

Drew University

**Rise of the Lamb's Queen: Revisiting Azusa Street Mission with
Pierre Bourdieu, Mikhail Bakhtin, and
Julia Kristeva**

A Dissertation Submitted to
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Doctor of Philosophy

by

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Table of Contents

ABSTRACT	I
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	III
INTRODUCTION	1
APPLE & TREE: SOURCES OF HUMOR	1
OVERVIEW OF THE WORK.....	4
AZUSA STREET MISSION AS MYTH & RITUAL	11
EXAMINING THE ROLE OF RITUAL ANALYSIS IN ASSESSING RELIGION AND ITS POTENTIAL AND PROBLEMS FOR ASSESSING PENTECOSTALISM	17
OUTLINE OF THE CHAPTERS.....	24
ON THE ELABORATE USE OF THEORY IN THIS WORK.....	26
CHAPTER 1: A BOURDIEUSIAN MACRO-SOCIOLOGY OF THE PRODUCTION OF TONGUES-SPEECH AS A COMPETITIVE FORM OF RELIGIOUS CAPITAL	29
INTRODUCTION	29
ONCE MORE, WITH FEELING: AGRICULTURAL DURESS IN THE RELIGIOUS FIELD AS THE CONTEXT FOR EARLY PENTECOSTALISM.....	30
<i>Bourdiesian Fields for the Study of Pentecostalism</i>	33
<i>Rationalization and Ir-rationalization in the American Religious Field</i>	39
<i>American Christianity Acquires a Revolutionary Ethos</i>	47
<i>Struggle in a Religious Field as Struggle Over America</i>	53
<i>Professions: Deferred, Not Denied</i>	61
UPENDING THE BOURDIEUSIAN FIELD: THE PENTECOSTAL BODY	77
<i>Radical Evangelicals' Rhetorical Mobilization of Nostalgia</i>	77
<i>The Radical Evangelical Body as the Means of Resistant Religious Production</i>	84
<i>On the Production of Tongues-Speech as a Competitive Religious Form</i>	88
CONCLUSION	96
CHAPTER 2: ASSESSING VICTOR TURNER'S LIMINALITY AS A THEORETICAL FRAME FOR PENTECOSTALISM	98
INTRODUCTION	98
A PRIMER ON THE "WORK" OF RITUAL: CATHERINE BELL	104
<i>The Political Rites</i>	107
<i>The Rites of Passage</i>	109
VICTOR TURNER'S DEVELOPMENT OF RITUAL LIMINALITY	110
<i>A Brief Background on Turner and the Manchester School</i>	111
<i>Arnold van Gennep's Rites of Passages and Turner's Liminality</i>	116
<i>Turner's Account of Liminality in Calendrical Rites</i>	120
TURNERIAN LIMINALITY IN PENTECOSTAL SCHOLARSHIP.....	126
<i>Turner's Discussion on Pentecostalism</i>	126
<i>Bobby Alexander</i>	130
<i>Daniel Albrecht</i>	134

WOLFGANG VONDEY	137
<i>Locating Vondey's Breach: A Breach in the Church Universal</i>	144
IDEOLOGICAL COMMUNITAS: VONDEY AND TURNER AS CHURCH APOLOGISTS	152
SOME CRITICAL RESPONSES TO VONDEY	161
<i>A More Robust Account of the Breaches that Attended Early Pentecostalism</i>	166
CHAPTER 3: CALENDRIAL RITES: LATTER RAIN AND HARVEST IN THE PENTECOSTAL HABITUS	
.....	177
INTRODUCTION	177
OVERVIEW OF THE CHAPTER	178
CREATING A SACRED THRESHOLD: EVANGELICAL ALTARS AS TURNER'S LIMINALITY	182
DIFFERENTIATING THE PENTECOSTAL ALTAR THROUGH NUANCING ITS RITUAL EFFICACY	187
<i>Harvest in Early Twentieth-century America</i>	189
<i>American Mythopraxis and Habitus</i>	196
<i>Myth: Harvest as Collective Representation</i>	200
ORIGINS OF A COLLECTIVE REPRESENTATION: HARVEST AT THE TURN OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY	202
<i>Harvest and Collective Effervescence</i>	204
<i>Anti-Temporality: Turner as Foil to Bourdieu's World Upside Down</i>	211
RITES OF PASSAGE PREDICATED ON SOCIAL CONFLICT: PIERRE BOURDIEU	217
TRACING A CARNIVALISTIC SEASONAL PROGRESSION:.....	228
OPPOSITION, CONFRONTATION, REVERSAL.....	228
CARNIVAL: CELEBRATION OF SEASONAL REVERSAL AS POLITICAL REVERSALS	241
<i>"A Boundless World": Carnival and the origins of the Culture of Folk Humor</i>	244
CONCLUSION.....	253
CHAPTER 4: CARNIVAL OF THE SPIRIT	255
HEAVEN BELOW: A CARNIVAL OTHERWORLD OF COSMOLOGICAL REVERSAL.....	255
AZUSA STREET MISSION: ANTI-STRUCTURAL INTEGRITY.....	260
RECEPTION OF AZUSA STREET MISSION AS CARNIVALESQUE.....	292
MENIPEAN COSMOLOGY AND THE CARNIVAL.....	299
THE PENTECOSTAL ALTAR AS A THRESHOLD AND THRESHING FLOOR:.....	308
INDIVIDUAL SPIRITUAL AND COSMOLOGICAL REVERSAL	308
CONCLUSION.....	317
CHAPTER 5: THE RISE OF THE LAMB'S QUEEN.....	319
INTRODUCTION	319
BRIDE: KEY COLLECTIVE REPRESENTATION OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN EARLY PENTECOSTALISM	324
THEMATIC ANALYSIS OF PENTECOSTAL BRIDAL DISCOURSE	332
<i>Purity</i>	332
<i>Love Marriage</i>	334
<i>Anti-hierarchy</i>	341
BRIDAL PLOT: WINTER-SPRING AND THE SEASONALITY OF POWER	344
<i>Winter: Early Pentecostalism's Discourse of Destruction</i>	352
<i>Spring: Crowning the Lamb's Queen</i>	360
BRIDE TALK: GLOSSOLALIA AS KRISTEVA'S SEMIOTIC DISCOURSE	362

<i>Ritual Syntax as the Root of Linguistic Syntax: Structure in Language</i>	362
<i>Structure Ritualized in Language</i>	363
<i>Kristeva's Semiotic Discourse in Language: Structure Revolutionized in both Carnival and Poetic Language</i>	368
<i>The Drives within Semiotic Discourse in Poetry and Carnivalists' use of Jeers and Oaths in Carnival</i>	371
<i>Glossolalia: Semiotic Speeching Aimed at the Maternal Body</i>	375
WORLD-UPSIDE-DOWN, WOMAN ON TOP	381
CONCLUSION: RITUOPRAXIS, GENDER, AND AUTHORITY	391
<i>Gender and Reversals</i>	393
<i>Public v. Private Sources of Authority</i>	395
<i>World Upside Down and Women</i>	406
<i>Trump and Private, Feminine Sources of Authority</i>	414
BIBLIOGRAPHY	417

Abstract

This dissertation presents an historical and macro-sociological account of the rise of Christian denominational hierarchies in the Progressive Era as the paramount social context of the rise of Pentecostalism, in order to counterpose the ritual innovation of Azusa Street Mission Revival as in dialogical negation of these rising hierarchies. I argue that the development of rites of anti-hierarchy was made possible, in part, owed to the reactivation of the Revolution-era's anti-hierarchical discourse and culture. I illustrate how altar-centered ecstasy came to be highly valued in American evangelicalism and how Pentecostals rhetorically pitted their ecstatic charisms against clergy-mediated goods. I argue that, by maintaining their bodies and embodied knowledges as reliable sources of religious goods, early Pentecostals resisted religious dispossession in a period of wide-spread economic and cultural dispossession.

I argue for a fuller understanding of the historical construction of Pentecostal altar space, chiefly at Azusa Street Mission, as a ritual threshold of change— individual, political, and global. To this end, I forward a reading of the rites of “baptism of the Holy Spirit”—as defined by at Azusa Street Mission—as Carnival ritual. To do so, I first locate the discernible influence of agrarian

thought/practice via the collective representations of *latter rain* and *harvest*. I argue that the palpable agrarian character of early Pentecostal thought about the altar suggests the influence of calendrical rites on the social construction and reception of the Pentecostal altar. Harvest rites are “rites of the threshold,” or “rites of transition,” or “rites of reversal” in the work of Pierre Bourdieu.

By constructing a Bourdieusian-Bakhtinian model of the rites of seasonal reversal, I produce a reading of Azusa Street Mission that highlights the Revival’s likeness to Bakhtin’s Carnival. I then argue that, in keeping with the logics of seasonal reversal, the early Pentecostals transformed into a feminine *Bride*, and the Holy Spirit was accordingly feminized through glossolalic dialogue. The time space of the Pentecostal altar was, therefore, constructed as a female seasonality of power.

Keywords: Ritual studies, Pentecostalism, harvest, seasonality of power, *communitas*, anti-structure, feminism, Marxist, cultural sociology, carnival, carnivalesque, semiotic, glossolalia, bride, latter rain, Pierre Bourdieu, Mikhail Bakhtin, Julia Kristeva

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I came to Drew facing existential questions that stressed my psychic limits, but this dissertation achieves a coming-together of answers that coalesce into an experience of the sublime. In this arduous process, Chris, my husband, kept me steady. I dedicate this dissertation to him.

Introduction

Apple & Tree: Sources of Humor

To her friends and neighbors, my mother seems a credit to the many institutions that have formed her. She was first in her class at Burbank High School and was on her way to Stanford when a family illness compelled her to stay in San Antonio and attend Trinity University. First in her tightly-knit community of Mexican-American immigrants to graduate from college, my mother spent her career teaching middle-school home economics in a disadvantaged school district. When I was a teenager, she ran our church's "Missionette" program, which helped girls transform into Christian young women by molding them in the images of Susanna, Tabitha, Anna, and Ruth, biblical heroines who otherwise get little attention in a biblical text dominated by heroic masculine types. My mother: first in her class, first to graduate, church leader; she could reasonably be considered a pillar of the community.

It came as something of a surprise to find that my mother— tither, sewer of taffeta Christmas dresses—was capable of heckling a priest, out loud, *during a funeral*. I can't remember who had died because my mother was then so conscientious that she insisted my family attend the funerals of everyone with whom she had ever had contact or who had ever had contact with any of her extended family. What I do remember is that this funeral was being conducted by a Catholic priest. This was unfortunate because Diana Sanchez Lopez, who never wears skirts above the knee, was raised Pentecostal by my grandmother, Olga

Lydia Sanchez Lopez, who with all her sisters (except one wayward one) had converted to Pentecostalism in the mid-1940s. This funeral was happening in the mid-nineties, so fifty years of hostile separation informed the following incident.

The priest, sensing he had a rare audience and opportunity, began to pontificate about evangelicals. “Los evangélicos,” he began, “being prideful as they are, like to pretend they are more spiritual and biblical than Catholic believers.” Apparently, this priest wanted us all to know that this was not the case. “It simply is not the case,” he said, “that Catholics do not read the Bible for themselves,” though he knew: “this is the kind of thing that evangelicals say about Catholics.” (On this point, his intelligence was correct. To my recollection, evangelicals of the time did say exactly this kind of thing.) This, to be clear, is the rising action of our story: my mother, seated behind me in a pew, is becoming upset. Having made that early point, the priest ventured to bring up a bigger issue. “Why,” he bemoaned, “do the evangélicos accuse Catholics of worshipping the Virgin?” Catholics do not worship, he explained, they “ven-er-ate Mary, which is entirely different.” He continued, asking, *why don't evangélicos also show Mary their love and honor? What had the Virgin ever done to them, the evangelicals, that they would refuse to honor her?*

He was not finished, was really on a roll, when he was rudely interrupted by a woman's raised voice, intoning the way one might at a baseball game. The voice asked, defiantly: “And what has she ever done for us?!” That woman was

my mother. To my surprise, my mother was this backtalking woman, too. And the institution on whom this version of my mother is a credit may be a surprising one: the little, immigrant-founded, Spanish-speaking Pentecostal denomination in which my mother was reared, the *Concilio Latino Americano de Iglesias Cristianas* (CLADIC).

This dissertation is an attempt to contribute to the study of Pentecostalism an account of its humor, via a reconstruction of its Bakhtinian-carnavalesque origins. The anecdote that opens this chapter is not only about the woman I have centered in the narrative, but is moreover about the origins of her (anti-clerical, anti-elitist) humor, about the groups of people behind her, those, so to speak, *egging her on*. This work is about Pentecostal anti-hierarchy, anti-elitism, and irreverence. It is about Pentecostal refusal (literally) *to kiss the ring or bend the knee*.¹ There are many excellent accounts of historical Pentecostalism. It is time to take this more cantankerous aspect of early Pentecostalism full into official account.

¹In his 1996 book “The Church Visible: The Ceremonial Life and Protocol of the Roman Catholic Church,” James-Charles Noonan Jr. wrote that “for centuries, the Church has granted an indulgence to Catholics who reverence the ring of the pope, cardinals, and other prelates.” Indulgences are granted for specific acts of piety wherein the Church grants remission of sin and have long been a common practice, yet as Noonan observes, when it comes to ring kissing, in most Western nations, prelates have long discouraged the practice.” Christopher White, “Pope Francis Ring Kissing Controversy Draws Confusion Over the Long-Standing Tradition,” The Washington Post, March 26, 2019.

Overview of the Work

This work, an interdisciplinary reading of Pentecostal history that aims to produce new theory, enjoys the advantage of borrowing from many excellent sources on early Pentecostalism. Foundational works like Edith Blumhofer's *Restoring the Faith* (1993), Donald Dayton's *Theological Roots of Pentecostalism* (1987), Grant Wacker's *Heaven Below* (2001), and Robert Mapes Anderson's *Vision of the Disinherited* (1979) all show up in these pages, as does Cecil Robeck's excellent historical account, *The Azusa Street Mission and Revival* (2006). Together these histories, along with Daniel Ramírez *Migrating Faith* (2015) and Gastón Espinosa's *William J. Seymour and the Origins of Global Pentecostalism* (2014), provide a critical mass of well-established primary accounts and secondary treatments that make it possible for me to produce this novel reading of the cultural sociological origins of Pentecostalism.

My starting point for inquiry into the character of Pentecostalism is the Azusa Street Mission Revival (1906–1909). At the heart of my dissertation is a reading of the bodily logics of Azusa Street Mission in tandem with the Carnival theory of Mikhail Bakhtin. I revisit the Mission to appraise the work of these logics as a cohort, as performed in combination, and argue that they collectively draw power downward. The embodied ecstasies that have (over time) become the Revival's calling cards—their drunkenness, “holy rolling;” fainting spells, clucking and howling; everything that originally made Azusa Street infamous—are my

starting point. Azusa's interracial altars; women in hysterics; and tongues-speech; its "heavenly chorus," and drunken laughter: everything that has qualified as Pentecostal *pandemonium* is, for me, my key material. I demonstrate a high degree of concurrence between Carnival's ritual categories, as influentially theorized by Russian folklorist and literary critic Mikhail Bakhtin, and these ostentatious behaviors that are the calling cards of early Pentecostalism, of which Azusa Street Mission Revival is the beloved ideal-type.

This dissertation performs the all-important work of connecting these ritual body logics to the early Pentecostals' anti-hierarchical discourse, which has hitherto been mishandled by interpreters of the movement. Eye-witness and early Pentecostal reporter Frank Bartleman famously exalted of the Azusa Street Revival that, therein, the "color line was washed away" has been interrogated in a fact or fiction dichotomy by historians, but herein the question is why Bartleman thought the work of the Spirit would be to wash the colorline away at all. Why was that kind of social leveling and integration the work that Bartleman (and others) wanted the Spirit to do? Closer interrogation of Bartleman reveals his thoroughly radical evangelical sensibilities: he also declared that the restored Pentecost eradicated hierarchy, priest-class, and "priest-craft!" This vision of the Pentecost was not unique to Bartleman. A Pentecostal appetite for stories that feature the power of the Holy Spirit bringing the high and mighty low appears repeatedly in the primary literatures. This discourse, which I present as a

tradition birthed in the American revolution, is the interpretive key for understanding how early Pentecostals defined the person and social work of the Holy Spirit. It was, in effect, their (revolutionary) lay sociology and pneumatology.

This leveling discourse, sourced from the American Revolution, was reactivated in the late nineteenth century under cultural duress. Early Pentecostals saw the Progressive era's rise of elites in religious denominations as occurring in tandem with the rise of elites in science, medicine, and law, and they contested the validity of these elites, as a group, based on a tradition of resisting authority that had its source in the American Revolution. In this context, the rites of the Holy Spirit aim first, to resist the professionalization of American religion and second, to contest loss of the authority of religion in American life to other kinds of authority. Thus, a carnivalization of power at the Pentecostal altar effectively drew power down—away from priests *and* also their newcomer counterparts, like lawyers and doctors. This carnivalization played a large part in defining the character and work of the (Pentecostal) Holy Spirit.

In this ritual work and discourse, early American Pentecostalism was deeply subversive and anti-authoritarian. Though scholars have noted that Pentecostalism is centered on ritual *liminality*, they often employ Victor Turner's concept of *communitas* to analyze the value and work of Pentecostal worship practices. Because Turner's concept of liminality places it in cooperative and

productive relationship to social order, his *communitas*—as a frame—tends to obscure the divisive anti-hierarchy that characterized the rise of the Holy Spirit in early Pentecostalism. (Chapter two examines this in detail.) A Bakhtinian account of the Carnival is better able to integrate the upside-down ritual logics of Azusa Street Mission with its carnivalizing discourse. Because Pentecostalism’s anti-hierarchy—both as a ritual form and as a discourse—was sourced from the American radical evangelical tradition and its relation to the revolutionary age, my work contributes to the stream of scholarship that posits Pentecostal origins as coming from America, and presents Azusa Street as the highwater mark of that original cresting.

Embracing Azusa Street as the Founding Myth of Pentecostalism

At the turn of the twentieth century, evangelicals of the period expressly longed for newer, *higher* experiences of God. Please note they did not yearn for something supplementary, but for something higher. They defined this “higher” over and against the practices of denominational Christianity. Many proto-pentecostals came from the tradition of American radical evangelicalism, which had long expressed dissatisfaction with, and vigilantly guarded against as dangerous, ritualistic and formal religion. “Radical” evangelicals’ strident (if perennial) denunciation of American waywardness, and of the cultural authorities whom they felt caused and authorized this waywardness, created a

precursor vacuum and interpretive frame for Azusa Street Mission's religious phenomena. At the time, there existed both the logic of desire for something higher and better than what denominational Christianity had to offer in evangelical circles, and the conviction that elite types were not to be trusted. The struggle of the American Revolution had produced the rise of the common person into cultural dominance; both the monarchy and other hierarchies of culture, and most especially the religious functionaries who had tried to suppress America's revolutionary energies, had been roundly defeated—not just in the battlefield, but also in the court of public opinion. And it was now the court of public opinion that mattered.²

One hundred fifteen years later, for ever vigilant proto-Pentecostals, something was always on the verge of compromising authentic, heartfelt, and populist American religion, and this in turn could compromise the American project. The rise of elites at the beginning of the Progressive era converged with force on evangelicals' apocalyptic anxieties about the end of the nineteenth century. In this context, the restored Pentecost grew to be perceived as helping to end the present evil age and bring about the next world; i.e., a form of millenarianism. This survey of the beginnings of Pentecostalism takes interest in the work performed by the revival at Azusa Street Mission as one that, in the

² See Nathan O. Hatch, *The Democratization of American Christianity*, (New Haven: Yale UP, 1989).

process of fulfilling hopes for Pentecost, enacted a ritual fusion between a *fin de siècle* sensibility (in religious parlance “the return of the Lord” at the end of a century) and a novel and bodily mobilization of the indwelling of Holy Spirit. Early Pentecostals posited this indwelling not as solely individualistic, but as group-functional: the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in human bodies *as a collective* was meant to help turn the pages of history and to bring an evil age to a close.³

This project actively participates in ongoing debate about the status of Azusa Street Mission in the history of Pentecostalism. Within the scope of American religious history, the Azusa Street Revival remains broadly recognized as significant for its influence on American and global Christianities. The Los Angeles Times’ eyewitness accounts of the revival have provided compelling primary texts, enabling scholars to visualize the “wild fanaticisms” that purportedly characterized the Mission and disturbed the peace of its surrounding neighborhood.⁴ Already conspicuous in its own time, Azusa’s shadow looms much larger in scholarly hindsight. North American Pentecostal denominational histories have commonly traced their roots to Azusa Street. In these denominational histories, the Revival is narrated as historical rupture, a

³ Edith Blumhofer, *Restoring the faith: The Assemblies of God, Pentecostalism, and American culture* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1993), 60.

⁴ Cecil M. Robeck Jr., *The Azusa Street Mission and Revival* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, Inc., 2006), 175.

phenomenon “suddenly from heaven.”⁵ But the subsequent spread of American Pentecostalism from the mission’s “small fanatical sect” to its unforeseeable global proportions has occasioned a thoroughgoing scholarly analysis of the mission’s reach and influence. As a result, the mission now occupies a contentious space in the historical narrative.

Notable historians of Pentecostalism Edith Blumhofer and Grant Wacker have each constructed their historical accounts in a manner designed to check the notion that Azusa Street Mission is the primordial site or quintessence of early Pentecostalism. In Blumhofer’s words, the historical facts contradict the “myth of Azusa Street.”⁶ For his part, Wacker likewise expresses doubts about “Edenic” accounts of race relations at Azusa Street Mission and critiques Black origins accounts of Pentecostalism as “presentist-driven.”⁷ There is plenty of good evidence for the primacy of Azusa Street Mission in the history of global Pentecostalism. That said, the dichotomy mobilized in these notions is simply one of academic imagination. The legend of the Azusa Street Mission Revival is both myth and fact. It is a social fact that Azusa Street Mission is legendary. It is

⁵ Donald Dayton, *Theological Roots*, 16, 29 n.7; Joe Creech, “Visions of Glory: The Place of the Azusa Street Revival in Pentecostal History,” *Church History* 65 (1996): 405-24.

⁶ Edith L. Blumhofer, *The Assemblies of God: A Chapter in the Story of American Pentecostalism, Vol. 1-To 1941* (Springfield, MO: Gospel Publishing House, 1989), 91.

⁷ In his very successful monograph about early Pentecostals, Wacker describes his own work as a critique of the Edenic model. Grant Wacker, *Heaven Below* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001), 342. See also Augustus Cerillo, Jr. and Grant Wacker, “Bibliography and Historiography of Pentecostalism in the United States,” *New International Dictionary of the Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, ed. Stanley Burgess (Grand Rapids, MI: HarperCollins Zondervan, 2002).

myth for precisely the reasons Blumhofer and Wacker suggest, but without the suspicion: the Azusa Street Revival circulated utopian feelings. It is not the case that Frank Bartleman “boosted” Azusa into a mythical origin, as historian of America religion Gastón Espinosa has persuasively argued. Instead, Bartleman speaks to early Pentecostals’ shared experience of Azusa Street Mission as Edenic, as ultimate, as (in their parlance) the Pentecost renewed, but a larger, more prominent Pentecost. This is why the denominational records independently record the Azusa Revival as iconic, as the primordial fountain that would change the world. This dissertation does not wrestle with insider accounts that present the mission as a pinnacle of spiritual experience. It asks instead why a purported pinnacle of spiritual experience would be characterized by egalitarian relationships, upside-down leadership structure, agrarian forms of religious embodiment and speaking in indecipherable languages.⁸

Azusa Street Mission as Myth & Ritual

In short, the reception and interpretation of Azusa Street Mission Revival as the origin of Pentecostalism are social processes and are studied as such here.

⁸ Gastón Espinosa stresses the reality of Azusa Street Mission’s egalitarian structure and the influence of that structure on the development of early Pentecostalism. He credits its leader, William J Seymour, with this achievement: “The Pentecostal influence in public life is a global trend that reflects Seymour’s socially liberative message that the Spirit baptism breaks down all human made racial, class, educational, and national barriers and unites all born-again, Spirit-filled Christians into one body of believers.” Espinosa, *William J Seymour and the Origins of Global Pentecostalism* (Durham: Duke Univeristy Press, 2014), 8.

