and "congregational life" utilizes concepts drawn from biomedical sciences, but fills those concepts out with data obtained through the methods of the human/social sciences. Natural Church Development, for example, originated from survey research by Schwarz among 1,000 congregations, and Schwarz and his colleagues maintain a continuous program of social-scientific “validation” of their model.[141] The Vital Congregations project began with a study that drew on “a combination of surveys, interviews, church visits, and analysis of available *data* to identify potential drivers and indicators of vitality. [It] used *objective* (non-opinion-based) *observable metrics* to uncover indicators of vitality. In order for an indicator to be used [it] had to meet these criteria: descriptive, differentiating, *quantifiable*, [and] available.”[142] In these and other instances, the goal is explicitly to generate scientific knowledge about Christian congregations, including the qualities and functions of their worship. This scientific knowledge (organized under biomedically characterized categories) then becomes the basis for continuous management of the “life” of actual congregations, with worship as one of the main targets for intervention. Such management and intervention are directed toward norms of vitality, health, and development that are themselves explained in a biomedical idiom.

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[136] See Institute for Natural Church Development, "The Essence of NCD," accessed March 25, 2012, http://www.ncd-international.org/public/essence.html.

[137] Christian A. Schwarz, *Natural Church Development: A Guide to Eight Essential Qualities of Healthy Church*, 7th ed. (St. Charles, IL: ChurchSmart Resources, 2006), 10. For instance, drawing on ecology, Schwarz argues (12) that every congregation has a "biotic potential," which NCD seeks to "release": "When we are dealing with natural processes, it is important for this inherent potential to have free rein."

[138] Institute for Natural Church Development, "The Essence of NCD."

[139] Schwarz, *Natural Church Development*, 7th ed., 32-34; see also Christian Schwarz and Christoph Schalk, *The Implementation Guide to Natural Church Development* (St. Charles, IL: ChurchSmart Resources, 1998).

[140] United Methodist Church, Call to Action Steering Team, "Vital Congregations Call to Action," accessed March 25, 2012, http://www.umc.org/site/c.lwL4KnN1LtH/b.7546249/k.D602/Vital_Church__Call_to_Action.htm.

This approach is identical — in the kind of rationality it relies upon, the manner in which it deploys that rationality, and the goals it seeks to achieve by such deployment — to myriad projects of regulatory biopower, from anti-smoking campaigns to the “testing and accountability” regime currently dominating public education. They share the fundamental technique of normalizing and optimizing the life of human populations on the basis of bio- and human-scientific knowledge about them.

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[141] Schwarz, *Natural Church Development*, 7th ed., 3-5.

[142] United Methodist Church, Call to Action Steering Team, “Vital Congregations Call to Action” (emphasis added).

If, therefore, it is a stretch to see congruence-oriented secondary liturgical theology seeking to produce *effects* of normalization and optimization that are *analogous to* those sought in regulatory biopower, it is demonstrably evident that certain widely influential programs in pastoral liturgical theology operate with the very mechanisms and goals *of* regulatory biopower.

C. Why is enmeshment with biopower a bad thing?

We have, then, traced the techniques, strategies, and aims of both disciplinary and regulatory biopower at work in various ways in congruence-oriented Christian worship. The minimal overall claim here is that, in congruence-oriented Christian worship, bodily conduct is governed in, with, and under a logic that, to a large degree, functions analogously to biopower; and a stronger claim is sometimes warranted, namely, that in some aspects, the government of bodily conduct in congruence-oriented worship is a manifestation of biopower itself. In either case, we can say that if we want to describe the way power operates on and through bodies in congruence-oriented worship, it is most clearly understood through the analytics of biopower rather than through other models of power (such as power as repression or power as the failure of consensus). Now, up to this point, I have offered this interpretation in a *descriptive* mode, attempting merely to perceive the government of bodies in congruence-oriented worship through the lens of biopower. Now, however, I begin a shift to an *evaluative* mode, arguing that the deployment of biopower (or of power that is functionally analogous to biopower) in Christian worship is highly problematic, and proposing, over the next two chapters, an alternative to biopower-reinforcing congruence-oriented Christian worship.

The first concern we should have is that, to the degree that Christian worship operates resonantly with biopower, bodies *in* worship are thereby made more available for the workings of biopower *outside of* worship. I am not arguing, like Chan does,[143] that Christian worship, in order to be authentically Christian at all, must utterly and unambiguously stand apart from the ways of "the world." Without advocating for a necessary, universal stance on the relative worth of similarity and difference between Christian worship and broader societal practices, I contend that, in the specific context of biopower (a particular ensemble practices in particular societies and at a particular historical moment), Christian worship should enact a regime of embodiment, an ordering of bodily conduct, that runs counter to the logic of biopower. This is so if for no other reason than that biopower, as has been amply demonstrated by the literature on it, has permeated nearly every domain of life in contemporary Western polities (and others in their interface with Western polities) and provided techniques contributing toward domination in each of those domains: race, sex, disability, poverty, nationality, education, work-place management and human resources, advertising and consumer formation, healthcare financing and delivery ... the list goes on. As I will explore more in the final chapter, the resurrection of Christ invites Christians to practice a different way of embodiment than what biopower achieves in these domains. If God's practice of embodiment in the Christ-event means anything in Western societies right now, it means that Christians should thoroughly resist the workings of biopower.

Yet precisely the opposite occurs in Christian worship that operates resonantly with biopower, such as congruence-oriented worship of the sorts we examined in chapters 1 and 2. I discussed above how congruence-oriented worship produces bodies that were docile with respect to the regimen of a worship service; but training bodies to be docile vis-à-vis the regimen also helps train them to be docile vis-à-vis other regimes of embodiment established by biopower in other domains of societal practice. The very fact that, given the prevalence of biopower throughout Western (and West-interfacing) societies in the past several centuries, the vast majority of Christian bodies (individual and collective) simply cannot be said to have robustly resisted biopower demonstrates that there is nothing inherent in Christian worship that leads bodies to resist biopower. If there were such an inherent element, then Christian communities — given how many millions of bodies they comprise — would be (and be known as) some of the primary sites for the resistance of biopower over the long course of its historical permeation. One of the most poignant examples of this is detailed by William Cavanaugh in his *Torture and Eucharist*, showing how theology and practice of "the Body of Christ" in Argentina during the Pinochet dictatorship led the majority of Christians away from resisting the regime.[144] And although Cavanaugh argues that the Eucharist does contain resources for such resistance, it is telling that perhaps the most direct bodily confrontations with the regime, those undertaken by the Madres de Plaza de Mayo, did not, in their form of bodily conduct, draw significantly on the regular liturgies of the Catholic Church of which many are part.[145]

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[143] One could add here a number of theologians, classical and contemporary, who argue for a high qualitative distinction, in universal terms, between "the church" and "the world."

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[144] William T. Cavanaugh, *Torture and Eucharist: Theology, Politics, and the Body of Christ* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 1998).

[145] Although much of the symbolism of motherhood upon which the Madres drew is linked to Catho-

Another example of Christian worship's ambivalence toward biopower comes from South Africa during the era of *apartheid*, when Walter Wink led a workshop on Christian resistance to this eminently biopolitical program, yet he did not draw on standard Christian liturgies to form bodies for resistance, but created a new ritual.[146] Now, one might wish to point to the Black Civil Rights Movement in the United States, at the zenith of which (1950s-60s) many predominantly African American Christian congregations were energized by their worship to place their bodies at risk of great harm by a racist regime of state and federal laws and law enforcement. Surely these worship services were, in themselves, no less congruence-oriented than that of St. John Progressive, which occupies some of the same race-class positions as many congregations that participated in the Black Civil Rights Movement? However, what we must distinguish in those worship services was how they explicitly thematized and dramatized resistance to biopower operating in apparatuses of racism. To the degree that African American bodies were trained in congruence with the regimen of worship, they were also being explicitly trained to act in ways that explicitly transgressed biopower's expectations for how African American bodies should act — that is, trained to reject and disrupt the docility that biopower sought, and still seeks, for African American bodies to consistently practice in all domains of life. Therefore, even congruence-oriented worship is not unalterably geared-in to

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lic religious discourses (particularly related to Mary as the mother of Jesus), the bodily actions that distinguished the movement were not largely those of Christian worship as it was contemporaneously practiced in the Madres' context. See Diana Taylor, "Trapped in Bad Scripts: The Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo," chap. 7 in *Disappearing Acts: Spectacles of Gender and Nationalism in Argentina* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1997).

[146] Wink recounted his experience to Tom Driver, whose analysis I borrow here. See Driver, *Liberating Rites: Understanding the Transformative Power of Ritual* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1998), 180-184.

biopower, but the vast majority of actual instances, across a long history, indicates that its great tendency is toward reinforcing rather than resisting biopower, and the relatively few examples where it is turned toward resistance required an extensive, explicit break with biopower, least in one of its most prolific guises.

The pervasive and persistent societal practices of racism point to a third cause for interrogating and challenging biopower-resonant regimens in Christian worship. As I described earlier, within a biopower framework, racism as it is commonly understood works — like sexism, ableism, heterosexism, classism, and so on — by means of categories of "identity" ("race," "gender," "disability," etc.) that allow individual bodies to be aggregated into populations, and thereby targeted for normalizing management on both levels.[147] These identity-categories are the hinges between disciplinary and regulatory biopower. Identity-categories are channels of expected conduct (and potential resistance) that bodies have to navigate continuously, often facing the threat of a host of violences great or small: bodies cannot opt out of them or their threats at will. The problem is that, in Western and West-interfacing societies at least, the identity-categories established by biopower are the basic categories within which bodies are in actuality received by Christian congregations. What I mean can be readily inferred from a number of empirically demonstrable and welldocumented patterns:

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[147] See, for example, Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*, 2nd ed. (New York: Routledge, 1999); Ellen K. Feder, *Family Bonds: Genealogies of Race and Gender* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007); David Macey, "Rethinking Biopolitics, Race, and Power in the Wake of Foucault," *Theory, Culture & Society* 26.6 (November 2009), 186-205; Shelly Tremain, ed., *Foucault and the Government of Disability* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 2005); Barbara Cruikshank, *The Will to Empower: Democratic Citizens and Other Subjects* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1999); Nikolas Rose, *The Politics of Life Itself: Biomedicine, Power, and Subjectivity in the Twenty-First Century* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2007); Peter Miller and Nikolas Rose, *Governing the Present: Administering Economic, Social, and Political Life* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2008).

- the linguistic, racial, and/or class homogeneity of most Christian worship services;
- the relative paucity (compared to the total number) of services, like Good Samaritan's, in which a large portion of bodies identified as disabled or queer participate, without needing to modify behavior associated with disability or queerness;
- the ubiquity of services in which bodies that look, sound, or smell "poor" or "mentally ill" (as those terms are marked by societal discourse) would evoke feelings of un-ease among regular participants.

These and many similar patterns indicate, at a minimum, that Christian worship as such does *not* tend to establish groupings of bodies that cut across the identity-categories sustained in biopower.

That Christian worshipping communities, much more often than not, strongly resemble populations already identified by biopower — but only very rarely consist of a group of bodies that scrambles the expectations of biopower — should not be taken as a natural or random effect, but should instead alert us to an insidious collaboration between biopower and Christian worship. Leaders and planners of worship are well acquainted with the *results* of this collaboration, which have become a major issue they want to confront and which are usually framed as follows: although Christian worship is ideally supposed to include all people, in practice it *excludes certain kinds of people, due to human sinfulness or something else is considered an aberration or alien to Christian worship.* Yet recognizing that biopower is a defining element of Western and West-interfacing societies suggests a more nuanced explanation: (1) Although Christian worship is ideally supposed to include any kind of body, in practice it draws its membership from groups already defined by biopower through identity-categories. Then, (2) at least in congruence-oriented Christian worship, the manner of governing bodily conduct — which resonates with, if not directly deploys, mechanisms of biopower — works to bring any body that diverges from the expectations of the service into conformity with those expectations. The combination of these two dynamics means that (3) Christian worship comes to serve as a mechanism for reinscribing identity-based group boundaries.

In other words, it is more accurate to define the problem as a matter not of the *exclusion* of certain kinds of bodies from a worship service, but as a matter of the terms on which they are *included* in a service: most services appeal primarily to those bodies that already look, sound, smell, and act like the other bodies in the service (and have relationships that resemble theirs), and when bodies diverge from what is expected in the service, they are corrected so that, in their conduct at least, they resemble every other body. Moreover, these dynamics are not aberrations or alien to worship — in the sense that there is a default way that worship will otherwise operate, unless something alien to worship leads it astray from this default — but rather have come to be constitutive[148] of worship itself, at least worship of the congruence-oriented sort. In gathering and manifesting the Body of Christ in the present world, congruence-oriented Christian worship draws the members of the

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[148] I mean this functionally and not ontologically: that is, these dynamics have become the fundamental way worship does its work, which is not the same as saying these have become the essence or fundamental nature of worship.

