

Theopoetics in Multiple Relationships:

A Sustaining and Transforming Process

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Abstract

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In my pastoral concern, I experienced great resonance of relational performances in my congregants' abysmal situation to affirm sustainability and transformation of the divine. Regarding their wounded hearts, I argue that the suggestive power of the divine through theopoetic performances in multiple relations is a way of mutual immanence between the divine and human, a self and a community, and a community and other communities. The self is incarnated in others through mutual immanence in communal performances. Differences are affirmed for creative transformation and the common-wealth of God. God as a poet of the world is sustaining and transforming the wounded hearts of the victim through the communal performances in becoming. It is a re-affirmation of mutual responsiveness and responsibility. The healing of wounded hearts occurs through that process, and the reconciliation leads the creative transformation for the common-wealth of God.

In this thesis, I argue how the self is co-constructed in a multi-relational web. As a way of creative transformation, arts performances sustained the Jewish community in the

abysmal situation in *Theresienstadt*. African oral literature shows how the communal performances are co-constructed and transformed in solidarity. Theopoetic in a multi-relational web is sustaining the people in an abysmal situation and transforming the world for the common-wealth of God.

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## Introduction

My theological question is this: how are oppressed people sustained and the oppressing social structures transformed both on individual and social levels? When I was a youth pastor of a church located in a town of Korean immigrants for four years, I felt great sorrow as I ministered to five young Korean adults who were classified as undocumented immigrants. When they came to the U.S., they were legal immigrants. However, their parents' ignorance of immigration law made them undocumented immigrants. Two of them became undocumented immigrants because of their uncle's deception. Their parents' assets were appropriated by their uncle as soon as they became undocumented immigrants. They were like disabled bodies that were politicized with a blurred national identity between the U.S. and South Korea. Their identity was ambiguous in terms of legal status, and that ambiguity limited their social participation. I cannot enumerate all the social obstacles that they had to endure as undocumented immigrants. Nowadays, most legal restrictions have been abolished for those who were raised in New Jersey, but several illegal immigrants are still struggling with legal restrictions related to living in the U.S. as contributing members of a society. This thesis is based on my experience with five young adults who were denied any legal protection. In my experience and confession, the divine is the potentiality and the sustainability for "creative transformation" in this abysmal situation.

John B. Cobb Jr. found "the anti-imperialistic ideals of Jesus" in "the *Basileia Theou*,"

and interpreted it as “the commonwealth of God.”<sup>1</sup> In accordance with Cobb’s symbol, one of my ministerial goals has been to “construct the common-wealth of God” in the immigration context. I found that repeated and transformed theopoetical rituals represent a resource of resolution given (by and) within God. God here signifies the ground of mutual sustainability.

Togetherness empowered these young immigrants to overcome difficult situations. I found mutual encouragement in relationship with them. The meaning of life is a great resource for resolution, as Victor Frankl points out.<sup>2</sup> As the meaning of life looked faint, mutual love, sympathy, and empathy were the ground of sustaining life for us through shared rituals. Victor Frankl asserted that love actualizes potentialities.<sup>3</sup> Experienced empowerment through communal religious rituals and performances relieved their frustration and desperation. Anger had been appeased and transformed through communal words and songs. Shared religious practices and materials in a shared place and time bind us into solidarity to endure the present hardship. The co-presence in an event became a present, a gift. Their wounded hearts from the socio-political and economic restriction were consistently visible, and how they were healed through communal performances in the multiple relations.

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<sup>1</sup> John B. Cobb Jr, “Common Wealth and Empire,” in *The American Empire and the Commonwealth of God: A Political, Economic, Religious Statement*, ed. David Ray Griffin, John B. Cobb Jr., Richard A. Falk, and Catherine Keller (Louisville and London: Westminster John Knox Press, 2006), 140-147.

<sup>2</sup> Victor E. Frankl, *Man’s Search for Meaning*, 5th ed. (Boston: Beacon Press, 2006), 110-111.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 112.

In this experience, I want to argue that communal theopoetic performances in a multiple relationship support the *han* entangled people and transform the individual and their social situations. In chapter 1, I want to introduce a Korean term, *han*, meaning a wounded heart, and by doing so, I affirm the communal aspect of the wounded heart in our contemporary world. The term implies the individual's trauma which is already related to the complexity of the communal and relational web. Pamela Cooper-White and Irvin D. Yalom also undergird the relational perspective that a self is constructed in a complex web of interdependence. Relational responsibility is a ground of creative transformation in a multi-pronged broken web.

In chapter 2, I argue that artful performances have the potency for sustaining and transforming individuals amidst their suffering. I will offer the example of the cultural activities in Theresienstadt, the model German concentration camp, in the Second World War. Theresienstadt was the only ghetto which allowed the Jewish community to perform cultural arts, providing a camouflage of the exterminist Nazi policies. Ironically, the aesthetic performances sustained their individual lives and re-membered communal solidarity under extreme racial oppression. Those performances had constructed their communal identity in process, and the process of creative performances was the ground of their mutual sustainability out of desperation.

In chapter 3, I choose another example, showing how the world is dynamically being transformed through the communal performances in African oral performances. "Chaosmos" is an apt term to indicate the phenomenon of sustaining and transforming the



world. Rituals are being repeated, and the repeated ritual is never the same as the previous one by the transforming process led by the participation of the audiences in the African oral tradition. On the one hand, it is a nexus of the past and the present, while on the other hand, it is a creative transformation through mutual immanence amidst multiple relations.

Theo/poetic performances in a multiple relational web is a way how to “make a way out of no way”<sup>4</sup> for sustaining and creative transforming in the *han*-entangled world. It is a way of mutual immanence, of “inter-carnation.”<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Monica A. Coleman, *Making a Way Out of No Way* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2008).

<sup>5</sup> Catherine Keller, *Cloud of the Impossible: Negative Theology and Planetary Entanglement* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2015), 5.

Catherine Keller, “The Entangled Cosmos: An Experiment in Physical Theopoetics.” *Journal of Cosmology*, vol. 20 (September 2012): 8648-8666.

## Chapter 1

### *Han* as the Wounded Heart in a Multiple Relational Web

Andrew Sung Park argues that the traditional Christian doctrine of Sin does not consider the victim of sin.<sup>6</sup> According to Park, attention and salvation are given for the sinners, but there is no space for the victims. Thus, Park argues that we need to consider the wounded heart of the victims through the Korean term, *han*. I found such a wounded heart in five young adults, members of my congregation, they came to the U.S. without any personal intention. They did not choose to come to the U.S. They came with their parents and were educated in the U.S. in their youth, and became illegal residents through no fault of their own. Their national identity became ambiguous with broken hopes and dreams. They experienced great financial hardship because of limited financial aid, when they chose colleges to study. They experienced great legal restriction when they chose jobs. They were not able to keep their hope in this land. As Park argues, the broken hope became frustration, *han*.<sup>7</sup>

Park defines the Korean term, *han* as “the division of the tissue of the heart caused by abuse, exploitation, and violence. It is the wound resulting from feelings and self-dignity.”<sup>8</sup> His definition of *han*, as the wounded heart, includes not only an individual dimension, but

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<sup>6</sup> Andrew Sung Park, *The Wounded Heart of God: The Asian concept of Han and the Christian Doctrine of Sin* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1993), 10.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 16.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, 20.

also a communal dimension. Thus, one can find *han* in the exploited worker during the period of Korean industrialization, the survivor of the holocaust, the victims of racism and in the abuse and destruction of animals and other dimensions of nature.<sup>9</sup>

The roots of *han* are varied. “In general, the individual *han* results from personal sin, while collective *han* derives from collective sin, but they are entangled in cause-effect relationships. Collective sin, however, generates a great deal of personal *han* as well as collective *han*.”<sup>10</sup> In his argument, global capitalism, patriarchy, and racial discrimination are major roots of *han*.<sup>11</sup> In that sense, sexism, racism, ageism, heterosexism, classism, nationalism, post-colonialism and etc. are also roots of *han*. Thus, *han* is related not only to the individual, but also to the communal and multiple relationships. We have to consider sin on the structural level in a multiple relational web.

One of the interesting points in Park’s argument is that sin and *han* should be treated as a complementary pair.<sup>12</sup> In his insight, sin originated from the oppressor and *han* originated from the oppressed, but sometimes, the oppressed becomes the oppressor, if *han* is not resolved. The position of the oppressor and the oppressed is not static, but dynamic. The relationship between sin and *han* is dynamic. Thus, as Park mentions, the subject-

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<sup>9</sup> Ibid., 20-44.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., 45.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., 45-66.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., 70.

object dualist thinking is not helpful for healing *han*.<sup>13</sup> The relational considerations of the oppressor and the oppressed are needed. That is, sin and *han* should be considered together in a relational sense. *Han* is resolved through relational reconciliation beyond subject-object binary relations. Healing is for both sinners and victims in salvation<sup>14</sup>.