In cultivating and narrating their experiences and later, in constructing their histories, early Pentecostals co-constructed the founding myth of American Pentecostalism. In my account, they did this with more rather than less of the traditional building blocks of myth, and incorporated myth's most reliable partner in creating meaning: ritual. The preceding scholarship of this period undervalues clear clues that early American Pentecostals were avid mythologists, or troubles myth as anti-history. This dissertation retrieves common early Pentecostal rhetorical motifs, such as the *latter rain*, which they used to refer to the outpouring of the Holy Spirit; the *harvest*, which signified a world-wide cohort of persons who would come to salvation; and the *Bride*, who represented the those who were especially pure in heart and who had been baptized in the Spirit, for what these symbols are, in sociological terms: Durkheimian collective representations. I investigate these representations not only for their coherence to biblical texts, but also for their coherence to the cultural contexts of early Pentecostals' lives. In doing so I uncover the influence of a certain set of agricultural rites, the rites of seasonal reversal, at work in the creation of Azusa's altar space and rituals. This part of my analysis draws heavily from anthropology, from Durkheim's thinking about the role of symbols and their effervescence in creating community bonds and shared meaning.

A second form of analysis throughout this dissertation is a sociological one, and the fault lines between thinking ritual in anthropological settings versus

in sociological ones will run through many aspects of my argument. To posit that the latter rain, harvest, and Bride *representations* have their sources in agrarian life/thought, in the agrarian collectivity, and thus can be studied using anthropological ideas, presents the difficulty of thinking about Pentecostal myth and ritual construction in the context of the nation-state, in a society with asymmetrical power relations, and during the incipient industrialization that was the context for early Pentecostal innovations. Critically, these fault lines run through anthropology and sociology as disciplines too, in jagged ways, and can be discerned in the thought of most of the theorists I will engage extensively.⁹ For instance, both Victor Turner's *liminality* and Pierre Bourdieu's *habitus* have (original) agrarian exemplars, but are then applied to the post Industrial, large-scale societal present by the respective authors. For Turner, the sociological picks up from the anthropological in his account of the *liminoid*, while for Bourdieu, this switch is interpolated into his theory via the treatment he gives habitus in modern France, in *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste* (1979).¹⁰ These common strains, which can be considered primarily part of the lived changes that Pentecostal ritualists (very broadly construed) faced, and

⁹ Venezuelan sociologist Otto Maduro writes, "Sociology is a consequence of the convergence of the problems and mental schemata that have arisen with capitalistic industrialization...is an attempt to explain these problems and mental schemata...is an effort to resolve some of the serious difficulties generated by these problems and mental schemata...and is therefore also one more terrain for the irruption of the problems and mental schemata." Maduro, *Religion and Social Conflicts* (New York: Orbis Books, 1982), 13.

¹⁰ Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste*. Translated by Richard Nice. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1984 [1979].

which theorists of ritual endeavor to also think through, in my work present as affinity.¹¹ I posit early Pentecostals as innovators of myth and ritual for whom ritual theorists are good interlocutors, and I do so in a manner that does not give primacy to theory but assigns the interpretive primacy to Pentecostalism—meaning that rather than trying to make the case that Pentecostalism is an instance of Mikhail Bakhtin’s carnival, I am instead arguing (as one example) that Bakhtin theorizes the disciplinary force of history against the body and the resistant rambunctious response of populists in a manner that resonates with the experience and endeavors of early Pentecostals. I premise that thinking with ritual theorists is helpful when assessing early Pentecostals as ritual innovators. I am making the case that Bakhtin helps to interpret Pentecostalism.

Additionally, this treatment of Azusa Street Mission Revival’s bodily practices endeavors to think through the construction of the Pentecostal altar and rites of the Holy Spirit with ritual theorists keeping top of mind that many of the concerns of sociologists and anthropologists of religion about the work the rituals

¹¹When I indicate that ritual theorists are good interlocutors, I am thinking directly of those who are anthropologists and sociologists of religion, and to a large degree ritual theorists who are often both, as in the examples I have given above. Even in the case of Bakhtin’s *Carnival*, he supposes carnival to be a ritual that has changed over time and has taken on aspects that are owed to the church and state’s single-toned seriousness and monological positions toward truth, thus situating the rite in broad social structures and venturing into history and critical sociology. Bakhtin’s literary theory is itself set in a sociology of struggle and thematizes social struggle. Confluences between Bakhtinian thought and Marxism have been noted and addressed. See Craig Brandist, “Bakhtin, Marxism and Russian Populism.” In Brandist C. Tihanov G. (eds) *Materializing Bakhtin*, St Antony’s Series. (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2000). See also, Graham Pechey, “Bakhtin, Marxism and Poststructuralism” in *Literature, Politics and Theory*, ed Francis Barket, et al., (London: Routledge, 1984).

do in the life of a community *echo* the sentiments and concerns of early Pentecostals themselves about the role and function of ritual in the life of the Christian community. Thus, I premise Pentecostals as self-reflexive ritual innovators, not as the “primitive” types who are (sometimes) posited to tidily fit under the anthropological gaze. Much of my argument, and most explicitly in chapter one, points to the fact that Pentecostals consciously thought about issues of power, the consolidation of power via ritualization, and concentration of it at the top of social orders. Thus, Pentecostal rhetoric that problematizes rituals can readily be placed in interpretive dialogue with the insights of anthropologists on the construction of power. Pentecostals inherited the discourses and experience of revolutionary nation-making. In this way, they inherit the revolutionary world that haunts sociology, whether muted as in Durkheim or motioned-toward, as in Marx.

Pentecostals had an imagination for ritual constructions of power. When early Pentecostal preacher Charles Parham railed against the rise of medical authority in American culture, he critiqued then-fashionable bloodletting in a manner that evoked ritual animal sacrifice. He cautioned that Christians not allow themselves to be “doped, blistered, bled and dissected on the altars” of physicians who, he added, got richer in this process.¹² Early Pentecostal disaffiliation from the medical field mirrored their disaffiliation from then-

¹² Wacker, *Heaven Below*, 192.

professionalizing religion; in both circumstances, they intuited that a ritualization of power culminated in relationships of domination that they utterly deplored. Instead, early Pentecostals rallied to see doctors, lawyers, and clergyman laid out on the floor under the power of the Holy Spirit, for they believed the Pentecostal altar should bring down the high. In this light, I read early Pentecostals' avowed aversion to rituals as--more specifically--aversion to ritualizations that assign power to elites *in particular*, by which I mean two notions: they were averse to rituals which assigned power to elites and open, instead, to rituals that brought elites down a notch or empowered instead the common person. Historically, I read Pentecostal aversion to rituals that empower elites as the constitutive negative ground that helped to give Pentecostal rites their opposite function and meaning: bringing power to the humble. In this light, Bartleman functions not so much as a historian as he does a ritual theorist. The Holy Spirit, per Bartleman, had washed away the color line and done away with hierarchies. Said succinctly, I read the Pentecostal altar as a space for rituals of anti-hierarchy, a legacy of the radical evangelical tradition. The altar space in Pentecostal practice is a space that endeavored to take the hierarchs of the secular cultural order and bring them low. When I read Pentecostal altar rites using Bakhtinian theory, I am arguing that early Pentecostals brought their agrarian and revolutionary sensibilities to bear in constructing an altar that

ritually produced upside down hierarchies, or anti-hierarchies.

Examining the Role of Ritual Analysis in Assessing Religion and its Potential and Problems for Assessing Pentecostalism

Early Pentecostal preoccupation with power—their anti-elitism, anti-clericalism, their anti-ritual stances—is derived from radical evangelical experience of the American Revolution, through the maintenance and passing down of these attitudes. This being the case, they share at least a rudimentary affinity with Marxist accounts of the social order and Marxist-influenced concerns about the role of ritual in sanctifying social orders of oppression, or in making these orders appear natural and ordained. This affinity makes it all the more interesting when some accounts of Pentecostalism problematize it from a Marxist perspective. Robert Mapes Anderson’s *Vision of the Disinherited: The Making of American Pentecostalism* (1979) recapitulated a unique historical account of the rambunctious nature of Pentecostal protest against (in his words) “very real political and economic grievances.”¹³ Though, as Anderson noted, Pentecostalism was “born of radical social discontent,” in his analysis it “expended its revolutionary impulses in veiled, ineffectual, displaced attacks that amounted to withdrawal from the social struggle and passive acquiescence to the

¹³ Robert Mapes Anderson, *Vision of the Disinherited: The Making of American Pentecostalism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1979), 222.

world they hated and wished to escape.”¹⁴ In Anderson’s account, Pentecostal believers did accrue considerable psychic gain from “the Baptism in the Holy Spirit.” Anderson concedes that early Pentecostalism provided a catharsis for the troubled, created close-knit primary religious fellowships, and offered hope and solace for the despairing. But ultimately, he cautions, the solution of religious ecstasy that Pentecostalism proffered ended by perpetuating the very social system that victimized Pentecostals to begin with.

Anderson’s treatment of early Pentecostalism posited its usefulness in redressing deprivation on a psychic level, but problematized its ecstatic escapism as disincentivization for challenging US economic systems of oppression. The question of religion’s function with respect to the social order is the animating concern of the sociology of religion. At the foundation of the field, German philosopher Max Weber explained the function of religion as tailored to the needs of its addressee which are determined by class. Venezuelan sociologist of religion Otto Maduro expounds on this theme as the “religious demand” of the laity. He writes, “To the extent that the laity comprises a public formed of social factions objectively situated in opposing positions ...to this same extent the religious interests of the lay public will be conflictively and asymmetrically organized in a constellation of differentiated and even opposing demands.”¹⁵ When that addressee was in a good position in society, religion’s role was to justify the

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Otto Maduro, *Religion and Social Conflicts*, 93.

person's felicitous status, or the *legitimation of dominance*, and when the people in question are in dire straits, religion needs to offer some measure of compensation and redress, and the clergy may feel a demand that they delegitimize the established order.¹⁶ In this context, the promise of a better world in the afterlife emerges as (one version of Marx's) smoking gun in accounting for the oppressive role of religion in public life. In displacing hope for a better life to the afterlife, religion fulfills its role as "opiate to the masses," displacing revolutionary energies from their real target: the State.¹⁷ In this context, religious millenarianism emerges as a particularly strident form of hope in the afterlife: for "millenarianism proclaimed the existing world to be wicked and beyond redemption by any human efforts" meaning, a disavowal of the established order, but also a displacement of the hope for a reversal of that order.¹⁸

¹⁶ Ibid.,

¹⁷ This classic quotation from Marx exemplifies well how he problematizes the role of religion. "Religious suffering is, at one and the same time, the expression of real suffering and a protest against real suffering. Religion is the sigh of the oppressed creature, the heart of a heartless world, and the soul of soulless conditions. It is the opium of the people. The abolition of religion as the illusory happiness of the people is the demand for their real happiness. To call on them to give up their illusions about their condition is to call on them to give up a condition that requires illusions. The criticism of religion is, therefore, in embryo, the criticism of that vale of tears of which religion is the halo. Criticism has plucked the imaginary flowers on the chain not in order that man shall continue to bear that chain without fantasy or consolation, but so that he shall throw off the chain and pluck the living flower. The criticism of religion disillusion man, so that he will think, act, and fashion his reality like a man who has discarded his illusions and regained his senses, so that he will move around himself as his own true Sun. Religion is only the illusory Sun which revolves around man as long as he does not revolve around himself." Karl Marx, *Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right* (London: Cambridge UP, 1970), 131.

¹⁸ Anderson, *Vision of the Disinherited*, 231.

Though Anderson's problematization of the function of religion treated the practice of glossolalia under the rubric of spirit possession, his account features no sustained rumination on Pentecostal ritual.¹⁹ But Marxist suspicion of the role of ritual in a society plagued by class struggles has informed anthropological and sociological appraisal of ritual in public life. The study of ritual in social life drew heavily, at first, from Durkheim's account of the role of rituals in integrating social life via collective representations and collective effervescence. Religion, in Durkheim's account, offers occasions for the social group to assemble and circulate sacred images. In Durkheim's thought, these images—the *collective representations*—actually represent the community itself, and the rituals that occasion their periodic circulation arouse intense feelings which connect individuals to the group. This is *collective effervescence*. In Durkheimian accounts of religion, ritual functions to “strengthen the social bonds of attaching the individual to the society of which he is a member.”²⁰ Durkheim's focus on the social functions of ritual led to the development of a school of British anthropologists led by Alfred Reginald Radcliffe-Brown. Radcliffe-Brown bracketed questions and theories about ritual's evolution²¹ and focused instead

¹⁹ Ibid., 14.

²⁰ Steven Lukes, “Political Ritual and Social Integration.” *Sociology* 9, no. 2 (May 1975): 290–296.

²¹ This was a welcome move for a discipline freighted with the unseemly baggage of colonial assumptions, which for example assumed that ritual was a relic from humankind's past only still visible in cultures that had yet to mature to the degree that had the British. This kind of thinking pervades James Frazer's now problematized, but enormously popular *The Golden*

on its role as an “essential part of the social machinery.” In Radcliffe-Brown’s work, ritual secures and maintains the unity of the group, a position known as functionalism. “We deal not with the origins but with the social functions of religions, i.e., the contribution they make to the formation and maintenance of the social order.”²² Radcliffe-Brown also understood the social structure as a system of relationships connecting people via their social roles. He anticipated that a community’s images of god, death, fertility, and spirit, for example, would be arranged and operationalized in ritual and myth in ways that maintained the social structure. Together, the viewpoints expressed in Radcliffe-Brown’s work comprise structural-functionalism.

But this simpler account of the role of ritual in small-scale societies drew challenge on the basis that larger-scale societies that feature both divisions in economic labor and class struggles that arise with these divisions present problems for accounts that present ritual as only having an integrating function. One early version of this challenge can be seen in Steven Lukes’ 1975 article, “Political Ritual and Social Integration.” There Lukes writes,

Let us recall the definition of ritual proposed by [Neo-Durkheimians]: namely, *rule-governed activity of a symbolic character which draws the attention of its participants to objects of thought and feeling which they hold to be of special significance.* My main positive suggestion is that political ritual should be seen

Bough. See J. G. Frazer, *The Golden Bough: A Study in Magic and Religion*, 2nd. ed., 3 vols. (London: Macmillan and Co., 1900).

²² See discussion in Catherine Bell, *Ritual: Perspectives and Dimensions* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 27.

as reinforcing, recreating and organizing representations collectives, that the symbolism of political ritual represents, *inter alia*, particular models or political paradigms of society and how it functions. In this sense, such ritual plays, as Durkheim argued, a cognitive role, rendering intelligible society and social relationships, serving to organize people's knowledge of the past and present and their capacity to imagine the future. In other words, it helps to define as authoritative certain ways of seeing society: it serves to specify what in society is of special significance, it draws people's attention to certain forms of relationships and activity--and at the same time, deflects their attentions from other forms...I suggest, in short, that we should go beyond the somewhat simplistic idea of political ritual expressing-producing-constituting ...social integration...and take up the fertile idea instead that ritual has a cognitive dimension (this being...original part of Durkheim's theory) though placing it (as Durkheim did not) within a class-structured, conflictual, and pluralistic model of society ...rituals can be seen as modes of exercising, or seeking to exercise, power along the cognitive dimension.²³

Lukes helped to reframe the work of ritual, which not only serves to produce social integration, but also functions to produce relations of social domination. Chapter two will continue this conversation by looking closely at the reception of Victor Turner in the study of Pentecostalism. That discussion will take off where this one leaves off, by positioning Turner as heir to structural-functionalism and demonstrating how his account of liminality has, by extension, been an important site of the continuation of the questions and themes that I have just raised here: What is the work of ritual? Does it function to maintain the social order? If it does, does it necessarily obscure social conflict, perhaps even including social

²³ Lukes, "Political Ritual," 301; emphasis mine.

oppressions? Does liminality, as it were, cover the multitude of social sins that Marx premises in his positing of social conflict as the *modus operandi* of social life? Or, as Turner suggests, does liminality surface the tensions and provide a means to resolve them? All of these questions converged on the reception of Turner's account of the liminal phase in rites of passage, and have not been successfully answered. Thus, when scholars interpret Pentecostalism in tandem with Turner's liminality, unless they attend to these questions they risk producing an account of the movement that indentures it to serving the social order. They risk recapitulating unreflexively its function in very the manner that Anderson's work has problematized.

Yet by paying close attention to the many forms of social conflict that gave rise to early Pentecostalism, early Pentecostal rhetoric and practice reveals the traces of ritual innovations that mirrors Mikhail Bakhtin's account of a carnival mystical clan body, poised in antagonistic relationship to the social order and symbolically enacting its own seasonality of power. The collective narrative that mobilized the latter rain and harvest as symbolic representations aimed to move the world into an upside down, feminine season of power. The work of these chapters is to demonstrate how these symbols narrated a new form of populist power plausible for its historical context. This is a feminist-Marxist account of the construction of the Baptism of the Holy Spirit as a seasonal ritual of reversal that

transformed the Holy Spirit into a matriarch.

Outline of the Chapters

Chapter one presents an historical and macro-sociological account of the rise of Christian denominational hierarchies in the Progressive Era as the paramount social context of the rise of Pentecostalism in order to counterpose the ritual innovation of Azusa Street Mission Revival as in dialogical negation of these rising hierarchies. The chapter extensively foregrounds this rise of hierarchical powers using Pierre Bourdieu's field theory to lend intelligibility and plausibility to early Pentecostals' understanding of priests, doctors, lawyers, and the pope. It also endeavors to show that the development of rites of anti-hierarchy was made possible, in part, owed to the reactivation of the Revolution-era's anti-hierarchical discourse and culture. It revisits the period of early Pentecostalism to illustrate how altar-centered ecstasy came to be highly valued in American evangelicalism, how radical evangelicals cultivated a space for it, and how they rhetorically pitted their ecstatic charisms against clergy-mediated goods. By maintaining their bodies and embodied knowledges as reliable sources of religious goods, early Pentecostals resisted religious dispossession in a period in which many were experiencing economic and cultural dispossession.

Chapter two anticipates that, in addition to discursive anti-hierarchy, early Pentecostals' ritual formation made it possible for them to innovate the baptism

of the Holy Spirit as rites of anti-hierarchy. But the work of chapter two is also foreground, examining why the reception of ritual theory in the study of historic Pentecostalism is at present insufficient for making early Pentecostal ritual intelligible. I argue for a fuller understanding of the historical construction of Pentecostal altar space, chiefly at Azusa Street Mission, as a ritual threshold of change— individual, political, and global. German theologian Wolfgang Vondey has characterized Pentecostal altar rituals as instances of Victor Turner’s liminality. But in this chapter I argue that Turner’s concept of liminality is too plagued with philosophical holism and too church contained to offer a sufficient account of early Pentecostal ritual innovation.

Chapter three moves toward a reading of the rites of “baptism of the Holy Spirit”—as defined by at Azusa Street Mission—as Carnival ritual. To do so, I first locate the discernible influence of agrarian thought/practice via the collective representations of *latter rain* and *harvest*. I argue that the palpable agrarian character of early Pentecostal thought about the altar suggests the influence of calendrical rites on the social construction and reception of the Pentecostal altar. I then situate the status of harvest rites in the US during the Azusa Street Revival period, which demonstrates their peak importance in American culture at the time. Harvest rites are “rites of the threshold,” or “rites of transition,” or “rites of reversal” in the work of Pierre Bourdieu. This chapter contrasts his account of these rites from Turner’s because his account better matches the rhetoric of early

Pentecostals with regard to weather. Bakhtin's account of Carnival depicts it as a ritual of seasonal reversal, which is able to take account of social conflict in a manner that Turner's seasonal rituals of reversal simply will not. The chapter constructs a Bourdieusian-Bakhtinian model of the rites of seasonal reversal, and closes with a discussion of Carnival that will enable the work of the last chapter: reading Azusa Street Mission with Bakhtin's Carnival, with a discussion that will illuminate ways to decode their likenesses in form and function.

In chapter four, I argue that, owing to the logics of seasonal reversal which included gender reversal, not only was the Pentecostal congregation transformed into a *Bride*, but the Holy Spirit was accordingly feminized into a mother through glossolalic dialogue. Accordingly, the time space of the Pentecostal altar was constructed as a female seasonality of power. Through contest over the validity of rites in the Holy Spirit, early Pentecostals doubled-down on what they originally constructed: a Pentecost that was the apex of spiritual authority and power. In remaining true to this vision, early Pentecostals flipped the gender hierarchy of the Trinity, so that the Holy Spirit is therein now functionally a Matriarch.

On the Elaborate Use of Theory in this Work

There threatens to be an overabundance of theory in this dissertation, but my engagements with anthropologist-sociologist Pierre Bourdieu, Russian folklorist and literary theorist Mikhail Bakhtin, and philosopher and

psychoanalyst Julia Kristeva are best read as *recourse*, undertaken to make possible an appraisal of the value and virtue of early American Pentecostalism. Said differently, American Pentecostalism is such a fantastic conglomeration of forces that making sense of these forces—making sense of tongues-speech, for example— requires a complex critical apparatus and the stomach for bodily upheaval. To be perfectly clear, I appeal to Bourdieu, to Bakhtin, and to Kristeva because they make it possible to make rich, coherent sense of Pentecostalism. It would be a misunderstanding, however, to interpret my argument as “explaining Pentecostalism away.” Instead, I appeal to these authors for the affinity of their thought with Pentecostalism. My dissertation has three major movements, and each one is defined and explained using a key theorist. I posit that in a situation of rising hierarchies of power (Bourdieu), early Pentecostals innovated a carnival ritual to depose this power under the name of the Holy Spirit (Bakhtin), and that in the process they shifted into a relationship with a feminized Holy Spirit (Kristeva). Accordingly, I revisit the turn of the twentieth century to show the rise of hierarchies in the Progressive Era, using Pierre Bourdieu to highlight just how clear early Pentecostals were in their analysis and rejection of hierarchies. The eruption of power that Pentecostals surfaced at Azusa Street enacts a carnival more ambitious than Bakhtin’s—where Bakhtin’s carnivalists were content to let nature take her course in deposing powers, early Pentecostals invoked a Wintery Tribulation on the nations of the world, using their altar rites to try to provoke

earthquakes that could “trample the rich and proud.” In this context, the emergence of tongues-speech, as speech freed from the constraints of grammar, is best understood through Kristeva’s account of the semiotic discourse in language, especially in how the semiotic is the source of revolution in politically-ritualized language. In Kristeva’s work, the semiotic is only perfectly audible in the speaking that infants direct toward their mothers before they occupy the social world as individuals. The semiotic may sound like gibberish, but in its earliest forms, it is a form of speech that exists apart from, does not recognize, and does not obey social norms of language. As earliest Pentecostals aimed for higher blessings, and innovated rites to resist rising hierarchs and hierarchies, they spun both a carnival and a semiotic discourse, which I read as a maternalized discourse of power. Thus, I make recourse to these theorists to tell a story about the rise of feminine symbol of power in Pentecostalism, from *Latter Rain to Harvest to Bride* and, finally, to *Maternal Holy Spirit*.

In my upsetting afterword, I chart the degradation of Pentecostalism’s carnivalesque from its interracial, mixed gender pinnacle at Azusa Street Mission, to its election of Donald Trump as a profane Carnival King.