Body of Christ from biopower's categories and joins them with one another in, with, and under a regimen that, where it does not apply biopower directly, applies techniques that amplify biopower's effects. This problem cannot be solved by simply adding more members to the Body of Christ, if those members' own bodies are defined by identity-categories established by biopower *and* if adding those members takes the form of making them conform to a group of bodies that are already largely homogeneous with respect to biopower's identity-categories.[149] Breaking up the linkages between biopower and Christian worship requires not the further *incorporation* of more members into Christian worship on biopower's own terms, but the very transformation of the Body of Christ at the level of regimen, both in its members and as a whole, in and by the act of worship. In the next chapter, I present one vision of how the Body of Christ can be thus transformed.

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[149] Such an additive model underlies much of the contemporary pursuit of "diversity" in Christian worship — and to the degree that it does, a recognition of the pervasiveness of biopower challenges us to radically reformulate the pursuit of "diversity" itself.

Chapter 4:
Imagining the Transformation of Congruence-Oriented Christian Worship

A. One possible starting point: the major prayer in a service

In the Lutheran tradition in which I have participated for much of my life, it is very commonly the case that, following the sermon but before the Eucharist, the assembled bodies pray a long prayer together. In most Lutheran orders of service this prayer is called the "Prayers of the People," and it is fairly directly descended from the "General Intercessions" of the Roman Mass. Let us consider for a moment the regimen — the expectations concerning bodily conduct — that operates in the Prayers of the People.[150] In most Lutheran churches, one body leads the rest of the bodies in prayer: this may be the pastor or another member of the congregation. The body leading prayer stands at the front of the worship-space, and remains in one place throughout the prayer. The rest of the bodies also each remain in one place: in most communities they are expected to stand (if they are physically able) throughout the prayer, though in some they may have the option of either standing or kneeling. Bodies usually are expected to close their eyes, if not also bowing their heads. Hands and arms are expected to remain at one's sides or else, less frequently, in the

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[150] I am basing my account here on my experience in many Lutheran churches located throughout the United States. Garrigan's and Wood's ethnographic descriptions present the parallel in Catholic worship, near-identical with respect to regimen, to what I describe here.

orans position (hands lifted slightly higher than the shoulders, palms open and facing up).[151] In these positions and with this little degree of movement, the exclusive activity of the bodies is to speak: the leader reads a series of petitions, after each of which the rest of the bodies offer a brief response. The response is often "Hear our prayer" or something similar, though other responses may be used; but regardless of which words are set as the response for that service, it is almost always the case that the same response is used after every petition. After the last petition and response, the pastor is usually the one who offers a conclusion to the prayer, after which all the bodies together say, "Amen."

A few further elements of regimen in this kind of prayer should not be missed. The timing of conduct strictly follows a pattern of alternation: one body speaks, then all respond at the same time; there are no acceptable variations from this timing. The form of conduct is likewise tightly circumscribed: possibly a few options for body position, but basically no bodily movement either from that position or even in that position. Even one's facial expressions are constrained, as one should not be looking around, but should position one's face in an attentive way. One does not speak at all except to offer a petition (the leader) or give the set response to it (all the other bodies).[152] We can, therefore, say that there are very little variations in this liturgical activity. Moreover, the threshold between deviation and disruption is set rather low: almost any non-prescribed action that would be audible or visible to those around one would provoke some degree of correction, other than an occasional cough or sneeze, or slight shift in position for the sake of comfort. Finally, there is one over-arching function for bodily conduct — to (sincerely, earnestly, attentively) pray to God. The petitions themselves, in their words and imagery, may well shift among the four modes of prayer identified by Don Saliers,[153] but the body's conduct does not, in fact, shift with them: whether praising or interceding, the bodies are expected to maintain the same position, speak with the same timing, and so on.

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[151] I often fold my hands together and hold them close to my face, and that seems not to provoke correction (i.e., accepted as a variation).

[152] There is one semi-variation on this pattern: often there is a period near the end (the "free intercessions") when any body, not just the leader, can offer a petition, to which all the other bodies give the same response. This is a *semi*-variation in role, because the role itself is the same, with the exact same expected conduct, it is just performed by several different bodies in succession (and only for a brief period).

We can briefly compare the Prayers of the People or General Intercessions with another kind of long prayer, more common in Reformed and Methodist congregations: the "Pastoral Prayer."[154] The Pastoral Prayer usually comes after the sermon, and in congregations that do not celebrate Eucharist weekly, it is the main activity with which non-Eucharistic services conclude. (I have participated in a few services, though, in Baptist or non-denominational evangelical congregations, in which the Pastoral Prayer occurred shortly after the start of the service, before the sermon.) It is often linked to and preceded by the sharing of "Joys and Concerns"; in other communities, petitions may simply be solicited right before the Pastoral Prayer. If we consider these two parts as one activity, Joys and Concerns followed by the Pastoral Prayer, we will see that they are not very different, at the level of bodily regimen, from Prayers of the People or General Intercessions. Bodies remain in one place through both parts. They speak one at a time, and only in the roles of leading (one body) or sharing-responding (every other body). Movement and posture are generally static in the same way as in Prayers of the People. And while a Pastoral Prayer, in its words and imagery, tends to focus on all four of the modes of prayer more equally, bodily conduct is still normed to the same single basic function: to (sincerely, earnestly, attentively) pray to God.

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[153] Saliers identifies four modes of prayer in his *Worship as Theology: Foretaste of Glory Divine* (Nashville, TN: 1994): (1) praising, thanking, beseeching; (2) invoking and beseeching; (3) lamenting and confessing; (4) interceding. Although the Prayers of the People or General Intercessions usually focus on the fourth mode (and to a lesser degree the second), traces of all four are borne in the petitions.

[154] Laurence Stookey explains the Pastoral Prayer thus: "... [I]n certain churches ... one prayer was used within most services. Since usually it was the pastor who prepared and led the prayer, it came to be known as the 'pastoral prayer.' ...In the past, comprehensive prayers could ... twenty minutes long, for example, in a time when sermons went on for two hours or more." *Let the Whole Church Say Amen! A Guide for Those Who Pray in Public* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 2001), 99-100.

Now, even if the Prayers of the People and the Pastoral Prayer are near-identical at the level of regimen, surely they are not similar, in terms of regimen, to two other forms of prayer we have already considered, namely, the "Altar Prayer" during Service at St. John, the Afro-Baptist congregation studied by Walter Pitts, and the periods of "praying in tongues" during the Charismatic Catholic services studied by Thomas Csordas. Because I discussed the structure of these kinds of prayer in chapter 1, I will not repeat all the details here. The Altar Prayer at St. John (which, in my experience, is similar to Altar Prayer in many congregations with a "free church" style of worship, both predominantly African American ones and predominantly European American ones) clearly differs from the Prayers of the People and the Pastoral prayer in the degree of movement that is permitted during the prayer: bodies can sway, raise their hands high, and weep, although they run around or do other things that would distract from the prayer. The timing is more idiosyncratic, since bodies interject things like "Yes, Lord!" or "Thank you, Jesus" in a sporadic fashion throughout the prayer. But the roles are restricted in the same way, one body (the pastor) leading and all other bodies responding. On the other hand, in Charismatic prayer, no body really leads the prayer, and every body can pray different words at the same time (i.e., concurrent timing, different texts). In this case, it is bodily movement that is restricted similarly to the Prayers of the People or the Pastoral Prayer: bodies are expected to remain in one place and in the same posture throughout the prayer-time.

We can refer to these four kinds of prayer, as "major prayers," in the sense that each of them constitutes a major, distinct component of its respective service, on par with the sermon/homily or the singing of hymns.[155] These major prayers turn out, at the level of bodily regimen, to have much more similarity than they do at the levels of *ordo* or verbal content or emotional content. Moreover, although, as we saw in chapter 1, the services of which they are part have several broad similarities regimen-wise, these kinds of prayer are even more similar. All of them have the same single function, to pray authentically to God. That function takes the same basic form, speech addressed to God. And that speech itself takes only certain predetermined forms, namely, the four modes Saliers demarcates — or, even more simply, acknowledging things about God and our relationships to God (the modes of invocation, praise/thanksgiving, and lament/confession) and asking God to do things (intercession/supplication). These major prayers do not include other kinds of direct speech, such as telling God a story (that is, narratively sharing something with God for the sake of sharing, rather than for the sake of confessing or praising), or asking God a question in the mode of curious inquiry, or making observations to God that are not tied to a request.

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[155] Although these major prayers are not usually thought to constitute their own ritual-frame (comparable to the "Liturgy of the Word" and "Liturgy of the Meal" in Catholic, Orthodox, Lutheran, and Anglican worship, or the "Devotion" and "Service" at St. John), one could say that bath, Word, meal, song, and prayer are the five distinguishable basic categories into which the activities from which nearly everything in Christian worship is drawn (the difference being that bath, Word, and meal are self-contained and mutually exclusive sets of activities, while song and prayer sometimes stand alone (as in the Prayers of the People) and sometimes are incorporated within bath, Word, or meal (as in the Eucharistic Prayer)).

The action of speaking in these major prayers is additional circumscribed both as to roles (only one or two, i.e., leader and responders in Prayers of the People, Pastoral Prayer, and Altar Prayer; individuals praying simultaneously in Charismatic prayer) and as to timing (a single kind of timing proper to each major prayer). Outside the action of speaking, bodies are permitted to perform very few other kinds of movements or expressions: they are expected to maintain the same posture in the same place, and even in Altar Prayer, bodies must remain in the same place and can move in that place in only certain ways. The range of bodily actions expected in these major prayers is, on the one hand, actually narrower than the range expected in Eucharist. On the other hand, while the range of actions permitted to bodies during a sermon/homily or baptism is similarly narrow, bodies are also allowed a greater range of deviations in those portions of worship. During these major prayers, every body is supposed to be actively doing the same thing (praying), with a high degree of focus, in a specific posture. By contrast, during a sermon/homily or baptism, bodies can shift among a number of postures (within certain limits) and are allowed a certain range of drifting off or loose attention without being corrected.[156]

This comparative rigidness of regimen for these major prayers should strike us as a little odd, because out of all the chief components of Christian worship — Baptism, Scripture-and-preaching, hymnody, Eucharist, and the like (granting, of course, that different services include different combinations of components) — prayer, both in general and specifically in the form of these major prayers, bears the least amount of historical burden as to right bodily conduct. That is, there are long histories of rule-making and conflict concerning the right manner of bodily conduct in Baptism, Eucharist, Scripture-and-preaching, and hymnody;[157] and such rule-making and conflict have played out, simultaneously and often heatedly, in the discursive domains of systematic and practical theology, ecclesiastical policy-making, and on-the-ground pastoral practice. Likewise, there are histories of rule-making and conflict concerning the right manner of bodily conduct in prayer. But questions about bodily conduct in prayer have generated less rule-making and conflict compared to questions about bodily conduct in worship's other chief components. To be sure, *with respect to theological and verbal content and structure* — that is, relationships among symbols within systems of meaning, rather than relationships among bodies within systems of action — prayer has generated as much rule-making and controversy as Baptism, Eucharist, hymnody, or Scripture-with-preaching. But it is hard to find controversies over prayer, *specifically with respect to bodily action as such*, that are equivalent in divisiveness to controversies over communion under both kinds, or whether female bodies may preach, or how young a body may be baptized and in what manner it ought be baptized, or whether bodies may dance or play instruments as a part of their singing of hymns.

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[156] Of course, drifting off during a sermon or paying loose attention during a baptism is not an ideal, but if bodies do them, they are not corrected. Additionally, during a sermon/homily, bodies can write notes or read the Bible — and, for that matter, adults can write checks for the offering, and children can draw — all without provoking intervention.

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[157] With regard to Scripture-and-preaching, one can think of, among other things, continuing preoccupations with what bodily mannerisms (inflection, volume, emotional timbre, gesticulation, etc.) are most appropriate or effective for preaching, as well as which kinds of bodies, in which roles, can read Scripture or preach. With regard to hymnody, one can think of, among other things, the strength and ubiquity of the expectation congregational song is really about producing harmony, consonance, and other forms of vocal unity; or fiery debates over how much bodily movement is acceptable during hymnody.

Because the bodily regimen governing prayer has comparatively less encrustation of historical controversy (even if only moderately so), major prayers like the Prayers of the People or the Altar Prayer may be the component of worship that a congregation would be the most open, or the least resistant, to transforming. So let us now imagine a series of modifications by which major prayers like these, strongly oriented toward congruence, could gradually shift to a different dynamic between congruence and divergence. Such a shift would be valuable, in the first place, simply for opening up new possibilities for prayer as a bodily practice. But it is also the necessary condition for the emergence of Christian worship that, instead of operating with a regimen that reinforces biopower, can engage bodies in resisting it. I will offer my proposal by telling the story of a made-up congregation — call it "Good Shepherd Church" (might we even picture one of Mrs. Murphy's granddaughters as the pastor there?) — as it tries out a new process for liturgical creation. In effect, I offer here a little bit of a liturgical thought-experiment in story form.