Rejecting the modern binary subject/object relationships, Catherine Keller contends that relational understanding of self is a ground of creative transformation in contemporary socio-political issues.<sup>15</sup> Following Keller's argument, we can change the social structure not as the object, but as a relational web.<sup>16</sup> "Self is an event."<sup>17</sup> Self is not a static substance, but "a form of society."<sup>18</sup> Quoting Alfred North Whitehead, Keller argues, "While the interrelations of actual entities always constitute a 'nexus' or network, a society is a kind of nexus in which the members feel each other in an especially intimate way: they receive from each other 'a common element of form.'"<sup>19</sup> Self is a becoming in constant relational events with others, and others are also becoming selves interacting with the self. By mutual immanence, others are embodied in a self in an immediacy of becoming.<sup>20</sup> On

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<sup>13</sup> Ibid., 73.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., 102.

<sup>15</sup> Catherine Keller, *From a Broken Web: Separation, Sexism, and Self* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1986), 32.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., 194.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., 195-196.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., 196-197.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

the one hand, selves are embodied in a self in a multiple relational web, while on the other hand, the society are being constructed by the becoming of selves in a multiple relational web. This relating process is “intercarnation.”<sup>21</sup> Thus, relational understanding instead of western understanding of the self as a separate individuality is needed. Another benefit of the perspectives of Whitehead and Keller is that both of them point out the value of each moment in the mutual interaction as an event.

When Koreans say about *han*, Koreans also talk about “*han-el-pul-da*.” It means resolving *han* or untying *han*. I believe that communal rituals are ways to untie communal *han* in victims’ heart. Catherine Keller argues that the sharing of grief is the energy to change the impossible into the possible, in her reflection on Judith Butler.<sup>22</sup> As an event, the communal rites untie the entangled *han*. The wound is soothed. Thus, *han* can be relieved through the communal arts performance.

By the same token, Monica A. Coleman argues that the process of “rememory” is one approach to keeping the past alive in the present and the future. We are called to remember our past and incorporate it into our process of becoming. As we do so, we can use past survival techniques to help ourselves live into the future. We can also remember the destructive death-dealing aspects of the past and vow not to repeat them as we move into

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<sup>21</sup> Catherine Keller, *Cloud of the Impossible: Negative Theology and Planetary Entanglement* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2015), 5.

<sup>22</sup> Catherine Keller, “A Tender Care that Nothing Be Lost” in *Butler on Whitehead: On the Occasion* ed. Roland Faber, Michael Halewood, and Deena M. Lin (Lanham, Boulder, New York, Toronto, and Plymouth in UK: Lexington Books, 2012), 255.

the future. We find that this conscious remembering is best done in community.<sup>23</sup>

### Empathy in a Multiple Relational Web

A self and society are not static, but they are co-constructed in a relational web. In this sense, relational empathy would be a way to build coherence and mutual transformation as a therapeutic process in a multiple relational web.

Pamela Cooper-White asserts the relational understanding of persons in her book, *Many Voices*.<sup>24</sup> In her postmodern pastoral perspective, “all pastoral encounters will involve a process of co-creating psychological, cultural, and theological meanings.”<sup>25</sup> “Human beings are good, yet vulnerable; embodied; both alike and unique; intrinsically relational; multiple; mutable; loved, and therefore, loving beings.”<sup>26</sup> In her argument, attention needs to be paid to the human beings as relational and multiple in intersubjectivity. The human being cannot be understood apart from the multiple relationships. “Human beings are intrinsically relational.”<sup>27</sup> In this sense, Karen Barad’s term, “intra-

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<sup>23</sup> Monica A. Coleman, *Making a Way Out of No Way: A Womanist Theology* (Minneapolis, Fortress Press, 2008), 101.

<sup>24</sup> Pamela Cooper-White, *Many Voices: Pastoral Psychotherapy in Relational and Theological Perspective* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2007).

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, 35.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, 39.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, 50.

acting,”<sup>28</sup> would be a proper term to explain how entangled entities are mutually impacting in mutual becoming. It implies that a self is in intra-relatedness in a complex entanglement. We are mutually immanent in a multiple relational web. Cooper-White asserts, “Persons are not only born into cultures; they also participate in and continually co-construct the cultures in which they are embedded.”<sup>29</sup>

Challenging the traditional model of vertical psychoanalytic theories, Pamela Cooper-White contends the horizontally dispersed model based on a relational theory.<sup>30</sup> Quoting Martin Buber, she argues that “life begins in the matrix of I and Thou.”<sup>31</sup> According to Cooper-White, Freud’s dualistic and vertical depth model is being replaced by the relational model.<sup>32</sup> In this model, the mind is normally nonlinear as a multiplicity of one’s mental states. “Our subjectivity is not monolithic.”<sup>33</sup> She continually asserts, “We experience ourselves as intersubjectively constituted both in our own internal relationship or primary ‘subjective experience’ of our multiple selves, and in relation to others—particularly as we are formed from infancy onward through identification with others’

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<sup>28</sup> Karen Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway: Quantum Physics and the Entanglement of Matter and Meaning* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2007), 178.

<sup>29</sup> Pamela Cooper-White, *Many Voices: Pastoral Psychotherapy in Relational and Theological Perspective* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2007), 48.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, 53-55.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, 50.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, 54.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, 55.

responses to us.”<sup>34</sup> Her relational perspective is well suggested with Gilles Deleuze’s and Félix Guattari’s image of the rhizome.<sup>35</sup> The mind is “multivarious and complex.”<sup>36</sup> Human beings are mutable, fluid, and in process.<sup>37</sup> According to Cooper-White, “the mind... is continually creating and renewing connections among mental representations and constructs.”<sup>38</sup> The concept of rhizome “fits well with the concept of a multiply-constituted mind, particularly in relation to mental development.”<sup>39</sup> “The relational-psychoanalytic conception of mind”<sup>40</sup> is “multiple and spatially rather than vertically imagined.”<sup>41</sup> “With Deleuze and Guattari’s rhizome image held in tension with the image of roots, the psychoanalytic importance of tracing associations is retained, but now we can see the possibility for a different kind of associational chain of events-horizontal, at times more randomly selected, and linked by present conditions as well as past,”<sup>42</sup> Cooper-White argues.

In this sense, empathic relationship is “therapeutic,”<sup>43</sup> in Cooper-White’s perspective.

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<sup>34</sup> Ibid., 56.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid., 57.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid., 61.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid. 58.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid. 59.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid., 185.



That is, for Cooper-White, in relation to Carl Rogers' and Heinz Kohut's understanding, empathy has a very important role. Empathy is "warm and unconditional regard"<sup>44</sup> in Carl Rogers' perspective, and also, it is an "information-gathering mental activity"<sup>45</sup> for emotional bond in Kohut's perspective.<sup>46</sup> Empathy is a way of mutual concern, care, and support. Empathy is a mutual responsiveness and responsibility. It is a basis of mutual healing in a multiple relational web. Bodily performances evoke mutual empathy. Performances of arts and rituals are mutual and relational. Empathy is the spontaneous feeling of the relationality. In this sense, I see group therapy as a kind of arts or ritual performance.

The sorrow of five young adults in my congregation became my sorrow. I felt great empathy with them. Feeling of sorrow became lesser through sharing it in communal prayers and mutual encouragement. Spontaneous feeling of the relationality became greater through consistent gathering and sharing.

### Group Therapy in a Multiple Relational Web

Group Psychotherapy can be understood as a practice of the relational understanding of a self. Irvin D. Yalom's "theory of group psychotherapy"<sup>47</sup> well indicates the role of

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<sup>44</sup> Ibid., 186-187

<sup>45</sup> Ibid.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

<sup>47</sup> Irvin D. Yalom, *The Theory and Practice of Group Psychotherapy*, 3rd ed. (New York: Basic Books,

interpersonal functioning for curing patients. There are eleven primary factors in group therapy; “instillation of hope,” “universality,” “imparting of information,” “altruism,” “the corrective recapitulation of the primary family group,” “development of socializing techniques,” “imitative behavior,” “interpersonal learning,” “group cohesiveness,” “catharsis,” and “existential factors.”<sup>48</sup> Of those, I want to choose specific factors to argue the effects of the multiple relationality in a group therapy.

According to Irvin D. Yalom, instilled hope is very important for human improvement. He points out that it is a ground of conviction for the optimistic improvement. The instilled hope is given by leaders and ex-patients. The shared experience of ex-patients is the ground of hope.<sup>49</sup> Hope is transferred through the relationship between ex-patients and current patients.

In his argument related to “universality,” the intimate relationship is constructed through similarities.<sup>50</sup> However, it doesn’t mean that differences are factors of exclusion. When Yalom notes similarities, it means that the patients are not alone by “sharing same dilemmas and life experiences.”<sup>51</sup> The patients feel relief when they feel they are not alone, and it accelerates self-disclosure through sympathy and empathy. I believe that universality

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1985).

<sup>48</sup> Ibid., 3-4.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid., 7.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid., 7-9.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid., 9.

is a ground of solidarity. As previously mentioned, in Park's notion of *han* not only as the individual, but also as the communal, the communal *han* in a similar situation becomes a ground of solidarity. However in my argument, the universality does not mean a reason of exclusion of differences in our solidarity. Uniqueness is not understood as exclusiveness. It is a gift to broaden the boundary of solidarity. Thus, careful acceptance of Yalom's concept of "universality" is needed to co-construct solidarity.