Chapter 1: **A Bourdieusian Macro-sociology of the Production of Tongues-Speech as a Competitive Form of Religious Capital**

Introduction

This chapter is a cultural sociological account of the rise of American Pentecostalism and posits that agricultural dispossession, workforce dislocation, and urbanization were forces that shaped the rise of Pentecostalism. I argue that these changes in the economic mode directly contributed to the rise of embodied charisms to a place of ritual prominence in radical evangelical Protestantism. The transition away from an agricultural economic base had a deeper consequence for the entire American workforce, which Robert Mapes Anderson's previous sociological treatment of the rise of American Pentecostalism, *Vision of the Disinherited* (1979), did not identify, but which is crucial for an appraisal of Pentecostal politics. A study of the philosophical underpinnings of Pierre Bourdieu's *fields* will show that *fields* arise as a consequence of industrialization. While fields produce various forms of *capital* that legitimate the bearer and the social order, what is pertinent for a novel understanding of the character of Pentecostalism is the manner in which fields, and professions within fields, are predicated on mass *dispossession* of the ability to produce goods and forms of capital for one's self. In the following sections, I argue that spirit possession and

glossolalia rose to prominence within the American radical evangelical tradition as a refusal to be dispossessed of religious traditional knowledges as a form of resistance to the dual threats of rising clergy authority and widespread dispossession of farmlands. This chapter is both a macro account of the rise of Pentecostalism and an intimate account of the Pentecostal body.

Once More, with Feeling: Agricultural Duress in the Religious Field as the Context for Early Pentecostalism

In America, the move away from agricultural ways of life to new industry and cities changed the modes of labor in the US in ways that presented myriad problems for American religious groups. From the late nineteenth to the early twentieth century, the United States changed from being a predominantly rural agrarian society to being the leading industrial nation in the world. A few metrics help make this process more comprehensible. Before the United States' Industrial Revolution, most Americans lived in small townships of no more than five thousand people. As late as 1880, though the American agricultural frontier had significantly dwindled in size, fully one half of American workers were still farmers who lived in isolated agricultural homesteads. Farms were largely and family run, and farmers were mostly self-sufficient in producing their own essentials, including food and clothes. The period from 1880 to 1920, however, saw the rapid and sweeping expansion of the American industrial sector thanks

to the advent of steam power, which allowed manufacturing to spread throughout the United States whereas before it had been restricted to a handful of locations near fast moving rivers.²⁴ In its full shift to an industrial economic base, the United States required and sustained mass migration and urbanization. Accordingly, though overall the national population was booming, townships lost half their populations to big cities. Whereas in 1850 only six American cities had populations of more than 100,000 people, that had risen to forty-one by 1900.²⁵

The relative growth of the economy intensified demand on American labor forces with the result that, by 1920, immigrants comprised over half the labor of the manufacturing workforce. These immigrant groups were at first largely populated by Eastern Europeans, but that leading place increasingly gave way to Mexican migrant workers seeking refuge from the Mexican Revolution after quotas delimited European immigration.²⁶ The influx of migrants during a time of territorial upheaval deepened a sense of loss and displacement in many white agrarian families. Where once the family farm occupied symbolic and economic centrality in American life, now agrarian life became marginal, and was threatened with the real risk of becoming altogether obsolete, as family farms lost

²⁴Charles Hirschman and Elizabeth Mogford, "Immigration and the American Industrial Revolution from 1880 to 1920." *Social science research* 38, no. 4 (2009): 897-920.

²⁵ Gerald King, *Disfellowshipped: Pentecostal Responses to Fundamentalism in the United States, 1906-1943* (Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2011), 23.

²⁶ Alicia Schmidt Camacho, *Migrant Imaginaries: Latino Cultural Politics in the US- Mexico Borderlands* (New York: NYU Press, 2008).

their roles to agricultural companies. As industrial methods replaced family style farming, families were effectively dispossessed of their means of economic production. The center of American production was becoming the city, where masses moved to work for wages, most often in unprotected and strenuous conditions. Living conditions were frequently squalid, and migrants often wrestled with illness. Many Americans were wary of the morals of immigrants, and assumed their polluting effects on rural economies. Additionally, the immigrants that arrived while the industrializing process was in full swing did not fit into the Protestant ranks of US public life as neatly as had prior immigrants. Gerald King highlights that by 1882, southern European Catholic, eastern European Orthodox, and Jewish settlers outnumbered northern European and Protestant immigrants. King explains, “[t]his alien contingent did not assimilate into the evangelical ethos as easily as their Protestant confessing neighbors to the North and were increasingly resented by the Anglo-Saxon majority.”²⁷

Thus, the industrialization process in the US was a period that presented multiple forms of challenge to people from different societies newly gathered into the city. The American workforce, together with arriving immigrants, faced the demands of a rapidly expanding economy that changed the contours of work, leading people into the city, into wage labor, and away from family farms and

²⁷ King, *Disfellowshipped*, 22.

homelands. For the purposes of this chapter, however, what is important is that the characteristic that many immigrant and migrant workers shared was a recent rootedness in an agricultural way of life.

Bourdieuian Fields for the Study of Pentecostalism

The switch from an agricultural economy, preoccupied with the production of food and largely *self-sufficient* in the production of necessary goods, including clothes and medicine, to a more advanced economy, historically one based on industrialization, was powered in part by increases in the divisions of labor. The processes of industrialization divide labor forces in a manner that gives rise to sociologist Pierre Bourdieu's *fields*, competition between these fields, and competition within fields. In the following section, I articulate Bourdieu's sociology of religion from the inception of its development into a field, a move that was foundational to the development of his comprehensive sociology of fields. In a felicitous sense, understanding Bourdieu's sociology of religion provides an accessible entrypoint into his field sociology, which can be a complicated system of thought, and is additionally beneficial as the religious field is of central concern in my argument.²⁸ I do this to lay the groundwork for discussing how Pentecostals did not so much “react to modernity” as mobilize an

²⁸ Terry Rey, *Bourdieu on Religion: Imposing Faith and Legitimacy* (Oakville, CA: Equinox Publishing Ltd., 2007) 8.

embodied resistance to the rise of competing forms of authority in modernity. I endeavor to show how early Pentecostals opted to maintain their bodies as means of religious production against the attempts of professionalizing clergy to dispossess them of these embodied knowledges and capabilities.

The advent of industrialization introduces different religious needs. Before industrialization, religious needs are characterized by the vulnerability of humans to the vicissitudes of nature. But as “the immediate, palpable, and vital realities of nature disappear,” German sociologist of religion Max Weber reasons, “external forces become an intellectual rather than material problem.”²⁹ Craftsmanship and commerce are relatively independent from seasonal vicissitudes and natural risks, allowing the religious needs of the city dweller to become oriented toward moral values, business ethics, and/or a meaningful account of existence via Weberian rationalization.³⁰ Bourdieu critically posits this intellectual production as *still* a type of labor which, although it pretends to be thought of in reference only to the object of study, is paid and therefore subject to the kinds of (often subliminal) coercion which a salary works on the minds of the employed.³¹ In positing the economic conditions of intellectual labor,

²⁹ Max Weber, *Economy and Society: An Outline of Interpretive Sociology vol. 2* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1978), 1178; Pierre Bourdieu, “Genesis and Structure of the Religious Field,” *Comparative Social Research* 13 (1991):6

³⁰ Bourdieu, “Genesis and Structure,” 10.

³¹ Bourdieu posits the structuration of mental labor in accordance with class position, so that religious producers will not produce an account of the world that calls into question their own position in it. Michèle Lamont explains the force of Bourdieu’s treatment of the labor forces required to create, here capital, but in her comment, *doxa* (not mutually exclusive):

Bourdieu revises a theme at the heart of classic sociology of religion—that of Marx's notion of religious parties' collusion with the status quo in the interest of elites. Bourdieu argues that laborers in various cultural fields, and not only religion, unwittingly produce symbolic goods that conform to schemas of domination because their livelihoods are historically functionally predicated on, and dependent on the continuance of, relations of economic domination.³² Complicity with power on the part of religion, a classic strain in Marxist analysis, is transformed in Bourdieu to suspicion of the role of clergy in producing symbolic domination that primarily benefits the clergy's own interests.

Indeed, Bourdieu's problematization of the development of a clergy caste, as a corps that enacts symbolic violence by producing a symbolically disempowered laity and supports (both actively and passively) social domination with sacred authority is thoroughgoing (Maduro 1982:92–95). In the switch from an agricultural to an industrial economy, the religious needs of the populace and types of religious goods offered by a growing clergy would need to develop in tandem. Yet myriad forms of competition threaten such a balance, including the

“Bourdieu's focus on knowledge production practices was most refreshing when read against the background of a neo-Marxist tradition that ignored many of the microlevel relationships within which social agents operate in a field of cultural production. Moreover, Bourdieu provided an entirely novel approach to research that eschewed both naïve positivism and disembedded theorization, one that combined purposeful “construction d'object” (or theoretically motivated research design) with empirically grounded research (as developed in *The Craft of Sociology*. This was in stark contrast with the atheoretical approaches to survey research that prevailed at the time.” See Lamont, “Looking Back at Bourdieu” in *Cultural Analysis and Bourdieu's Legacy: Settling Accounts and Developing Alternatives*, eds. Elizabeth Silva and Alan Warde (London: Routledge, 2010), 130.

³² Rey, *Bourdieu on Religion*, 75-78.

advent of classes resulting from increased divisions of labor. Bourdieu's religious field is composed of and sustained by clergy who engage in competition with each other, and is given shape by the positions that these religious providers occupy in their social hierarchy of religionists³³ This competition easily leads to rationalization of religious goods independent of the actual and felt religious needs of the laity. For example, elaborate soteriologies of Christ's atonement have a palpable effect on religious goods, but arise chiefly from the "struggle" between clergy for positions of intellectual authority and dominance. The rationalization of religious discourse in a productive religious field outpaces the felt needs of the laity by responding instead to the reality of competition within the religious field.

Second, in a competitive economy, separation of physical from mental labor surfaces the struggle between the two modes of labor; mental labor's higher remuneration encourages mental labor's symbolic dominance over physical labor. Because the work of religious laborers in a developed field is mental, the association of mental work with clergy symbolically sacralizes mental labor and, by extension, encourages the transformation of religion into a matter of correct belief rather than one of implicit knowledge or divine sustenance. For the laity who remain physical laborers, their work and their class positions are then perceived as relatively profane in relation to sacred, mental labor, and their urgent needs for daily provisions become a matter of charity and no longer a

³³David Schwartz, *Culture and Power: The Sociology of Pierre Bourdieu* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997), 120; Maduro, *Religion and Social Conflict*, 85-135.

matter of divine favor and intervention. Work conditions in an industrialized, competitive economy thus have significant bearing on the relationship of the clergy to a working-class laity. As clergy offer intellectualized products as religious goods, they alienate and actively make profane both the needs of the laity in general and working-class laity in particular.

Third, clergy, who in the main have access to education and credentials, and are often male, are predisposed to enter their professions from higher relative positions in the social order. Though the clergy ostensibly exists to provide religious aid to the laity, the religious laborer is again mentally structured according to relations of power which are his (or less often her) context. Finding this order felicitous to themselves, clergy persons are influenced by self-interest to transfigure (wittingly or unwittingly) "social relations into supernatural relations, inscribed in the nature of things," meaning they are likely to believe the social order to be a meritorious one, and to represent it as such, and even as one divinely ordained.³⁴ If and where religion is a symbolic system that obscures domination in the guise of a divinely sanctioned order, it only becomes so by the efforts of paid clergy in a religious field; otherwise it is more likely to remain a naturalistic religion. Clergy, as religious laborers, occupy a relatively higher position in the social hierarchy; they labor in a society where mental labor and physical labor are divided; they treat religion as mental labor, and rationalize

³⁴ Bourdieu, "Genesis and Structure," 19.

their religious products as they compete with each other for status within the hierarchy of religionists. The professional rationalization of religion, for the reasons stated above, is quite unlikely to produce a version of religion truly beneficial to physical laborers and lower classes, and instead is more likely to become tailored to the style and interests of the upper classes. As Otto Maduro writes, “a tendency is to be noted in the religious field for the dominant clerical categories to identify with the socially dominant factions. This tendency derives, among other reasons, from the structural homology of the respective (dominant) positions of these groups. It derives as well from the fact that the social origin of the higher clergy is generally to be found in the socially dominant factions.”³⁵ Bourdieu’s sociology of religion is an account of how religion, like all other fields, contributes a specific symbolic economy in a cultural sociology of domination. Yet importantly, Bourdieu posited religion as the original symbolic field of domination, as one whose organization and discourses perform the domination function particularly well, and according to whose logic other fields also run.³⁶ To summarize, in Bourdieu’s field theory a corps of religious functionaries develops and transforms religion into a primarily mental, rationalized discourse which is overdetermined to obscure and sacralize social domination. This process has its origins in the divisions of labor which arise from industrialization.

³⁵ Maduro, *Religion and Social Conflicts*, 97.

³⁶ Rey, *Bourdieu on Religion*, 5.

Rationalization and Ir-rationalization in the American Religious Field

Bourdieu's oversized influence on the European and American academic landscape deserves a word. Though it began as a sociological term, Bourdieu's *habitus* is now the most common theoretical tool also used in other academic fields, and is therefore a handy tool for critical sociological analysis such as that of this dissertation.³⁷ Biblical scholars, for instance, commonly reference *habitus*, as do art historians and literary theorists.³⁸ Yet it is Bourdieu's *sociology of fields*, not his *habitus*, which can enable a fresh assessment of how Pentecostalism has changed: first, in the American religious field and second, in the global religious field. So as to not risk universalizing Bourdieu's account of religion, I note that Bourdieu's references for religion are primarily French Catholic³⁹— but not only

³⁷“Habitus is the ‘set of dispositions,’ ‘the basis of perception and appreciation of all subsequent experiences,’ that predisposes the agent to perceive and behave in a certain fashion. It is both the ‘matrix of perception’ and the seat of one’s disposition, and as such is very essential to what it means to be a human being. It is also, in my view, the single most important concept in Bourdieusian theory for the study of religion chiefly because of its trenchant power in explaining the nature of human belief and practice, which are obviously so fundamental to religion at large.” Terry Rey, *Bourdieu and Religion: Imposing Faith and Legitimacy* (London: Equinox, 2007), 5.

³⁸ Julian Go, “Decolonizing Bourdieu: Colonial and postcolonial theory in Pierre Bourdieu’s early Work,” *Sociological Theory* 31, no. 1 (2013): 45-50; Gad Ya’ir, *Pierre Bourdieu: The Last Musketeer of the French Revolution* (New York: Rowman & Littlefield, 2009), 13; Otto Maduro, “Religion and Exclusion/Marginalization: Globalized Pentecostalism among Hispanics in Newark, NJ” in *Religion, Globalization, and Culture*, edited by Peter Beyer and Lori Beaman. Boston: Brill, 2007), vii.

³⁹Erwin Dianteill observes that Bourdieu’s sociology of religion is first and foremost a sociology of Catholicism. “The accent falls on the process of monopolization of power by a single institution: The Catholic Church. From this point of view, the highest concentration of hierocratic power is reached in western Europe before the Reformation. It is the genesis of this monopolization that most interests Bourdieu...From this point of view, Bourdieu’s sociology of religion clearly depends on a particular social situation, namely the existence in

French Catholic: they are also drawn from his work with Algeria's Kabyle.⁴⁰ The origins of Bourdieu the man are clearly French Catholic, his scholarly project, largely Algerian Kabyle.⁴¹ Therefore to press Bourdieu's *fields* for comment on American Pentecostalism requires some explanation, especially as Bourdieu's construction aims to explain how the religious field sacralizes social domination. As I am arguing that American Pentecostalism arose as an exception to this schema, I need to clarify my use of Bourdieu.

Instead of arguing that the American religious field took a Bourdieusian sociological turn after the Industrial era (which is in fact the case with respect to the progressive rationalization of its goods and professionalization of its authorities as will be discussed below), I highlight instead that American Pentecostalism is best understood as an instance in which laypersons successfully resisted the encroaching professionalization of American Protestantism. In short, I argue that American Pentecostalism arose as the contradictory exception within a typically rationalizing American religious field. Still, Bourdieu's work is not disproven by this historical case. Rather, Pentecostals were successful in capturing their (otherwise) typically -rationalizing religious field because in

France of a quasi monopolistic religion that has maintained organic links with the state for several centuries." See Dianteill, "Pierre Bourdieu and the Sociology of Religion" in *After Bourdieu: Influence, Critique, Elaboration*, edited by David Swartz and Vera Zolberg (Boston: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2004).

⁴⁰Julian Go, "Decolonizing Bourdieu," 50.

⁴¹Johan Heilbron, "Practical foundations of theorizing in sociology," in *Social Knowledge in the Making*, edited by Charles Camic, Neil Gross, Michèle Lamont (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011) 181-208; Rey, *Bourdieu on Religion*, 125.

important ways they were, themselves, *bourdieusienne*. By this I mean that early Pentecostals were, like Bourdieu, abidingly concerned with class and power, were convinced of the role that professionals played in exacerbating elite social power over the common man and woman, and were willing to do something about it—namely, to fight for power. As such, early Pentecostals were part of a tradition of radical American politics.

A widespread anti-establishmentarianism, one vociferously critical of professions and professionals, grew directly out of the Revolutionary era in America. In its ethos, this anti-establishmentarianism was strikingly *bourdieusienne*—though of course actually antecedent to Bourdieu, the man. Both Bourdieu and American Pentecostals can be understood to be inheritors of "a revolutionary tradition in a world ruled by kings and monarchs" and more specifically, of the cultural effects of the revolutionary age that featured the French and American revolutions.⁴² The vantage point of Bourdieusian fields offers a fresh perspective from which to engage the peculiarity of the ecstatic Pentecostal body and the extent to which lay ecstasy challenged the American religious field in its time and, at the same time, all other contemporary fields.

First, however, to qualify this claim I propose a discussion-specific definition of "bourdieusian" which draws from the political character of his work

⁴² Hatch, *The Democratization of American Christianity*; (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989); *Gad Ya' ir*, Pierre Bourdieu: The Last Musketeer of the French Revolution (New York: Rowman & Littlefield, 2009).

in relation to the field of sociology. The character of French sociology was from the inception of the field, via Durkheim's influence, politically conservative. Durkheim's account of religion showcases its all-important role in producing social cohesion, and is comparatively inattentive to oppressive relations of power within a given cohesive group as well as to religious symbolic economies of social dissolution.⁴³ This lack of attention is striking because flagrantly a-historical: a case of denial and neglect with respect to the French Revolution in particular, not simple myopia. Sociologist Alexander T. Riley, for contrary example, posits that Durkheim's abandonment of *left sacred* theory—essentially a destructive, even violent, religious symbolic economy—is Durkheim's active foreclosure on the dark potentials of sacred power, and that this omission reflects the duress of the "Reign of Terror" on Durkheim's sensibilities. Where Durkheim's sociology represses the bloody history of the Revolution, Riley fruitfully develops *left sacred* precisely in relationship to the ritualized spectacles of the guillotine.⁴⁴ For the moment, I look to Durkheim's apparatus to identify which *collective representations* and what shared *effervescence* are providing society its cohesion.

Bourdieu's sociology validates Durkheim's account of religious cohesion but situates Durkheim's cohesive society across a Marxist class arrangement and

⁴³ Paul Christopher Johnson, "Scholars Possessed! On Writing Africana Religions with the Left Hand." *Journal of Africana Religions* 4, no. 2 (2016): 157.

⁴⁴ Alexander T. Riley, "Renegade Durkheimianism" and the Transgressive left sacred," in Jeffrey C. Alexander and Philip Smith, eds., *The Cambridge Companion to Durkheim* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press 2005) 274-301.

its attendant struggles. Bourdieu's *field sociology* is predicated on the ostensible fact of perpetual oppressive social hierarchies, which he argues are made and remade (mostly unwittingly) by society-wide effort. Bourdieu posits that individual actors, even well-intentioned ones, remake social orders of domination by virtue of competing with others in what Bourdieu terms various *fields* (in which religion is only the first among many) of cultural production for social *capital*, essentially material and symbolic objects of social status. By striving for the best position one can hold in different cultural-economic and political hierarchies, everyone plays a part in maintaining diverse social hierarchies of domination.⁴⁵ Bourdieu posits that fields produce discourses and that practices create capital (i.e. religious, legal, educational, artistic, fashion, etc.) over which everyone struggles, and it is these common sites of struggle that, in turn, create social cohesion—not the kind of effervescence and representations that Durkheim imagines. This cohesion is, instead, an ambivalent one: Bourdieu's society is united by individuals' contests within fields for capital, united therefore in antagonistic struggle. Field participants are locked together in battle, in Marxist-style social conflict. As in the religious field just under discussion, all stakeholders in a given field occupy a position within its hierarchy, higher or lower, determined by the amount of capital they possess.

⁴⁵ Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1984 [1979]).

The rise to prominence of Bourdieu's macro sociology, one of struggle and oppression in fields, restored French sociology to the critical sociological tradition, as Bourdieu successfully integrates Marx with Durkheim and Weber. Bourdieu's *oeuvre* is dedicated to uncovering how hierarchical oppression has proven such an enduring schema of social organization; Bourdieu has described his own work as a "martial art" against social domination. A Bourdieusian account might demonstrate what kinds of capital are inaccessible to the lower class and might problematize a corresponding system of symbolic domination. To take this critical view of social domination, of the upper classes who perpetuate it from hierarchical positions of social dominance, and to develop a rhetoric to attack the same, is here to share a *Bourdiesian* persuasion.

To apply a Bourdieusian frame to the study of early Pentecostalism, in this argument, makes visible its particular context in terms of religious goods, and does so at a point in American religious history in which the production of religious goods had been more successfully taken over as a profession. Such an application situates this monopolization within a protracted frame of lay and clergy struggle over religious goods that is particular to American Protestantism and its revolutionary culture.

Alongside a shift in production of religious authority to professional labor, American Pentecostalism arose at a time when the American religious field began facing heightened conflict with other American fields for cultural authority.

Bourdieu's field sociology is the composite of many fields with similar modes of competition and stratification between these fields. All fields are, internally, hierarchies of social domination both in terms of their social organization of participants and in the manner in which they enact a scale of values like merit, favor, chosenness, sublime, refined, and superior over and against negations of value like dull, vulgar, commonplace, uninspired, base, basic, passé, and inferior.⁴⁶ Field logic is bipolar: a particular artist is inspired, while another is dull; a film is sublime where another is passé; one home is architecturally refined, but another is vulgar. Yet it is also a scale of intensity, from those with the least amount of capital (the largest group) to those with the greatest amount of capital, the smallest and most powerful group of players in a field hierarchy. The social hierarchies of respective cultural fields make fields *homologous* to each other in Bourdieusian parlance, and as referred to before in a quotation from Maduro; their symmetrical hierarchical distributions of power also testify to the time-worn sensibility that the social order is naturally a hierarchy. In addition to being sites of competition, and similar in shape, fields compete with each other for higher status in what is essentially a meta-field: the *champs de pouvoir*. The entire social order, the *champs de pouvoir*, is in rudimentary terms a hierarchy made up of fields of the smaller hierarchies. Take a particularly pertinent example: during a long period in American history, the religious field held the most

⁴⁶ Ibid.

cultural power, though now the scientific field commands more respect and can therefore more convincingly authorize the use of power.⁴⁷ At the top, in positions of the most power, reign the fields' hierarchs, homologous to each other and often joined to each other in various forms of mutually beneficial collusion. The primary dyad of this type represents the marriage of church and state: king and pope, archbishop, or imam. To produce a novel understanding of the way that glossolalia functioned as capital within the American religious field at the turn of the twentieth century, it is important to keep the two forms of Bourdieusian struggle in view: the internal drive to produce more rationalized forms of religious goods within a field and the external challenges to authority that the American religious field was then newly facing, especially from the scientific field.

As subscribers to the (Bourdiesian) American religious field, a site with internal conflict and facing external challengers at the same time, early Pentecostals took a *bourdieusienne* turn: a course of action in keeping with the critical spirit of Bourdieu, *the thinker*. Early Pentecostals inherited a tradition of critique of power that proved influential in how they renovated Protestant ritual practices, a critical tradition with roots in the revolutionary age. It is this revolutionary tradition, one that has not been factored into the genealogies of American Pentecostalism, that is critical to understanding the movement.

⁴⁷ Magali Safartti Larson, *The Rise of Professionalism: Monopolies of Competence and Sheltered Markets* (London: Transaction Publishers, 2013 [1997]); Julian Go, "Decolonizing Bourdieu," 50.