But why am I taking this approach, rather than doing an original ethnography of some of the congregations and communities that already practice the sorts of continual transformations I narrate below?[158] Or, failing that, could I not engage a book like Janet Walton's *Feminist Liturgy*, which contains numerous examples of actual services created and enacted by the New York Women's Liturgy Group, through some of the same processes and on some of the same assumptions as I discuss here?[159] After all, it is not as if I have discovered something that no Christian congregation or worshipping community has ever done before, and now I am announcing it. Indeed, it is precisely to honor and acknowledge these communities, who are already doing much of what I describe here, that I have undertaken the whole project of this dissertation. My task, however, is to provide one basis (certainly not the only one) for advocating that *many* Christian communities *should* move towards the kind of transformation-processes that these communities already practice. These communities have their own reasons for transforming worship, which may be quite different from my overarching reason for advocating that *many* communities do something similar — i.e., because doing so is a way to disrupt the operations of biopower in Christian worship. Thus, an ethnography-based account would run the risk of having to reconcile possibly quite distinct values and commitments.[160]

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[158] For instance, the worship program at Union Theological Seminary in New York City, in which I participated for several years, was the original inspiration for the kind of worship transformation process I describe here, and I know several other seminaries whose approach to worship is similar. In addition, I have worshipped in several congregations (including Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church of Manhattan and St. John's Lutheran Church, in Atlanta) that also engage in transformation-processes similar to what I discuss below. (And my colleague Susannah Laramee Kidd has told me that the Atlanta Mennonite Fellowship engages in transforming worship quite similarly to what I am proposing.)

Hence, while what I am proposing here is very similar to the extant practices of a (relatively small) number of worshipping communities, my goal is not to re-articulate or re-construct the principles behind what they already do — that is, a secondary account of their primary theology. Rather, I am proposing one possible path a congregation could take to enact forms of worship that actively disrupt the ingrained operations of biopower in Christian worship. Adopting the form of a story, rather than a list of principles, allows me to convey that *the process of transforming bodily conduct is itself the practice that fundamentally disrupts biopower*, even more than any specific order of service that emerges in that process.[161] Moreover, the story form allows me to perform a sort of wondering — one with which worshippers ask each other, "*Imagine if we...*" and allow this query to lead their bodies down new paths of worship — that is part of the very process to which I am inviting worshipping communities. Finally, I mean to signal my awareness that the sort of shifts I envision can only be the efforts of real bodies living all the busyness and stress of their real lives. So I want, as fully as possible, to frame shifts from congruence-oriented worship (and thereby a shift to resisting biopower) as a process of continual unfolding, with great intentionality, and not a sudden, wholesale substitution of one kind of worship for another. However cliché in ministry and human services professions, the maxim certainly applies here: *the process is the goal.*

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[159] Janet Walton, *Feminist Liturgy: A Matter of Justice* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2000). I acknowledge that, in ways large and small, the vision of liturgical transformation I present here has been influenced, shaped, and disciplined by this book and, with even more distinction, its author.

[160] And I would, in any case, have to engage in some degree of imaginative translation in order to distill from a particular community, with its own histories and needs, something that other communities could act on or act from.

My hope is that the following story will give a sense of what it could be like for a congregation to intentionally shift from congruence-based worship (at least in the way they pray the major prayer of their service). It is offered as an invitation for congregations to imagine themselves doing something like what Good Shepherd does. Even if their context demands a different approach at each step narrated in the next section, the story will have accomplished the work of opening an imaginal space in which we can conceive worship that breaks its unjustified reliance on mechanisms that reinforce or instantiate biopower.

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[161] To return to the language of regimen, we can say that the process of breaking open a biopower-aligned regimen is itself the performative constitution of a counter-regimen.

B. Imagining prayer at Good Shepherd Church

Every Sunday, the worship service at Good Shepherd Church includes a major prayer, which begins with a time when members[162] can indicate things they would like included in the prayers (they can also submit prayer-requests to the church office the preceding week). The prayer proper is structured as petitions offered by a leader and a response repeated simultaneously by the rest of the members, with a time open for free petitions, concluded by a petition said by Pastor Murphy and "Amen." As described above, there is little movement, either at or from the place each body occupies.[163] One Sunday, during coffee hour after service, two members and the pastor are sitting and chatting. One of the members is recounting how, in her son's church, which she recently attended, worshippers can write on cards before the service's long prayer, and then during the prayer, different members of the congregation would come up and pray aloud the request or thanksgiving that is written on the card. The Good Shepherd member remarks that what was neat about praying in this way is that you could hear another praying for your joy or concern and feel that they cared about you, and also that multiple members get to participate in leading the prayer. Pastor Murphy — ever attuned to the liturgical creativity of laypeople no less than pastors or scholars — then asks, "What would it be like if we tried that here? What would people feel about it?" A lively, brief conversation about this ensues.

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[162] In this section I will depart from my general practice and refer to "members" rather than "bodies," to recognize that, in most congregations, thinking about the body in worship *qua* body is not typical (even though it may emerge through a process like what I'm describing here).

[163] Although, given that this minimal-movement style of prayer is not, empirically speaking, characteristic of many if not the majority of African American congregations, Good Shepherd would likely be a predominantly European American congregation, the dynamics I describe here do not depend on Good Shepherd being predominantly European American. That is, much of this story could be imagined in the same way in a congregation whose major prayer is an Altar Prayer like at St. John, which includes many predominantly African American congregations. But one has to choose one form or another to tell a story, and I have chosen to go with something close to the practice I know most deeply, that of the (admittedly predominantly white) Lutheran church.

It's nearing the end of a long season of Epiphany, and from this conversation Pastor Murphy has an idea for a little different Lenten study group. She talks to a few members to gauge possible interest, and after receiving some encouragement, she approaches the Worship Committee with the idea. Some think it would be a wonderful experience, others are non-committal (and probably a few have silent objections), so they are willing to let her try it out. She asks that the committee members consider participating in the Lenten group. The next few Sundays, Pastor Murphy includes an invitation to the group among the announcements. Since prayer is one of the classic Lenten disciplines, she explains, it is a good time for us to explore more about both why we pray and *how* we pray. As Lent begins, the group meets every Wednesday evening. The first two weeks, they read some short passages about prayer from, among others, Teresa of Avila, Walter Brueggemann, and Claire Wolfteich. They also reflect on what they experience in prayer, the various emotions and bodily senses. They talk about times when prayers during worship were especially meaningful, and times when they "fell flat." And they talk about what things feel missing in the prayers of Good Shepherd, and what sorts of things they could imagine trying out, "just to see what it's like."

Slowly the group moves from talking about prayer to creating new prayers for speaking in worship. They work *within* the already existing structure of the prayers (petition-response), but try using different language than is usually used at Good Shepherd, a wider range of vocabulary. They seek different ways to name God's presence among them and the conditions in which they find themselves. They also seek more vivid, powerful verbs to describe the actions they are asking God to take. By the third week of Lent, they are ready to bring some of the petitions and responses they have crafted into Sunday morning worship. They include a note in the bulletin explaining the group's work, and then for the rest of Lent, a different group member or members leads the long intercessory prayer in the service. Then, during coffee hour, one or two group members intentionally approach various worshippers to see how they experienced the prayers: whether it deepened their sense of being in God's presence and heightened the honesty of what was said to God in that encounter. The group then ponders this feedback in its next session, before beginning to craft more new prayers. Near the end of Lent, one of the group members wonders about not having one leader at the front leading all the petitions, but having different group members scattered randomly throughout the pews, each voicing a different petition from a different location. They try this on the fifth Sunday of Lent, and while it surprises many in the congregation, most members seem either to like it or be indifferent to it.

As Lent draws to a close, some of the group express how much they would enjoy continuing to explore together new ways to pray in worship. They decide to take a few weeks off, then invite more members of the congregation to join them for another round. During this second round, they continue to try out new language, but, from the experiment at the end of Lent, they also start exploring different things they can do with their bodies while they speak prayers. So, for instance, during one group session, they try praying in different positions — kneeling, standing, sitting, laying down even. They also try praying while doing different common movements from “real life” — holding a child, or cutting up food, or walking through a door. The point of all these things is to connect the act of speaking with other kinds of physical acts, more than “just standing there and talking.” They decide to try out some simple new movements in Sunday worship: they invite everyone to hold the hand of or touch the shoulder of the person next to them (while giving permission for those who don’t want to be touched to say so). But at the end of each petition, as they say, “We cry to you, Holy One,” they lift their hands above their heads, and then re-join them with their neighbors’ hands. Now *that* gets people’s attention! Many members have looks of strangeness on their faces, some are clearly not happy, and others are a little confused.

So the group realizes that changing up how bodies act in prayer can feel a little more threatening then only changing the words that are prayed. In order to help engage their fellow worshippers more, they hold a workshop for the whole congregation, right after service one Sunday, on bodies in worship. They do with the whole congregation some of the exercises they’d been doing as a group. Most are hesitant at the start, but by the end most are at least trying out the exercises, and some seem to be enjoying it themselves. The group decides not try any more bodily changes in prayer for a while, but focus instead on hosting a series of workshops to try to reach most congregation members, to help them try out new kinds of embodiment *related* to prayer, but *outside* of the actual worship service. (These workshops also draw more regular participants to the group’s meetings). Eventually, it seems like the congregation is ready to try some new movements during prayer in the Sunday service. This time, many in the congregation have thought about and experienced some new possibilities for movement related to worship, so they are at least much less dis-oriented by being asked to move in new ways during worship. That doesn't mean every loves "that new prayer-motion stuff," and the group again reaches out every week to talk to different members about their experience. But the congregation is willing to keep trying with those new movements (but not any others) for a while. After some time — maybe several months, maybe more — people seem to be comfortable with the movements, not everyone likes them, but they at least tolerate them.

In the mean-time, the WE Pray Group (as the Worship Experiments with Prayer group has come to call itself) has settled into a longer-term pattern: they meet once or twice a month now, and their meetings are open to anyone who wants to join. They also hold a few "Pray Without Ceasing" workshops a year that they try to get lots of congregation members to attend, where they work on both the language of prayers but also bodily actions during prayer other than speaking. (The group has agreed not to touch other components of worship — Scripture readings, communion, baptism, etc. — until the congregation as a whole desires to.) In its own original experimentation, however, the group is embarking on a new question: are there ways to "pray" without speaking? The group was inspired by a member who had read a maxim attributed to St. Francis: "Preach the Gospel at all times. Use words when necessary." That insight got the group thinking about whether prayer required speaking words — or whether gestures, motions, or other kinds of action could also be a way to "pray."[164] So they begin trying new things out with their bodies in their meetings, along with reading more deeply in the theology of prayer, written by both academic theologians, mystics, and everyday Christians reflecting on their lives.

Eventually, they start developing several "prayers" that did not involve any speaking, but instead involved an assortment of actions, from drawing pictures to handling objects from everyday life to silently portraying with their bodies both pains members were struggling with as well as ways they experience grace. "Can this really count as prayer?" some ask. The group suggests that it only *doesn't* count as prayer if one assumes that God can only receive our petitions through our speech, rather than through our enactment before God both the world as it is *and* the world as it can, in God's grace, be for all people. At this point, WE Pray follows what has, by now, become a familiar, accepted series of steps for creating and trying out new prayer-practices at Good Shepherd:

(1) Activities developed in the more intensive WE Pray sessions are eventually brought to wider portion of the congregation in a "Pray Without Ceasing" workshop. At the end of the workshop, WE Pray members lead congregation members in reflecting on how that form of prayer worked and how it didn't — "worked" in this case meaning that it deepened the experience of God's presence and the honesty with which people could confront, to God as well as to one another in God's presence, the tensions between their pains and hopes, the terror

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[164] See Saliers, *Worship as Theology*, chapters 9-10.

and the beauty,[165] the "not yet" and the "live as if."

(2) Based on this feedback, WE Pray spends more time refining the new ways to pray they have been developing.

(3) When the group feels they are ready, the congregation commits to trying out these new forms during Sunday morning service, over a period of at least six to eight weeks. (The congregation had previously decided that certain periods of the year were more appropriate for these "trials" — Epiphany or Lent (but not both back-to-back), the last stretch of Sundays after Pentecost, and *sometimes* Advent.) Each week, WE Pray participants pay attention during the service and approach members after it to discern how the new forms are "working," in the sense noted above.

(4) After the trial period, there is a time when any congregation member can express, in writing or orally, whether they would like to continue with the new form of prayer, or would like it revised in specified ways, or would like to see alternatives to the just-tried form — in each case explaining also by what emotional, spiritual, intellectual, and social dynamics the new form enhanced or diminished the intensity of being in God's presence and the honesty in confronting the tensions of terror and beauty in life. This is not strictly a vote, but the congregation follows a three-part rule of thumb: keep anything that three-fifths or more find enhancing, discard anything that one-third or more object to, and revise and re-try anything that more than two-thirds want to keep or revise.[166]

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[165] See Saliers, *Worship as Theology*, 24, 27.

[166] In a situation where *both* three-fifths want to keep something *and* one-third object, the WE Pray group undertakes revisions, intentionally working with those who objected to address the problem-

(5) If the congregation decides to keep something, it will be tried for the next three months, after which it can be kept semi-permanently,[167] revised and the revisions tried anew, or alternatives developed to go alongside (but not replace it) — or, if now three-fifths desire, it can be rejected.