Regarding the role of imparting information, Yalom argues that didactic instruction "functions as the initial binding force in the group until other therapeutic factors become operative."<sup>52</sup> In his argument, uncertainty evokes anxiety to the patients, and didactic instruction relieves the anxiety from the uncertainty. Also, direct advice "implies and conveys mutual interest and caring."<sup>53</sup> Fundamentally, didactic instruction and direct advice are based on interpersonal relationship, caring and curing each other. Each is based on mutual concern, responsiveness, and responsibility.

Altruism is a type of mutual feeding. According to Yalom, "importance to others is refreshing and boosts self-esteem."<sup>54</sup> He points out, in therapy groups, patients' giving is a way of receiving. A patient is becoming important through giving, and it enhances self-esteem. Agreeing with Victor Frankl, Yalom contends, "self-actualization or meaning in

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<sup>52</sup> Ibid., 11.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid., 12.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid., 14-16.

life can never be attained via deliberate, self-conscious pursuit.”<sup>55</sup> Relational giving and receiving are a ground of “refreshing self-esteem.”<sup>56</sup>

“Imitative behavior” is an interesting factor in group therapies. Quoting A. Bandura, Irvin D. Yalom argues that “imitation is an effective therapeutic force.”<sup>57</sup> In his assertion, imitation is a way of “experimenting with new behavior” and attempting to gain approval in transition.<sup>58</sup> My concern in his argument is that imitation could be considered as a way of mutual immanence in a multiple relationship. I think it is a mutual adventure in mutual learning.

Quoting W. Goldschmidt and William James, Yalom continually contends the importance of interpersonal learning based on Harry Stack Sullivan’s systematic interpersonal theory of psychiatry.<sup>59</sup> The goal of therapy is moved from the relief of anxiety to communicating with others. Mental health is gained through the mutual relationship.<sup>60</sup> What a patient needs is not only “apart from” but also “a part of” to “touch others.”<sup>61</sup> Our mutual relationship itself is a ground of healing process.

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<sup>55</sup> Ibid.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid., 17-18.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid., 18, 90.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid., 20.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid., 22.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid., 23, 101.

“Group Cohesiveness” is a calibration in group therapies. Yalom argues, “Those with a greater sense of solidarity or ‘we-ness’ value the group more highly and will defend it against internal and external threats.”<sup>62</sup> Cohesiveness indicates the relationship between the therapist and the patients. Cohesive groups show “high mutual understanding and acceptance.”<sup>63</sup> In my perspective, cohesiveness is the affirmation of our responsiveness and mutual support, in other words, mutual responsibility. It is a ground of social action and transformation.

“Here-and-Now,” a key concept of group therapy, denotes an emotional and a corrective experience in group therapies, according to Yalom.<sup>64</sup> Group therapies have two aspects of experiencing here-and-now and self-reflection of it as a process.<sup>65</sup> Statements as contents of “here-and-now” indicate complexity of process of group therapy in the multi-relationship, and the therapist has to acknowledge “the meta-communicational aspects” of statements.<sup>66</sup> As regarding the communication about communication, it is “a message about the nature of the relationship between the two interacting individuals.”<sup>67</sup> The process of “here-and-now” is the barometer of ongoing becoming in the group relationships. The relationships are not static, but dynamic. There are always conflicts and resolution through

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<sup>62</sup> Ibid., 49.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid., 50.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid., 28.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid., 136.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid., 137.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid.

empathy and “we-ness.” The group as a social microcosm denotes that our selves are unable to be separated from other human beings and the multi-relationship, itself, is the common ground of constructing a self in process.

In my relationship with five young adults, I felt cohesiveness through shared life stories and mutual encouragement. They were mostly altruistic, even though sometimes selfish. Conflicts among them were opportunities of self-exposure and inter-personal learning process. They instilled hope each other in a similar situation. Hope was also instilled through the shared words and rituals. Nowadays, they are helping younger groups in the church, instilling hope to them. They are helping younger students through advices and “imparting information.”<sup>68</sup> Communal activities built family like relationships among them. Group cohesiveness was experienced through inter-dependence and mutual-encouragement in communal performances. In chapter 2, I argue the meaning of arts performances in the abysmal situation.

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<sup>68</sup> Ibid. 9.

## Chapter 2

### Arts

#### Arts and Performances

Quoting Otto Rank, Robert S. Corrington argues that arts offer “a strong group identity.”<sup>69</sup> In his argument, “the artist uses collective mythological histories to weave a personal and individualized myth of radical individuation but steers clear of the public forms of collective life.”<sup>70</sup> Art is not only individual, but also communal. Art in our socio-cultural modes is constructing a self and the public, being created by a self and a community in a multiple relational web. That is how the community is sustained and transformed at the same time.

As Richard Schechner argues, “performance is an inclusive term. Theater is only one node on a continuum that reaches from the ritualizations of animals (including humans) through performances in everyday life – greetings, displays of emotion, family scenes, professional roles, and so on – through to play, sports, theater, dance, ceremonies, rites, and performances of great magnitude.”<sup>71</sup> Quoting Roy A. Rappaport, he argues that performances regulate “economic, political, and religious interaction among neighboring

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<sup>69</sup> Robert S. Corrington, *Nature's Sublime: An Essay in Aesthetic Naturalism*, (Lanham, Boulder, New York, Toronto, and Plymouth, UK: Lexington Books, 2013), 178.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid.

<sup>71</sup> Richard Schechner, *Performance Theory*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (London and New York: Routledge Classics, 1988, 2003), xvii.

groups.”<sup>72</sup> Building on his work, my concern is the socio-political and religious impact of performances on the social and individual levels. As I argue in the previous chapter, the self is constructed in a multiple relational web. In the multiple relational webs, we interact through various performances. As Schechner points out, performances affect not only temporally but also permanently.<sup>73</sup> He asserts, ”Changes affecting individuals or groups help maintain the balance of the whole system.”<sup>74</sup>

Quoting Erving Goffman, Richard Schechner argues, “performances mark identities, bend time, reshape and adorn the body, and tell stories. Performances - of art, rituals, or ordinary life – are ‘restored behaviors,’ ‘twice-behaved behaviors,’ performed actions that people train for and rehearse.... Everyday life also involves years of training and practice, of learning appropriate culturally specific bits of behavior, of adjusting and performing one’s life roles in relation to social and personal circumstances.”<sup>75</sup> As Schechner argued, performances have deep connection with everyday life. Performances are relational. Those are relational interactions. A self is constructed in becoming through moment by moment events and performances.

According to Richard Schechner, performances follow a theatrical pattern of

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<sup>72</sup> Ibid., 175.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid., 192.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid.

<sup>75</sup> Richard Schechner, *Performance Studies: An Introduction*, 2nd ed. (New York and London: Routledge, 2006), 28-29.



“gathering,” “playing out an action or actions,” and “dispersing.”<sup>76</sup> “The event itself is absorbed into the action of reconstructing what took place.”<sup>77</sup> Schechner argued that “the bottom line (of the pattern) is solidarity.... When people go to the theater, they are acknowledging that theater takes place at special time.”<sup>78</sup> People expect shared space and time. The social process from the gathering to the dispersing is in solidarity. Especially, Schechner pointed out how transformation occurs in theater in “three different places, and at three different levels: 1) in the drama, that is, in the story; 2) in the performers whose special task it is to undergo a temporary rearrangement of their body/mind, what I call a ‘transportation’; 3) in the audience where changes may either be temporary (entertainment) or permanent (ritual).”<sup>79</sup> As he argues, the communal gathering in theater is transformational. Communal performances are events of “mutual immanence” and “inter-carnation.” Performances are solidarity of multiplicity in re-construction of selves and the community. “The boundaries between ‘art’ and ‘life’ are blurry and permeable.”<sup>80</sup> I agree with Schechner’s argument that “theater is the art of actualizing them (virtual),... By turning possibilities into action, into performances, whole worlds otherwise not lived are

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<sup>76</sup> Richard Schechner, *Performance Theory*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (London and New York: Routledge Classics, 1988, 2003).

<sup>77</sup> Ibid.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid., 189.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid., 191.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid., 194.

born. Theater doesn't arrive suddenly and stay fixed either in its cultural or individual manifestations. It is insinuated along a web of associations spun from play, games, hunting, slaughter and distribution of meat, ceremonial centers, trials, rites of passage, and storytelling. Rehearsals and recollections-preplay and afterplay – converge in the theatrical event.”<sup>81</sup> Arts performances are transformational.

In this sense, performance is “self-poietics.”<sup>82</sup> According to Athena Athanasiou, the self is “opening a relation to alterity”<sup>83</sup> through dispossessing itself of the sovereign position of the self.<sup>84</sup> Judith Butler adds, we might consider “the ‘I’ as an interval or relay in on ongoing process of social crafting.”<sup>85</sup> In the ongoing process, “recognition itself has to be a transformative category,”<sup>86</sup> argues Judith Butler. For Athanasious, recognition effects “the frame of ontology.”<sup>87</sup>

Butler contends, “performativity does take place when the uncounted prove to be reflexive and start to count themselves not only enumerating who they are, but ‘appearing’

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<sup>81</sup> Ibid. 208.

<sup>82</sup> Judith Butler and Athena Athanasiou, *Dispossession: The Performative in the Political* (Cambridge, UK and Malden, MA: Polity Press, 2013), 68-69.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid.