American Christianity Acquires a Revolutionary Ethos

Toward the end of the eighteenth century, revolutionaries in both France and America not only forced political change on their heads of state, they also pulled asunder the time-honored marriage between church and state. Where “the conservative alliance of squire and parson remained a distinctive feature of English life,” the American and French situations diverged and developed distinctly even from one another.⁴⁸ Early in the nineteenth century, England, like France and the US, experienced strident class conflict and political unrest. There, Anglican and Methodist leaders opted to “batten down conservative hatches,” defending paternalism, deferential politics, and genteel ways of life and denigrating populist expression and leaders, thus aligning well enough to Marx’s portraiture of collusion of religion with political authority.⁴⁹ But Nathan Hatch’s *Democratization of American Christianity* (1989) asserts that the “age of Revolutions” had a very different, surprising, and determinative effect on the political character of American Protestantism. Hatch’s account suggests that, prior to the Revolution, America’s social relations were characterized by hierarchical relations of social domination, the kind that Bourdieu presents as pervasive and that England’s clergy protected, but Hatch argues that the revolution in America dramatically changed the order of society. Hatch describes

⁴⁸ Hatch, *Democratization*, 8.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

these changes as the most crucial event in American history, which separated an older world, premised on standards of deference, patronage, and ordered succession, from a newer one.⁵⁰

The rejection of an ancient regime and the struggle to establish a new social and political order involved intense social strain and dislocation toward the end of the eighteenth century. John Murrin suggests the Revolution reversed the dominant integrative trend of eighteenth-century America, shattering the most venerable habits, customs, and loyalties.⁵¹

This vast transformation, this shift away from the Enlightenment and classical republicanism toward vulgar democracy and materialistic individualism in a matter of decades, was the real American revolution.⁵²

It is during the Revolutionary period that the concept of a natural aristocracy, based on merit, talent, and supposedly God's will, came under intense scrutiny and effectively came under referendum. It was rejected.⁵³

This revolution changed not just the official political order (so that a president replaced a monarch), it also changed public consciousness and feelings about how the social order should be. Contesting the British monarchy's claims to rule in America changed primary categories of thought and practices, the social sensibilities, of the American public. Where once nobility and authority were

⁵⁰ Ibid., 6

⁵¹ Ibid., 23.

⁵² Ibid., 56.

⁵³ See J. G. A. Pocock. "The Classical Theory of Deference." *The American Historical Review* 81, no. 3 (1976):516–23. doi:10.2307/1852422. See also, Gordon S Wood, *The Creation of the American Republic 1776–1787*, (Chapel Hill: UNC Press, 1998 [1969]).

expected and honored cultural currencies, the disavowal of the British monarchy and the influence of the French Revolution propelled the American public toward intense reform, and did so in an unprecedented way. Historian Amanda Porterfield writes, “Only in the United States did the international struggle over the meaning of democracy at the turn of the nineteenth century become institutionalized in mass politics. Unknown in other countries before the last dates of the nineteenth century, partisan politics directed at ‘the people’ emerged in 1800 as the principal means of organizing public life.”⁵⁴ The presumed sanctity of the American Revolution had rested on the experimental notion of the sovereignty of “the people” in place of the older model of society—the sovereignty of the monarch.⁵⁵ This extraction and reassignment of sovereignty from the king and nobility to the people— an “inversion of authority” in Hatch’s parlance—was no simple ideological shift but the outcome of blood-soaked contest for political authority. Crucial to my argument is the fact that the American Revolution resulted in ideological revolution across Bourdieusian cultural *fields*, that is, many inversions of all manner of authorities resulting in a comprehensive sea change in public attitude towards elites and establishment.

During the American Revolution, and subsequent public debates over the Constitution, “the issue of popular participation in government flared up with

⁵⁴ Amanda Porterfield, *Conceived in Doubt: Religion and Politics in the New American Nation* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012), 76.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 22.

greater intensity” and sharpened America’s egalitarian impulses.⁵⁶ Average men and women came to believe it their patriotic duty to make up and speak their own minds about important subjects. As a result, America saw the rapid proliferation of voluntary organizations and popular newspapers, which expressed fresh ideas on topics like citizenship, representation, and women’s status in society.

According to Hatch, populists’ forays into the public square changed the ethos and tone of American culture which became, accordingly, a populist popular culture. For Americans, equality became civic virtue, both inspiration and rallying cry.⁵⁷ Subjection to supposed betters was not merely passé, nor embraced as a legitimate part of a shared past, but was reinterpreted as an insult to average Americans and portrayed in newspapers as deeply *un-American*.⁵⁸ For example, in 1784, the South Carolina legislature threatened a tavern keeper named William Thompson with banishment from the state for insulting “the eminent John Rutledge,” Thompson took to the newspapers. In a self-penned article, he denounced the claims of “self-exalted” persons and “men of learning” who, like Rutledge, “conceived his neighbors as his inferiors.” Thompson's diatribe touched on populists' favorite subjects: the problems of the upper class, of coercive and authoritarian structures, and of “federalists, lovers of order” who

⁵⁶ Porterfield, *Conceived in Doubt*, 23.

⁵⁷ Hatch, *Democratization*, 7.

⁵⁸ Ronald P Formisano, "Deferential-participant politics: the early republic's political culture, 1789–1840." *American Political Science Review* 68, no. 2. (1974): 473-487.

“cant [sic] bare to be on a level with their fellow creatures.”⁵⁹ A decade later, a similar public dispute concerned the punishment of Irish ferrymen who had been punished for insulting a magistrate. When democratic leader William Ketaltas penned a newspaper article critiquing the magistrates in response, Ketaltas himself was arrested for “breach of privilege.” When Ketaltas was released after a brief stint in jail, the several thousand people who had gathered to protest his imprisonment celebrated en masse by pulling Ketaltas through the streets of New York in a carriage decked with American *and* French flags—a vivid example of the connections between French revolutionary history, ongoing American political struggles, and the democratizing ethos being hard-won in American public life.⁶⁰

Important for our argument, social ills of the period were routinely and rhetorically laid at the feet of professional types, “the marchent, phesition, the lawyer and the divine and all the literary walks of Life, the Jutical & Executive oficeers & all the rich who live without bodily labour.”⁶¹ Like Bourdieu, but long prior to him, American revolutionaries problematized the effects of professions and professionals in creating social hierarchies over those who *labor with their bodies*, and decided that these hierarchies were, in their essence, *un-American*. And while no profession was spared from sharp criticism, the denigration of the minister is for our purposes especially important.

⁵⁹ Hatch, *Democratization*, 23.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 24

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 26-31.

Just as revolutionary Americans accused lawyers and judges of “swallowing up the little man,” so they spitefully indicted clergymen for sacralizing their subjugation. In a periodical titled *Herald Gospel of Liberty*, a poem called “Priest-Craft Float Away” urged:

Why are we in such slavery, to men of that degree;
Bound to support their knavery when we might all be free;
They’re nothing by a canker, we can with boldness say;
So let us hoist the anchor, let Priest-craft float away

And a satirical hymn titled “The Modern Priest” complains:

Preaching is now a science and a trade
And by it many grand estates are made

While others labor six days, [the priest] but one,
For that day’s work, [he] gains a pretty sum.
For fifty-two days labor in a year,
The sum of eighty pounds [his] heart shall cheer.⁶²

In short, stridently populist rhetoric, which had risen with the tide of Revolution, infiltrated the American religious field. Protestant theology was accordingly rechanneled toward a historical materialist reading of New Testament, one that indicted the rich and powerful alongside the figures of Pontius Pilate and the Pharisees, and promoted themes like equality and freedom.⁶³ As Bourdieu does

⁶²Hatch, *Democratization*, 236.

⁶³ Hatch, *Democratization*, 42–45. An example of the populist rhetoric that clearly inspires this change in religious rhetoric can be seen in Pennsylvania’s *Herald of Liberty* newspaper where elites were commonly harangued, as in this example: “Does it warrant them to be wallowing in luxury and ease, whilst the laborious farmer and hardy mechanic are paying

in his field theory, so too American religious folk problematized the development of religious authority into a “science and a trade,” that is, into a profession. Otto Maduro concurs, “The religious interest of the clergy becomes, in the first instance, an interest in preserving, extending, and deepening its power over the production, reproduction, exchange, and distribution of religious goods and accordingly its power over the means of religious production.”⁶⁴

Struggle in a Religious Field as Struggle Over America

But rather than forsake the religious field altogether as the domain of professionals, American Protestants enacted a religious resistance of the marriage of church and state power. Oppressed as they had been under English rule, America’s religious dissidents laid claim to self-rule against the Church of England’s attempt to sacralize the crown. Contrary to Marx’s theorization of religion as opiate, revolutionary lay Americans sacralized not “the social order” but again, in contradiction, their revolution.⁶⁵ Bourdieu’s theorization of clergy as inherently invested in protecting the social order and their place in it held true enough among the traditional clergy ranks in America at this time, but the

enormous and heavy taxes...and more wanted to support them in their dissipation? ...Our sacred regard for the people’s interests, sanctions our publishing to the world this stupendous fabric of corruption & speculation.” Porterfield, *Conceived in Doubt*, 55.

⁶⁴ Maduro, *Religion and Social Conflicts*, 92.

⁶⁵ James P. Byrd, *Sacred Scripture, Sacred War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013).

revolutionary period in America saw the rise of a competitor religious laborer.⁶⁶

Directly following the American Revolution, when the American population skyrocketed from two and half million in 1775 to twenty million in 1845, clergy ranks grew from eighteen hundred to forty thousand, tripling the number of preachers per capita. The new recruits to the ministry were largely uneducated farmers ready to preach the gospel as they understood it, from their own lower-class social positions. The lower-class positions of the newcomers were simply not the provenance of the clergy caste, as Bourdieu theorizes it. By sheer force of numbers, these lay-clergy changed the terms of American religion.

Recall that in Bourdieu's composition of field, clergy simply *are* extracted from higher social positions. Accordingly, they readily corroborate the status quo as divinely sanctioned as they provide goods of salvation. But, during the period between 1790 and 1820, American Protestantism became flooded with lower-class religious laborers who blurred the distinction between clergy and laity, used vernacular styles of address for sacred business, and sharply criticized the status quo—not just as untenable or arbitrary—but as *evil*. Forthrightly challenging elites' right to power in the religious field, this lay-clergy asserted not equality per se, but the innate goodness and symbolic primacy of the lower classes in particular, achieving an *inversion of authority*, as described by Hatch, that modeled an *upside-down hierarchy* as the sacred social order.⁶⁷ Populist

⁶⁶ Porterfield, *Conceived in Doubt*, 49.

⁶⁷ Hatch, *Democratization*, 44–56; emphases mine.

preachers of the period sometimes themselves imagined they were “turning the world upside down.”⁶⁸ The religious rhetoric of the American Revolution placed the people as the arbiters of truth and judgment over their former sovereigns, indeed over power holders of every kind, as apparent in this quotation by successful populist preacher John Leland: “Were not the learned clergy (the scribes) Christ’s most inveterate enemies? Have not almost all lawless errors crept into the world through the means of wise men (so called)? [...] We will be free, we will rule ourselves; our officers shall be honorable servants, but not mean masters.”⁶⁹

The thesis of *Democratization of American Christianity* held sway over American religious history for three decades, but historian of American religion Amanda Porterfield challenges Nathan Hatch’s central premise. Porterfield’s treatment of the period following the Revolution showcases what she terms the influence of “doubt” on America’s religious voters, and demonstrates that religious revolutionaries, the same Hatch portrays as “democratizing,” quickly lost confidence in human freedom and subsequently perpetuated mistrust in human nature and reason, toward a reconsolidation of powers in favor of religious denominations. Porterfield laments that these evangelicals joined forces with their Protestant relations—the same Presbyterians and Episcopalians they

⁶⁸ Ibid., 73.

⁶⁹ Ibid, 98.

had criticized as emissaries of hierarchy— to quell a nascent strain of religious skepticism and reassert the authority of religion in American life.

But Hatch's treatment primarily concerned the changed *ethos* of American religion, which he demonstrates became newly populist in its rhetorical form, ritual practices, and class commitments. Hatch charts how lower-class troops changed the aesthetics of public preaching, so that the vernacular newly became a style of sacred speech; the successful country preacher spoke lower-class English, and spoke to lower-class needs. Preaching moved from exhortation to persuasion; the venues changed from traditional churches to open air and tent meetings. Between 1780 and 1830, the well-being of the common man and woman assumed symbolic centrality in assessment of the state and fate of the nation, pushing elites of all types to the margins of rhetorical importance and political dominance, including in the pulpits and revival tents of America's radical evangelicals. From their rough-hewn class locations, populist preachers mocked the arrogance of trained clergy and stridently critiqued their materialism as discordant with the relatively impoverished life of Jesus Christ.⁷⁰ While Porterfield is right to question how Hatch's rhetorical populists seemingly gave way, not to democratization but instead to illiberal religious authoritarianism, it would be mistaken to suggest that a peculiarly populist religious discourse, specific to American Protestantism, had not acted as handmaiden of the

⁷⁰ Hatch, *Democratization*, 12-15.

Revolution, even if Hatch's religious protagonists themselves ultimately fail to fit Porterfield's standards for democracy.

Hatch might better have argued for the revolutionization, rather than the democratization, of American Christianity; clearly, there were stronger hints of anti-elitism and anti-authoritarianism, more so than any blueprint for equal representation under the law, in popular preaching. What cannot be argued, however, is that the Revolution in the United States did not materially affect American Christianity. In fact, the categories of dispute over authority in revolutionary America acquired a logic of sacred good versus unholy evil that was unparalleled in France, for instance, where the Revolutionaries pushed instead the *desacralization* of the world.⁷¹ Not so in America, where antagonists were roundly denounced in religious overtones.

Because of pride, and because of false teachers, and false doctrine, their churches have become corrupted, and their churches are lifted up; because of pride they are puffed up.

They rob the poor, because of their fine sanctuaries; they rob the poor because of their fine clothing; and they persecute the meek and poor in heart, because in their pride they are puffed up...⁷²

And elsewhere, again, typical of this period:

You may support your distinction and feed your pride, but in a religious point of view all men are on a level, and the good man

⁷¹ Lynn Hunt, *The Family Romance of the French Revolution* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992); 194.

⁷² Hatch, *Democratization*, 117.

feels it so. The very fact of your aversion to worship your Creator with the poor and despised, proves to me that you have neither part nor lot in the matter; that you know not God nor his worship, and that to follow your advice would be the sure road to perdition. The Lord hath declared his intention and purpose to exalt the humble whilst he will pull down high looks.⁷³

By showing that the content, style of delivery, and political biases of American evangelicalism changed to support the cause of lower classes and common person into rhetorical prominence, to powerfully critique the upper classes and indeed class stratification itself, and to challenge New England's centralizing federalists, Hatch convinces that the revolutionary period in America changed Protestantism into a more subversive and anti-authoritarian version than had existed before— if not one as thoroughly democratic as Porterfield wishes, then nonetheless one that authorized a revolution in favor of democracy, in favor of *the people*. If the democratic program is in question in American Protestant Christianity, during this period it is clear that an inversion of authority and new assignment of importance to the common person did shape Methodists and Baptists, for two key examples.

This revolutionized message, popularized by a flood of lay preachers, did not go unnoticed by competitor religionists. In fact, it split the religious field against itself. In the midst of this upheaval, Presbyterian Lyman Beecher, addressing students of “the desk,” inveighed against competitor lay preachers.

⁷³ Ibid., 133.

Not quite engaging in a full-scale apologetic for hierarchy, Beecher instead argued that their competitors' inferiority was primarily the fault of their class location, and argued that their incompetence with the gospel actually rendered the gospel itself powerless: "[w]hen its chosen advocates are ignorant and unlettered men, [the gospel] is totally *incompetent* to arrest human depravity. Illiterate men have never been the chosen instruments of God to build up his cause."⁷⁴ Beecher's invective echoed that of Timothy Dwight at Andover Newton, where Dwight "denounced those persons who declare both in their language and in their conduct, that the desk out to be yielded up to the occupancy of Ignorance. While they demand a seven years' apprenticeship, for the purpose of learning to make a shoe, or an axe; they suppose the system of Providence...doctrines and precepts...may all be comprehended without learning labour or time."⁷⁵ In their diatribes, traditional and highly educated ministers strained for monopolizing control over religious goods by denouncing newcomer competitor goods as low-brow and incompetent. Their rhetoric suggested the ministry was a profession for learned men.

Yet, challenged by populist contenders in a populist era, the expanse of America proved to be too ungovernable for older, established English denominations, like the Episcopalians.⁷⁶ They were overwhelmed by the

⁷⁴ Ibid., 17-18.

⁷⁵ Ibid., 19.

⁷⁶ Ibid., 59-61.

successes of the Baptist and Methodist “sects” that affirmed rising populist values such as the individualization of the conscience, the wisdom of the people’s will and preferences, the offense of class distinctions, the arrogance and insufferability of elites, and the untrustworthiness of professionals.⁷⁷ Class struggles internally divided the religious field, and lower-class lay ministers won this struggle by winning the public’s attention and allegiance away from traditional and upper-class clergy. It may be, as Porterfield laments, that both kinds of religionists together struggled to support the waning authority of the religious field against a rising tide of skepticism—a common enemy—but attention to class differences and the actual historical affinity of Christianity with revolution should prevent treating all Christians of the period as one kind of political actor.⁷⁸

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 17–46.

⁷⁸ From a Bourdieusian point of view, a nation functions very much as a hierarchy of oppression composed of endless smaller hierarchies of oppression no matter whether they make reference to God. Each field is, in the end, superintended by an authority that is analogous to a priest, so that domination functions sacred without overt reference to a deity. Though it would be easy enough to conjecture that the resilience of this model is in part owed to Christians in the US, Bourdieu surmised it as equally or more visible in (less religious) France, as he demonstrated in *Distinction* (1979). Furthermore, France’s Revolution was not tempered by evangelical sentiments, and yet Lynn Hunt indicates that the aftermath of the Revolution, and especially the period following the execution of the king, was in fact a period of the most extreme anxieties—felt to be a crisis by the French. Yet, one remarkable aspect of Porterfield’s work is the way that she suggests churches cultivated anxiety and managed anxiety, as opposed to merely experienced it and addressed it. Hunt’s work suggests revolutionary change may be (as is evident in both the American and French cases) an anxious project in and of itself. Though Porterfield convincingly demonstrates that religious folk in America, sometimes the same ones who called for revolutionary action against kingly authority, experienced nostalgia for monarchy that was partly underwritten by the fact that the biblical text is a monarchical text, she does not problematize enough the inherent risks of

Professions: Deferred, Not Denied

Though Porterfield demonstrates that American religionists all worked to undermine American skeptics and perhaps stymied the development of America's skeptical tradition, the class-based cleavages within the field were real, continued to deepen, and eventually resurfaced. With the rise of the Progressive Era in America (1890–1920) came a renovation in popular understanding of the merit and function of professionals. In *The Rise of Professionalism: A Sociological Analysis*, sociologist Magali Sarfatti Larson details how a fresh vision of moral reform replaced the anti-elite and anti-professional ethos that had characterized the revolutionary period and continued well into the 1830s.⁷⁹ Beginning with the professionalization of engineering in the 1830s and continuing with law, medicine, and the ministry, Larson details the rocky road traveled by the professions we know today to standardize knowledge, claim expertise, and gain control over anarchic and decentralized fields of competitor practitioners in part through winning monopoly on licensing practices over the period from 1840 to 1900.⁸⁰ By 1850, for example, the field of law had developed a recognizable

Enlightenment thinking toward hierarchies of culture, sharpened by the anthropological project in Europe and implicated in the practices of slavery. Hunt, *Family Romance*, 88; 185–90. See George Stocking, *Victorian Anthropology* (1987); Jacques Revel, “Forms of Expertise: Intellectuals and “Popular” Culture in France (1650–1800) in *Understanding Popular Culture*, ed. Stephen Kaplan (1984).

⁷⁹ Larson, *Rise of Professionalism*, 118–19.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 123–25.

hierarchy of lawyers and was on its way to becoming a dominant political force in the 1880s.⁸¹ The struggle for legitimacy and standardization in the medical field was, on the other hand, particularly difficult owed to the challenges posed by somewhat successful homeopathy and botanical medical systems.

Problematically, Thomsonian botanical medicine had the appeal of being natural and “providential,” and natural methods which emphasized “temperance, healthy diet, cleanliness and natural remedies” were at the time “at least as effective” as the methods of traditionally trained doctors. But, after the end of the Civil War, the public health movement in urban sectors began to call for practitioner professionalization in response to health challenges being posed by crowded industrial cities.⁸² With the rise of bacteriology in the 1890s, orthodox medicine finally gained a credible foothold in the competition to offer remedies the public trusted. Larson specifies that, before that period, it was only traditional medicine’s educational credentials which lent them a legitimacy over botanical methods, notwithstanding the fact that their actual practices were frequently ineffective or even harmful.

The professionalization of America was finally aided by the development of the university system. Larson explains that, after 1893, the university system began to mediate the tension between the anti-hierarchical, universalistic

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 87.

⁸² *Ibid.*, 133.

principles of the revolutionary ethos here under discussion and the contradictory privilege attending the notion of elite expertise entailed in professionalism. “The inegalitarian uses of acquired expertise were concealed by the alleged universalism of schools’ criteria of selection” Larson offers.⁸³ Between 1870 and 1920, Larson explains, rapid economic expansion and the rise of corporate capitalism provided the structural support for an ideological shift in America regarding the function and value of professional elites. An “ethos of efficiency and the need to regulate anarchic competition” developed in view of the need to “plan and regulate production, distribution, and employment in order to ensure profits in expanding markets. Their new administrative structures emphasized decision-making as applied science.”⁸⁴ What emerged in the change from competitive capitalism to corporate capitalism was a new conception of authority—“science as

⁸³ Bourdieu’s *The State Nobility*, (1998 [1989]) discusses the transformation from “direct modes” of social reproduction to “school-mediated” ones. The former allowed the landed elite, long known in France as the Second Estate, and the emergent middle classes to transfer their wealth and privileges to their children via direct inheritance. The massive expansion of tertiary education in France introduced contradiction into the process of acquiring acceptance into elite schools, so that now the offspring of wealthy families must first convert their family-based material capital into cultural capital, whose display is then rewarded by success in the system of elite schools. “While the informal varieties of cultural capital that the children of the upper class acquire at home early in life (such as a particular accent or knowledge of the arts) serve them well in the school system, true hard work is required of these inheritors, and many in fact fail to reconvert their family’s cultural capital into material capital (via prestigious degrees leading to top jobs in the state or private sector).” In Thomas Medvetz and Sallaz, Jeffrey J., “Introduction” in *The Oxford Handbook of Pierre Bourdieu* (Oxford: OUP, 2018).

⁸⁴ Larson, *Rise of Professionalism*, 137.

a method and a worldview” and a corresponding authority “for scientifically oriented experts who act in bureaucratized institutions of the new social order.”⁸⁵

Samuel Hays observed, “[a]lmost every movement of the Progressive Era subscribed to the concept of ‘the people’ and believed that its demands sprang from them. But the people in fact often opposed reforms” (138). Larson agrees with Samuel Haber that it took the comprehensive formulations of Taylorism to change the prevailing attitudes of the period (1880–1920). Taylor intertwined the values of hard and disciplined work, the cost-profit relationship, and “social efficiency” in his vision of social harmony. In the early part of the twentieth century, “the language of efficiency appeared to unify various reform campaigns into a ‘reform syncretism’ centered on a new concept of the state...which involved a rejection of laissez faire and the acceptance of social guidance and control” – mediated by the authority of professionals.⁸⁶ With this shift toward professionalization, traditional American ministers struggled to transform their craft into a recognized profession. Fifty years before this, by the 1830s, partly owing to competition from populist lay preachers and additionally to a general “economic decay,” the stable professional “permanency” that mainline traditional denominational ministers could once depend upon dried up completely in small

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ Ibid., 141.

towns throughout New England. Ann Douglas in her influential *The Feminization of American Culture* (1977) bemoans this historical moment for six pages:

In 1775, just prior to the American Revolution, nine of the colonies had “established” churches, comparable in status to the Anglican one in England. These were churches which citizens were required by their governments to attend and maintain, and against which so-called dissenting sects like the Methodists or Baptists were allowed only very limited overt powers of competition. In Connecticut, for example, where the contest between established and non-established groups increasingly dominated the political scene between the Revolution and 1817, dissenters or non-Congregationalist could not meet in churches for worship until 1770; they were forced to pay taxes to support the Congregational Church until 1777...Predictably, the American Revolution brought disestablishment with it. New York went first in 1777; under Thomas Jefferson’s urging, the Anglican Church in Virginia lost its official status in 1785; and by 1833, when Congregationalism ceased to receive state support in Massachusetts, disestablishment was complete in the United States.⁸⁷

Hopes for a stable living in the ministry increasingly depended on a position in a large town; professional status, prestige, and greater incomes were available in urban parishes or the central offices of the denomination.⁸⁸

Larson discerns the outcome for ministers to have been pauperization. Douglas apparently disagrees: “The result of the disestablishment process was an apparent triumph for the competitive, commercial, and individualistic spirit: a ‘voluntary’ system in which no denomination had automatic precedence over any other and no person had any obligation to attend worship or to support religion

⁸⁷Ann Douglas, *The Feminization of American Culture* (New York: Noonday, 1977), 23.