By this time, it is now four or five years since the Lenten group when Good Shepherd first started studying, reflecting, and experimenting with *one* main portion of its regular service, the major intercessory prayer. The congregation has certainly not abandoned this prayer, nor has it radically revised members' basic notion of its theological purpose, which many would express as something like asking God's help, healing, and guidance, for one's own sake and for the sake of others. What *has* changed is the range of bodily actions by which members think they can rightly fulfill this purpose. Now, instead of only standing in one place, with little motion, and only speaking to repeat the response after the leader has spoken a petition, members have a repertoire of four, eight, or more patterns of bodily action: some of these patterns retain the petition-response format but incorporate new language, roles, or accompanying physical movements; some of these break out of the petition-response format altogether; and some of these do not involve speaking at all. The congregation cycles through these various manners of praying over the course of a year. But once or twice a year they also develop new manners of prayer, or revisit ones they have been using for a while. Most importantly, they engage in an ongoing *process* in which the whole congregation, in different ways, designs, tries out, and

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atic parts.

[167] They say "semi-permanently" at Good Shepherd because *any* way of praying can be revisited through the WE Pray process.

reflects on new ways to pray. This process involves many people in actively creating forms of worship, and it also provides an opportunity for additional fellowship, theological learning, an d spiritual reflection. Moreover, members of the congregation truly engage in the "work" of creating worship together, rather than depending on Pastor Murphy and the musicians, altar guild, and worship committee to decide how the congregation will pray and simply hand members the words to say.

Having permanently committed to a process of continual experimentation in which no manner of praying is the single permanent one, Good Shepherd over the next five years continues to implement this process in new ways (which I only have time to recount in passing). At one point, they decide to intentionally learn how some other Christian communities (some in the present, some in the past) pray in ways that are radically different from theirs. They (or some of them) visit with these communities several times, or else they invite these communities to come and teach Good Shepherd. Then they experiment with what they have learned. At another point, Good Shepherd tries to opens itself to more improvisational ways of praying: drawing from the already-greatly-expanded repertoire of ways in which they pray, they experiment with prayer-times in which everything is *not* planned ahead of time, but instead one body initiates with a familiar action (speech or other than speech), and then the rest of bodies respond how they will. The WE Pray group wisely decides to spend much more time than usual trying out improvisations like this in its own meetings and in "Pray without Ceasing" workshops before even initially attempting them in Sunday worship. But they discover that prayer through improvised bodily action (not only improvising the words, but the actions themselves) allows them to experience prayer as more of a co-discovery and a co-sharing, with one another and with God, of their joys and concerns — rather than the assumption that, before even coming to prayer, each person knows what they need from God. Through improvised bodily conduct, prayer itself becomes they way to know what one needs to pray for.

Good Shepherd also undertakes several rounds of the process that all begin from the question, “What kinds of bodies would *not* fit as comfortably in the way we pray, and why?” This leads them to an evaluation of how their bodily actions — despite being quite varied compared to what they used to be — nevertheless assume certain things about what is “normal” for bodies to do in worship, and thereby leave some bodies out, especially bodies that are identified with racial groups, levels of poverty, sexualities, or disabilities that differ from the majority of Good Shepherd’s members. This is a different way to engage “diversity” than the standard multi-culturalist approaches in Christian worship, and it turns out to be the most difficult, uncomfortable, and controversy-generating aspect of Good Shepherd’s whole project of transforming prayer. Here Good Shepherd was served well by having two distinct venues *outside* the regular Sunday worship (the WE Pray group’s meetings and “Pray without Ceasing” workshops), in which difficult issues of cultural assumptions and broader issues of inequality could be engaged in a more deliberate, less formalized way than in the worship service proper. After various fits and starts, Good Shepherd began to be able to explore what it would mean for their bodies to pray with actions that challenge or blur these norms.

God only knows where Good Shepherd will go next with its prayers!

C. Some notes on Good Shepherd's experiments

Good Shepherd's experience is, of course, an idealization. And while I have tried to acknowledge some of the struggles that are involved in transforming congruence-oriented worship, there are many specific kinds of concerns and problems that I did not delve into. For instance, I hardly commented on the demographic make-up of the congregation and all the ways bodies marked by such apparatuses of biopower as race/ethnicity, gender, sexuality, disability, poverty, and the like would, due to biopower's disciplinary formation, different kinds and degrees of bodily capacities and limits. These will certainly be central issues in any attempt to move beyond congruence-oriented worship. Moreover, the only explicit engagement with biopower itself came relatively late in the process. Does that mean that resisting biopower only *begins* after many other steps, or are there multiple ways in which worship can resist biopower? (I answer these questions in the next chapter.) In addition, it is somewhat contrived to suggest that Good Shepherd's WE Pray group would, over years of experimentation, *only* ever attempt to transform the major prayer in the service, rather than other main components, such as Eucharist or Scripture-and-preaching. Despite these limitations (and many others), the point of the story is to spark further imagination by Christians in their own real communities, considering how things would play out differently in their contexts and why. Every possible problem need not be addressed if one is only trying to issue an adequate invitation to an ongoing process of transformation.

Nevertheless, several crucial shifts in widely held assumptions about worship were implied in the story, to which I now draw attention:

(1) Rather than assuming that change in worship should be the exception and not the norm, and that it should only occur when it can be fully justified, the process at Good Shepherd assumed that regular change was the default mode for worship, and that what needed to be decided was when and on what terms to keep a given change or to revise. It was assumed that anything in worship, potentially, could be subject to change and change again.

(2) Moreover, change did not come from articulating a principle in liturgical theology (or any other branch of theology, for that matter) and then deducing from that principle the manner of worship that would best apply it. Change occurred in conversation with liturgical theology, but liturgical theology did not get to predetermine what could or could not be changed, in what way, or why.

(3) Instead, change took the form of open-ended experimentation, beginning with questions and curiosities, proceeding to creative trial and error (enriched by study), and resulting in the performance of new forms for worship followed by reflection and revision. At no point was the end-result of a given round of transformation pre-determined at the outset.

(4) At the same time, the process never assumed a blank state: the congregation never rejected all prior patterns of worship and started absolutely from scratch. Instead, transformation occurred *in medias res*, holding many elements constant while selecting a few for experimentation. It was, in fact, assumed that a congregation could not throw out everything in its worship — at the levels of order of service, *ordo*, and regimen — and invent everything anew, but could only transform piece by piece.

(5) The materials from which the congregation created new ways of worshipping were eclectically drawn from many sources: members' explorations with their own bodies; the practices of everyday life; writings by liturgical and other theologians of all stripes; other Christian communities' practices; and, presumably, the Bible (and other sources as well). The experimental attitude drew upon all of these sources without establishing a hierarchy among them.

(6) Similarly, the criteria used to evaluate the newly developed forms of worship were pragmatic ones: in the example of prayer, whether the forms enhanced the sense of being in God's presence and deepened the honesty of that encounter. These are loose and highly subjective norms, though they did invite reflection by actual worshippers on their actual experience of worship.

(7) Finally, all the transformations only occurred through the steady activity of a group of congregation worshippers in an intentional and intensive practice of liturgical study and experimentation, as well as workshops for the whole congregation to try out new forms. Both of these were distinct from the regular worship service, and it is impossible to see Good Shepherd's experience playing out without these para-liturgical venues and practices.

This list may be quite startling to liturgists, in whole or certainly in some of its parts. It is intended to push clearly past the limits within which congruence-oriented Christian worship operates. That is, if we want to move beyond worship that, at the level of bodily conduct, aligns with biopower, we must brace ourselves for worship that feels much closer to this list than to some of the unquestionable principles with which we have operated in worship. Is there any way to construe

Christian worship — and bodily conduct in it — that could, if not justify, at least help make sense of this preceding list? How might we nuance the list to more explicitly tie it to the disruption of biopower? These are the questions with which the final chapter wrestles.

Chapter 5:
Canonizing and Improvising Our Way to Resurrection

The story of Good Shepherd may seem like a fairy tale. But I have lead, designed, and participated in worship in several communities who create worship in just the way I described in the last chapter. Union Theological Seminary in New York City, where I earned my master's degree, worships as a community four times a week, Monday through Thursday. There is no single sequence of conduct that each individual service must adhere, and both in principle and in practice, the different groups that plan worship services are fairly free to craft an order that includes a wide variety of activities, even somewhat idiosyncratically. There are some broad parameters, chief among which is that on one day a week the service will center on the celebration of Eucharist and on another day it will center on preaching — though in both cases, the rite can proceed in a manner that is well established in one or another broad Christian tradition, or it can vary significantly. Most services tend to have readings from Scripture and prayer as well, though these vary considerably. And while most services operate *do* operate with the expectation that the sequence of functions is set ahead of time, there are occasionally services, or portions of services, in which even the sequence is created during the service itself.

What is most important for my argument in this dissertation is that, in Union's worship, there is really no expectation that, from one service to the next, the sequence of conduct will largely remain the same. The groups that plan worship draw significantly from the traditions in which they were formed before coming to Union, and, thus, much of what happens in any given service is familiar to at least some bodies in the service. Yet because students come from a wide range of traditions, much of what happens in a given service may be *un*familiar to many or possibly most of the bodies. It is simply expected that bodies will do different things in each service, and that they must be open to try new or unexpected things in any given service. Hence, it is not only that the *order of service* or *sequence of conduct* varies, often widely, from one service to the next, but that a *regimen* different from that in congruence-oriented worship is in effect at Union. Worship becomes a practice of not knowing at the start of a service which bodily capacities will be drawn upon in that service and having to remain open to discover that as the service proceeds. (In some services, bodies might even have to figure out, on the fly, what to do during a portion of the service, rather than fulfilling an order of what they should do that was set before the service.) Moreover, a body has to be open to different configurations of capacities being drawn upon from one service to the next, and a wide range of capacities might potentially be used over the course of many services.

Worship at Union, therefore, already proceeds on the basis of the shifts I listed at the end of the previous chapter. Nor is Union unique in the sense of “this couldn’t happen anywhere else.” For while I studied at Union, I also was a ministry intern at Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church of Manhattan, a congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). For three years, my fellow Union student (and now ordained pastor) Margaret Sawyer and I worked under the supervision of Trinity’s pastor, Heidi B. Neumark, to create new manners for various activities in worship.[168] Trinity is not a congregation with a long history of radical liturgical innovation, and most Sundays, the worship was relatively similar to the Sundays before. In other words, unlike Union's worship, Trinity's worship does *not*, for the most part, fit the aforementioned list. But what is significant is how much possibility there was at Trinity to embark on a process of experimentation similar to that at Good Shepherd. As Heidi, Margaret, and I designed new activities to complement Trinity's customary order or, in some instances, re-designed customary rites in modest ways, the congregation did not collapse, nor was there a sense that worship had lost its integrity or that the congregation was betraying the true Christian faith.

This kind of openness to experimentation was not due to the uncommon diversity of race, class, and sexuality at Trinity. I can assert this boldly because, having received, for two years, a "worship renewal grant" from the Calvin Institute of Christian Worship (funded by the Lilly Foundation), we met, at the Institute's weeklong summer conference, a number of other congregations that were likewise experimenting in ways large and small with what bodies were doing in worship. And many of those congregations were more homogeneous than Trinity with respect to race, class, and/or sexuality. So we have, on the one hand, a place like Union (and seminaries with similar worship practices), where it is taken for granted that worship will change in some way from every service to the next one — but where almost every body in worship is involved in the in-depth study of it and works as a ministry professional. But then we have congregations like Trinity and its fellow "worship renewal" grantees, where most of the worshippers do not have formal training in liturgy and work in other professions, but where, nonetheless, some early parallels to Good Shepherd's process were concretely manifested.

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[168] Heidi and I worked together in the English-language service, while Heidi and Margaret worked together in the Spanish-language service, and we all teamed up for the bilingual worship occasions. Nor should I neglect the leadership, creativity, and wisdom of Horace Beasley, a rostered "associate in ministry" of the ELCA.

In no small way, this dissertation, as an intellectual project, has proceeded on the assumption that the worship of these communities is fully legitimate as Christian worship. And from this assumption, the dissertation has been seeking, implicitly, to both

- (a) understand the assumptions prevalent in the vast majority of the practice and theological interpretation of Christian worship that foreclose the possibilities, if not altogether deny the Christian legitimacy, of the kind of approach represented both by Union and other seminaries and Trinity and other congregations; and
- (b) articulate a framework for the interpretation and practice of worship that does not *rule out* that approach, *a priori*, as a legitimately Christian approach to worship.

But is there, in addition, a way to (c) affirmatively characterize this approach to worship as a legitimately, if alternatively, Christian approach? Is there a way to define Christian worship that can include the way worship is created and enacted at Union — the way congregations like Trinity are starting to create and enact it?

Is it acceptable to improvise?