<sup>84</sup> Ibid.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid., 70.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid., 87.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid.

in some way, exercising in that way a ‘right’ (extralegal, to be sure) to existence.”<sup>88</sup> Performance is a way of recognizing of the “I” in a multiple relational web, and it is a way to sustain the self and the sociality in creative transformation in the abysmal situation. As she proposes, regarding the political and cultural dimensions of performativity, the arts performance is a way of “recognition” of the self in a sustaining and ongoing “co-construction” of the sociality in transforming. When she mentions performances, the concept is not directly related to arts performances. However, in my use of the concept of performances, I follow Schechner’s inclusive methods.

According to Brian Massumi, “the felt perception of continuing movement is qualitative because it directly grasps the changing nature of the shared event ‘behind,’ ‘across,’ or ‘through’ its objective ingredients and their observable combinations. It is, simply: relationship. Directly perceptually-felt; ‘nonsensuously’ perceived.”<sup>89</sup> Following Massumi, I think that shared event is a way to co-construct relationship. Quoting Alfred North Whitehead, Massumi argues that “the relational ‘form of life’ of which it is a question in any given instance is vitality affect plus affective tonality: indissociably both. The form of life being lived is composed of their immediate, mutual inclusion in the event.”<sup>90</sup> Shared events and performances are mutual inclusion. Arts performances are mutual inclusion.

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<sup>88</sup> Ibid., 101.

<sup>89</sup> Brian Massumi, *Semblance and Event: Activist Philosophy and the Occurrent Arts* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2011), 107.

<sup>90</sup> Ibid., 113.

According to Massumi, “Each new event retraces the world’s qualitative order, even as it advances by a step the world’s objective ordering. Each time we experience an event, we are nonconsciously returning to our own and the world’s emergence. We are in re-worlding. We are reattuning, and reindividualizing.... New attunements are added to the diversity of events that can be yoked across distances in space and time.” Quoting Susanne Langer, Massumi pointed out the efficacy of ritual in relationships. Massumi argues, “Ritual is a technique for bringing forth virtual events, nonsensuously yoking diverse events of the bodies and the heavens. Ritual produces a semblance of an event in which nothing proprioceptively appears-but is nevertheless seen.... Ritual produces a perceptual feeling of seen cosmological spaces.... The intensity of the affective tonality with which they envelop vitality affects may effectively carry truth-producing powers. The relational reality invoked may retrace world-lines whose terminations positively come to pass.”<sup>91</sup> “A multiplicity of singular vitality affects are enveloped in the affective tonality of the event.”<sup>92</sup> Ritual has truth-producing powers in the ongoing worlding process, and it has suggestive power, as Massumi pointed out. The unjust social structure could be felt and uncovered by the immediate feeling of arts performances. New vision is represented by the communal imagination through arts performances. The visible and invisible togetherness and connectedness is re-affirmed through arts performances. The shared hope yet to come is visible and promoted through rituals and arts performances. In this sense, I see roles of

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<sup>91</sup> Ibid., 126-127.

<sup>92</sup> Ibid., 152.

arts in *Theresienstadt*.

### Arts and Performance in *Theresienstadt*

I have noted the individual and the communal effects of the arts and performance as the ongoing mutual process in socio-political, cultural, and psychological dimensions above. The “I” is co-constituted in a multiple relational web through mutual performances in occasions as an expression of the openness of the self and the “responsiveness” of the other as the ground of mutual responsibility, because “the ‘I’ is already social,”<sup>93</sup> as Butler has argued.

In that sense, I see the role of arts and performances in Theresienstadt. Anne D. Dutlinger asserted in the exhibition, “*The Arts as Strategies for Survival: Theresienstadt 1941-4*,”<sup>94</sup> arts, music, and education were creative strategies for survival for a Jewish group in the captivity of Nazis in Theresienstadt during the Second World War.<sup>95</sup>

In this chapter, I argue how theatre, as an art performance, worked in the Nazi ghetto, Theresienstadt, based on Sloane Drayson-Knigge’s dissertation.<sup>96</sup> According to Drayson-

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<sup>93</sup> Judith Butler and Athena Athanasiou, *Dispossession: The Performative in the Political* (Cambridge, UK and Malden, MA: Polity Press, 2013), 107.

<sup>94</sup> Anne D. Dutlinger, ed., *Arts, Music and Education*, (New York and London: Herodias, 2001), 1.

<sup>95</sup> Ibid.

<sup>96</sup> Sloane Drayson-Knigge, *Theatre as a Response to ‘Everyday’ Life in the Nazi Ghetto Theresienstadt: Women’s Contributions to Scenes of Resistance, Acts of Survival* (PhD diss., Drew University, 2002).

Knigge, Theresienstadt was “a place of paradox and bewildering ambiguities.”<sup>97</sup> The Jewish prisoners believed that it was final destination, but it was “a transit point before swept through the floodgate to “extermination” in the East.”<sup>98</sup> The Jewish prisoners had to struggle against “life threatening crises.”<sup>99</sup> In the situation, “stage setting” was “a Nazi-produced illusion,”<sup>100</sup> but ironically it sustained the Jewish prisoners. The Arts was a form of temporal transcendence that the Jews could live beyond the oppressive and the uncertain deportation situation with the deficiency of food in the togetherness of the ‘here and now.’

#### Life-threatening crises in Theresienstadt

According to Drayson-Knigge, the Nazi ghetto, *Theresienstadt*, was a life-threatening place plagued by illness, hunger, and the all-pervasive terror of deportation.<sup>101</sup> In the uncertainty of the future, the support of daily life was a very important issue in *Theresienstadt*.<sup>102</sup>

After the German invasion of Czechoslovakia, the Nazis wanted to keep Jews isolated

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<sup>97</sup> Ibid., 6

<sup>98</sup> Ibid.

<sup>99</sup> Ibid.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid.

<sup>101</sup> Sloane Drayson-Knigge, “*Theatre as a Response to ‘Everyday’ Life in the Nazi Ghetto Theresienstadt: Women’s Contributions to Scenes of Resistance, Acts of Survival,*” (PhD diss., Drew University, 2002), 8.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid., 7.

from the outside, and *Terezín*, a fortress town, was a choice for that purpose, according to Drayson-Knigge. “In the mid-morning of 24 November 1941, the three hundred and forty-two young men of *Aufbaukommando* I [work command], arrived at *Bohušovice* railway station. They then marched to *Terezín*, where they were to begin its conversion into the ghetto of *Theresienstadt*.”<sup>103</sup>

Negotiating with the Nazis, Edelstein wanted to create a ‘model Jewish Town’ to prevent the Jews from being sent to the east. However, the model ghetto, *Theresienstadt*, driven by the Nazis was an illusionary device.<sup>104</sup> Even some seniors sold their property to live there for the dream of good hospitals and homes for the elderly people. Once there, they had to endure the unexpected loss of self-respect.<sup>105</sup> Even though as a deporting ghetto, it was not a death camp like *Auschwitz*, yet, the certainty of uncertainty is a tremendous threat of the unknown.<sup>106</sup> The terror of ominous uncertainty has great power of devastating human life with great stress. As Drayson-Knigge asserts, even sustaining daily life was a burden in *Theresienstadt*. “The key elements which shape and influenced the social structure of *Theresienstadt* were: its genesis as a ‘coerced community,’ the compression of the temporal and spatial orders under which the prisoners were forced to live, the constant emotional assault by the threat of deportation, as well as the bewildering,

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<sup>103</sup> Ibid., 56.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid., 59

<sup>105</sup> Ibid., 99

<sup>106</sup> Ibid., 61

deceptive ‘normalcy’ engendered by the ghetto’s role in the development of the Nazi policy as it pushed toward ‘The final Solution.’”<sup>107</sup> One of the interesting points that Roy Kift points out is that “unlike other camps, the inmates at Theresienstadt were able to take advantage of an immense range of cultural and educational activities.”<sup>108</sup> This argument is undergirded by Brian Massumi’s assertion that “art and everyday perception are in continuity with one another. . . . Art foregrounds the dynamic, ongoingly relational pole.”<sup>109</sup> Jokes, drama, Arts, and etc. were spiritual food amidst the lack of food.<sup>110</sup> Drayson-Knigge contends, arts are the ground of hope which is “opening/clearing within the heart of the unconscious of nature.”<sup>111</sup> It opens the possibility of creative sustainability, affecting the daily life of the community.

### Cultural Life in *Theresienstadt*

Why was *Theresienstadt* allowed at all? The Nazis used the Jews for camouflages (beautification) to show *Theresienstadt* as an intended paradise of Jews in the visit of Red

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<sup>107</sup> Ibid., 71.

<sup>108</sup> Roy Kift, “Reality and illusion in the Theresienstadt Cabaret” in *Staging the Holocaust: The Shoah in drama and performance*, ed. Claude Schumacher (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 154.

<sup>109</sup> Brian Massumi, *Semblance and event: Activist Philosophy and the Occurrent Arts* (Cambridge and London in England: The MIT Press, 2013), 45

<sup>110</sup> Sloane Drayson-Knigge, “*Theatre as a Response to ‘Everyday’ Life in the Nazi Ghetto Theresienstadt: Women’s Contributions to Scenes of Resistance, Acts of Survival*” (PhD diss., Drew University, 2002), 78.