⁸⁸ Larson, *Rise of Professionalism*, 122.

beyond his or her desire to do so.”⁸⁹ Larson notes that small town ministers became marginalized as “embryonic attempts to bend the organization of the church to a professionalized conception of the ministry emerged in urban and educational centers” beginning in the 1840s. During this period, clergy endeavored to lay claim to professionalization and expertise via a “learned and autonomous elaboration of theology.”⁹⁰ But even that attempt produced little in the way of economic security. Douglas writes that, “An enormously popular preacher like the Congregationalist Henry Ward Beecher (1813–1887) could make a comfortable fortune; yet, as one Universalist pastor complained, the average minister at mid-century earned about four hundred dollars a year, less than many manual laborers, not to speak of his fellow professionals, lawyers and doctors.”⁹¹

Still, professionalization of the clergy was the only strategy available. Bourdieu’s field theory helps to trace the degree of rationalization that professionalization had achieved in American Christianity by the turn of the twentieth century, a span of forty years from the development of religious “profession” as such, and bringing us up to the decades in which Pentecostalism was fomenting. The decade between 1880 and 1890 saw growing support for German higher criticism in elite American seminaries and universities. In the

⁸⁹ Douglas, *Feminization*, 24.

⁹⁰ *ibid.*

⁹¹ *ibid.*, 31.

1890s, Christ's virgin birth and his resurrection from the dead were openly disavowed by leading Presbyterians in Ivy League teaching posts, to the dismay of many of America's biblicist evangelicals. Biblical criticism's historical and literary methods were embraced by professors who were now more often professional academics where once they had been former ministers. As the products of America's religious field rationalized, their character reflected an appropriation of prestigious German styles of religious rationalization, thereby becoming distanced from the lives and interests of American farmers and the urbanizing working classes. Academic theologies denied the legitimacy of practical, devotional religion as insufficient and passé. In the space of forty years, the professionalizing American field succeeded in producing highly rationalized theologies that established them as a credible hierarchy of experts—but their “products” or forms of *capital* were hardly designed with laity's felt needs or preferences in mind.

Actually, in the process of professionalization American religion became not only estranged from, but sometimes even antagonistic toward, the working classes. American appropriation of German biblical criticism extended and intensified a process of the period directly preceding it, during which professional clergy rhetorically asserted the superiority of their rationalized goods over those of competitor (and successful) lay preachers. In the context of this competition of religious providers, Congregationalist and Presbyterian preachers characterized

the differences between these goods not as rooted in different *ideas* about the legitimacy of hierarchy in the nation and in interpretation and implementation of religion, but as simply rooted in class.

In *Divine Hierarchies: Class in American Religion and Religious Studies* (2007), historian Sean McCloud demonstrates that leading clergymen prescribed an overhaul of Protestant religious practices designed, in part, to nullify lower-class religious practices. McCloud reveals how famed revivalist Charles Finney labored to transform the fervent religiosity of America's heartland into one more suitable to rising middle-class tastes for rationality and self-control.⁹² This transformation required overt efforts to discipline the radical evangelical body. In a series of letters from May to July of 1845, Charles Finney worked to differentiate what he termed "authentic" religious experiences from those of fanatics.⁹³ In these letters, Finney counseled that biblical heroes like David "never manifested any ecstatic, demonstrative behaviors" and argued that "when God induces religious experiences, there are no manifestations of an excited imagination."⁹⁴ Finney's anti-ecstatic rhetoric forwarded a practical rubric for *valid* experience that invalidated emotional, volatile bodily experiences as the locus of the work of God. A true spiritual experience, in Finney's epistles, was *not* one that produced uncontrolled emotion, not one that "drowned the intelligence,"

⁹² Sean McCloud, *Divine Hierarchies: Class in American Religion and Religious Studies* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2009), 132–34.

⁹³ *Ibid.*

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 133.

but one that instead produced “an enriching clarity of thought” in a still, even serenely paralyzed body. In Finney’s epistles, the supernatural/ecstatic religious body, both in practice and in the biblical text, was being chastised by Enlightenment reasoning and middle-class aspiration.⁹⁵ Revivalist modes of worship threatened the legitimacy of religion as a proper field *and* undermined the power of professional religionists to consolidate authority over the field.⁹⁶

Finney’s valuation of religious goods was unequivocally accented with class antagonism. Beverly Skeggs demonstrates that, during the nineteenth century, the American working class was associated with excess emotion and a

⁹⁵ For a complimentary account of how the religious body has endured the pressures of both secularization and colonialism, see Sally Promey, “Religion, Sensation, and Materiality” in *Sensational Religion: Sensory Cultures in Material Practice* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2014). Calvin White, Jr., investigates a split in African American church culture in which “Holiness [bodily practices] seemed incompatible with the new rising black middle class that ... stressed refined rational religious liturgy.” See Calvin White Jr., “Introduction,” in *The Rise to Respectability* (Fayetteville, AK: University of Arkansas Press, 2012).

⁹⁶ Gastón Espinosa discusses many of the social issues that are here being discussed at length, in a manner that surpasses other accounts of the social psychology of the period. In a section titled “Social and Religious Context,” Espinosa frames the social milieu of Azusa Street as “[t]he rise of Enlightenment rationalism, science, and a new urban middle class and the decline of rural communities and experiential religion created an impersonal society. Industrialization, mechanization, the mass production of the pocket watch and the Model T Ford, along with the influx of millions of immigrants and African Americans fleeing the South in the wake of a failed Reconstruction created a period of tremendous social upheaval. The middle-class response was a search for order that stressed uniformity and rationality, administration and management...and the centralization of authority. Rationality and emotional control were key ingredients in the psychosocial makeup of the era. Seymour and his revival seemed to challenge these ingredients.” Gastón Espinosa, *William J. Seymour and the Origins of Pentecostalism: A Biography and Documentary History* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2014), 41. This chapter overlaps with Espinosa’s account, but differs by suggesting that there is, in these dynamics, appreciable forms of class struggle—not just “a search for order” but a rising and interested social order of class-based domination. It also traces the change in ecstatic embodiments from a decidedly natural form of agrarian worship to, instead, a mode of resistance against encroaching powers.

lack of self-control while the middle class aimed to be characterized by self-denial, reason, and self-restraint.⁹⁷ To be sure, the poor in the nineteenth century were not actually more “bodily” and less mindful than the middle class *per se*. Skeggs explains that these characterizations were made by interested parties and were not innate properties. Middle-class aspirations and identifications were performed in part by being reasonable and self-restrained over and against lower-class emotionality and volatility. These simplistic caricatures were most often made explicit in the public arena by journalists.⁹⁸

There was, at the same time, a regional logic to this struggle to reform the religious field. Joe Creech (2006) illustrates that in North Carolina even stalwart Christian restorationist groups like the Disciples of Christ, the Christian Connection, and the Methodist Protestants experienced rapid centralization after the Civil War, so that by 1900 most of them had established centers of higher education and theologically trained clergy.⁹⁹ These established centers and their authorities marginalized local lay preachers and older styles of embodied worship, flaring tensions between small town religious authorities and centralized denominational leadership.¹⁰⁰ Briane Turley details a symmetrical

⁹⁷ McCloud, *Divine Hierarchies*, 128–89.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 14–18.

⁹⁹ Joe Creech. *Righteous Indignation: Religion and the Populist Revolution* (Champaign, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2006) 14.

¹⁰⁰ *ibid.*

struggle in Georgia's Methodist ranks,¹⁰¹ wherein rural Methodists criticized the leisurely pursuits of their citified counterparts and clashed with the tastes of a rising urban religious hierarchy anxious for a more moderate, "self-controlled" laity; anxious, that is, for the ministry *as a profession*. Rural believers were the lower-class cousins that often embarrassed their more well-to-do urban counterparts, but many Methodist transplants to urban centers had revivalism and pietism in their religious DNA. Driven from the denomination's respected pulpits, the Georgia Holiness Association's ministers took to the camp meeting. With the option to attend camp meeting and their more proper denominational churches, Methodist laity continued to have the option of attending intermittent emotional revivals:

Because the Georgia Holiness Association held its meetings and services independent of Methodism, church leaders were unable to curb their influence on church members. Antagonistic bishops instead applied the power of conference appointments to demote the most notorious Holiness ministers. A high percentage of Holiness advocates in Georgia received transfers to 'hard scramble' circuits and a demotion in salary after 1890; subsequently all but the most ardent professors of the experience abandoned their ties to the movement and carefully avoided using Holiness rhetoric in their pulpits ... By the mid 1890s the denomination's efforts to squelch the Holiness movement in Georgia had met with considerable success. Most of the state's young ministers recognized that active involvement with Georgia Holiness Association offered a fast track to a lackluster career of small town

¹⁰¹ Briane K. Turley, *A wheel within a wheel: Southern Methodism and the Georgia Holiness Association* (Macon, Ga: Mercer University Press, 1999).

and rural pastorates.¹⁰²

The bishops recognized the political expediencies of segregating outspoken advocates of Holiness religion from the state's more 'fashionable' urban charges "where the worldliness and formality of worship the Holiness prophets spurned were rapidly gaining acceptance."¹⁰³ Given this context, as Finney advocated for a quiet, more mental experience of God, he also simultaneously critiqued reportedly lower-class, rural worship styles and steered the worship practices of his own followers toward the aesthetics of America's urban, rising middle class.

The outlines of protracted class struggle in the American religious field are evident. First, Congregational and Presbyterian clergy rhetoric begins by problematizing the class location of newcomer competitors. Then (after disestablishment) there is an attempt to transform the priesthood and pastorate into proper professions. Next, denominational leadership is pushed into urban centers, causing the marginalization of small-town lay preachers. Then, we can note disciplinary efforts on the parts of influential elder clergyman like Charles Finney to restrict the radical evangelical style of worship, and a subsequent aggressive rationalization of religious goods that included overt reference to German higher criticism: all such details corroborate Bourdieu's problematization of the competitive inner workings and class politics of a

¹⁰² Turley, *Wheel within a Wheel*, 16–17.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, 17.

professional religious field. In the decades between 1830 and 1900, Congregationalist, Presbyterian, Episcopal, and even Methodist clergy aimed to professionalize the religious field using academic credentials, urban centers, and denominational offices to centralize and license the ministry as matter of expertise in knowledge and in the process nullify the campmeeting and the enchanted body as a source of spiritual goods.

The way Larson recapitulates the era of the rise of professions indicates that this strain in the religious field, a struggle to centralize, hierarchalize, and to produce licensed ministers who provide expertise and authorized goods, was in part a response to the Progressive Era's ethos—to its valuing of scientific objectivity, streamlined productivity, efficiency, and achievement for its goals for human advancement and bureaucracy. Larson is forthright in her assessment: this is the period in which science began to achieve its dominance as a source of authority in American life. The American field had to adopt some of the logic of scientific analysis like the use of higher criticism (or be perceived to be doing so), while at the same time fighting off claims to public authority by the scientific field.

The dozens of crutches, braces, plaster casts, “instruments of torture,” and other medical devices that hung from the walls of Dowie’s tabernacles were trophies “captured from the enemy.” [...] The vast majority of such testimonials paralleled evangelical conversion narratives. They told of patients being lost in their sicknesses; the failure of worldly means to produce wholeness; consequent hopelessness; and God’s dramatic intervention, resulting in triumphant, integrative healing [...] Incipient

Pentecostalism was characterized in part by its tangibility and physicality. Various ecstatic behaviors and manifestations located religious assurance in the physical expressions of the body. Woodworth Etter's trances authenticated the experience of the Holy Spirit's infilling power, while for Pentecostals speaking in tongues evidence of Spirit baptism. This partly reflected a radical evangelical take on a broader Protestant focus on the body as a site of moral and religious meaning around the turn of the century [...that] challenged Protestantism's traditional tendency to secularize the body through the denial of post-apostolic miracles. Even more than others, incipient Pentecostals resacralized the body and rejected secular authority over it. Divine healing was the apex of this process, representing not only bodily expressions but concrete physical changes.

Pentecostal healing, in contrast to medicine, preserved the integrity of the religious body by saving it from bad treatment through blunders, from the economic harms of medical costs, and from corruption by submission to the authorities of the medical field.

It also made the body a site of contestation in support of the religious field over and against the medical field. In this contest, Pentecostal requests for medical corroboration of divine healings function as a rhetorical performance of dominance over the scientific field, ostensibly forced to admit that God does heal.¹⁰⁴ (Early Pentecostals keenly perceived that American religion was threatened with the loss of its ability to give authoritative accounts of human history and public life, cultural prowess that Bourdieu terms "legitimizing

¹⁰⁴ Joseph W. Williams, "Modernity Baptized in the Spirit: Early Pentecostal Rhetoric in America," in *Agency in the Margins: Stories of Outsider Rhetoric*, edited by Anne Stockdell-Giesler (Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 2010), 249; Wacker, *Heaven Below*, 192.

power.”¹⁰⁵ Religious ways of knowing and being were becoming less obviously right as advances in medical science and literary criticism challenged religious epistemologies.

Because they were serious in their commitment to religious authority, and ready to guard its powerful place in American life, Pentecostals loved to tell conversion narratives in which “uptown parsons” or “proud, well-dressed preachers” come to a revival to investigate or ridicule, but end up “on the floor asking God to forgive them and make them as little children.”¹⁰⁶ Baer notes that “healers commonly employed the tactic of assembling writings from doctors acknowledging the harmful nature of the medicines they prescribed and the superiority of divine healing.”¹⁰⁷ They relished narratives in which God, instead of a doctor, provides healing to the body. As representatives of the medical field and the wayward religious field, doctors’ and well-dressed preachers’ affirmations of the authenticity of Pentecostal power garnered a confessional acquiescence that Pentecostals dearly valued. The purity and sacrality of the radical evangelical body resisted the encroaching domination of the medical field and its scientific epistemology. Charles Parham claimed, “You cannot expect God’s blessing healing power to come into your life, while you aid or abet in any way, such ministers, churches, or mission, who fight the full atonement for soul and body.”

¹⁰⁵ Schwartz, *Culture and Power*, 91–93.

¹⁰⁶ Wacker, *Heaven Below*, 193.

¹⁰⁷ Baer, “Redeemed Bodies” 767.

¹⁰⁸ Woodworth-Etter emphasized, “Our bodies are God’s Power House, they are the channels for the Holy Ghost to flow out of like rivers of living waters.”¹⁰⁹

So far, I have endeavored to demonstrate that America’s Industrial Revolution rapidly changed social life by producing widespread division of physical labor from mental labor, by complexifying social relationships by an aggressive development of class, and by professionalizing the production of social meaning and authority. I have located within clergy rhetoric obvious class struggle and echoes of that struggle as an American religionists’ rhetorical tradition, one that invokes class, without assuming that this rhetoric (on either side) refers to the correct social location of the persons being critiqued. I have introduced historical details which indicate a transformation of Protestant religious goods into those oriented toward belief and propriety and away from revivalistic bodily practices. Finally, I have introduced a reading of Pentecostal rejection of medical science as one example of Pentecostal savviness about the stakes of professional authority, highlighting how their rejection of rising medical authority functioned to maintain divine authority over the human body and suggesting that Pentecostal healing resisted scientific objectification of the body and, instead, rendered the miraculously healed body as authoritative entity over scientific medical practitioners.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., 768.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., 765.

In the next section I argue that religious use of the body by laity versus clergy is, in these conditions, a critically important site of struggle for power within the religious field. I present the ecstatic religious body as analogous in function to the divine healed body for the medical field. I illustrate rhetorical moves and embodied practices with which American Pentecostals essentially rejected mental religious goods as true goods, and I demonstrate how proto-Pentecostal preaching advocated a tradition which utilized, and promoted the continuous utilization of, the religious body as the true means of religious production.

Upending the Bourdieusian Field: The Pentecostal Body

Radical Evangelicals' Rhetorical Mobilization of Nostalgia

Bourdieu predicates the development of the religious field with the supposition that where the laity possesses doxa, that is, where it truly believes in religion as recourse to God, it will act as consumer of the goods of salvation.¹¹⁰ A religious field, populated by religious providers in competition for a monopoly over religious clientele, must be able to produce religious goods *for consumers who subscribe to them*. Only by successfully maintaining for itself a religious clientele, a laity, can a religious field exist as a valid producer of symbolic goods.

¹¹⁰ Rey, *Bourdieu on Religion*, 10–11; 86–88; 155.

Subscribers are what lend a field its validity and power relative to other cultural fields. Bourdieu envisions that when a religious field succeeds in producing “salvation goods” and sacraments (which essentially present the status quo as legitimate) for a critical mass of believing people, the field performs a legitimating function for state power that, in turn, garners for said religious field and its functionaries *capital* in Bourdieu’s *field of power*.¹¹¹ For the religious field to secure its own status in the field of power it must maintain for itself a subscribing laity.

Where there is not a laity to buy into specific goods of salvation—think here of the creed, water baptism, church weddings, confession, for example—the supplying religious field loses status in the field of power. When a laity claims to believe in the message but rejects the goods of salvation on offer, it is a challenge to the hierarchs of the religious field. Simply rejecting the overall message is to abandon a field, a real problem for the producers of a given capital which, if not remedied, leads to the subjugation of and eventual demise of the field. Maintaining belief in the value of a field, *doxa*, while contesting either the mode of its production of capital or the value of the capital—e.g. the Anabaptist question ‘*is infant baptism efficacious?*’—this is a challenge to power holders in a field. Such was the case in the late nineteenth century, when the American laity

¹¹¹ Ibid., 72–74, 90.

were deeply religious, but did not circumscribe their religious goods to those immediately on offer by professional clergy.¹¹²

The prophet said, the time would come, if anyone had a vision, when they would be ashamed to tell it. That time is here. The masses of church leaders look upon everything supernatural as a disgrace and cry out, "Hypnotism," "Excitement," "Drunkeness," or some other power. Just like the Jews, progressing with the age, they are satisfied with dead form. The churches are filled with unconverted people. Where there are no visions the people perish. If there is not power enough for visions, there is not power enough to save a soul.¹¹³

In her preaching, Etter attributes the waning power of the church to the failure of the religious field to provide authentic goods of salvation. In fact, Etter's diatribe makes ecstatic experience such as visions, supernatural experiences indices of the churches' goods of salvation: where there are no visions, Etter argues, *there is no salvation*. Then, in Bourdieusian terms, Etter attempts to reconstruct the religious field rhetorically by retrieving older and, in her words, superior religious goods from the religious past and attempting to bring them into mass circulation.

¹¹² Cristián Parker states that Bourdieu's theory is in error "when it generalizes its conception of the religious field as a simple market of salvation goods. It fails to understand that the 'consumer' of those goods are actors as well and that as collective actors, they too are collective producers of their own goods of symbolic consumption, or of 'popular' goods." Cristián Parker, *Popular Religion and Modernization in Latin America*, trans. Robert Barr (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books 1996), 239; Rey, *Bourdieu on Religion*, 125–26.

¹¹³ Douglas Jacobsen. *Thinking in the Spirit: Theologies of the Early Pentecostal Movement* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2003), 28.

We read the supernatural displays of God's power and glory, but how many comprehend that we, too, may behold them? The people seem to think that these manifestations were for the early followers. We do not find any such teachings in the word of God [...] God has ever desired to manifest himself unto his children. In the ancient days he made himself known in various manifestations of power. He descended upon Mount Sinai in fire and smoke and a cloud of glory covered the mount [...] In the apostolic days he revealed himself through the blessed Holy Ghost. He came upon the church with such magnifying power the people recognized the presence of God and gave him the glory. If, as in the days of Samuel, there could be a return of the "open vision" and the interrupted communication with God restored, the great decline of the power of the church would be arrested. The Holy Ghost is no longer with us in primitive Pentecostal power. Instances of faith-power, of unction in preaching, of wondrous displays of the Holy Ghost, are painfully inconspicuous and exceptional. Sorrowfully we must acknowledge that the glory of the former days has departed.¹¹⁴

Although it is true that historians have duly noted that the rise of Pentecostalism partook in Restorationist thinking, scholars have emphasized a buy-in to the miraculous and have not been clear that restoration motifs also involved religious self-sufficiency and enacted overt struggle over the production of goods of salvation with clergy. Trances, fits, rolling, and jerking characterized Maria Woodworth Etter's meetings—all embodied forms of religious goods that people can experience and put into practice for themselves, and which therefore encourage religious self-sufficiency.¹¹⁵ In her rhetoric, Etter invoked the memory

¹¹⁴Ibid., 20-22.

¹¹⁵Michele Dillon critiques Bourdieu's field theory based on experience with Catholics whom, Lamont advises, "recast the official discourse of the church hierarchy in ways that advance alternative interpretations." This interpretive autonomy troubles the "mechanistic underpinnings of Bourdieu's perspective on religious production and his categorical

of powerful, supernatural experiences laced with biblical allusions to encourage her audience to reject professional religion and to bodily participate in the production of superior religious goods instead. In Weberian terms, Etter's rhetoric aimed to transform the religious consumer of salvation goods, which she declared null, into a producer of real salvation goods.¹¹⁶

In significant ways, proto-Pentecostal discourse echoes the anti-clerical tradition that evangelicalism developed alongside the American Revolution. Radical evangelicals in the late nineteenth century were, like their forerunners in the late eighteenth, stridently anti-creed and anti-clerical, claiming (for example) that creeds “were designed by uninspired men, liable to err as any other good man,” and quipping, “[i]f I had a creed, I would sell it to a museum.”¹¹⁷ This rhetorical displacement of the creed (museums are the sacred domain of the upper-class) shows that radical evangelicals understood the class-given preference in professional religion and rejected it, that they assumed no special character to the clergy, and that clergy products were not salvific—“I would sell it.”

differentiation between religious producers and consumers.” See Michele Dillon, “Pierre Bourdieu, Religion, and Cultural Production.” *Cultural Studies ↔ Critical Methodologies* 1, no. 4 (November 2001): 411–29.

¹¹⁶ Yet clergy who conducted revivals could take a different view of revivalism, not as extra-or anti-clerical, per se, but instead as the very religious product of the clergy. Finney espoused this view, remarking that “a revival is not a miracle; it consists entirely in the right exercise of the powers of nature.” Briane Turley explains, “Finney did not view revivals as a consequence of divine intervention. Rather he saw them as events that could be precipitated through application of ‘right means.’” Turley, *Wheel Within a Wheel*, 46.

¹¹⁷ Douglas Jacobsen. *Thinking in the Spirit*, 28.

There is also, in the extended quotation by Etter above, the perpetuation of the memory of a religious tradition that clergyman like Beecher and Finney actively attempted to relegate to the past. As Briane Turley's *Wheel within a Wheel* (1999) demonstrated, the holiness campmeeting circuit was created expressly to keep radical evangelical forms of revival embodiment in practice when they were banished from Methodism's increasingly proper pews. Radical evangelicals agreed that religious ecstasy was a *still* superior religious good to comparably "dead" formal ritual.