Let me frame the problem in the following way. Worship in the Catholic tradition, as presented by Garrigan and Wood, and in the Afro-Baptist tradition (with its two frames, Devotion and Service), as presented by Pitts, are both unquestionably

Christian manners of worship. And although I went to great lengths in chapter 1 arguing that they had some fundamental similarities with respect to the regimen that governs bodily conduct in each of them, clearly they draw upon different sets of bodily capacities, in different forms, with different timings, and, to some degree, different kinds of roles. Now, imagine if, one Sunday, the members of the Catholic congregation in Dublin studied by Wood worshipped at St. John Progressive Baptist, and then the next Sunday, the members of St. John worshipped at that Catholic congregation. Following this exchange, both communities decided that, the next Sunday, back in their own sanctuaries, they would each abandon their customary order of service and worship entirely according to the other congregation's order of service.[169] For the Dublin congregation there is ecclesiastical law that says this sort of thing should not happen, though St. John is under no such prohibition. But *other* than ecclesiastical law, are there any other bases for saying that such decision *must* not happen? That is, would some constitutive principle of Christian doctrine or ethics be violated for each congregation to, out of nowhere, switch to a completely different sequence of conduct or order of service (though one that was incontestably a Christian sequence or order)?

So far as I can tell, every compelling objection to this scenario is not of the form "This would violate some constitutive principle of Christian doctrine or ethics..." but rather of the form "This would be an extremely unwise decision, but not a doctrinally or ethically prohibited one."[170] The reasons for judging it extremely unwise would likely include that it would be very confusing for worshippers; that, with next to no practice, they would not know what to do for much of the service; and that the frustrations caused by attempting to enact unfamiliar bodily conduct would detract and distract, to an unacceptable degree, from worshippers' experience of God's presence, spiritual centeredness, and so on. In other words, rather than being contrary to Christian faith or morals, it would be extremely *pastorally* imprudent — as, in fact, I agree that it would be — because the difficulties it would present for worshipping bodies rises to the level of violating something necessary in Christian worship. And why would such a sudden switch be so difficult for bodies in most Christian congregations? Because Christian worship in most Christian congregations trains bodies to expect that they will enact roughly the same set of bodily actions week in and week out, and it does *not* train them in the arts of adapting bodily conduct on the fly, with little preparation, using whatever bodily skills they already had to conduct themselves in a new way. In a word, we can say that congruence-oriented Christian worship, whatever else it achieves, almost entirely excludes any bodily capacity for *improvisation*.

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[169] I hasten to acknowledge how such a decision could bear the worst sort of cultural misappropriation, across lines of race (and very likely class), so let me posit as a condition of this hypothetical that the interaction between the congregations was done in such a way that issues of misappropriation were largely not in effect.

Now, it is not as if Christian congregations never change the sequence of conduct expected in their services. For instance, many congregations that follow the yearly cycle of traditional liturgical seasons (Advent, Christmas, Epiphany, and so on) will add or remove certain activities during some seasons, like lighting an Advent wreath or a praying in a different way during Lent.[171] So in one sense what I am suggesting here is a difference in degree, not in kind: a change in much of or many elements in the sequence of expected conduct, simultaneously, instead of one or two elements, slowly. Still, it is true that most congregations do not make such a large number of changes at such a rapid pace, and it would likely be very overwhelming. But *what if* there were an approach to worship that actually prepared the members of both St. John and the Dublin congregation to enact an entirely different sequence of actions one Sunday? Perhaps it would need to be a little more gradual than deciding out of the blue to enact a different sequence, though at the same time much more rapid than several years or months. But granting this, if there *were*, nonetheless, a practice or set of practices related to worship that could create in congregations the capacity to switch to a significantly different sequence of conduct — *without* being overwhelmed by an unfamiliarity or discomfort that prevented the full experience of worship in God's presence — would it be acceptable for a congregation to make such a switch?

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[170] Another way to say this is to ask whether there is any fundamental Christian doctrine or ethic — as opposed to pastoral preference if not good sense — that requires an Anglican congregation always to worship in the manner customary for most Anglicans, a Lutheran congregation always to worship in the manner customary for most Lutherans, and so on?

If the major *pastoral* concerns have been obviated, I contend that there should be no doctrinal or ethical bar prohibiting a congregation from significantly switching its sequence of conduct from service to service: it could even switch the sequence fairly rapidly, provided that its overall worship practices had adequately prepared members for this rate of change.[172] We must admit that such a bar would have to compellingly demonstrate the following: that (a) fundamental Christian doctrine or ethical requirements, *concerning worship in itself and not merely concerning authority in the church as it is applied to worship*, necessitate that a congregation maintain largely the same sequence of conduct from one service to the next, and only introduce changes in small numbers and slowly; and that (b) to the degree that worship violates this pattern, it cannot, as a matter of doctrine or ethics, be considered proper Christian worship. It is difficult to see the case that could sustain this conclusion, and unless the prohibition can clearly be sustained — again, on grounds of worship in itself and not worship-as-a-derivative-of-church-authority[173] — then it is a *preference* and not a theological necessity that a congregation not switch its sequence significantly and/or rapidly.

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[171] At this very moment (the liturgical year that began in Advent 2011), in fact, the Roman Catholic church in the United States is beginning to worship according to the changes, first promulgated in 2002, to the standard text of the Roman Rite (*Missale Romanum, Editio Typica Tertia*) as well as the *General Instruction on the Roman Missal* that governs the celebration of this Rite.

[172] Such switching may be prohibited by canon law or analogous ecclesiastical rule: it certainly would be in most Catholic, Orthodox, Lutheran, Anglican, and Reformed polities. But the very fact that even

The interplay of congruence and divergence

Assuming that it is not doctrinally or ethically forbidden for a congregation to worship with a changing sequence, what then could be a framework, in liturgical practice and liturgical theology, for the relationship between change and continuity? I propose here *a shift, in both the practice and theological interpretation of Christian worship, from privileging congruence* over *divergence to privileging the continual* in-

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in traditions with such rules, sweeping liturgical changes can be mandated by the higher authorities in the polity suggests that the issue is really not with change per se, but with change outside the grip of ecclesial authorities (which, to be sure, is also a doctrinal issue — but concerning doctrine on church authority, not doctrine on worship per se). And, anyway, ecclesial law is *not* the same as doctrine or ethics, and if a competent authority were to simply change the law, the kind of switching I am envisioning would suddenly become permissible (and likely required), without any change in doctrine — or, more importantly, in the nature of Christian worship.

[173] There are those who would say, “But there *is* and *can be* no Christian worship without church authority, so distinguishing between them is specious, and, therefore, a violation of doctrine or ethics concerning church authority as it applies to worship is the same as a violation of doctrine or ethics concerning worship itself.” But they must contend with the counter-claim that it is the converse which is true: “There is and can be no Christian church — and therefore no church authority to speak of — before there is the *worship* of the church. Worship creates and defines the church, in whose life we can then ask questions about order, *not* the other way around.”

terplay *of congruence and divergence*. I am not proposing that, instead of congruence, Christian worship should value only divergence, in some sort of permanent free-for-all, where one service has nothing in common with to the last service or each service has to be created from scratch. It would be utterly exhausting if, week after week, a community had to make everything up anew, without drawing on some previous elements (and even I am not certain how that would work). But pure divergence is not the only alternative to a congruence-oriented regimen for worship. Between the extremes of seeking to maintain congruence among all bodies at all times, or sending all bodies off into total divergence from one another, there is a *via media*: an approach in which sometimes bringing one's body into congruence with other bodies and, at other times, diverging from those bodies are both *equally valued and valid* as necessary and good elements of worship. Instead of setting either congruence or divergence as the norm for worship and thereby making the other a problem to be contained, *Christian worship can be an activity and process constituted in and by experiments with the* dynamics *of bodies continuously moving into and out of both congruence and divergence with one another.*

It is fairly obvious how defining Christian worship as repeated experimentation with the interplay of congruence and divergence departs from liturgical theologies that strongly uphold a norm of congruence (of bodily conduct with either theological principles or liturgical rubrics), since for the latter, divergence cannot, by definition, count as a legitimate element of Christian worship unless it is held within some broader frame of congruence: thus, for example, Wainwright's call for precise judgments of "where tentative exploration opens up new vistas and where it misses its way and passes into error or nothingness."[174] But what about a liturgical theology like Lathrop's, which emphasizes tension between holding the truth of symbols and breaking those very symbols open to new meaning? Doesn't a framework like Lathrop's "juxtaposition" already do what I am suggesting needs to be done, equally valuing congruence and divergence and conceptualizing Christian worship as their mutual unfolding? Indeed, it does not, because of the "dialectical" structure in which "juxtaposition" is understood.[175] Within the dialectic, divergence is only a temporary moment that serves to establish a more comprehensive congruence (the "third thing," "faith," in Lathrop's framework). Divergence is only valued, and at all permissible, insofar as it is ineluctably resolved into congruence.

My own position is, unsurprisingly, closer to Saliers than to Lathrop, for Saliers speaks of "permanent tensions" whose value lies less in their resolution than in the creative energy generated by the "full stretch" between life's beauty and its terror, between liturgy as beauty and as holiness, and between local and universal modes and materials for creating beauty in liturgy.[176] However, the tensions that Saliers thematizes are tensions between, in essence, something that is good and something that is less good or even bad (but which must nevertheless be honestly faced). In the pairs beauty/terror, holiness/beauty, and universal/local, the first term is the one according to which the second is normed: we confront life's terror in the eschatological hope that it will be turned to beauty; the local is necessary but should not displace or violate the universal. By contrast, in the "interplay of congruence and divergence" for which I am arguing, both terms or equally valid and valued, and the goal is not for either to eventually subsume the other, but for bodies to perpetually move from one to the other, and back again, and forth again. I am advocating that worship be re-conceived as a process that does not "resolve" bodily divergence into ultimate congruence, nor bodily congruence into ultimate divergence — but keeps bodies moving between and around both of these two poles, not letting them rest permanently in either one.

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[174] Geoffrey Wainwright, *Doxology: The Praise of God in Worship, Doctrine, and Life* (London: Epworth Press, 1980), 11.

[175] Again, "dialectic" is a term applied by Lathrop himself; see Gordon Lathrop, *Holy Things: A Liturgical Theology* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1993), 80-82, 163, 214.

[176] See Don Saliers, *Worship as Theology: Foretaste of Glory Divine* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 1994), chaps. 1-2 and 12-13, especially pp. 22-24 and 213-16.

The framework I am proposing differs from Lathrop, Saliers, and most other liturgical theologies in another respect, namely, that I am arguing neither for a different *order of service* nor even for a different *ordo*, but rather a different bodily *regimen*. In other words, I am not advocating any particular first-order sequence of liturgical activities — such as, for example, inserting a new ritual of solidarity with the poor between the Service of the Word and the Service of the Table — to simply replace the sequences currently practiced. Nor am I calling for a new scheme of categories and dynamics that can explain how the sequence of activities in worship form a unified system of symbolic meaning. Consistent with my pursuit of somatic liturgical theologies in counter-point with, and as a balance to, semantic liturgical theologies, I am calling for a different scheme for governing how bodies conduct themselves, in relation to one another, in Christian worship. Under this scheme, the fundamental expectation is not that bodies will so conduct themselves that overall congruence is continually maintained, with minimal divergence: it is instead the expectation that bodies will alternate, over multiple time-scales, between two contrasting modes — one that promotes congruence, and one that promotes divergence.[177]

“Canon” and “improvisation”

Let us conceive of one mode as that in which a group of bodies repeatedly perform a pre-determined activity or bounded set of activities. In this mode, the body’s conduct —what it does and the manner (function, role, form, timing, etc.) in which it does it — is held constant, so that the activities become very familiar, perhaps to the point that a body can do them routinely or un-self-consciously, “without even thinking about it” and without other bodies “thinking anything of it.” This mode activates certain bodily capacities and attenuates others, so as to direct the body overall towards the establishment of certain deep dispositions: “Hence, Christian liturgy both forms us in certain characteristics ways of being human, and brings these to expression through the arts of worship.”[178] To call this mode “canon,” or the “canonical mode,” draws upon three verbal valences that evoke important aspects of what this mode accomplishes. First, in Christian history, “canon” has long meant a rule or decree concerning not only belief, but actual conduct. “Canon” has also meant a kind of rule specific to worship, regarding which writings may authoritatively be taught in worship or, in less wide usage, regarding a set portion of a Eucharistic prayer (“canon of the mass”). Second, a canon is a musical genre, in which different voices or instruments successively repeat the same melody. Finally, we hear an echo ritual theorist Roy Rappaport’s use, partly derived by reference to Christian worship, of the term "canonical" to mean those elements of ritual characterized by "regularity ... and apparent durability and immutability," which "make references to processes or entities ... outside the ritual, in words or acts that have ... been spoken or performed before."[179] The canonical for Rappaport is one of the two constitute modes of ritual, including liturgy: "Whereas the indexical is concerned with the immediate, the canonical is concerned with the enduring."[180]

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[177] In what follows I flesh out a framework of “canon and improvisation.” I got this phrase from a presentation made by Janet Walton for the course CW101: Introduction to Preaching and Worship, at Union Theological Seminary, New York City (February 8, 2004). Although I am using “canon and improvisation” in different ways from how Walton used it, the phraseology and broad notion are hers.
[178] Saliers, *Worship as Theology*, 28.