<sup>111</sup> Robert S. Corrington, *Nature’s Sublime: An Essay in Aesthetic Naturalism* (Lanham, Boulder, New York, Toronto, Plymouth, UK: Lexington Books, 2013), 96.



Cross ('the play within a play') and the irony of it was revealed in the film entitled, 'The *Fuehrer* Gives a Town to the Jews.'<sup>112</sup> The Nazi's ironic intention became the source of humor, jokes, and drama.

According to Drayson-Knigge, in *Theresienstadt*, artistic expression was the life-sustaining value of every life.<sup>113</sup> The injustice in *Theresienstadt* was often revealed through Artistic drawings.<sup>114</sup> Also, Arts work was a part of a bartering system.<sup>115</sup> One of the particular roles of the Arts was solidifying the community in the rapidly changing situation of leaving and arriving.<sup>116</sup> Even though the Nazis tried to de-humanize Jews as the cultureless race, paradoxically, the cultural life of Jews was growing.<sup>117</sup> The cultural life of Jews in *Theresienstadt* was the ground of the communal hope for them. Corrington contends, "the work of art, no matter how beautiful and fecund, can only do so much to restore the lost object under the constraints of finitude."<sup>118</sup> And "the art-work, then, as we have seen from our inquiry into the nature of aesthetic pleasure, presents a unity, alike in its effect and in its creation, and this implies a spiritual unity between the artist and the

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<sup>112</sup> Sloane Drayson-Knigge, "Theatre as a Response to 'Everyday' Life in the Nazi Ghetto *Theresienstadt*: Women's Contributions to Scenes of Resistance, Acts of Survival" (PhD diss., Drew University, 2002), 106, 111.

<sup>113</sup> *Ibid.*, 113.

<sup>114</sup> Burešová's drawing, *Ibid.*, 121.

<sup>115</sup> *Ibid.*, 123.

<sup>116</sup> *Ibid.*, 128.

<sup>117</sup> *Ibid.*, 127.

<sup>118</sup> Robert S. Corrington, *Nature's Sublime: An Essay in Aesthetic Naturalism*, (Lanham, Boulder New York, Toronto, Plymouth, UK; Lexington Books, 2013), 183.

recipient,” in his quotation of Otto Rank.<sup>119</sup> Shared arts and performances as the grounds of hope solidified the prisoners for mutual sustainment.

### Humor and performance

One of the particular insights of Drason-Knigge is her concern of the role of humor and jokes in *Theresienstadt*. She points out that it lets the people forget the present situation.<sup>120</sup> According to Drayson-Knigge, it kept the Jews’ heads above water, letting them lose sight of the horror facing them. The autonomy play in cabaret was spontaneous and improvisational. It played directly to the audience, shortening the distance. Humor was used to let the prisoners negotiate the ambiguous daily life.<sup>121</sup>

Roy Kift argues that “if camp life was intolerable, one way of making it bearable was to try to relativize it by comparison with something even worse.”<sup>122</sup> He argues that Leo Strauss uses a typical comedy technique of reversal, as Drayson-Knigge points out. The mimicking of the Nazi’s illusion is mockery here in a song of *invitation* created by Strauss: “Invitation ... When neighbours see the star you’re wearing, Do they start to scowl and jeer?

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<sup>119</sup> Robert S. Corrington’s quotation of Otto Rank, *Art and Artist: Creative Urge and Personality Development* with a foreword by Anaïs Nin, translated by Charles Francis Atkinson (New York: W.W. Norton, 1968), 113.

<sup>120</sup> *Ibid.*, 177.

<sup>121</sup> *Ibid.*, 179, 180.

<sup>122</sup> Roy Kift, “Reality and illusion in the Theresienstadt Cabaret” in *Staging the Holocaust: The Shoah in drama and performance*, ed. Claude Schumacher (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998). 155.

Had enough of hostile staring? Pack your bags and join me here....”<sup>123</sup> The camouflage of the Nazis was imitated by a performer. In his conclusion of the essay, he also points out the role of theatre in *Theresienstadt*, indicating that it had “an ability to bolster up the will of its audiences to cling on to hope and refuse to capitulate even in the midst of the most appalling circumstances.”<sup>124</sup> Arts performances blurred the boundary between the present and the future, opening the not-yet in the communal hope. It bound the people to overcome their abject situation through arts performances. In my opinion, it is bottom-up experience letting them experience the reversed hierarchy through the performances of imagination. Such imagination is the power and potentiality to change the unjust present.

As I previously noted, communal performances sustain the community in an abysmal situation. The victims of a particular form of discrimination could be sustained by communal arts performances, as I argue in chapter 2. I argue that a “self” is constructed and healed in a horizontally multi-relational web in chapter 1. Art performances in a multi-relationship sustain and support an individual and a community in resolution. The wounded hearts of *han* could be healed and relieved through the communal arts performances in multi-relational web. In chapter 3, I argue how the community is creatively transformed in the communal performances in theopoetic creativity. Theopoetic performances in an apophatic relationships create solidarity by the mutual openness to differences in non-separable relationships. The potentiality for creative transformation becomes actual in

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<sup>123</sup> His quotation of Weiner’s reports on leisure activities in Migdal, *Und die Musik*, 131-60.

<sup>124</sup> *Ibid.*, 165.

harmony through arts performances. Hope yet to come is envisioned through arts performances.

## Chapter 3

### Theopoetic in Performances

Catherine Keller noted, “the notion of *theopoetics* sprang into play, in English, as though a neologism of the 1960s...., In his little 1976 *Theopoetic*, Amos Wilder observed: ‘I believe that I had picked up the term ‘theopoetic’ and ‘theopoesis’ from Stanley Hopper and his students, no doubt in one or another of the remarkable consultations on hermeneutics and language which he had organized at Drew University...’”<sup>125</sup> Keller argued, “the poetic is not made of similes, of similarities, but of difference, fragmentation, and multiplicity...., *Theopoetics*, in other words, has everything to do with the art and form of poetry. But it is not reducible to a literary style.”<sup>126</sup>

According to Keller, “nothing.... is known outside of relation.”<sup>127</sup> Quoting Alfred North Whitehead, Keller argued that the universe is a solidarity of many actual entities.<sup>128</sup> “To know something is to participate in its actualization.... Differentiation is not an effect of separation but of an entangled unfolding....”<sup>129</sup> For Whitehead, “everything is

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<sup>125</sup> Catherine Keller, “Theopoesis and the Pluriverse” in *Theopoetic Folds: Philosophizing Multifariousness*, ed. Roland Faber and Jeremy Fackenthal (New York: Fordham University Press, 2013), 185.

<sup>126</sup> *Ibid.*, 185.

<sup>127</sup> Catherine Keller, *Cloud of the Impossible: Negative Theology and Planetary Entanglement* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2015), 20.

<sup>128</sup> *Ibid.*, 21.

<sup>129</sup> *Ibid.*, 21-22.

positively somewhere in actuality, and in potency everywhere.”<sup>130</sup> In the nonseparable relationships, “the relational knowing, marked in the Hebrew *yada* as erotic knowing in paradise and out, makes possible every act of justice.... The challenge is to mobilize the democratizing solidarity trapped in our tangles.”<sup>131</sup> I found it in the African oral performances which show “the aesthetic harmony”<sup>132</sup> in the relationship between a performer and audiences by means of co-creating in performances. It is a process of mutual openness and immanence in co-construction. It is “inter-carnation.”

God is “the poet of the world, who with tender patience, is leading it by his vision of truth, beauty, and goodness,”<sup>133</sup> according to Alfred North Whitehead. In Roland Faber and Jeremy Fackenthal’s interpretation of Alfred North Whitehead, God is suggestive for a poetic vision in the transforming events.<sup>134</sup> In my understanding of events as performances, the arts performances are events for the creative transformation in God’s persuasive attraction. God is continually communicating with the world in freedom of chaos, as Roland Faber quoted Catherine Keller.<sup>135</sup> There are multiple creative

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<sup>130</sup> Ibid.

<sup>131</sup> Ibid., 30-31.

<sup>132</sup> Alfred North Whitehead’s term.

<sup>133</sup> Alfred North Whitehead, *Process and Reality*, edited by David Ray Griffin and Donald W. Sherburne (New York: The Free Press, 1978), 346.

<sup>134</sup> Roland Faber and Jeremy Fackenthal, *Theopoetic Folds: Philosophizing Multifariousness*, ed. Roland Faber and Jeremy Fackenthal (New York: Fordham University Press, 2013), 4.

<sup>135</sup> Roland Faber, *God as Poet of the World: Exploring Process Theologies*, trans. Douglas W. Stott (Louisville and London: Westminster John Knox Press, 2008), 207.

transformations in the mutual immanence between God and the world.

As I previously noted, arts and creative performances in Theresienstadt allowed the Jews to sustain themselves in the abysmal situation. By mocking the Nazis in performances, they experienced liberation and reversed the oppressive hierarchical structure. It gave the Jews the potential to endure the terrible situation by reacting and uncovering the violence and oppression.