Like lay Methodist preachers before her, Etter's discourse mobilized an understanding of God's availability to all people, and of their ability to obtain salvation goods, that is destructive to the concept of clergy as an especially sacred class of people. In radical evangelical discourse, ecstatic religious experience is available to anyone with the temerity to *try God*. Venezuelan sociologist of religion Otto Maduro singles out Pentecostal belief in the possibility of a call to the ministry for any person, no matter how socially disadvantaged, as a key characteristic of Pentecostal ecclesiology, one which enables Pentecostalism to become a mode of resistance to colonialism.¹¹⁸ *Laity* often do not recognize that subscription to priestly *goods of salvation* is at the same time an a priori acquiescence to a profane status. It is the clergy's sacred, set apart status that enables their production of religious goods while, at the same time, the perceived

¹¹⁸ Otto Maduro, "Religion and Exclusion/Marginalization," 372.

need for goods is the foundation of the laity's profane status. Maduro highlights that the ability for uneducated, even undocumented Pentecostals to become clergy disrupts obscure class divisions which otherwise separate professional, sacred clergy from working-class, profane laity.

But as concerns the constitution of its clergy, the origins of Pentecostalism are more radical than what Maduro describes in his observations of present-day Pentecostalism. Proto-pentecostals, as members of the radical tradition in evangelicalism, explicitly juxtaposed supernatural experiences over and against clerically produced goods, making ecstatic embodiments a form of religious *capital*—again, an object of struggle meant to infer legitimacy for its bearers which simultaneously aims to prove the illegitimacy of professional clergy. To wit, it is not only that any Pentecostal might credibly become clergy, but that the category of “clergy” was rhetorically and performatively deconstructed by lay ecstasy. In displacing the value of spiritual goods from clergy goods to their own goods, radical evangelicals verbally inscribed their forms of ecstatic embodiment with a deeply competitive logic.

The Radical Evangelical Body as the Means of Resistant Religious Production

The production of embodied charisms as religious goods maintains a sacral, even magical status for the body, as does divine healing.¹¹⁹

Denominational creeds, doctrine, and memberships are by contrast forms of religious capital that effectively nullify the body's religious use and insinuate profane status to it. In Bourdieusian terms, the loss of the body as the locus of sacred experience is dispossession:

[o]bjective dispossession means nothing other than the objective relationship produced when groups or classes occupying an inferior position in the structure of the distribution of religious goods confront then a new type of goods of salvation born of the dissociation of physical labor and symbolic labor.¹²⁰

For American evangelicals still on the farm or trying to make it in the city, this desacralization of the body was coterminous with a distancing of religion from their lives and interests:

Most authors might agree that magical practices aim at concrete and specific goals, both particular and immediate; that they are inspired by an intention to coerce or manipulate supernatural powers [...] these traits—which originate in conditions of existence dominated by an economic urgency prohibiting all distancing from present and immediate needs and unfavorable to the development of competent scholars in the field of religion—are obviously more often found in societies or social classes more impoverished from an economic point of view and thus predisposed to occupy a

¹¹⁹ Williams, "Modernity Baptized," 52.

¹²⁰ Bourdieu, "Genesis and Structure," 9.

dominated position in the relations of material and symbolic power. But there is more: every dominated practice or belief is doomed to appear as profanatory, as by its very existence [...] it constitutes an objective contestation of the monopoly over the administration of the sacred, and therefore of the legitimacy of the holders of this monopoly. In fact, *its survival is always a resistance*, that is, the expression of a refusal to allow oneself to be deprived of the instruments of religious production.¹²¹

The ecstatic, sacred body is a religious possession, of which radical evangelicals effectively refused to be dispossessed as the means of production of religious capital, even while they were adamant about the rightful authority of religion in American life. The key to understanding the rise of Pentecostalism in America is not, as Anderson posited, deprivation. It is instead a refusal to be deprived of the means of religious production in a situation of widespread dispossession of the means of economic production. About such a reclamation of the means of religious production from the clergy, Maduro writes, “The religious interest of the clergy becomes, in the first instance, an interest in preserving, extending, and deepening power over the production, reproduction, exchange, and distribution of religious goods (i.e., the means of salvation) and accordingly its power over the means of religious production. The religious interest of the laity becomes an interest in restraining, and if possible reversing, the process of expropriation of the means of religious production.¹²² In mobilizing religious ecstasy as a form of religious capital, early Pentecostals performatively refused

¹²¹ Bourdieu, “Genesis and Structure,” 13, emphasis mine.

¹²² Maduro, *Religion and Social Conflict*, 91.

the bifurcation of mental religious goods from physical goods, and instead maintained their bodies as means of religious production and encouraged others to do the same, thereby deeply challenging not the value of Protestant religion, but the foundations of the American Protestant religious field as a professional field.¹²³

One all-important difference of interpretation when it comes both to healing as is being discussed and, in the next section, to tongues speech as well, is the interpretation of each as gift of God to a deserving lay believer (whether through having enough faith or through having enough holiness as prescribed by holiness evangelicals themselves) or as the result of the healing gifts of the preacher through whom, it might be imagined, the gifts operate as the power to cure or, by extension, to save. Some incipient Pentecostal preachers, it should be noted, rhetorically angled for the latter interpretation. John Alexander Dowie, for example, reasoned:

¹²³Erwin Dianteill notes that “the constitution of a religious field is accompanied by the dispossession of religious capital of laymen towards a group of religious specialists... it can thus be said that different social formations fall between two poles: popular religious self-consumption and specialists who monopolize religious production completely. These two extreme positions are defined by the opposition between practical mastery of thought schemata acquired through simple familiarization on one hand and, on the other, conscious savant mastery acquired through intentional and institutional pedagogical action. Erwan Dianteill, “Pierre Bourdieu and the Sociology of Religion” in *After Bourdieu: Influence, Critique, Elaboration*, edited by David Swartz and Vera Zolberg (Boston: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2004), 72.

There are some of you here this afternoon, for healing, because you hear God has used me to multitudes of people. When I have prayed with you, and after you have received healing, you intend to go right back to the Methodists or Baptists, or some other dead denomination. You do not intend to stand by God's servant, and God's work... "Oh God Almighty, disappoint every selfish wretch who has entered this building today... They think they can get their healing and go on their way and do just as they like." ... I am through praying for people who are going to do as they like. They are abominable nuisances... If I am God's minister, am I not God's representative?

Bear cautions that, "as a ruling theocrat, Dowie exercise complete control over Zion City, a trust he abused in maintaining a luxurious lifestyle even as the city failed financially. Dowie's megalomania seemed to grow with each passing year."¹²⁴

Although the religious goods of preachers like Woodworth Etter and Parham were older and tended toward embodied knowledges and self-sufficiency, their perpetuation and valorization in camp meeting relied in part on what we might call the clergy of the lower classes. The lower classes make demands of their clergy in symmetrical, if diametrically opposed, manners than do the upper classes. Maduro writes,

¹²⁴ Baer, "Redeemed Bodies," 769.

To cite merely the most general and best known oppositions characteristic of the lay public, we note with Max Weber that these demands will be organized around two fundamental poles. There will be the pole of the dominant classes, whose religious demand will tend toward a worldview that will permit them to continue to situate and orient themselves, and to act, dominant... for the legitimation of dominance. And there will be the pole of the dominated classes, whose religious demand will tend toward a worldview that will permit them either to compensate for or to reverse their subordinate situation. That is... in the area between a demand for compensation of their subordinate condition and a demand for reversal of the legitimation of the established order.¹²⁵

Maduro explains that, while the fundamental division in the religious field is the division between clergy and laity, there is a second division between higher clergy and lower clergy. While the rhetoric of “old time religion” and embodied logics of self-sufficiency characterized the content of incipient Pentecostal revivalists, their willingness to critique the clergy of more stodgy, urbanizing churches and denominations structurally placed them in this position of a lower, opposing clergy, where anti-denominationalism and the makeshift nature of the camp meeting held any aspirations of dominance in check.

On the Production of Tongues-Speech as a Competitive Religious Form

In its status as origin myth and the most important catalyst in the spread

¹²⁵ Maduro, *Religion and Social Conflict*, 93.

of Pentecostalism, Azusa Street Revival has never had any competitors.¹²⁶ In Bourdieusian terms, it functions as an independent site, meaning a site independent of denominational control and oversight, and a site of the production of tongues-speech as a new, improved form of highly competitive *capital*. Prior to Azusa Street Revival, and owing in part to the aforementioned desires for the return of “real power” to the church and in part to the innovative ideas of Charles Parham, there was the condition of possibility: speaking in tongues could be popularly embraced as the sign of a definite (higher) work of the Spirit. But the propagation of the notion that speaking in tongues signified the baptism of the Holy Spirit, which Blumhofer credits to Parham to place him as progenitor of the movement proper, is not the production and dissemination of glossolalia *as a form of spiritual capital*. For three years straight, three times a day, seven days a week, William Seymour held open space for the performance of sacred liminality and its signature charism—tongues-speech—to achieve worldwide recognition as the “baptism in the Holy Spirit.” As many as fifteen hundred people crowded Azusa Street Mission’s altars on any given Sunday in 1906, with at times 250 new converts being baptized weekly.¹²⁷ Because fields garner their power from subscriber participation and *doxa*, Azusa Street

¹²⁶ Creech 2007:10; Robby Waddell and Peter Althouse, “The Promises and Perils of the Azusa Street Myth”, *Pneuma* 38, 4 (2016): 367-371.

¹²⁷ Cecil M. Robeck, *The Azusa Street Mission and Revival: The birth of the global Pentecostal movement* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2006), 7.

Mission's overwhelming success and exposure succeeded in changing the terms of the American religious field.

In many ways, Azusa Street Mission made good on its location. The mission was felicitously located in a rising cosmopolis with an active press and significant international population.¹²⁸ International visitors could in turn spread the word of the full gospel, a version critically inflected by Azusa Street Mission, into communities at a great distance from California. Azusa Street Mission's position in California also facilitated extensive exposure to Mexican migrant laborers and citizens of Mexican heritage alike, resulting in a quick rooting into Mexican ranks that has yielded US Pentecostalism its largest share of its growth in the last century.¹²⁹ Los Angeles also proved capable of sustaining a conspicuously interracial revival at a time when other parts of the US were still experiencing race violence and might have shut the meeting down quickly in the interest of lawful public order.¹³⁰ For an auspicious production of a competitive form of religious capital, you could do worse than Los Angeles.

The strength of Azusa Street's capital was derived not from the reasonability of its pneumatology or its historical continuity with any previous revival, but from mass popular participation and the rise of Azusa's reputation

¹²⁸ Ibid., 7–10.

¹²⁹ Daniel Ramírez. *Migrating Faith: Pentecostalism in the United States and Mexico in the Twentieth Century* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2015); Espinosa, *William J Seymour*, 2014.

¹³⁰ *ibid.*, 55.

into prestige. The intensity of the Azusa Street Revival and its ability to make skeptics into believers, to transform seemingly normal people into religious ecstasies—into tongues-speakers—satisfied a radical evangelical appetite for more spiritual power and proximity to God. The Revival’s strong reception in Los Angeles’ crowds spectacularly confirmed radical evangelicals’ assessment of the times, as urgent and critical “end times,” and it “empowered” them with confidence to spread this version of the faith that they contended was the actual, true faith.¹³¹ This view was not divorced from radical evangelical struggle for authority in the religious field, nor from challenges to the religious field from “scientific” fields. Azusa served as a longed-for *phenomenological* triumph of radical evangelicalism in its own eyes: the Pentecost. This Pentecost triumphed through popular participation and a very persuasive performance of an apex of spiritual power. By drawing a glut of attention to its way of enacting power and convincing people of the veracity of the gift, by reportedly turning would be mockers into tongues-speaking believers, by enabling religious consumers to become religious producers *en masse*, Azusa Street Mission successfully produced tongues-speech *as capital*.

This “Pentecost” answered many needs. Early Pentecostal Stanley Frodsham proclaimed Azusa as the answer to spiritual death due to powerless religion: “Our souls chafed under the unreality of a religion that was utterly

¹³¹ Edith L. Blumhofer, "Revisiting Azusa Street: a centennial retrospect." *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 30, no. 2 (2006): 59-64.

lifeless and powerless, but how grateful we are to God that there has been a revival of the primitive faith.”¹³² Eyewitness and early convert Frank Bartleman exulted in Azusa Street Mission’s lack of social hierarchy: “The mission had no pope or hierarchy. [...]We had no priest class nor priestcraft. We did not even have a platform or pulpit in the beginning. All were on a level.”¹³³ These quotations are not best interpreted in a true-or-false dichotomy. What they have missed is the continuity of Bartleman’s vision with his revolution-era radical evangelical forebears. *No pope, no hierarchy, no priest class, no priestcraft. All were on a level.* Frank Bartleman’s interpretation of the sanctity of Azusa Street is clearly one formed by participation in the radical evangelical tradition that had, since the American Revolution, opposed all hierarchies. He, and other bearers of this same tradition, performed the interpretive work of invoking this tradition as what was being actualized in the restoration of the baptism of the Holy Spirit. In the ongoing struggle to interpret Azusa Street Mission correctly, it was Creech who asked the most helpful question—not whether its egalitarian primordially was true in a historical sense, but instead: Why did early Pentecostals *want* it to be true? Why did they *choose* to interpret and remember Azusa Street this way? And why is this their primordial representation of the work, specifically, of the third person of the Holy Trinity, the Holy Spirit ? The answer offered here is that

¹³² King, *Disfellowshipped*, 102.

¹³³ Robeck, *Azusa Street Revival*, 128.

their interpretive framework reflects their genealogical relation to radical evangelicals¹³⁴ and their revolutionary ethos.¹³⁵

Azusa Street Mission's overwhelming power made a strong case against the merits of professional religion and reoriented the American religious field toward a body-centric version of revivalistic Christianity that has proved popular the world over. How that capital functioned in Bourdieu's "metafield of power" is hard to answer. It spoke to the strength of religion in American public life, but this religion did not authorize the status quo and called into question the hierarchy of professional religionists at the time. Still today there is not yet a

¹³⁴ Catherine Brekus describes radical evangelicals as "intoxicated by the republican rhetoric of equality" in the decades immediately following the Revolution. She notes that, accordingly, evangelicals diminished distinctions between race, class, and sex. See Catherine Brekus, *Strangers and Pilgrims: Female Preaching in America, 1740–1845*, 11.

¹³⁵ My view of Frank Bartleman is quite different from that of Blumhofer or Creech, who dismiss his eyewitness accounts of the mission's egalitarian ethos as "Azusa boosting." Joe Creech, "Visions of Glory: The Place of the Azusa Street Revival in Pentecostal History," *Church History* 65 (1996): 405–24. Blumhofer entirely misses the connection between anti-clericalism and anti-hierarchy in American evangelicalism and the American Revolution, a connection made explicit four years earlier by Hatch (1989), before Blumhofer's early treatment of American Pentecostalism, *Restoring the Faith* (1993). In *Restoring the Faith*, Blumhofer simplifies the anti-hierarchical rhetoric of radical evangelicals with phrases like "the anti-organizational bias of independent restorationist churches." She indicates that Pentecostals continue this tradition, to what degree she understands it, for instance citing that "Pentecostals deplore institutionalization and acculturation," yet, she does not connect these traditional aversions to their Revolutionary heritage. When Blumhofer does mention Hatch, she acknowledges that Pentecostals drew from a deep radical evangelical heritage, but does not evaluate how, for instance, anti-hierarchy sentiments can be understood to inform the politics of American Pentecostalism, our concern here. Blumhofer obscures: "Nathan Hatch has noted that the strength of evangelical movements has been their identification with the people and their passion about communicating their message. Pentecostalism, he notes, is democratic in structure and spirit." Where Blumhofer explicitly affirms that Pentecostals continued the tradition of radical evangelical embodiment, she severs the anti-hierarchy still present in its incipient pneumatology from the revolutionary rhetoric so fundamental to radical evangelicalism. Blumhofer, *Restoring the Faith*, 3, 7.

concept for negative capital, or intra-field capital that broadly negates the status quo. Capital in field theory is tightly related to authorizing the social order and use of power within a metafield of power. Instead, by constructing and maintaining a flagrantly transgressive, sacred social space that did not observe the social order, the mission set itself apart from other revivals in a manner that suggests it understood itself to be at the apex of degree of intensity and liberty. By deconstructing the line between the laity and the clergy through a performance of heightened spiritual lay powers, and by openly insisting that these powers replaced dead and formal rituals, participants in Azusa Street Revival forcefully challenged a religious field to reevaluate their goods, and through their religious, ecstatic labor it called the very category of clergy into question.¹³⁶

At a time when other fields were consolidating power and hierarchalizing, Azusa Street Mission and Pentecostalism introduced a different strain of Protestantism, a strain that laid claim to more spiritual power, and then diffused that power across the congregation in an unprecedented way. It was, in an important sense, a reverse move than other fields were making at a time of widespread professionalization via expertise. Azusa Street Mission's success was inversely related to the move toward professional expertise that the religious field's powerholders, in step with professional elites in all other fields, were attempting to achieve. That so many denominations trace their origins to Azusa

¹³⁶ Robeck, *The Azusa Street Revival*, 8–9; 137.

Street is not faulty historiography, but does represent strategy on the part of believers to represent themselves with the version of Christianity they believed was divine and authoritative, the anti-hierarchical version they believed put contest to rest. It is not surprising that the production and circulation of Azusa Street Mission's history acquired mythic qualities, as the event enabled believers to verify enchanted worldviews and possess magical bodies in a period of instrumentalization, rationalization, and dispossession, economic and symbolic. The political desire for myth maintenance is an historical condition and need not function in binary opposition to history. Pentecostal theologians Robby Waddell and Peter Althouse argue in favor of the place of Azusa Street Revival as a sustained primordial myth, still able to "provide meaning, shape identity and inspire ethical conduct."¹³⁷ Cultural sociologist Jeffrey Alexander has problematized the advent of divisions of labor and forms of cultural capital differently, as giving rise to instead, "more complex, segmented, and differentiated" collectivities as opposed to "more simple collective organization."¹³⁸ But, Alexander reasons, "every kind of modern collectivity seems to depend on at one time or another on integrative processes that create some shared sense of identity."¹³⁹ Alexander puts forward his own model, theorizing that where ritual performs the integrating social function in simpler

¹³⁷ Robby Waddell and Peter Althouse, "Promises and Perils," 367-371.

¹³⁸ Jeffrey C. Alexander, "Cultural pragmatics: social performance between ritual and strategy" in *Performance and Power* (Malden, MA: Polity, 2011), 27.

¹³⁹ *ibid.*, 26.

collectivities, in a more differentiated and complex society, formidable *performance* has to secure the fusion of action and symbolic meaning that has become fragmented in a pluralistic, rationalized society. If Azusa Street Mission had not filled this need, there is every reason to think that revivalists waiting for Pentecost would simply have kept pressing. In the following chapter, we get a closer look at Pentecostal altar practices, especially at Azusa, as *performance*, designed to integrate a rapidly changing society and church.

Conclusion

Thinking in fields allows a bipedal assessment of two crises of cultural authority at issue for the religious field in the second part of the Industrial Revolution and facilitates a new perspective on what they have in common. First, within the religious field, proto-Pentecostals were concerned by the decline into “powerlessness” of the American Church and blamed the empty goods of professional clergy, which were overly rationalized and reflected class antagonism. Second, the religious field’s struggle with the rising authority of scientific field is reflected in Pentecostal rejection of medicine in preference for supernatural healing. Converts to Pentecostalism were concerned about the integrity of the goods of the religious field and at the same time anxious for the sustained place of authority of religion in American life. These challenges from within and without the field substantially depended on a dispossession of a

sacred body. At Azusa Street Mission, the evangelical body grew more mystically powerful in response.

By revisiting the Marxist sociological roots of Bourdieu's fields, we can see that Pentecostal maintenance of the body as a means of religious production of proclaimed *real, authentic* goods undermined a foundational dispossessing movement at work in the origins of the religious field and the scientific field, predicated as they are on the bifurcation of physical from mental labor, the dispossession of traditional/embodied knowledges, and the subjugation of the physical body to the mental laborer. I do not suggest that Pentecostals shared a conscious understanding of the critical importance of the dispossession of the body in producing a disempowered laity or for a diminished view of the body in a Darwinian science. Instead, I suggest that what early Pentecostal rhetoric unequivocally attests to is that its speakers felt a palpable difference between the aesthetics and kinesthetics of the clergy goods ("dead, powerless") and those in keeping with an enchanted agricultural past. They were believers for whom "old time religion" was still "good enough" and their rhetoric suggests that nostalgic, oral tradition proved instrumental in resisting religious and scientific domination, the very types Bourdieusian theory posits as ubiquitous and perpetual.

Chapter 2: Assessing Victor Turner’s Liminality as a Theoretical Frame for Pentecostalism

“The glossolalia of some modern Pentecostals appears to be connected with the notion that whereas articulate speech divides people of different linguistic groups and even expedites ‘sin,’ among those of the same speech community, nonsense (archaic) speech facilitates mutual love and virtue.”
—Victor Turner¹⁴⁰

Introduction

Having sketched in the previous chapter an account of changes in the American religious field owed to the nation’s revolution-era contest for authority, especially changes in the class composition of clergy and in the class priorities expressed in their rhetoric, the goal of this chapter is to take a relatively new idea within the study of historic American Pentecostalism—namely, that the heart of Pentecostalism is liturgical liminality—and to restore this historic liminality its own socio-political history. The particular ritual liminality of early American Pentecostalism can be profitably conceptualized in multiple ways: it might not simply appear as an erstwhile “suspension of the social order” that is

¹⁴⁰ Victor Turner, *From Ritual to Theatre: The Human Seriousness of Play* (New York: PAJ Publications, 1982), 51.

circumscribed only to the ecclesial setting in which it takes place and thereby conceptualized to perform liturgical aims only; it could also credibly be interpreted as the construction of sacred space that ritually negates the sociopolitical order and aims to define and maintain itself apart from this order, in contradistinction to the sociopolitical order and in judgment and rejection of the social order. The history of American Pentecostalism will show that it produced a form of altar-centric liminality that, far from affirming the existing social order as sacred, instead endeavored to have this social order destroyed and replaced. But current framing of altar practices as liminality has led to their being coded as play in a manner that obscures the historical context just covered in chapter one. Thus this chapter presents just how “missing” the history of chapter one has gone in the interpretation of historical Pentecostal revivalism as a Turnerian liminality.

The use of ritual theories to understand the rise of American Pentecostalism is somewhat counterintuitive. From the start, early American Pentecostals were consciously and explicitly opposed to rituals, believing them to be evidence of worldliness and, more to the point, of *popery*. But Pentecostal distaste for the pope and for ritual was less about anti-Catholic sentiments in particular and more a reflection of American populist distaste for elites in general. Evangelical wariness of pomp was an important part of a broad rejection of centralizing forces and hierarchical politics that had its source in the American

revolution and that was undergoing resurgence at the end of the the nineteenth century. In short, early Pentecostals did not only innovate their own embodied forms of religion, they also reactivated perpetuated critique of religious hierarchies and other cultural hierarchies. The rhetoric and sentiments of the revolutionary period, which we have just covered in chapter one, experienced a resurgence and circulation at the end of the nineteenth century, the decade in which Pentecostalism was fomenting. That reanimated critique surfaces in chapter three. This chapter serves as a literary review that essentially points up the inadequacy of the historical account of the development of Pentecostal altar practices and attempts to attribute this lack in part to Turner's own theoretical bias toward liminality as a renewing source of the social order.

Historian of religion Joe Creech has argued that the resurging political populism of the late nineteenth century is best understood as form of *restorationism*,¹⁴¹ a desire to recapture the original sources and purity of Jeffersonian democracy.¹⁴² This political restorationism, Creech presents, was in

¹⁴¹ According to Creech, religious restorationists display three characteristics: 1) they believe that they are "a holy remnant" which remains faithful to the pure or the true origin; 2) they tend to "reproduce the exact theological and ecclesiastical ideas of the Bible, New Testament, or early church." This eagerness to remain faithful to the earliest form of Christianity leads them (and especially Pentecostals and Quakers) to "practice a more far reaching critique of cultural norms, challenging things such as hierarchy of gender and race that they believe run counter to the social patterns outlined in the Bible. They put a stronger emphasis on conversion, baptism, and ecstatic worship. See Joe Creech, *Righteous Indignation: Religion and the Populist Revolution* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2006), 11–13.