Now, let us conceive of another mode, alongside and coequal to the canonical mode, which is defined by its *breaking away from* the previous manner of conduct, its *breaking out of* the pre-determined pattern for conduct. In this mode, the body's conduct, which had been held constant, transforms to something different. It begins with already-established and oft-repeated conduct, but iterates it with a difference. The difference could be major or minor: perhaps a slight movement in a different direction, or a subtle shift in the voice's inflection; or perhaps jumping or turning in a circle where usually one is expected to rise simply or to remain stationary. Conduct in this mode could be contained to one body's breaking away from the expected pattern, in response to which all the other bodies nonetheless perform what they are expected to: in this case, the break-away conduct still has the effect of creating a brief gap from what is expected, which can re-introduce a level of self-consciousness in the other bodies (as they enact the expected sequence) that had faded away after many repetitions in the canonical mode. Or conduct by one body in those other mode could invite or induce or require other bodies to also act differently, either by opening up an unexpected possibility or by making it less feasible to do the expected conduct: a classic example of the former would be a child's faux pas that breaks levity into a somber moment; of the latter, Kenny's outburst during a Sunday-morning service at Good Samaritan. Following Janet Walton's usage, we can call this other mode "improvisation" or the "improvisational mode":

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[179] Roy A. Rappaport, "The Obvious Aspects of Ritual," in *Ecology, Meaning, and Religion* (Berkeley, CA: North Atlantic Books, 1979), 173-221, here 179.
[180] Ibid.

> "The term 'improvisation,' as I am using it ... describes an *attitude* toward worship as well as the skills needed to embody it. Improvisation is a way of being that intends to *pray and live in the moment* from what each person remembers and from what each is willing to continually envision. *No one knows where the pilgrimage will end nor even where it will wander, only that each person contributes to its twists and turns*.... I am proposing that worshiping congregations develop an artistic mindset and a schema for improvising as *a way to enjoy the freedom and the power worship can provide*. It is 'holy play,' *a way of breaking the habits we have developed that miss the riches of our symbols*, a vehicle for claiming the power of our partnership with one another and God. Improvisation or holy play intends to use engaged bodily ways of knowing to transform ourselves and our world" (emphases added).[181]

In nearly every way, "improvisation" (as I am using it) is the opposite of "canon": where canon proceeds from a sense of permanence, improvisation intrudes with a sense of immediacy; where canon works through repetition, improvisation is by definition a non-repetition, or at least a non-complete repetition;[182] where canon constantly re-iterates what has been done and said before, improvisation does and says completely different things, or does and says what has been done and said before, but in a different, perhaps contradictory, way;[183] where canon may evoke a sense of cosmic perpetuity, improvisation provokes an awareness of instantaneous fragility.[184] And yet I do not intend improvisation to be understood as the *negation* of canon, the sweeping away of everything and starting fresh. For improvisation necessarily draws upon and proceeds from canon. Canon consists of whatever is carried over from previous performance to the present moment, improvisation is what happens with it in the moment: canon is always the initial move, improvisation the counter-move. (I mean this not in a fancy ontological sense, only in a definitional way: improvisation is defined in relation to whatever comes first; by definition, something comes first, and from whatever comes first, there are always myriad possibilities for improvising.) But improvisation is not derivative on account of its being the counter-move: indeed, by means of improvisational action, a body shows that canon is not a impermeable boundary containing conduct — such that it could be the foundation for a norm relative to which improvisation is judged as deviation — but a line marking what the body has previously done, and enticing the possibility that the body might exceed the line and do something different.

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[181] Janet Walton, "Improvisation and Imagination: Holy Play," *Worship* 75.4 (July 2001), 295-6.

[182] We can also speak with Deleuze's term "repetition with a difference." See Gilles Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, trans. Paul Patton (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994).

[183] Cf. Judith Butler, "Imitation and Gender Insubordination," in *Inside/Out: Lesbian Theories, Gay Theories*, ed. Diana Fuss (New York: Routledge, 1991), 13-31.

We can bring these abstract ruminations a little closer to the ground if we think about three different time-scales on which the interplay of canon and improvisation takes place. First, a congregation can undertake a long-term practice of continually, but deliberately, experimenting with new manners of worship, such as the process I imagined at Good Shepherd. In this practice, a congregation holds most things constant from one service to the next, but occasionally, and only after a moderate length of preparation (several weeks or months), it will introduce a few relatively small changes into a service. On this time-scale, what is held constant from one service to the next is canon; the small changes introduced constitute improvisation on that canon. This same canon-improvisation relationship obtains when multiple or relatively significant changes are introduced all at once, if they are made over a long process of deliberation and preparation. The services at which changes are introduced — whether slight or major, few or many — constitute improvisation with respect to the long series of services that preceded them. But if those changes adopted are adopted for ongoing use (occasional or frequent), they eventually become canon, from which the congregation can improvise anew, continuing the cycle.

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[184] My thoughts on the relationship between canon and improvisation are heavily influenced by Foucault's construal of the relationship between a "limit" and its "transgression": "Transgression, then, is not related to the limit as black to white, the prohibited to the lawful, the outside to the inside.... Rather, their relationship takes the form of a spiral that no simple infraction can exhaust. Perhaps it is like a flash of lightning in the night which, from the beginning of time, gives a dense and black intensity to the night it denies; which lights up the night from the inside, from top to bottom, and yet owes to the dark the stark clarity of its manifestation, its harrowing and poised singularity. The flash loses itself in this space it marks with its sovereignty and becomes silent now that it has given a name to obscurity." *DE* #13, "A Preface to Transgression" (1963) (see the Bibliography for full citations of works by Foucault).

There is also the scenario in which a congregation intentionally plans, ahead of time, to open up a moment or moments during a service when, contrary to the expected pattern, bodies are invited (or possibly commanded) to improvise on the fly. For instance, after a baptism, the newly baptized could go (or be brought) to various members of the congregation, who are invited to improvise — through gestures, words, touch, facial expressions, and so on — different manners of "embracing" the newly baptized into the congregation. In this scenario, the possibility for improvisation is planned, but the substantive content of the improvisation is unplanned and only emerges in the moment. We might think of this as "planned spontaneity." (Also: a scenario in which a new form of conduct *is* designed ahead of time, but bodies are asked to enact it without knowing about it or preparing for it ahead of time, is actually closer to "planned spontaneity" than to the first scenario (deliberate prior preparation), because bodies are asked to try out something that is new to them with little lead-time.)

Finally, there is improvisation that has the least amount of preparation or expectation: unplanned spontaneity, those moments when, right in the real-time flow of action, a body or bodies do something totally unexpected, either intentionally or inadvertently. The normal(izing) response in congruence-oriented Christian worship is to regard spontaneous outbursts like this a problem to be mitigated — contained and, as much as possible and as quickly as possible, converted back to the expected sequence of conduct. But a regimen of "canon and improvisation" creates a wider range of possible responses. Instead of being regarded as a problem, it could be responded-to as an unexpected opportunity to experience the canonical conduct in a new way, as for example, if a body accidentally began leading prayers from in the pews rather than up front, or a body danced their way through the communion line rather than walking unemotionally. Only the preference for congruence itself requires that other bodies should try to contain every spontaneous improvisation rather than riff off it.

An unplanned spontaneity could also be responded-to as an indicator that something has been excluded that should not be, and of whose exclusion, quite likely, many bodies were not aware. So in a service like St. John's, if a body begins furiously drawing pictures rather than shouting, it could be regarded as an indicator that the Spirit's presence can be manifest in a wider range of conduct than was expected. An unplanned spontaneity can also be responded-to as a revelatory reminder that a wider range of what Saliers calls “human pathos” is present than our words or actions had presumed. When a body begins to weep during prayer, it is usually politely tolerated. But what if it were a sign that there may be other pains that need to be voiced, and that the sequence of actions needed to be interrupted to allow those other pains to be expressed (which is not the same as explained)?[185] An unplanned spontaneity would, in this sense, be a guidepost for where the sequence of activities, not foreclosed before the service even started, should go next, given the needs of *these* bodies, on *this* day, in *this* place.

Brief normative considerations

Now, if a regimen of “canon and improvisation” does not foreclose, either permanently or at the outset of a given service, what conduct could become part of Christian worship, then what is there to prevent anything from becoming part of Christian worship? Is there anything that can be ruled out of bounds? There are, I believe, two answers to these questions, one of which has been implicit in what I have said, the other of which must be posited, but is still consistent with the principles I have already laid out. What has been implicit is the idea that no Christian congregation begins completely from nothing. Any congregation that practices congruence-oriented Christian worship already has a robust canon in place. I am not recommending that Christian communities sweep away all that they have ever done, and begin with a completely blank slate that they fill in with their desired order of service.[186] Rather, I am calling on congregations to be open to possible improvisations as they arise in the midst of service itself (planned or unplanned spontaneity), or as they arise through the para-liturgical process I described in the last chapter.[187] A congregation should engage in an intentional process of both planned improvisation and unplanned improvisation, and be open to where this process may lead.

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[185] One of the most difficult things to work through is the presence of multiple emotional responses to the same activity: a hymn, say, that evokes grief for one body, joy for another, deep questions about God for a third, and a sense of belonging to a fourth. Whether a service allows for bodies to explicitly, honestly express and acknowledge of all these four different responses, they are there: but wouldn’t it be a fuller experience if there were manners by which bodies could receive one another’s contradictory experiences, and hold them in their incommensurability, rather than try to simply hope everything blends together without too much difficulty in singing the same tune?

Yet the normative question persists: "But say a congregation is fully open to where the interplay of canon and improvisation leads them: will they not still want or need some more definitive guidance as to whether they are being lead to properly Christian ways of worshipping and conduct that is proper for Christian worship?" I can here posit only a *minimal* criterion for Christian worship, one which sets one lower bound for what can be permitted in a canon-and-improvisation regimen to govern Christian worship. And why am I reluctant to offer more? Because I have been arguing strenuously for a *process* of liturgical creation, and not simply a particular *outcome*. Therefore, I am trying to place nearly all of the burden for determining whether something belongs in a given Christian worship service on the real community that is struggling with improvisation as it actually plays out in their context.

Secondary liturgical theologians must have the humility to trust that a congregation that has been deeply challenged to engage in an intentional, self-reflective, long-term process of liturgical creation through the interplay of canon and improvisation will develop, as part of that very process, its own sense of what is proper to worship in its context. And then that sense of propriety will itself be available to be improvised upon, reflected upon, and transformed as part of continuing the interplay. The assumption that the norms for liturgy cannot arise from the process of creating liturgy — but instead must be supplied *a priori* by secondary liturgical theology — is just that, an assumption or axiom. I stake my proposal here on a contrary assumption, that the more fully a community opens itself up to the inter-animating processes of establishing and breaking (and establishing and breaking and ... without end) canon and improvisation, the more capable it will be of discerning what, at any given time, belongs in Christian worship and for what reasons.

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[186] So it is not the case that, if we do not arrive at adequate normative bounds, a congregation will simply have to flail around with no guidance as to what they should do other than pure whimsy.
[187] As I said there, none of the transformation towards "canon and improvisation" is possible without a regular space and practice of para-liturgical experimentation, *outside of* the main worship service of the congregation. It is simply an axiom of my framework of "canon and improvisation" that a congregation should have two tracks for its liturgical practice: its main regularly scheduled worship service, and some kind of process of para-liturgical experimentation — whether a group that meets continually, occasional workshops, or even ad hoc, but not extremely rare, experimentation sessions.

To the degree that this is so, the job of secondary liturgical theologians, at least those pursuing canon-and-improvisation worship rather than congruence-oriented worship, is not to tell communities ahead of time what belongs in Christian worship and what does not. Instead, the task is to articulate a normative stance that can constantly call congregations to engage more fully and more critically in the practice of placing everything in their worship in the (liturgical *and* para-liturgical) process of canonizing and improvising, intentionally, reflectively, and over the long term. Given that my own project has been to articulate the rudiments of a somatic liturgical theology that sustains the liturgical disruption of biopower, the minimal norm that I can offer is as follows: *Christian congregations, in the liturgical and para-liturgical process of creating and enacting worship through continual experimentation with the interplay of canon and improvisation in bodily conduct, should constantly seek man-*

ners of worship that expand and equalize every body's chances to live abundantly. Does this not beg the question of what constitutes "living abundantly?" Yes — and it is begged for worshipping communities themselves to struggle with, under the condition that however they define "living abundantly," it ought to be expanded to every body on an equal basis.