According to Amos Niven Wilder, “Imagination is a necessary component of all profound knowing and celebration; all remembering, realizing, and anticipating; all faith, hope, and love.”<sup>136</sup> The imagination is fulfilled through arts performances. As Wilder argued, the divinity is operative and experienced with the believer’s participation in rituals.<sup>137</sup> In my understanding of imagination as God’s persuasive and suggestive luring, arts performances must be recognized with divine immanence as the panentheistic God. My theological concern is how theopoetic performances are co-constructed and mutually affect a community without any ossifying and exclusion in multiple non- hierarchical relationships.

John D. Caputo argues that the theological problem occurs when doctrines are ossified or unilateral, comparing radical theology to confessional theology.<sup>138</sup> According

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<sup>136</sup> Amos Niven Wilder, *Theopoetic: Theology and the Religious Imagination* (Lima, Ohio; Academic Renewal Press, 2001), 2.

<sup>137</sup> *Ibid.*, 11.

<sup>138</sup> John D. Caputo, “*Theopoetics as Radical Theology*,” in *Theopoetic Folds: Philosophizing Multifariousness*, ed. Roland Faber and Jeremy Fackenthal (New York: Fordham University Press, 2013),

to Caputo, privileged legacy must be suspended and questioned in order to be considered open-ended theology, which is “radical theology.”<sup>139</sup> Thus, Caputo concluded, “Radical theology thus is only possible as a theo-poetics of the event, or, if you prefer, theo-poetics is radical theology.”<sup>140</sup> He argued that there is neither boundary, nor fixation in God’s revelation. The divine is revealed in the events and performances. When we confine the interpretation of divinity in literalized text and its tradition with authority, the divine revelation is not preserved, but rather is abused in the hierarchical faith community.

According to Robert S. Corrington, there are “two distinctive types of communities (interhorizontality); namely, natural and interpretive.”<sup>141</sup> According to Corrington, natural community excludes “all non-tribal selves and which does so through a powerful demonization and abjection of Otherness.”<sup>142</sup> However, “a community of interpreters” opens itself to the future and forms an eschatological vision... opens the future by standing into the *not-yet-being* that stands before it as an invitation to transformation but not as a specific blueprint of a particular natural community.”

Karmen MacKendrick also points out problem of absolutized creed, quoting

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<sup>139</sup> Ibid., 126-127.

<sup>140</sup> Ibid., 141.

<sup>141</sup> Robert S. Corrington, *Nature’s Sublime: An Essay in Aesthetic Naturalism* (Lanham Boulder, New York, Toronto, and Plymouth, UK; Lexington Books), 89.

<sup>142</sup> Ibid.



Catherine Keller.<sup>143</sup> As MacKendrick quoted, creeds are the “open relationality of the flesh of the world and the divine.”<sup>144</sup> When the creed is ossified, it becomes a reason of anathema and exclusion. In my ministerial experience, the ossified faith boundary interrupts the divine interacting through the closure to the novelty. MacKendrick also contends, “the language of faith is poetic-evocative, provocative, and unsettled.”<sup>145</sup> The communal rituals are open-ended processes to find the divine in the faith community. There must not be any appropriation in the confession. The apophatic divinity is found through the poetic words without any settlement. As she contended, “The divine is seductive”<sup>146</sup> and “always a stranger in all manifestation and revelation.”<sup>147</sup> God is immanent in our communal performances apophatically, as her/he wants in mystery.

As MacKendrick argues, faith is a communal question and answer.<sup>148</sup> She contended, “To be faithful to divine revelation, in this view, is to place oneself always in question.”<sup>149</sup> When we confront all forms of discrimination, oppression, and victims of it, we find the divine responsibility through the communal questioning and answering. As

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<sup>143</sup> Karmen MacKendrick, *Divine Enticement: Theological Seductions* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2013) 39-40. Catherine Keller, *On the Mystery: Discerning God in Process* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2008), 7.

<sup>144</sup> *Ibid.*, 39.

<sup>145</sup> *Ibid.*, 45.

<sup>146</sup> Karmen MacKendrick.

<sup>147</sup> Karmen MacKendrick, *Divine Enticement: Theological Seductions* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2013), 165.

<sup>148</sup> *Ibid.*, 51.

<sup>149</sup> *Ibid.*

MacKendrick argues, the shared word is “reading a shared world.”<sup>150</sup> The community is co-constructed through the shared words and performances.

As Caputo, Corrington, MacKendrick, and Keller have differently argue, the novelty is coming from the openness to transformation without any ossification of faith. Agreeing with their arguments, I was looking for communal performances which have no fixed boundaries, preserving the communal tradition that I can categorize as theopoetic events.

Vincent Colapietro contended that “the blues is (at least, in part) a genre of theology.”<sup>151</sup> In Colapietro’s argument, “metaphysics is nothing,” but all details of practices are bases for his generation.<sup>152</sup> Human agents are “entangled and implicated in a complex nexus of historical practices (hence, in evolved and evolving processes).”<sup>153</sup> Quoting James Cone, Colapietro asserted that “The affirmation of self in the blues is the emphasis that connects them theologically to the spirituals. Like the spirituals, the blues affirms the sombodiness of black people, and they preserve the worth of humanity through ritual and drama.”<sup>154</sup>

As Vincent Colapietro argues, oral performances in a community are theopoetics

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<sup>150</sup> Ibid., 88.

<sup>151</sup> Vincent Colapietro, “Theology as a Genre of the Blues,” in *Theopoetic Folds: Philosophizing Multifariousness*, ed. Roland Faber and Jeremy Fackenthal (New York: Fordham University Press, 2013), 72.

<sup>152</sup> Ibid., 67.

<sup>153</sup> Ibid.

<sup>154</sup> Ibid.

for me. There is no absolution in oral performances. There is no boundary between a performer and audiences. By a performance of a performer, the whole performance has connection to the previous one. However, by an interruption of audiences without certainties, the whole performance is creatively transformed. There is no exclusion without hierarchy. Especially, in the struggle against post-colonialism, the African oral literature binds the people in exile into solidarity through remembering process of their communal relationships. The western academic culture which values written signs devalues African oral literature which is open to the creative transformation through differences. Multiplicity is involved without any hegemony. All kind of oppression and tears are uncovered and remembered. God is experienced in “making a way out of no way”<sup>155</sup> in the communal struggle against all forms of oppressions.

### Orality and Literacy

Walter J. Ong argues how orality of language works through the text of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, in his argument, Adam Parry developed his father’s thought that the text of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* were initially the orally transferred product of the poets.<sup>156</sup> “The entire language of the Homeric poems, with its curious mix of early and late Aeolic and Ionic peculiarities, was best explained not as an overlaying of several texts, but as a

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<sup>155</sup> Monica A. Coleman, *Making a Way Out of No Way* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2008).

<sup>156</sup> Walter J. Ong, *Orality and Literacy* (London and New York: Methuen and Co., 1982), 23.

language generated over the years by epic poets, using old set expressions which they preserved and/or reworked largely for metrical purposes.”<sup>157</sup> “Oral formulaic thought and expression ride deep in consciousness and the unconscious, and they do not vanish as soon as one used to them takes pen in hand.”<sup>158</sup> Thus, we need to understand the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* as the outcome of the communal performance in a long-term process.

The result of the study of the text of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* resonated in literature studies all over the world. In Ong’s note, Isidore Okpewho(1979), Joseph C. Miller(1980), Eugene Eoyang (1977), Plarks (1977), Zwettler(1977), Bruce Rosenberg (1970), and John Miles Foley (1981) utilized Parry’s perspective of the oral literature study in their own tradition.<sup>159</sup> This study shows the deep connection of oral and written literature. Through Ong’s research, it was proved that oral literature couldn’t be devalued because of its non-formalization. Even the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* were oral literature before those were written. Notably, African literature has a deep and fluent history of oral literature. I will argue that prior to Ong’s study, anthropologists tended to see the oral nature of African literature as being inferior to the written nature of early western texts.

### Psychodynamics of Orality

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<sup>157</sup> Ibid.

<sup>158</sup> Ibid., 26.

<sup>159</sup> Ibid., 28.

Ong has noted some characteristics of the orality:<sup>160</sup> 1) "Additive rather than subordinative," 2) "Aggregative rather than analytic," 3) "Redundant or 'copious,'" 4) "Conservative or traditionalist," 5) "Close to the human lifeworld," 6) "Agonistically toned," 7) "Empathetic and participatory rather than objectively distanced," 8) "Homeostatic," and 9) "Situational rather than abstract." In these characteristics, we can assume orality is more open to the concrete transformation in a democratic way than literacy. My theological concern with his argument is that oral literature is the outcome of the communal openness in multiple equivalent relationships. The performance is a way to co-construct the self in multiple relationships, and also, every member is included in the transformational process. Through the mutual immanence in the process, creative transformation occurs. The self is dispossessed and co-constructed in the communal relationship. The community is also co-constructed by all members without any exclusion or hierarchy. Only announcers exist for guidance and to maintain connectivity and tradition, allowing for creative transformation. It is a process of "inter-carnation."<sup>161</sup> The self and the community are transformed in the process through communal arts performances and events.

Ong also discussed the difference between orality and literacy in A. R. Luria's research.<sup>162</sup> Included were the following findings: 1) Illiterate subjects never dealt with

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<sup>160</sup> Ibid., 36-50.

<sup>161</sup> Catherine Keller's theological term.