¹⁴² Creech, *Righteous Indignation*, 30.

elective-affinity¹⁴³ with radical evangelical and holiness groups' religious restorationism, so that evangelicals of the period could both desire a return to Jeffersonian populism and argue the need to return to an apostolic church era style of Christianity from similar restorationist orientations. Creech writes,

Especially important to Populists like the congregants at Bethany Christian and Whitakers Temple was what they called 'Jeffersonian democracy,' 'Christian liberty,' or simply 'freedom,' by which they meant economic independence on a personal level, laissez-faire capitalism in the political sphere, freedom of conscience in politics and religion, and the inherent 'tyranny' of centralized or 'concentrated' people (urbanization), wealth, political power or denominational leadership¹⁴⁴.

It is this last kind of persuasion—a distaste for urbanizing, hierarchalizing political powers of all sorts—that needs to be more strongly factored into present understandings of the founding of Pentecostalism.

America's populist revolutionary discourse, reactivated in the early 1900s against the rise of an elite class on American soil, is positively insinuated into

¹⁴³ "The notion of elective affinity (*Wahlverwandtschaft*) has a long history which is much older than [Max] Weber's writings. It went through a complex path that leads from alchemy to romantic literature (Goethe), and from there to the social sciences. Weber uses it only three times in *The Protestant Ethic*, but it appears also in several of his other writings, mainly concerning sociology of religion. Weber does not define it, but one could propose the following definition, based on the weberian use of the notion: elective affinity is a process through which two cultural forms – religious, intellectual, political or economical – that have certain analogies, intimate kinships or meaning affinities, enter in a relationship of reciprocal attraction and influence, mutual selection, active convergence and mutual reinforcement." See Michaël Löwy, "Le concept d'affinité élective chez Max Weber" in *Archives de sciences sociales des religions*, vol. no 127, no. 3 (2004): 6.

¹⁴⁴ Creech, "Righteous Indignation," *xix*.

Pentecostal harangues against doctors, lawyers, and “high-falutin” people. In a sanctified populist rhetoric, the pope stood as the loathed symbol of an especially resented form of social domination, that is, religious domination. Accordingly, Pentecostal disavowal of rituals is best understood as based in their inherited distrust of pomp and rejection of the elites that pomp authorizes, meaning: Pentecostalism inherited more than heart-felt conversions from the circuit riders of early Methodism.¹⁴⁵ They did not, as most histories of early Pentecostals suggest, *randomly* find “church authority intolerable” (Blumhofer 1993:14). Nor, as is often presented,¹⁴⁶ were they wary wholesale of culture in a hyper form of separatist asceticism. Instead they inherited the deep anti-authoritarianism discussed in chapter one, and, in a conscious reactivation and perpetuation of this revolutionary culture, distrusted their contemporaneous cultural discourses that reflected elites or elitism and discredited their own discourses. The re-infiltration of elites and elitism into American Christianity they especially deplored—and resisted— by displacing professional clergy with plain-speaking revivalists who brought with them not exactly *no* ritual (as they imagined) but the

¹⁴⁵ The suspicion of rituals is apparent in what William J. Seymour wrote in 1907 concerning the work of the Spirit: “When the Holy Ghost comes in He will cleanse out dead forms and ceremonies, and will give life and power to His ministers and preachers, in the same old church buildings. But without the Holy Ghost they are simply tombstones.” Ecclesial practices are basically perceived as “dead forms and ceremonies. See William J. Seymour “The Holy Spirit Bishop of the Church” *The Apostolic Faith* vol. 1, no. 9 (June-September 1907).

¹⁴⁶ Grant Wacker’s account of the anti-elitism of early Pentecostals portrays it as the consequence of their pragmatic instincts, not of radical evangelical tradition and the revolutionary era. Wacker, *Heaven Below*, 191-197.

competitor rituals of the Baptism of the Holy Spirit. By this I mean that the class conflict reflected in the anti-elites and anti-ritual discourse of early Pentecostals informed their social construction of the rites of Baptism of the Holy Spirit and what the Spirit's work was understood to be—the bringing down of hierarchs. But at present, none of these anti-hierarchical sensibilities are taken into the account of Pentecostal “liminality.”

In this chapter, I engage the concept of liminality as enunciated by well-known anthropologist Victor Turner, which has been thought to strengthen the social order by means of an authorized, limited break from it. Turnerian liminality has gained a prominent place in the study of Pentecostal liturgy, so this chapter is substantially a literature review of the reception of Turner into the study of Pentecostal revivalism. In the first section of this chapter, I discuss Turner's concept of liminality and then examine how it has been appropriated in the Pentecostal scholarship, particularly in the works of Bobby Alexander, Dan Albrecht, and Wolfgang Vondey. I then critically evaluate both Turner's notion of liminality and the trend of placing Pentecostal ritual within such theoretical framework. By showing the limitations of Turnerian liminality in understanding the radicality of Pentecostalism, in the next chapter I demonstrate that the liminality that Mikhail Bakhtin has constructed in his account of the Carnival would be a better framework for that purpose, as it aims instead to destabilize

and topple social hierarchies, just like the Holy Spirit of early Pentecostalism.

A Primer on the “Work” of Ritual: Catherine Bell

From the middle of the 1970s, ritual studies has steadily risen to become an independent and interdisciplinary field of study, catalyzed in part by the work of ritual theorist Catherine Bell. Bell’s *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice* (1992) complicated the use of ritual as a frame for investigating social life, acknowledging the category’s many limitations: such as lack of coherent, universal definition, disciplinary¹⁴⁷ boundlessness, and implicit western viewpoint.¹⁴⁸ Bell also challenged a very common sociological notion that held that ritual simply serves as a means of social domination, enabling a set of powerful figures (whether in secular life or religious settings or in some amalgam

¹⁴⁷ Turner’s definition of liminality describes ritual processes as an undoing of social structures (anti-structure). Liminality involves the specifically novel and extraordinary experience of the “threshold people” going through rites of passages by deconstructing cultural units which inhibit them from group immersion— they become “neither here nor there; they are betwixt and between the positions assigned and arrayed by law, custom, convention, and ceremonial” Turner, *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure* (Chicago: Aldine Pub. Co, 1969), 95.

¹⁴⁸ Catherine Bell, *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), 14. Scholarly and popular interest in “ritual” in Europe and North America “suggests a certain drive toward transcending the particularities of place, time, and culture by means of the “higher learning” embodied in scientific, artistic, historical, and hermeneutical forms of analysis. This interest in transcending the particular suggests a fundamental drive toward world transformation and self-determination. It suggests an eagerness to find or forge spiritual-cultural commonalities among the heterogeneity of beliefs and styles in the world, but primarily in terms that extend our historical experiences as nearly universal.” See also Catherine Bell, *Ritual: Perspectives and Dimensions* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 267.

of the two) to control the underpowered masses.¹⁴⁹ Instead, Bell convincingly argued that ritual, far from being “thoughtless action, stripped of context” is instead better conceived as enabling various strategies within a social context. In Bell’s influential account, ritual is better conceived as “a culturally strategic way of acting in the world.”¹⁵⁰

Bell concurs that rituals are a means of representing a social order as being in harmony with cosmological order. In this she agrees, for example, with Jonathan Z. Smith, that ritual’s core function is to create (not merely represent) a relationship between society and a larger metafield of meaning, performing the social order as not arbitrary, but instead as necessary and meaningful.¹⁵¹ Though Bell agrees that rituals work to make the social order appear in sync with nature and divinely sanctioned, Bell departs from those scholars who posit that rituals

¹⁴⁹ Such a notion of ritual serving the ruling class is embedded mainly in a Marxist critique of ideology, particularly in the works of Louis Althusser. See discussion in Bell, *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice*, chap. 8.

¹⁵⁰ Bell, *Ritual: Perspectives and Dimensions*, vii.

¹⁵¹ Bell notes the following concerning the role of ritual (or ritualization) in both differentiation and integration of communities. “Just as strategic differences in ritual traditions can differentiate particular communities, ritualization can also work to integrate communities. Indeed, ritualization appears to be a type of social strategy that can simultaneously do both. This is not due to any synchronic structure it may be said to possess; instead, the integrations and differentiations affected by ritualized activities are closely associated with ritual’s temporal dimension. That is, the orchestration of rituals in time, some reproducing local communities, others later integrating them or parts of them into larger communities, enables each unit in the system to experience both its own autonomy and its dependent place within a network of relationships with other groups. This orchestration is not a perfect and holistic order imposed on minds and bodies but a delicate and continual renegotiation of provisional distinctions and integrations so as to avoid encountering in practice the discrepancies and conflicts that would become so apparent if the ‘whole’ was obvious.” Bell, *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice*, 125.

thereby necessarily make holy various forms of social domination, instead pointing out that ritual also creates space for change in the social order, i.e. they sometimes allow and even make intelligible strategic renovations in social relations. Her helpful taxonomy of key types of rituals¹⁵² allows for a comparative assessment of the work that rituals might do across cultures, allowing for cross-cultural comparison and contrast. This chapter considers three of Bell's named types of ritual: first, political rites; second, rites of liminality in life transitions; and third, calendrical rites.

While political rites can be said to perform the work that scholars problematize as potentially oppressive, making the social order seem cosmologically needful with little regard for its potential to be oppressive, a rich discussion has also developed in which scholars question whether the rites of transition, which feature a period of liminality marked by *communitas*,¹⁵³ might serve as a ritual foundation for critique of the social order and, perhaps, of change. Via her taxonomy, Bell serves as an interlocutor, helping to situate our respective theorists as part of a larger, more developed scholarly conversation about ritual and its political efficacies. Taking for granted the idea that ritual

¹⁵² These are 1) rites of practice, 2) calendrical rites, 3) rites of exchange and communion, 4) rites of affliction, 5) fasting and festivals, and 6) political rites. See Catherine Bell, *Ritual: Perspectives and Dimensions*, chap. 4.

¹⁵³ "Communitas" denotes intense feelings of social togetherness and belonging, often in connection with rituals. In communitas, people stand together "outside" society, and society is strengthened by this. The concept is in many ways the opposite of Marx's alienation or Durkheim's anomie, and is closely related to the latter's ideas about the "sacred" (vs. the "profane").

unifies a social group, the important question about their efficacy is whether the political rites and the rites of liminality sanction social oppression, and additionally whether the rites of liminality (to be discussed at length in this chapter) perhaps introduce ritual logistics for profound change for a social order that is oppressive. Bell's work provides a helpful guide for placing the work of Van Gennep, Turner, and later Bakhtin in more general categories that can help to make clear comparisons and contrasts that will be crucial for assessing the power of these respective theorists to shed light on early Pentecostal ritual.

The Political Rites

Of the first kinds of rites under discussion— the *political rites*— Bell observes:

They can be said to comprise those ceremonial practices that specifically construct, display and promote the power of political institutions (such as king, state, the village elders) or the political interests of distinct constituencies and subgroups. Geertz, as noted earlier, argued that political rituals should not be thought of as simply giving form to power in the way that a bowl gives way to water or a light bulb and wires give form to electricity; instead, rituals construct power. The king's cult creates the king, defines kingliness, and orchestrates a cosmic framework *within which the social hierarchy headed by the king is perceived as natural and right*.¹⁵⁴

The political rites are by this definition hierarchicalizing rites that place “the king” (or other supreme ruler) at the top of a social hierarchy and present this

¹⁵⁴ Bell, *Ritual: Perspectives and Dimensions*, 129.

order as in keeping with nature in a “cosmic framework.” Critically, this work is not merely symbolic in a vernacular sense but is instead performative and constitutive of relations of domination. Following Geertz, Bell elaborates how these rituals “construct, display, and promote” power. She continues by noting that:

In general, political rites define power in a two-dimensional way: first, they use symbols and symbolic action to depict a group of people as a coherent and ordered community based on shared values and goals by establishing their iconicity *with the perceived values and orders of the cosmos*. As such, political ritual is something very different from the use or threat of coercive physical force... It is through ritual that those claiming power can demonstrate how their interests are in the natural, real, fruitful order of things. When effective, the symbolic imagery and structural processes of political ritual—what Roy Rappaport calls its “sanctity”—can transform “the arbitrary and conventional in what appears to be necessary and natural.”¹⁵⁵

Here, Bell highlights one of the key outcomes of political rites: to make to social order seem in keeping with nature, or the natural order. Political rituals do the cultural work of sanctifying social hierarchy, by tying an arbitrary social order to the natural order, itself seemingly divinely designed.¹⁵⁶ It is in relationship to

¹⁵⁵ Bell, *Ritual: Perspectives and Dimensions*, 129.

¹⁵⁶ The needfulness of the logic of coherence between nature, the divine, and the social order demonstrably persists today in the Christian Right (often called the Religious Right) in the United States. Faced with the challenge of Hurricane Katrina, the symbolic onus of the storm’s devastation was symbolically displaced onto the people of New Orleans themselves (and their cultural inheritance of voodoo) by Charismatic televangelist Pat Robertson’s 700 club. In this way, his discourse can be read as designed to protect then-President George W. Bush from the appearance of being, as head of the nation, somehow not in sacred synchronicity with nature. Through this rhetorical juxtaposition, the problematization of voodoo therefore produces Christianity as being in good relationship with nature. “A number of possessions left behind suggest the mindset of some of the evacuees,” Lane said. “They include this voodoo cup with the saying, ‘May the curse be with you.’” A shot of a

these kinds of rites that the rites of liminality, our key category, have been theoretically developed and problematized.

The Rites of Passage

Bell's discussion of the *rites of passage* centers on the work of French folklorist and anthropologist Arnold Van Gennep (1909), from which the better-known anthropologist Victor Turner drew his very influential reading of the liminal period. Van Gennep posited that rituals of transition broadly enacted a three-stage process of separation, liminality, and reincorporation. The *rites de passage* dramatize major events, such as birth, coming of age, marriage, and death. As "life crisis" or "life cycle" rites, they make the transitions between one stage of life possible, visible, and intelligible. In Van Gennep's account of the rites of passage,

a person leaves behind one social group and its concomitant social identity and passes through a stage of no identity or affiliation before admission into another social group that confers a new identity. Such rites of passage from one stage of life to another, Van Gennep went on to argue, provide the model for initiations into

plastic souvenir cup from one of New Orleans's countless trinket shops appeared on the screen. "Also music CDs with the titles *Guerrilla Warfare* and *Thugs 'R' Us*," Lane stated, pointing out a pile of rap CDs strewn on the ground.

It is well known that President G.W. Bush is a practicing Christian. For another example: the narrative around climate change, which suggests that the social order is in bad relationship with Nature, is consistently denied by the Religious Right. Article accessed at: <https://www.thenation.com/article/pat-robertsons-katrina-cash/>

special groups whose membership is not closely tied to any formal stage of life.¹⁵⁷

Drawn from Van Gennep's account of rites of status elevation, and later inflected by Turner's own life-long and inherited love of drama, British anthropologist Victor Turner developed a robust account of the middle, liminal phase of *rites de passage*, the phase in which there is no identity or affiliation. In the following section, I turn to Turner to discuss first his development of the rites of passage of status elevation and then his treatment of a second kind of rite of passage, the calendrical rite. Throughout this discussion, I periodically take up Bell's taxonomy to appraise the development of two kinds of thought about liminality in Turner's work. But first, a brief look at the relationship of Victor Turner to his predecessor, Max Gluckman, and their role in developing the structural-functional account of ritual.

Victor Turner's Development of Ritual Liminality

"To the Insurgent Peoples of the World"

The humble have become the proud,
 The red flower buds from dust,
 But we have no word for the way it comes
 In English, Comerado, Kamerad.
 Wistfully we watch the changing maps,
 Inhale a gust of gunsmoke like the memory of a rose,
 Hold out our hands for happiness
 But we have no living word

¹⁵⁷ Ibid., 130.

For comrade or for comradeship,
Comerado, Kamerad.

Victor Turner¹⁵⁸

A Brief Background on Turner and the Manchester School

In this section, I delve into the development of Turner's account of liminality within the tradition of structuralist-functionalism. The retrieval of this early history allows for a nuanced reading of Turner as a theorist, because there is good reason to think that though liminality is a constant theoretical frame in Turner's work, he nevertheless uses it in different ways depending on his own intellectual trajectory. This early history also allows for a nuanced account of the reception of Turner's theory of liminality, especially with regard to questions about its political function in the social order. The question of whether Turnerian liminality serves to support the social order, in a manner inattentive to the order's capacity for oppression, still finds echoes in fields as diverse as literary theory, medieval studies, Africana studies, to name a few. This question is of paramount importance to this dissertation, so this early account allows for a complementary account of the rise of this question.

At present a towering figure in the field of anthropology, Victor Turner was once a graduate student trying to produce a dissertation that would satisfy his

¹⁵⁸ Timothy Larsen, *The Slain God: Anthropologists and the Christian Faith* (London: Oxford University Press, 2014) 178.

doctoral committee and secure his place in the field as a rising star. Originally enrolled in a comparative literature program at University College London, Turner changed his trajectory after he read Margaret Mead's *Coming of Age in Samoa* (1928). His nascent interest in anthropology grew more acute with his subsequent reading of A. R. Radcliffe-Brown's *The Andaman Islanders* (1922), which solidified for Turner a new sense of vocation as an anthropologist.¹⁵⁹ During the course of his anthropological studies, Turner attracted the attention of Oxford anthropologist Max Gluckman, under whom he would eventually conduct his career-making fieldwork among the Ndembu tribes of then-Northern Rhodesia, from December 1950 to Summer 1954.

Today, Turner is regarded as a key successor to Gluckman, and one of the brightest stars of Gluckman's "Manchester School" of anthropology. As T.M.S. Evans and Don Handelman acclaim, Turner is "a stellar representative of the Manchester School."¹⁶⁰ That it sometimes appears less than clear to later anthropologists to what degree Manchester was properly a school or in what ways the affiliated ethnographers shared more than basic orientations to research, does not for our purposes challenge an important interpretation of Turner as Gluckman's heir in the structuralist-functionalist tradition. Gluckman's own anthropological training was in structural-functionalism, and this chiefly through

¹⁵⁹ Timothy Larsen, *The Slain God*, 179.

¹⁶⁰T.M.S. Evans and Don Handelman, *The Manchester School: Practice and Ethnographic Praxis in Anthropology*, 7.

Radcliffe-Brown's interpretation of Durkheim. The essential thesis of this paradigm is that rituals maintain social structure; proponents of this view posited that social processes maintain social stasis, evincing the influence of Durkheim's account of social cohesion. In his fieldwork under Gluckman, and the resulting career-catalyzing production of his Ndembu account, the influence of this Durkheimian vision of the social world is clearly visible from Gluckman to Turner.

Turner would later express dissatisfaction with the dissertation he produced chiefly under Gluckman, 'Social system of the Lunda-Ndembu of Mwinilunga District' (1955), and the resulting book, *Schism and Continuity in an African Society: A Study of Ndembu Village Life* (1957), lamenting this rendering of Ndembu life as "straitjacketed by the conventions of structuralism and as failing to let ritual breathe on its own terms."¹⁶¹ Biographer and historian Timothy Larsen reasons, "Gluckman told his protégé to include material that Vic thought was unimportant and to leave out or take out material about which he was passionate. However, this seems to have been the kindly advice of someone on Vic's side who wanted to make sure that his work was widely acknowledged to be successful rather than a reflection of the narrowness of Gluckman's own views"¹⁶²

Still, Turner was dispirited enough about it, according to Larsen, to portray

PhD students as being at the mercy of their institutions:

¹⁶¹ Larsen, *The Slain God*, 180.

¹⁶² Ibid.

Their best thoughts may be tabooed and their integrity undermined by 'city state' shibboleths in the way of concepts and styles to which they must render at least lip service to obtain support from nationally and locally prestigious departmental faculty. Students often seem to suffer from the guilt of 'self-betrayal'—which pursues them even into their fieldwork in far places. I am sure this is not an optimal condition for fieldwork. For they have to process their fieldwork into Ph.D. dissertations acceptable by their sponsoring departments.¹⁶³

This sense of self-betrayal did not change the fact that Turner had accomplished something vitally important on behalf of and as representative of the Manchester School. The structural-functionalist framework was broadly thought to be too static.

Turner's novel development of the social drama was able to incorporate existing elements of of conflicted departures into its account. Turner rendered these conflicts as helping to reproduce social order, no longer static, but still in the main secure.

The development of the extended-case method stemmed most immediately from [the] constitutional incapacity of structural functionalism to address the issue of social process... it was above all intended to overcome this incapacity and thereby to save the structural-functionalist paradigm. The method was designed to force the paradigm to confront the empirical realities of social process and their contribution to the state of the social order, thus rescuing structural functionalism from what seemed a fatal flaw.¹⁶⁴

¹⁶³ Ibid., 181.

¹⁶⁴ Marian Kempny, "History of the Manchester 'School'," in *Social Analysis: The International Journal of Social and Cultural Practice* 49, no. 3 (2005): 155.

Turner's social dramas were "his own dashing iteration on the extended case study method" which proved to be influential and salvific for structuralist-functionalism. A social drama was a conflict that had a processional form: breach, crisis, redressive action, and, finally, reintegration or recognition of schism.¹⁶⁵ Though later in our discussion it will become very clear that the structural-functionalism of Gluckman and Turner are considered in their vision of society essentially static, what this "conservative" vision of the world—a vision of continually resetting social processes— belies is Gluckman and Turner's own Marxist persuasions.¹⁶⁶

For his part, Turner had undertaken his 1950 study of the Ndembu with copies of Marx hidden in his luggage, away from the eyes of colonial officials. This younger Turner was, by his own hand, deeply suspicious of structural hierarchy and institutions.¹⁶⁷ So if it is the case that Turner produced, as a protégé of Gluckman, an account of rituals as in the main in service of the social order, as helping to maintain its equilibrium, there is little reason to believe that this repetitively conservative outcome represented what (this younger) Turner

¹⁶⁵ Larsen, *The Slain God: Anthropologists and the Christian Faith*, 181.

¹⁶⁶ Evans and Handelman say of Gluckman: "Whether in his pioneering work in anthropology of law or his more general analyses of tribal social orders, he was inclined to see conflict as the counter-intuitive optic through which to discern the essential character of any social order...the force of Gluckman's views on conflict and social order is distinctly dialectical and as such... most likely finds its philosophical spirit in the Marxian tradition." Evans and Handelman, *The Manchester School*, 3.

¹⁶⁷ Larsen, *The Slain God*, 179.

wanted to see happen in the world. And given his own feeling of his account of ritual as having been constricted to the tenets of structural-functionalism, there is good reason to doubt it.

As Turner's conceptualizing of ritual liminality and social dramas took hold in the field, their conservative implications were met with Marxist-inflected criticisms. Just what could be the value of liminality if, in the end, it serves only to renew and reinforce conflicted structures—where what is really needed is revolutionary change?¹⁶⁸

Arnold van Gennep's Rites of Passages and Turner's Liminality

In terms of the discipline, Turner's 1969 account of ritual liminality, in *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure*, represented expansion on knowledge of liminality as introduced by French ethnographer Arnold van Gennep. Van Gennep's 1909 account dealt more strongly with the liminality of initiates for transitions in status than that of calendrical status reversal.¹⁶⁹

¹⁶⁸ Turner's work on ritual was actually radical in its own way because it portrayed ritual as efficacious and even granted it ontological status for creating community and knowledge, as opposed to depicting it as meaningless repetition.

¹⁶⁹ Says Turner of van Gennep's reception: "Although van Gennep himself seems to have intended that his term "rite of passage" should be used both for rituals accompanying the change in social status of an individual or a cohort of individuals, and for those associated with seasonal changes for an entire society, his book concentrates on the former type; and the term has come to be used almost exclusively in connection with these "life-crisis" rituals. I have tried to revert to van Gennep's earlier usage in regarding almost all types of rites as having the processual form of 'passage.'" Turner, "Liminal to Liminoid," 56.