Liturgical dispositions and the disruption of biopower

Now I turn briefly to the matter, significant in liturgical theology, of "disposition." Worship under a regimen of canon-and-improvisation involves a process of experimentation, in both regular worship and para-liturgical practices, with various kinds of bodily conduct, to pursue any action that has potential to equalize abundant life for all bodies. Canon-and-improvisation worship *does* form bodies in a certain disposition, but in a paradoxical way: at it its root, canon-and-improvisation forms bodies in the disposition of *not* being irreversibly formed in any one disposition, but instead being forever open to the possibility of exercising new bodily capacities or exercising already-existing capacities in new ways. The dispositions often intended by most expositions of congruence-oriented worship aim to permanently orient the body's capacities towards certain deep states of being and of perceiving the world. Moreover, the set of states towards which the body's capacities are to be oriented is known, in a foreclosed way, by the secondary liturgical theologian at the outset (i.e., the secondary liturgical theologian can definitively assert, before any worship has even happened, the states of being and perceiving towards which all conduct in worship should be oriented). But worship in, with, and under the interplay of canonized and improvised conduct cannot know, *a priori*, all the states of being and perceiving bodies in worship can be capable of and should pursue — because by definition, canon-and-improvisation worship seeks always to activate new and wider bodily capacities (and, again, canon-and-improvisation worship that is critical of biopower will deploy those capacities to expand equalize abundant living for all bodies).

Canon-and-improvisation worship, therefore, disposes bodies *against* any permanent foreclosure of their capacities. To the degree that congruence-oriented worship cultivates dispositions that foreclose bodily capacities, canon-and-improvisation worship can be said to incite moments of contra-disposition: canon-and-improvisation worship always holds open possibilities for the body, at certain given moments, to do things a little differently (or perhaps a lot) from how it had theretofore been disposed. It is a matter of moments of contra-disposition rather than an anti-disposition, because the goal is not to undo all bodily dispositions or create a raw bodily experience entirely free of dispositions. Rather, canon-and-improvisation worship takes in bodies with all the dispositions in and with which they have already been formed, and then creates situations in which bodies have to act a little (or a lot) against the "natural" flow of those dispositions. For instance, at a certain point in a service when bodies are trained to maintain silence — in order to cultivate a disposition of thoughtful receptiveness — bodies could be uncustomarily invited to speak out words that they are freely associating in their minds at that moment (or, more radically, to emit whatever kind of non-verbal sounds felt fitting to them at that moment). Such a moment of flowing against the behaviors to which bodies have been, over long practice, disposed could expand the possibilities for how the body could enact the usual disposition (in this example, receptiveness does not have to equal silence), or it could suggest that that moment in the service should leave space for the enactment for other dispositions along with the usual one (perhaps a disposition of curiosity, or of living-with-a-mix-of-doubt-and-certainty).

In other words, in canon-and-improvisation worship, the interplay of the canonical and the improvisational applies as much to the long-term dispositions created by repeated performance of certain orderings of bodily conduct as to the bodily conduct itself. The dispositions that liturgical theology has rightly lifted up so much are not rejected, but they are nonetheless subjected to the possibility of transformation, in two ways: they may, over time, come to be enacted with a wider range of bodily conduct; and they may be joined by other dispositions, perhaps contradictory ones, thereby widening the range of human reality that is included within worship. Now, the first kind of change at the level of liturgical practice (i.e., opening up the conduct that can be associated with a given disposition) does not require a major shift at the level of secondary liturgical theology, because secondary liturgical theologians have not generally maintained that the particular dispositions they each, respectively, have explicated can only be enacted with one set of conduct: a given constellation of bodily actions has usually been seen as one possible way to cultivate an intended disposition, not the exclusive one.[188]

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[188] For instance, Saliers makes no claim with respect to any of the four fundamental dispositions in which worship forms can *only* be formed by the enactment of a prescribed set of bodily actions. Indeed, he says that "the 'canon' of Christian worship, while tied to the particularities of the biblical witness, is not tied of necessity to any one ethos.... [T]he fullness of how Christ reveals God could not be contained in any one culture's ethos and style of celebrating baptism, Eucharist, daily prayer, or the cycles of time. Neither could sometimes vast differences in local customs and practices obscure

Yet I am arguing for a shift away from the idea that changes in the bodily conduct associated with a disposition should only come as a matter of correcting errors[189]: in canon-and-improvisation worship, dispositions can take shape in un-customary bodily actions simply for the sake of doing things in a new way, not only as a correction of something that was wrongly omitted. This suggests a different role for dispositions in canon-and-improvisation worship. They are still abiding qualities, offering a layer of stability across many services, but instead of their stability being tied to one particular set of bodily actions, the stability of dispositions is in their constant prodding of bodies to try new actions as part of realizing those dispositions. So, if we take a disposition of "thankfulness" as an example, we can imagine two complementary modes in which this disposition operates: first, bodies repeatedly perform a certain set of actions associated with being thankful; but then, when thankfulness reaches a certain degree of deep-woven-ness with their perception and being (in worship *and* in the world), bodies then experiment with new, perhaps strange, ways of realizing thankfulness. If, in a certain community, the bodily action usually associated with thankfulness is to sing a joyful song of praise, bodies could experiment with being thankful by making a gesture or movement that is part of what they can do in life because of the things for which they are giving thanks. In this way, the disposition of thankfulness can abide over a long period, but it can abide in multiple manners of bodily conduct. Dispositions participate in the interplay of canon and improvisation by being both one of the main elements in worship that induces congruence-over-time in a community *and also* one of the main elements that pushes

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the patterns found in Christian burial, care for the sick, and marriage." *Worship as Theology*, 169.

[189] See, for example, ibid., 213-216.

bodies to diverge from that congruence, in a never-ending, never-foreclosed cycle.

I am, however, proposing a second shift, which may be more controversial for secondary liturgical theology: giving up the assumption that secondary liturgical theologians know (or even can know), *a priori* and for all time, the entire set of dispositions for which Christian worship out to form bodies. Instead of asserting a set of dispositions as a fairly certain matter — "The following are *the* definite set of dispositions proper to Christian worship..." — the task of secondary liturgical theologians is to help communities discern those instances when, in bodies' experiments with new forms of conduct for realizing the dispositions in which they have previously been formed, the possibility arises of an entirely new disposition (and not simply a new manner of realizing an established disposition). And then secondary liturgical theologians assist communities in evaluating what that disposition contributes to expanding and equalizing abundant life for all, challenging them, as needed, to keep experimenting.[190] But now we are moving to the more general issue of what authority and responsibility is entailed for secondary liturgical theologians in a framework of canon and improvisation, on which I comment briefly.

In communities that practice canon-and-improvisation worship, the role of secondary liturgical theologians cannot be that of arbiters determining the acceptability or non-acceptability of bodies' experiments with new ways of acting in worship (in the manner that Wainwright, Lathrop, and Chan all advocate, which we saw in chapter 2). That kind of role would be committed to putting a stop to the very dynamic whose continued unfolding defines and energizes canon-and-improvisation worship. That is, once one drops the assumption that congruence is the ultimate aim of bodily conduct in worship and divergence is only ever valued in terms of its subsumption within congruence, then it is not necessary to have certain participants whose primary work is the guaranteeing of congruence. Instead, the work of secondary liturgical theologians vis-à-vis canon-and-improvisation worship is to encourage the community to continue advancing the spirals of canonizing and improvising — and to always do so thoughtfully, creatively, and caringly.

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[190] Or secondary liturgical theologians can use a different criterion with which to help communities evaluate this new disposition; the criterion of "expanding and equalizing abundant life for all" is the criterion I have posited for worship (and, by extension, secondary liturgical theology) that maintains a critical stance towards biopower.

Let us say that secondary liturgical theologians are designated to act as *sympathetic skeptics* in the interplay of canon and improvisation: but what they are skeptical of is any ceasing of the interplay for too long a time at either the pole of congruence or divergence. When a community has dwelled for a while with a given order of service, manner of worship, regimen for worship, or set of dispositions from worship, the secondary liturgical theologian is the one who stands ready to call for things to be shaken up, for the community to experiment boldly. And, conversely, the secondary liturgical theologian keeps watch for when it might be beneficial for a community to pause in its experimentation, in order to be more fully formed in a given manner of worship (and the dispositions it engenders).[191] In other words, canon-and-improvisation worship does not need secondary liturgical theologians to be the authoritative judges of the *outcomes* the interplay of canon and improvisation: it needs them to always challenge the community to pursue the *process* of canonizing and improvising more thoughtfully, creatively, and caringly, and then to help the community caringly negotiate (and re-negotiate) the terms on which it will judge the outcomes of the process for itself.

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[191] The secondary liturgical theologian must also be ready to help a community realize when and how (1) more robust reflectiveness or study is needed in the process of liturgical experimentation, and (2) bodies have been excluded from equal participation in liturgical experimentation and the community needs to change its processes to permit more equal participation.

To return now to the main point: what do these shifts in the way liturgical dispositions work have to do with the disruption of biopower? The contra-disposition I have been discussing, and canon-and-improvisation worship more generally, repeatedly encourages bodies to relate to themselves and their capacities in new ways: instead of perfecting their training to enact a single routine of conduct, they develop skills for introducing differences into the routine, being more creative with their capacities to act in new ways. Bodies that can do this are not the kind of bodies that biopower desires to multiply, because biopower requires docile bodies, which will use their capacities in only specific ways that are deemed useful for society, while not using them in ways that challenge the structures of domination within society. Canon-and-improvisation worship does not seek to eliminate discipline entirely, but to limit the degree to which any given discipline, in worship or in society, can claim a permanent hold on a body. In canon-and-improvisation worship, bodies learn both how to follow a discipline *and* how to break out of it, so at a minimum makes it more difficult for biopower to fully or permanently bind them in its patterns. This does not at all guarantee that bodies *will*, in fact, resist biopower's disciplines very much outside of worship; increasing that likelihood requires, among other things, some sort of intention to disrupt biopower (or at least an intolerance of the conditions biopower sustains). But canon-and-improvisation worship can offer one space where, relative to the rest of society, biopower's grip is lessened, making bodies more conscious of biopower at work in other contexts and practicing manners of embodiment that cut against the grain of biopower.

In addition, a community in which bodies are open to doing new things in worship has the potential to gather and organize itself, as a group of bodies, differently from how biopower creates groups of bodies. Within regimes of biopower, bodies are continuously measured against one another and sorted according to their size, shape, appearance, physical abilities, patterns of movement and expression, and other aspects of embodiment. Certain configurations of these elements are then treated as “normal,” differences from which are assigned varying degrees of abnormality. Bodies that are sufficiently close to the norm are ascribed an identity as a coherent group, while bodies that differ from the norm in similar ways are also identified as a coherent group. Groups, therefore, are organized as identities on the basis of conformity to or deviance from the norm.

As I noted in chapter 3, Christian worship often maintains the identity-based divisions that biopower widely perpetuates throughout society. In many Christian worshipping communities, the majority of bodies are identified with the same groups, especially with respect to race/ethnicity, poverty or affluence, disability, and sexuality. If the worship of the community tends only towards the canonical without the improvisational, then when bodies from minority identities join the worship, they are largely expected to conform to the liturgical canon, which marks any differences they might introduce as abnormalities. (Moreover, the maintenance of a closed canon of worship — in conjunction with the predominance of one set of identities — effectively discourages bodies from even joining in the first place worship in which they would be in the minority.) However, in a community actively that actively canonizes *and* improvises its worship, the entrance of minority-identified bodies can be taken as an invitation to open the canon again, allowing what had theretofore been considered normal conduct to potentially be countered, revised, or placed alongside other ways of acting in worship. In fact, canon-and-improvisation worship bears the possibility that the entrance of *any* new bodies — no matter the degree to which they resemble, with respect to biopower's norms of identity, the majority of bodies already in the community — can likewise be a cause for opening the canon to transformation. In this way, the community can form and continuously re-form itself *qua* group of bodies in a way that does not uphold the identity-norms and -divisions of biopower, but quite possibly disrupts them.

Finally, there are also several ways a worshipping community can *explicitly* contest or disrupt biopower, either biopower in general or, more likely, one of the apparatuses in which it is most widely encountered, such as race/ethnicity, gender, sexuality, disability, poverty or affluence, and the like. The two kinds of challenges I have just been describing — training bodies to not allow their capacities to be permanently bound to any discipline, and breaking down divisions of bodies according to biopower's identity-norms — can be undertaken with an explicit aim of disrupting one or some of biopower's apparatuses.[192] Further, a community can intentionally improvise, for a portion of worship, conduct that trains bodies in ways of acting that would protest or disrupt biopower. For instance, what if a congregation, introduced the reading of Scripture by role-playing a scene in which some bodies were demeaning other bodies on account of race or disability, in the midst of which the Scripture-reader rudely interrupts and begins proclaiming the lessons? Done once, this could be quite confusing (or even disgusting), but if it were done Sunday after Sunday for five or eight weeks, with para-liturgical reflection, it could begin to change what worshippers heard in the Scripture, how they conceived the power of Scripture, and the ethical demands of Scripture.

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[192] This will in most cases require that a community intentionally and carefully listen to experiences of, learn about, and reflect on the workings of biopower, which can be done both within the community's para-liturgical practice as well as its educational practices more broadly: for example, a workshop on the continuing co-operations of racism and sexism, or a reading-group on socioeconomic inequalities.