<sup>162</sup> Walter J. Ong, *Orality and Literacy* (London and New York: Methuen and Co., 1982), 50-57.

abstract figures, but rather with concrete objects. 2) Illiterate subjects do not think in categorical terms, but in practical situations, employing “situational thinking.” 3) Illiterate subjects don’t think in purely logical forms, but in practical matters. 4) There was some resistance to requests of definition. For the illiterate, there is no need for definition. 5) The illiterates had difficulty in articulating self-analysis. They are more focused on the external situation and they are interested in the operational.

In relation to this argument, Ong asserts that Luria’s research shows that “writing has to be personally interiorized to affect thinking processes.... Oral thinking, however, can be quite sophisticated and, in its own way, reflective.”<sup>163</sup>

In Ong’s argument, I grasped the guidelines on how to read oral literature. His argument liberates us from the hierarchical understanding of the relationship between oral and literate literature. Normally, people think literate literature is better than oral literature. Also, we can see the different viewpoints of the world’s individual perception and communal perception, the defining and functioning, the abstract and concrete, the stable acknowledging and dynamic embodied feeling, also through the comparisons.<sup>164</sup> There is a possibility to read the relationship between the oral and the literate in the explanation of Gilles Deleuze’s term, ‘chaosmos’ which opens the pathway for creative transformation. According to Catherine Keller, “process theo-poetics only goes there, into that obscurity, with the accompaniment of an entire chaosmos—a living multiplicity of

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<sup>163</sup> Ibid., 56, 57

<sup>164</sup> Ibid., 50-57.

multiplicities of creatures enfolded in and unfolding from one another.”<sup>165</sup>

Regarding to Caputo and MacKendrick’s argument, I think that oral thinking opens the possibility for creative transformation in a communal relationship. Ossified tradition in a written form close the possibility of creative transformation. As Luria’s research shows, it is non-situational, non-practical, and non-functional. When the communal rites are confined by the non-changing form, those rites support hierarchy in the community. Regarding to the previous chapter about arts in *Theresienstadt*, I believe that African oral performances as arts performances also have energy of binding, sustaining and transforming the community.

I see how the hierarchical and western-centered written method of acknowledgment has exploited and devalued the native African oral literature tradition. Interestingly, as I mentioned, the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* were outcome of the communal and oral memorization over a long period of time. Let me move into the history of African literature. By doing so, we can find how the value of African literature as a form of communal becoming in performances was hidden and revealed.

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<sup>165</sup> Catherine Keller, “Theopoiesis and the Pluriverse” in *Theopoetic Folds: Philosophizing Multifariousness*, ed. Roland Faber and Jeremy Fackenthal (New York: Fordham University Press, 2013), 185.

## African Oral Performance

Ruth Finnegan argues, “Oral literature is by definition dependent on a performer who formulates it in words on a specific occasion.... The nature of the performance, itself, can make an important contribution to the impact of the particular literary form being exhibited.”<sup>166</sup> In her argument, the written words are only “a shadow of the full actualization of the poem as an aesthetic experience for the poet and the audience.”<sup>167</sup> The aesthetic experience is expressed by words, music, and dance. The creative expression in continuing reproduction of the performance is very important. Another important factor is the audience, because they break into the performance with additions, queries, or criticisms. This mutual performance is one of many distinctions between oral and written literature.<sup>168</sup> So, one needs to consider the details of the performance, the audience, and the occasion for the subtlety, flexibility, and individual originality of its creator, and the aesthetic canons.<sup>169</sup> In the performances, the boundary between the performer and the audience is blurred by the audiences’ interruption and transformation in uncertainty. The role of the performer and the audience is continually mutated. Multiple participation in differences in transforming process offers creative transformation in theopoetic creativity. In the struggle against post-colonialism, I will

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<sup>166</sup> Ruth Finnegan, *Oral Literature in Africa* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1970), 2-3.

<sup>167</sup> *Ibid.*, 3

<sup>168</sup> *Ibid.*, 7-11

<sup>169</sup> *Ibid.*, 12



show how the value of African oral literature was hidden by the western scholars-driven anthropological studies.

Finnegan shows the history of the study of African oral literature in two ways. First, she wants to expose the appreciation for the knowledge of the subjects. Second, the various resources have to be put into historical perspective.<sup>170</sup> I could see the various stances to the study of the African oral literature history.

Regarding her first point, she stated that in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, linguistic studies were emerging, and they aimed to evangelize Africa. Narratives, historical texts, proverbs, riddles, vernacular texts, songs, and poems were collected for linguistic purposes. However, there was no concern for the social contexts, literary significance, or the circumstances of their recitation.<sup>171</sup> With the collection, comparative studies were conducted, and they often found the manifestation of the depth of feeling and artistry, and the fullest sense of the word.<sup>172</sup> By the end of the century, a certain amount of literature was recorded and published.<sup>173</sup> German linguistic scholars established the subject as being worthy of serious study, and recognized recordings as a form of literature. However, after several decades, the German interest waned because of the loss of their

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<sup>170</sup> Ibid., 27.

<sup>171</sup> Ibid., 28.

<sup>172</sup> Ibid., 29.

<sup>173</sup> Ibid., 31.

imperial interest.<sup>174</sup>

In the first half of the twentieth century, anthropologists monopolized the professional study of African institutions and culture. Their basic concern was the social and cultural evolution within concentration of the origins. This perspective implies that “most African peoples belonged to an early and low stage, and that their art, if any, would be correspondingly primitive.”<sup>175</sup> Therefore, the literary effectiveness or acceptability was ignored as the primitive stage with its prejudice. It also explains the hierarchical relationship between the European and the African in terms of ‘evolution.’

By the 1930s, anthropologists were more focused on the structural and functional role of African oral literature in the society. Their assumptions ignored the aesthetic aspect of it, and so, British anthropologists didn’t make any collection of African oral traditions. As a result, there was little progress in these studies.<sup>176</sup> In both the nineteenth century and twentieth century, the Scandinavian or ‘historical-geographical’ school of folklore took a diffusionist approach. They focused mainly on the subject-matter of oral literature.<sup>177</sup> The French interest, *africaine*, was connected with a literary and quasi-political movement, rather than a stimulus to on exact recording or analysis. It attracted

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<sup>174</sup> Ibid., 33-34.

<sup>175</sup> Ibid., 35-36.

<sup>176</sup> Ibid., 38-39.

<sup>177</sup> Ibid., 39-40.

great general interest, but it failed to build the serious field of scholarship.<sup>178</sup>

By the late 1950s and 1960s, there was rapid interest in African studies as a whole, with great recognition of Africa as a worthwhile field of academic study and a marked proliferation of professional scholars concerned with different aspects of African life.<sup>179</sup>

“The musicologists represent a very different approach from all those mentioned previously.”<sup>180</sup> American anthropologists had great engagement in the study of African oral arts. They took a wider approach to recording the oral literature, and related it to its social context. “They pointed out the importance of considering individual inspiration and originality as well as the ‘traditional’ ‘tribal’ conventions, the role of poet and audience, as well as subject matter.”<sup>181</sup> With various fashions of criticism and interpretation, Finnegan asserts that we should not ignore the oral arts as a form of literature.<sup>182</sup> It is the communal literature being performed again and again in the remembering and re-orienting in a multi-relational nexus. Multiplicity is involved in the communal performances. Differences are accepted and the acceptance transforms the communal performances as a form of literature. The forgotten is revealed and remembered through the communal performances. They are bound through the co-construction. Each are embedded in the whole performances. They are mutually

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<sup>178</sup> Ibid., 40-41.

<sup>179</sup> Ibid., 41.

<sup>180</sup> Ibid., 42.

<sup>181</sup> Ibid., 43.

<sup>182</sup> Ibid., 45-47.

immanent. This is the communal becoming of solidarity. Related to chapter 1, a self is mutually constructed by the communal dynamics. Through shared dancing, words, lyrics, stories, and etc., the world is shared as I previously noted MacKendrick's argument.

I here summarized the history of the African oral study written by Finnegan from the 19<sup>th</sup> century to the 1960s. I'd like to test some more African oral literature as an example to better understand it.

### African Poetry

Isidore Okpewho argues that there are two kinds of poets. One is the trained poet. In the Mandinka of western Africa and the Zulu of southern Africa, we can find the trained poet in rituals. Training occurs within the family, from father to son, from generation to generation. For me, the training has great theological implication for its role as a mutual immanence in the training process.

The other type is the free-lance entertainer. It is commonly found in merrymaking. This is also found at funeral ceremonies.<sup>183</sup> Okpewho has special concern for two effects of a selection of poetry: "One is by touching us emotionally so that we feel pleasure or pain; the other is by stirring our minds deeply so that we reflect on some aspect of life or

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<sup>183</sup> Isidore Okpewho, "African Poetry: The Modern Writer and the Oral Tradition" in *Oral & Written Poetry in African Literature Today 16*, ed. Eldred Durosimi Jones, Eustace Palmer and Marjorie Jones, (Trenton, N.J.: Africa World Press, Inc., 1989), 5-7.

some significant idea.... We would need to consider the situation or process within which it is created.”<sup>184</sup> It touches us with delight and pain and involves various people’s participation. *The Singer of Tales* and the poem, ‘The Odomasquerade’ are his examples of how the audience is active in the performance.

One interesting point Okepewho makes is the ‘marriage of politics and poetics.’ Azikiwe felt racial solidarity outside of Africa, and Leon Gontran Damas of French Guyana and Aimé Césaire of Martinique felt the racial prejudice while in exile. In the poetry of Senghor, the celebration of blackness was represented.<sup>185</sup> In addition, American Jazz was the mood of solidarity in poems written by African and black American intellectuals between the 1940s and the 1950s.<sup>186</sup>

Political independence between 1957 and the 1960s brought forward a sense of freedom of choices, and re-examination of traditions and culture occurred throughout Africa. “Senghor openly acknowledges its fundamental departure from the traditional model.”<sup>187</sup> “Soyinka has used the image of the god, Ogun, as a symbol of the revolutionary creative energy tuned towards a sustained challenge to the evils of the contemporary socio-political climate and an affirmation of the life principle in the face of

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<sup>184</sup> Ibid., 8.

<sup>185</sup> Ibid., 16.

<sup>186</sup> Ibid., 17, 18.

<sup>187</sup> Ibid., 20.

the frustrations confronting it.”<sup>188</sup>

The cultural transition from oral to literal threatened oral literature. In the socio-political change, Okpewho asserts that there is a lack of enough criticism of problems in modern poetry. In his argument, his duty is to re-identify themselves with the oral tradition roots.<sup>189</sup> Joel Adedeji asserts that “oral tradition is the ‘complex corpus of verbal or spoken art created as a means of recalling the past.’”<sup>190</sup> In this quotation, he insists that it is based on the ideas, beliefs, symbols, assumptions, attitudes and sentiments of people and it is both literary and historical. He also points out the role of the performance for the involvement of the community in the creative process and in criticism.<sup>191</sup>

I agree with Iyasere’s quotation of Chinua Achebe’s words. “African people did not hear of culture for the first time from Europeans;... their societies were not mindless but frequently had a philosophy of great depth and beauty, ... they had poetry and, above all they had dignity. It is this dignity that many African people all but lost during the colonial period and it is this that they must now regain.... The writer’s duty is to help them regain it by showing them in human terms what happened to them, what they lost.”<sup>192</sup> The

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<sup>188</sup> Ibid., 22.

<sup>189</sup> Ibid., 23.

<sup>190</sup> Charles A. Bodunde, “Oral Traditions & Modern Poetry: Okot p’Bitek’s Song of Lawino & Okigbo’s Labyrinths” in *Orature in African Literature Today 18*, ed. Eldred Durosimi Jones, Eustace Palmer & Marjorie Jones (Trenton, N.J.: Africa World Press, Inc., 1992), 24.

<sup>191</sup> Ibid., 24.

<sup>192</sup> Solomon O. Iyasere, *Understanding Things Fall Apart: Selected Essays and Criticism*, ed. Solomon O.

African oral performance is the communal gathering in solidarity. The injustice is revealed through performances. African people gather to share their experience and stories in various forms. They are gathered in solidarity. Differences and transformation are allowed through mutual attendance by a performer and audiences. It is shared place and time for creative transformation. The socio-cultural and political value of African oral literature was found by the re-examination.

#### Exposition, Sustainment, and Transformation

Mark Lewis Taylor points out the role of art as the exposition in his reading of Richard Wright.<sup>193</sup> Taylor argued that art “might be deployed to similar effect, providing a “scheme of images and symbols that enable our tracing and reflecting on how those suffering social death, the world’s concentrated weight, its imposed social suffering, still create world, forge liberatory space.”<sup>194</sup>

As Taylor argued, African oral literature, as an art, offers ‘lived experience,’ unveiling the social suffering and death made by racism, sexism, and other forms of discrimination. Also, it builds the space for the diverse creativity in the community. As the mutual process between the performer and the audience, the aesthetic words create a

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Iyasere (Troy, New York: The Whitston Publishing Company, 1998) 1.

<sup>193</sup> Mark Lewis Taylor, *The Theological and the Political* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2011), 134.

<sup>194</sup> *Ibid.*, 156.

musical rhythm of liberating social transformation. It is “inter-carnation”<sup>195</sup> through theopoetics!

In analyzing Ong’s argument, one can see that there is no difference in value between oral and written literature. Through the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, the prejudice in seeing oral literature as being primordial and inferior is proven as false. Through the unveiling of western prejudice, African oral literature became a precious subject as a source of human wisdom that is the sustaining and transforming energy of the community.

As Finnegan argues, African oral literature was studied by Europeans for practical reasons. It was a kind of westernizing process that ignored the fluent values of oral literature. The Euro-centric perspective de-valued the native arts and wisdom in terms of how they transform the community creatively. Oral literature offers what written literature cannot offer, as Ong argued. So, the role of African elites is to re-energize the process of oral literature, and to find continuing value of it in a contemporary context. As the oral literature is not fixed into one, our role is to find its multiple dimensions in our socio-political and cultural dialogue in the postcolonial situation.

In this sense, it is good to see the role of African oral literature in my theological concern of ‘theopoetics’ and ‘intercarnation.’ African oral literature uncovers the unjust oppression of the colonizing power and constructs the theological and philosophical

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<sup>195</sup> Catherine Keller’s theological term.



ground of the multi-forming power, keeping its nexus against uni-forming western colonialization. The oral process itself opens up the potential for creative transformation.

When the five young adults performed dancing and sang Christian worship songs I saw togetherness in their performances. They danced in harmony and rhythm. There was no hegemony in their dancing in dynamic rhythm. Lyrics of songs relieved their stress and trauma. The message of Love of God was re-affirmed in their singing. God's suggestive power was revealed in lyrics of songs. Their communal prayer was shared and co-constructed without any exclusion. The shared words and imagination became hope yet to come. Shared stories built cohesive relationships. They experienced God's sustaining and transforming through their communal performances. God is the poet of the world, and the divine is experienced when they affirmed togetherness in relationships. The apophatic God was talking through their theopoetic performances in the uncertainty. Their stress from the uncertainty of future was relieved by the faith of the "messianicity"<sup>196</sup> yet to come. The hope was instilled in their relationship through the affirmation of hope yet to come in theopoetic performances.

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<sup>196</sup> Jacques Derrida's term.

## Conclusion

In this thesis, I have argued that the self is social in a multi-relational web in chapter 1. The self is constructed in a horizontal relational web. As Andrew Sung Park argues, sin has to be considered with *han*, the wounded heart. To heal the wounded heart, a self in a multiple relationship has to be considered together. As Irvin D. Yalom argues, cohesiveness in a multiple relationship is a ground of healing.

In chapter 2, I noted the role of the arts performance for the Jewish community in Theresienstadt. As a communal process, the arts performances offered the power of sustainability to the Jews to overcome their abysmal situation. I argued the power of theopoetics in the creative transformation of a community.

In chapter 3, I noted the African oral performance as being theopoetic. The mutual immanence occurs through mutual performances. A self is inter-carnated through the communal performances. It is an event of healing of the wounded heart and mourning of the loss for re-membering. The self in a community experiences solidarity through the communal becoming.

Through this research I expect that sensibility of theopoetic performances in a multi-relational web can offer the possibility for the creative transformation of society in our social, political, economic and cultural struggles against various forms of discrimination. All kinds of oppression can be exposed by communal performances. All kinds of tears can be washed away by communal performances. All kinds of lost things can be remembered through communal callings and responses. All kinds of possibilities can be

actualized through communal responses. As God desires, I desire theopoetic performances without any appropriation to co-construct the aesthetic harmony for “the common wealth of God”<sup>197</sup> in the places of desperation and frustration. This thesis is my prayer for “the common wealth of God.”<sup>198</sup>

Nowadays, the five young adults are serving at the church as teachers of younger students and leaders in their group. They are brothers and sisters to younger students, assisting them with empathic mentorship. Even though most legal discriminations are abolished for them, they are still struggling against some issues as immigrants. This thesis is not reflection of their happy ending. This thesis is about their experience as an ongoing process of discernment of the divine in a multi-relational web in their struggles. Catherine Keller argues, “Hope for that which is to come lives in our embodied becoming now.”<sup>199</sup> “Hope for that which is to come”<sup>200</sup> lives in five young adults’ gathering. They experienced hope is to come in their communal singing, dancing, reading, performing musical instruments, and etc. in their multi-relational web. The divine is immanent in the solidarity as sustainability and transformation. The divine is mutually and suggestively calling them toward the co-construction of the common-wealth of God. The five young

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<sup>197</sup> John B. Cobb JR., “Common Wealth and Empire” in *The American Empire and the Commonwealth of God: A Political, Economic, Religious Statement*, ed. David Ray Griffin, John B. Cobb Jr., Richard A. Falk, and Catherine Keller (Louisville and London: Westminster John Knox Press, 2006), 140-147.

<sup>198</sup> Ibid.

<sup>199</sup> Catherine Keller, *On the Mystery: Discerning God in Process* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2008), 170.

<sup>200</sup> Ibid.

adults' experience of God was not the transcendence of God with a rapid transformation, but the immanence of God encouraging them not to give up in their struggles against socio-political and cultural oppression and discrimination. It is the divine sustaining and transforming in a multi-relationship in the "open-ending."<sup>201</sup>

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<sup>201</sup> Ibid.

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