A third, related form of explicitly contesting or disrupting biopower occurs when a community rehearses, during the service, some of the actions by which, in other societal contexts, it could help force structures of power to move away from biopower: an example is doing, as part of the prayers, the kind of one-on-one interview that many grassroots community organizing efforts undertake as a first step.[193] A more radical variation involves the performance of a worship service (or of major activities from it), at a site associated with societal structures of power rather than the community's usual worship-space, as a form of direct protest against or disruption of biopower, as was the case in the 1986 "People Power" revolt in the Philippines, when clergy, religious, and laity used the hymns and prayers of Roman Catholic liturgy as means of protest. These are just some of the obvious possibilities for explicitly confronting biopower, but others remain. But even before communities openly target biopower, canon-and-improvisation worship activates capacities — and reconfigures bodies' relationships with previously activated ones — that make them less amenable to biopower.

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[193] See Dennis A. Jacobsen, "One-on-Ones," chap. 7 in *Doing Justice: Congregations and Community Organizing* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press).

Conclusion: resurrection in regimes of biopower

This dissertation has been an attempt to understand and give one articulation of what the body does in worship, a task which has required reflecting on what it means to think and speak about the body's actions in worship at all, and then trying out an approach that can account for bodily conduct thoroughly and on its own terms (rather than simply as a derivative or expression of symbolic meaning). I have aimed to make this a *critical* approach to embodiment by analyzing bodies' actions in worship, and the rules governing them, in relation to practices that govern bodily conduct in various societal domains, other than worship, of which Christian worshippers, at least those in modern Western polities, are simultaneously part. I now want to close this inquiry, while also opening it to further exploration, by suggesting how the sort of liturgical transformation I have proposed — which involves both transformation *of* liturgical practice and transformation *in* and *by* liturgical practice — can be characterized in terms of one of the central doctrinal discourses of Christianity, namely, the *resurrection of the body*. I am able here to give only an inchoate treatment of the matter, which involves at least two major issues that each deserve extensive development in the future: (1) what does resurrection mean specifically in regimes of, and in resistance to, biopower; and (2) how does canon-and-improvisation worship participate in the resurrection of the body in regimes of biopower?

We can start to get a sense of resurrection that is meaningful amidst the polymorphously pervasive operations of biopower by noting the distinctive way biopower exploits the relationship of life and death. One of the earliest ways Foucault defines biopower is by distinguishing it from the power of ancient and medieval sovereigns: "One might say that the ancient right to *take* life or *let* live was replaced by a power to *foster* life or *disallow* it to the point of death."[194] Both sovereign power and biopower rule over life and death, but whereas sovereign power exercises this rule by deciding whether to take a life (e.g., a king ordering that a subject be hanged), biopower exercises it by setting the conditions for bodies to live. Sovereign power actively rules over life when it *makes* a body die or *lets* that body live, whereas biopower actively rules over life by *making* each body live and *letting* certain bodies die sooner than others. Biopower seeks to make each body live according to rational schemes for the realization of an optimal society (with "optimal" defined variously by the human sciences): it desires to make each body function usefully for this realization. It aims to make every aspect of a body's life and health entirely responsive to rational administration, from birth to economic and social functioning to reproduction to death.

But realizing the optimal society does not require that each body live as long as every other body, or that it live as long as it possibly can. It is acceptable in a regime of biopower that some bodies die before others, so long as the rate of death over a whole society is rationally managed — not too many deaths, and not too soon or too late. Death becomes simply another rate to normalize, and the identity-based subpopulations into which biopower divides bodies make it easier for biopower to accomplish this, allowing authorities to focus on extending the life of certain sub-populations while keeping the death-rates of other sub-populations from reaching too costly a level (i.e., costly in terms of health-care, provision for meeting basic needs, loss of workforce productivity, and so on). Fields of knowledge as diverse as genetics, actuarial science, risk management, criminology, public health, and many others all contribute to converting death from a brute fact and fate that all human bodies face to a probabilistically calculable and predictable phenomenon that can be managed to occur on different terms for different bodies. All bodies must die, but they do not all die after the same length of life: biopower makes use of this dynamic, not by seeking to increase the death-rate of certain sub-populations, but by working diligently to expand the life-chances of certain sub-populations without extending them to others.

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[194] Foucault, *History of Sexuality*, vol. 1, *An Introduction* [alt. *The Will to Know*], trans. Robert Hurley (New York: Vintage, 1990), 138 (emphasis in original).

Indeed, the notion of "life-chance" is so constitutive for biopower that it necessitates broadening how we construe death (and thereby resurrection) in a regime of biopower. For biopower treats death not as a sudden, singular event at the very end of a lifetime, but rather as the cumulative effect of myriad life-chances — opportunities to enhance, as well as threats of degrading, the overall quality of a body's life — each of which it seeks to rationally normalize. Life-chances include everything from the quality of health-care available to a body at its birth, to the opportunities for physical, mental, and social development in the neighborhood(s) in which it is able to live, to the various networks (educational, sexual, labor) of social relations with other bodies through which it is channeled, and much more.[195] Each of these contributes some effect to the total quality of a body's life, which in turn sets the probabilities for how long a body will live. Again, in a regime of biopower, life-chances do not fall equally on all bodies, but instead bodies identified with certain sub-populations have greater opportunities for enhancing quality of life, while bodies identified with other sub-populations are exposed to greater threats of degradation in quality of life.

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[195] Strictly speaking, biopower's aim is to *remove* the element of chance from all of these patterns, at least for those sub-populations whose lives it is trying to enhance.

Take the example of obesity, which has been shown by the health sciences to be a major factor in many diseases that accelerate death. I do not for a moment contest the correlation between obesity and accelerated death. But how do bodies become obese in the first place?[196] There are genetic predispositions, and then there are lifestyles that enable or contain these predispositions. But whether a body practices obesity-preventing lifestyles depends on whether a body had access to the resources such lifestyles require (nutritious diet, regular exercise, and the time, money, and institutions[197] required for both of these) *and* whether it was trained, from childhood onward, to actually use these resources.[198] Moreover, cultural values and dominant images, as well as social expectations, strongly encourage certain bodies (for example, "athletic" male teenagers, especially those identified as white and/or heterosexual) to maintain these practices, while making it less glamorized for other bodies (such as non-affluent African American female teenagers) to do the same. Individual will-power does play a role, but long before an individual body becomes aware that it could exert its will with respect to obesity, it has already been set along the path to either obesity or a "normal Body-Mass Index" (the medical term for someone who is not obese). And once a body is on the path to obesity, accelerated death is the highly likely outcome. But such death comes merely as the cumulative effect of all the factors just described, much of which were programmed for particular sub-populations by the apparatuses of biopower.

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[196] Obesity is an especially powerful example because its medical definition — according to an immensely simplistic, one-size-fits-all measure known as the Body-Mass Index (BMI) — exemplifies how biopower normalizes bodies.

[197] Such institutions include near-by grocery stores that sell high-nutrition food at affordable prices; cooking classes for those who do not already know how to prepare nutritious meals; affordable options for high-nutrition meals for those whose work-schedule prevents cooking for themselves or their families; high-quality gyms with affordable membership fees; recreational athletic leagues in which all kinds of bodies are welcomed; and the like.

[198] Of course, one can begin to train oneself to use one's resources for a nutritious diet and regular exercise at any time, but once one is obese, it is much harder to do so than if one is trained long before the onset of obesity. Whether one ever has access to the resources to *effectively* practice nutritious diet and regular exercise is another matter.

Contemporary practices related to obesity illustrate how, in biopower, death is not just the ultimate ceasing of a body's life, but the constant degradation of its quality of life; within a regime of biopower death in the sense of *final cessation* is analytically inseparable from death in the sense of *repeated degradation*. Biopower treats the former as simply the guaranteed outcome of the latter, and works assiduously to prevent the latter for some sub-populations while allowing it for the rest. To say it most simply: under biopower, the death of each body occurs over its whole lifetime, and it occurs on starkly unequal terms across the body politic; biopower permits the lifelong dying, through life-degradation, of every body which is not necessary to ensure the continuous life-enhancement of "society as a whole." And because death under biopower is the lifelong, rationally managed degradation of quality of life, then the Christian notion of resurrection, if it is to be meaningful as something that invites or induces Christian bodies to act in particular ways, needs to be construed with a different sense of both its temporality and its activity. As to temporality, resurrection from under biopower's regime is not another single event which follows the single event of death, but rather a lifelong process that transpires in every instance in which the determination of a body's life-chances is at stake. Resurrection in the context of biopower cannot be defined as something that happens after a body finally dies, because death is no longer the moment after which life is absent from a body, but rather a continuously managed aspect of a body's life, coextensive with life itself.

A temporal sense of resurrection as a moment-by-moment process, rather than an only-at-the-end feat, is not new, but resonates on deep levels with Christian discourse about life and death in baptism, — such as, for example, Romans 6, especially as it is glossed by Luther in his *Small Catechism*: "Q: What then is the significance of a baptism with water? A: It signifies that the old creature in us with all sins and evil desires is to be drowned and *die through daily* contrition and repentance, and on the other hand that *a new person is to come forth and rise up to live* before God in righteousness and purity forever."[199] Moreover, both in worship and in everyday life, many Christians speak of resurrection as an ongoing or repeated process.[200] We can, then, define the resurrection of the body in a regime of biopower by saying that the body is resurrected in every instance, of long or short duration, in which it, by itself or with others, breaks *out of* any pattern of conduct that metes out enhanced life-chances to some bodies and degraded life-chances to others, and breaks *into* conduct that bears the possibility of more equal life-chances for all bodies.

For instance, racism establishes a scheme by which bodies that act and appear in certain ways are identified as white, while those that act differently are identified as non-white, and, once bodies are thus identified, non-white bodies, *ceteris paribus*, have less access to economic and cultural resources, are the targets of greater violence (at the hands of police and other societal collectivities), and have less likelihood of reaching any given age. The resurrection of bodies happens every time either white or non-white bodies or both act to create more opportunities for *all* bodies to live with equal access to resources and equal possibilities for fulfillment. This could be action on as small a scale as disrupting an instance of racism-based assault (verbal or physical) or as large a scale as building whole communities of pan-racial equality or organizing for national policy to eliminate racial disparities. What qualifies such divergent forms of action as resurrection is in all of them, bodies are acting in a way that does *not* conform to biopower's logic of unequal life-chances realized through identity-normed patterns of conduct.

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[199] Martin Luther, *The Small Catechism*, in *The Book of Concord: The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, ed. Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Fortress, 2000), 360 (emphasis supplied).

[200] Of course, many Christians who speak in this way nevertheless distinguish between resurrection in a general sense of renewal (as well as the dogmatically defined process of sanctification) and the dogmatic sense of the physical re-vivification of the actual body of believers; for them, the latter sense may be the only authoritative one.

Just as biopower fundamentally seeks to make bodies *live* (but only in certain prescribed ways), resurrection in a regime of biopower does not mean that a body will not die, but that, even momentarily, a body can *live* on terms other than biopower's. Biopower aims to rationally stabilize the probability that a body identified with *these* groups (and not *those* ones) will have *this* particular difference of life-quality (the degree of enhanced quality minus the degree of degraded quality), with *these* likely outcomes of health, liveliness, livelihood, and longevity. Resurrection, therefore, is about defying those same odds, shaking things up so that one body has no more and no less a chance at flourishing life than other bodies — and so that abundant life becomes more and more likely for *all* bodies. It is not about avoiding death, but about avoiding patterns of action that contribute to *unequal* death, for either oneself or others. Resurrection is about taking the chance, again and again, of doing abnormal things with one's body that could expand the life-chances of all bodies: speaking out when societal disciplines would have us remain silent; getting in the way when some bodies are being exposed to greater violence or other degradation; risking the comfort of familiar ways of acting in order to experience, with and in one's body, possibilities of liveliness and livelihood equally shared with all bodies. It is the risk of life (as biopower administers it) in order to experience more abundant life for all. It is the willingness to risk losing one's life (that is, life lived on biopower's terms) in the hope of saving the life-chances of all bodies. It is living in such a way 'that the beating of your heart / should kill no one.'"[201]

In regimes of biopower, not all resurrection occurs in worship, and not all worship resurrects bodies. But worship has the possibility of making a radical break with patterns of conduct expected throughout society that all but guarantee a consistently degraded quality of life for some groups of bodies and a consistently enhanced quality of life for other groups. It can help bodies discover *that* they are embedded in such patterns; it can give them space and time to imagine other manners of conducting their lives; it can embolden them to challenge, in contexts other than worship, the necessity and the continuation of such patterns. If the hope is for all bodies to have life and have, and have it abundantly, then bodies that claim to be the Body of Christ for the sake of the world must tenaciously contest the array of social forces that seeks to prevent abundant life for all. To worship by canonizing and improvising, never one without the other, is one way for the Body of Christ so to constitute itself and act in the world that all bodies may share equally in abundance. As a process of endless, reflective transformation, it can invite and incite Christian bodies, again and again, to refuse to let any more bodies live or die on the terms, and under the management, of biopower.

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[201] Alice Walker, "Love Is Not Concerned," in *Her Blue Body Everything We Know: Earthling Poems 1965-1990 Complete* (San Diego: Harcourt, 1991), 341.

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