Turner's own ground-breaking treatment also centered on the transition in social status.¹⁷⁰ His 1969 account of the transition in status for boys from the Ndembu tribe, now well-known to generations of readers in anthropology, effectively reinforced the primacy of this kind of liminality in the reception of liminality for readers of anthropology. Turner's desire to give a fuller account of sources of liminality notwithstanding, it is palpably this linear liminality that bequeaths to Turner's account of the period "between and betwixt" social statuses a decidedly terminal temporal structure. The "social drama"—Turner's ground-breaking theorization of "social drama" as a narrative template for registering social conflict that requires redress—bears a discernible before-and-after, sequential narrative structure.¹⁷¹ Thus it is arguable that this kind of linear liminality (and not a different, repetitive, cyclical liminality to be discussed next) had more import on Turner's own thought.

Turner's initiate into manhood would not again revert to the status of child. In this initiate-centered schema, the liminal period is that in which the novices have shed their former statuses, but have not yet received a soon-coming elevated status; this liminal period occasions *communitas*, a form of status-less egalitarianism. Critically, Turner's Ndembu adept, no longer a boy and not yet a

¹⁷⁰ In his discussion on the distinction between liminality and liminoid, Turner acknowledges that his comparative symbology (symbolic genres) work is an effort to expand van Gennep's theory in "*large-scale societies*" (italics his). See Turner, *From Ritual to Theatre*, 24.

¹⁷¹ Turner, *Ritual Process: Turner, Structure and Anti-Structure*, 57; Larsen, *The Slain God*, 181, 191–94, Bynum, *Fragmentation and Redemption*, 27–42.

man, experiences egalitarian *communitas* on his way to real and irreversible structural status *elevation*. Though a temporary reversal is experienced in the process of transition, the overall thrust of movement in this kind of transition is upward in the social hierarchy.

In Turner's earliest and most influential descriptions of the liminal period he described persons in liminal transition as follows:

The attributes of liminality or of liminal personae ("threshold people") are necessarily ambiguous, since this condition and these persons elude or slip through the network of classifications that normally locate states and positions in cultural space. Liminal entities are *neither here nor there; they are betwixt and between the positions assigned and arrayed by law, custom, convention, and ceremonial*. As such, their ambiguous and indeterminate attributes are expressed by a rich variety of symbols in the many societies that ritualize social and cultural transitions. Thus, liminality is frequently likened to death, to being in the womb, to invisibility, to darkness, to bisexuality, to the wilderness, and to an eclipse of the sun or moon.¹⁷²

The phrasing "betwixt and between" quickly became shorthand for scholars referencing Turner's account of the liminal phase. This liminal phase is marked by egalitarian or non-hierarchical relations, and as such Turner understood this phase, and presented it, as differing substantially from the rites of hierarchical order, i.e. the "political rites."¹⁷³ But the transitory nature of this liminal period,

¹⁷² Turner, *Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure*, 95, emphasis mine.

¹⁷³ In significant ways, this dissertation is asking questions about the social origins and political efficacy of Pentecostal ritual in a manner that would seem at home with political anthropology. But the field of political anthropology itself has had an uneven reception and development in the US. The field's most prominent figure of late has been French theorist

as something *gone through*, curtails liminality's strength vis-à-vis structural order.¹⁷⁴ The move in between states or statuses, some scholars note, means that the liminal period is always in reference to the structure, always implicitly affirming the structure. People move through liminality with the express purpose of moving upward to new places in the social order. As Bourdieu notes,

With the notion of rites of passage, Arnold Van Gennep named, indeed described a social phenomenon of great importance. I do not believe he did much more and neither did those who, like Victor Turner, have taken up his theory and offered a more explicit and more systematic description of the phases of the ritual. In fact, it seems to me that in order to develop the theory of rites of passage any further, one has to ask the question that this theory does not raise, and in particular those regarding the social function of ritual and the social significance of the boundaries or limits which the ritual allows one to pass over or transgress in a lawful way. One can ask oneself whether, by stressing the temporal transition—e.g. From childhood to adulthood—this theory does not conceal one of the

Pierre Bourdieu, but the structural functionalist school in which Turner is a major player is also part of its genealogy. Bjørn Thomassen explains, “Political anthropology developed as a recognizable, well-defined branch of anthropology only in the 1940s and 1950s, as it became a main focus of the British functionalist schools, heavily inspired by Radcliffe-Brown, and openly reacting against evolutionism and historicism. The approach was empirical, with the main bulk of work carried out in colonial Africa. The British structural-functionalist school was institutionalized with *African Political Systems*, edited by Meyer Fortes and E.E. Evans Pritchard (1940). A special version of conflict-oriented political anthropology was developed in the so-called “Manchester school,” started by Max Gluckman (1963). Gluckman focused on social process and an analysis of structures and systems based on their relative stability. In his view, conflict maintained the stability of political systems through the establishment and re-establishment of cross-cutting ties among social actors. Gluckman even suggested that a certain degree of conflict was necessary to uphold society, and that conflict was constitutive of social and political order.” See Bjorn Thomassen “What Kind of Political Anthropology?” (*International Political Anthropology* Vol. 1 No. 2 (2008) :264–271.

¹⁷⁴ Turner defines structure as: “By “structure ” I mean, as before, “social structure,” as used by the majority of British social anthropologists, that is, as a more or less distinctive arrangement of specialized mutually dependent institutions and the institutional organization of positions and/or of actors which they imply- I am not referring to “structure ” in the sense currently made popular by Levi-Strauss, i.e., as concerned with logical categories and the form of the relations between them.” Turner, *The Ritual Process*, 166-167.

essential effects of the rites, namely that of separating those who have undergone it, not from those who have not yet undergone it, but from those who will not undergo it in any sense, and thereby instituting a lasting difference between those to whom the rite pertains and those to whom it does not pertain. That is why, rather than describing them as rites of passage, I would prefer to call them rites of consecration or rites of legitimation, or quite simply, *rites of institution*.¹⁷⁵

As *liminality* became popularized in scholarly discussions, and Turner's theoretical construction came to be increasingly invoked without full reference to its anthropological underpinnings, it was this liminality—its “betwixt and betweenness”—that implicitly became Turner's calling card.

Turner's Account of Liminality in Calendrical Rites

Yet Turner delineated not only one but two “main types” of liminality:

I wish to distinguish two main types of liminality—though many others will undoubtedly be discovered—first, the liminality that characterizes *rituals of status elevation*, in which the ritual subject or novice is being conveyed irreversibly from a lower to a higher position in an institutionalized system of such positions. Secondly, the liminality frequently found in cyclical and calendrical ritual, usually of a collective kind, in which, at certain culturally defined points in the seasonal cycle, groups or categories of persons who habitually occupy low status positions in the social structure are positively enjoined to exercise ritual authority over their superiors; and they, in their turn, must accept with good will their ritual degradation...Such rites may be described as *rituals of status reversals*.¹⁷⁶

¹⁷⁵ Bourdieu, *Language and Symbolic Power*, 117.

¹⁷⁶ Turner, *Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure*, 167.

Where the first type concerned the novice, on his¹⁷⁷ way—irreversibly—to a higher social position, the second type pertains to collective and seasonal rituals of status reversal, in which persons of low status and persons of higher status switch roles during specified times of the year. Because calendrical rites of liminality often feature said reversals of social position, promote egalitarian relations, and generate a feeling of social solidarity and well-being called *communitas* (in a more expansive sense than happens during rituals of transition for specific groups in the social order), these rites are posited to be antithetical in import and effect to the political rites of hierarchy. In their mobilization of egalitarian relationships as an ideal, however contained, they are potentially an important resource of ritual strategies for negotiating situations of structural oppression.

A *calendrical rite*, according to Bell's six major groupings, is an "obvious and important corpus of rituals;" calendrical rites enact an ever-renewing cycle of the meaningful passage of time as an "ordered series of re-beginnings and repetitions" (102). Seasonal (as opposed to commemorative) calendrical rites are rooted in planting and harvesting for agriculturalists (whereas for pastoralists grazing and moving the herd are the central activities). In a typical calendrical

¹⁷⁷ Here, it is better to speak of the novice as male because Turner's initial and influential discussions focused on male liminaries. The centrality of maleness to Turner's treatment of rites de passage has been critiqued, for instance by Carolyn Walker Bynum in "Women's Stories, Women's Symbols: A Critique of Victor Turner's Theory of Liminality" in *Fragmentation and Redemption* (New York: Urzone Inc, 1990), 27–52.

rite, Bell explains, “the sowing of the seed is usually marked by offerings to ancestors or deities in order to secure protection for the fields. In return, harvest rites generally involve festivals in which the first fruits are given back to the gods or ancestors, accompanied by a communal feast with abundant food, music, dance, and some degree of social license.”¹⁷⁸

Calendrical rites enact politics via commentary on the relationship between society and nature. They “may attempt to influence or control or harness nature, as when rites address the amount of rain or the fertility of the land, or might simply try to harmonize the activities and attitudes of the human community with the seasonal rhythms of the environment and the larger cosmos.”¹⁷⁹ In both cases, Bell posits that calendrical rites constitute “working interpretations of the natural and social worlds”; among the Panare in South

¹⁷⁸ Bell, *Ritual*, 103. It is worth noting that the New Testament account of Pentecost, from which early Pentecostals drew their ideas about speaking in other tongues, itself occurred during such a calendrical rite: the Feast of Weeks. “The Feast of Weeks, Shavuot, or Pentecost, comes seven weeks after Passover. In the ancient Palestinian agricultural calendar, Shavuot marked the end of the grain harvest and was called the “Feast of Harvest.” See Jacob Neusner, *An Introduction to Judaism: A Textbook and Reader* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1991), 58. Thus, when early Pentecostals spoke about the Pentecostal altar as a threshing floor for the Harvest, their conceptual system was in deep agreement with the setting of their model event: the baptism of the Holy Spirit in Acts 2. This ritual agreement they also understood. An unsigned article, “Old Testament Feasts Fulfilled in Our Souls Today,” explains that the four feasts of the Old Testament “typify complete salvation.” Passover, First Fruits, and Pentecost are types of justification, sanctification, and the Spirit baptism, respectively. The Feast of Trumpets, as the “feast of the full harvest” “typifies the coming and reigning of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, when He shall spread the tabernacle and feed us.” Unsigned quotation from the Apostolic Faith from Larry McQueen’s chapter titled, “Early Pentecostal Eschatology in the Light of The Apostolic Faith, 1906–1908” in Peter Althouse and Robby Waddell, eds., *Perspectives in Pentecostal Eschatologies: World Without End* (Cambridge, UK: James Clarke & Co./Lutterworth, 2012), 139–54.

¹⁷⁹ Bell, *Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure*, 102–103.

America, for example, “calendrical rites are literally seen as keeping the cosmos in motion” while the Incas’ “truly magnificent” rites integrated spatial positions, social hierarchies, genealogical histories and dynastic powers.¹⁸⁰

In his explicit treatments of calendrical rites, Turner conceives of these rites as “seasonal rituals of status reversals,” and posits that they too function to integrate the tribe as a collective type of liminality. Of calendrical rites, Turner writes, “[n]ot only do they reaffirm the order of structure, they also restore relations between the actual historical individuals who occupy positions in that structure.”¹⁸¹ He emphasized this interpretation, writing:

It might be argued that rituals of status reversal are also found contingently, when calamity threatens the total community. But one can cogently reply by saying that it is precisely because the whole community is threatened that such countervailing rites are performed—because it is believed that concrete historical irregularities alter the natural balance between what are conceived to be permanent structural categories.¹⁸²

In Turner’s treatment, calendrical rites mediate relations between the tribe, as a collective, and nature, in a two-party encounter meant to promote good relations or restore them where they have become conflicted; they also serve to recalibrate tribal society into *a natural, original* collectivity. “Rituals of status reversal, either placed at strategic points in the annual circle or generated by disasters conceived of as being the result of grave social sins, are thought of as bringing

¹⁸⁰ Ibid., 103.

¹⁸¹ Turner, *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure*, 177.

¹⁸² Ibid.

social structure and *communitas* into right mutual relation once again”¹⁸³

Critically, the conflict here is posited to be possibly between the group as a collective and nature, as registered through disasters; in this case the rites of seasonal reversal can be used to restore synchronicity with nature. But these rites can also be thought of as bringing the social order into right relationship with *communitas*—which represents an original wholeness of society that for Turner is in the distant past. Seasonal rituals of status reversal are a kind of loophole into that past.¹⁸⁴

The kinds of interventions that calendrical rites can achieve, by using the energies of *communitas* to recreate the collective, in Turner’s work can also be the means for changing the people in the social order.¹⁸⁵ Where calendrical rites can address social fractures, they intervene by making officials in power behave toward communitarian ends. Beyond that, in Turner’s work seasonal calendrical rites do not change the order itself; again, Turner’s work assumes that rituals

¹⁸³ Ibid.,178.

¹⁸⁴ See Victor Turner’s “Images of Anti-Temporality: An Essay in the Anthropology of Experience” in *On the Edge of the Bush: The Anthropology of Experience*, ed. Edith Turner (Tucson: The University of Arizona, 1981).

¹⁸⁵ Turner writes, “Something of the sacredness of that transient humility and modelessness goes over, and tempers the pride of the incumbent of a higher position or office. This is not simply, as Fortes (1962, p. 86) has cogently argued, a matter of giving a general stamp of legitimacy to a society’s structural positions. It is rather a matter of giving recognition to an essential and generic human bond, without which there could be no society. Liminality implies that the high could not be high unless the low existed, and he who is high must experience what it is like to be low. No doubt something of this thinking, a few years ago, lay behind Prince Philip’s decision to send his son, the heir apparent to the British throne, to a bush school in Australia for a time, where he could learn how “to rough it” See also Turner, *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure*, 97.

integrate in a Durkheimian fashion. Thus, while the status elevation of the individual in *rites de passage* is real, according to Turner, the status renovation of the “rites of seasonal reversal” are, by contrast, merely fantasies:

Briefly put, one might contrast the liminality of the strong (and getting stronger) with that of the permanently weak. The liminality of those going up usually involves a putting down or humbling of the novice as its principal cultural constituent; at the same time, the liminality of the permanently structural inferior contains as its key social element a symbolic or make-believe elevation of the ritual subjects to positions of eminent authority. The stronger are made weaker; the weak act as though they were strong. The liminality of the strong is socially unstructured or simply structured; that of the weak represents a fantasy of structural superiority.¹⁸⁶

In Turner’s estimation, even when rites of status reversal are improvised to address social ills, such as in the case of dealing with calamity, they retain their logic of integration with a temporal order and ritually move to reset this order. Turner’s treatment of calendrical rites presents them to be as functionally conservative of the status quo as are the rites of status elevation. It is in fact these public, group-oriented calendrical rites—as opposed to the rites of initiates in transition—that are more potentially a “pressure-valve” that releases the tensions that arise from conflicted social systems. This catharsis, scholars reason, might drain an oppressed population of the energies they need to resist their oppressors.¹⁸⁷

¹⁸⁶ Turner, *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure*, 168.

¹⁸⁷ Anthropologist James C Scott observes, “The world-upside-down tradition can, of course, be taken to have no political significance whatever. As a trick of a playful imagination—a simple jeu d’esprit—it may mean nothing more than that. More commonly, the tradition is

Turnerian Liminality in Pentecostal Scholarship

Turner's Discussion on Pentecostalism

Turner's own application of *communitas* to Pentecostalism, in *From Ritual to Theatre* (1982) says nothing explicit about rituals, but we might infer ritual logics into his discussion of *communitas* and of proselytization.

Interestingly enough, in this discussion, the aspirations of *communitas-personae* are decidedly more ambitious than in Turner's prior theorizations. He observes that,

those who are experiencing, or have recently experienced *communitas* often attempt to convert a social structural interaction or a set of such interactions (involving the primacy of institutionalized status-role behavior over "freewheeling" behavior) into a direct, immediate and total confrontation of human identities, that is, into spontaneous *communitas*. *Communitas* tends to be inclusive (some might call it "generous"), social structure tends to be exclusive, even snobbish, relishing the

occasionally seen in functionalist terms as a safety-valve or vent that, like carnival, harmlessly drains away social tensions that might otherwise become dangerous to the existing social order," 167. "Accepting, for the moment, the place of suppressed speech and acting in carnival, we must still consider whether it ritually serves to displace and relieve social tensions and hence restore social harmony. This is a familiar variant of the safety-valve theory—the idea that once the people get the hidden transcript off their chest, they'll find it easier to return to the routines of domination. If issues of interpretation like this were resolved on the basis of a majority vote of scholars who had looked at the matter, the safety-valve theory would almost surely prevail," 177. The scholars Scott lists include: Max Gluckman, *Order and Rebellion in Tribal Africa*; Victor Turner, *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure*; and Roger Sales, *English Literature in History, 1780-1830: Pastoral and Politics*. Walter Benjamin, *Towards a Revolutionary Criticism*, 148, and Stallybrass and White, *Politics and Poetics of Transgression*, 13. On the strength of his own fieldwork in Asia, primarily, Scott offers that there is no evidence that world-upside-down practices act as pressure valves, linking the liberation that Carnival allows to speech to his own concept of hidden transcripts when given voice. See Scott, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance*, 167–77.

distinction between we/they or in-group/out-group, higher/lower, betters/menials. This drive to inclusivity makes for proselytization.¹⁸⁸

Those who have recently experienced *communitas* (presumably those who have experienced egalitarian relations or “immediate and total confrontation of human identities”) proceed, in this quotation, to proselytize over and against the social structure which does not “run” on inclusivity, but instead of exclusivity, i.e. on “betters” vs “menials.” In Turner’s words, they attempt to convert social structural interaction into egalitarian, *communitas* alternatives! Though Turner is not here talking about early Pentecostals, it is the case that Azusa Street Mission Revival sent scores of missionaries all over the world to bring more people into the “We” fold. This process would entail a changing of individual status that has some of the hallmarks of a life crisis and a resulting elevation of status into the family of God, and of welcoming this new “child” into an, ostensibly, egalitarian family of God.

In this later account of *communitas*, Turner elaborates that Pentecostals, and other groups organized by a sense of egalitarian *communitas*, might be “perceived as a threat” to those people invested in their place in the social order, whom Turner paints as “feeling safe in their obedience” to the norm, and this might lead the latter to try to repress the communitarians. He writes:

¹⁸⁸ Turner, *From Ritual to Theater*, 55.

One famous case in the Western tradition is Pentecost, when people of different linguistic and ethnic groups claimed, under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, to understand one another completely sub- or trans-linguistically. After that the Pentecostal throng went forth to missionize the world. The glossolalia of some modern Pentecostals appears to be connected with the notion that whereas articulate speech divides people of different linguistic groups and even expedites "sin," among those of the same speech community, nonsense (archaic) speech facilitates mutual love and virtue. But these conversion attempts by communitarian individuals may be interpreted not only by the power elites of social structure, but also by the rank and file who *feel safe in their obedience to norm, as a direct threat to their own authority or safety, and perhaps especially to their institution-based social identities.*¹⁸⁹

Critically, there is no word here on historical situations in which *communitas* is actually mobilized alongside a vociferous critique of people in positions of power for being people in positions of power. There is also no ready category for holding the structure accountable, for instance, to the charge of racism! Early Pentecostals certainly experienced *communitas*, and they had plenty to say about hierarchies and people who love them. They were ready to flout racist and masculinist structures of their day.

But Turnerian structural sins are barely conceived. *Snobbishness* as a problem of structural hierarchy is consistent with the kinds of sins that Turner is willing to imagine as created by structure, along with greed, or misuses of power. As the scope of Turner's imagination in 1982 does not problematize, for instance,

¹⁸⁹ Turner, "Liminal to Liminoid," 49-50; *emphasis mine*.

gender domination, structural racism, ethnic domination, in short, serious social oppressions, it makes little sense to try to push into his restrictive account of social structure's issues any kind of misuse of power that is ethically or socially serious. Still, in this, one of his more adventurous accounts, Turner announces a decidedly less conservative potential for *communitas*: now we see arise a "spiraling struggle between the forces of structure and the forces of *communitas*" and a new description of energies that indeed does not sound like the earliest accounts of liminality.

Thus the expansive tendencies of *communitas* may touch off a repressive campaign by the structurally entrenched elements of society, which leads in turn to more active, even militant opposition by the communitarians (cf. here the historical process set in train by many millenarian or revivalistic movements); and so on, in an ever-spiraling struggle between the forces of structure and the powers of *communitas*. The struggle is rather like what Frye and David Erdman—drawing on Blake's symbols—have called the Orc-Urizen cycle. "Orc" here represents revolutionary energy and "Urizen" the "law-maker and the avenging conscience."¹⁹⁰

Blake's Orc, by Turner's account, is revolutionary in energy. Here it both stands for and stands in for liminality, and likewise it opposes the energies of structure, or Blake's Urizen, the "law"-oriented energy. Curiously enough, though this 1982 elaboration does register revolutionary potential in a manner that is simply missing from the earlier articulations, Turner still manages to emphasize stasis in

¹⁹⁰ Turner, *Process, Performance, and Pilgrimage*, 50.

his account of revolutions. In this later account, Turner reads the possibility of revolution, via Pareto, as a mere cycling of elites. There is also a still relatively soft account of the sources of struggle between *communitas* and structural hierarchies. As in this passage, those in the elite structure are guilty of being a bit snobbish and protective of their authority. Its proponents purportedly feel the need for security. By contrast, the communitarians are depicted as having the love of humanity in their hearts.

Bobby Alexander

In 1991, sociologist Bobby C. Alexander posited that modern-day black Pentecostalism should be considered not as affirming of the social order but instead as social *protest*. In an assertive article in the *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*, Alexander suggested that Pentecostalism's protest function was rooted precisely in its liminality, and that *generations* of anthropologists had been misreading Turner. Alexander's article brought together two issues important for our discussion here: the efficacy of Pentecostalism's liminal worship practices, especially spirit possession, and Turner's legacy as the scion of the Manchester school. Bobby Alexander writes,

The greatest misreading of Turner is the view that he presents ritual as essentially conservative. Some scholars interpret Turner to say that ritual is fundamentally a form of sublimation. It is thus viewed as a socially acceptable form of opposing or subverting the social-structure status quo. Furthermore, because ritual is a form of

catharsis, draining off or deflecting hostility toward the status quo, it serves to *preserve the existing social structure*. This concept of sublimation is the link between the misunderstanding of Turner's theory and the standard scholarly discussion of Pentecostal ritual...Clarity about Turner's theory is lacking in part because Turner focused his early discussion on case studies that tended to support the common conception that ritual conserves the existing social order.¹⁹¹

Alexander proceeds to argue that, while scholars often assume that ritual invocations of an other-worldly system actually only serve to support the political status quo, a correct reading of Turner understands that he places a subtle inflection on the pressure that rituals place on society to respond to the ritual ideal, which is to make the society function toward communitarian ends.¹⁹² The unity that rituals create lies in the fact that the experience of *communitas*, or awareness of the need for *communitas*, leads to alternative expressions of the existing social structure that better promote community, at least at the outset or temporarily. By "unity," Turner does not mean a solidified social hierarchy but rather social structure in the service of *communitas*; nor does he assert that *communitas* is made to serve the existing social structure. Instead, in the process of restoring the basic human unity beneath social-structural distinctions, which are arbitrary, he says that *communitas* makes social structure serve the

¹⁹¹ Bobby Alexander, "Correcting Misinterpretations of Turner's Theory: An African-American Pentecostal Illustration," *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 30, no. 1 (1991) 27–28; emphasis mine.

¹⁹² *Ibid.*, 27.

"commonweal."¹⁹³ Thus the very title of Alexander's book on Turner is *Victor Turner Revisited: Ritual as Social Change* (1991). This book was a revision of his 1985 Columbia University dissertation.

Additionally, Alexander points out that Turner was expressly writing about institutionalized or normative *communitas* (more or less interchangeable with the concepts of *anti-structure* and *liminality*) which is a "perverted" form of *communitas*, since it has been thoroughly "domesticated, even corralled" by structure. Nevertheless, even when *communitas* has been institutionalized, there remains, according to Turner, "a core of potential *communitas*" that is, *spontaneous communitas*—and with this core, a potential threat to structure. Even in his early treatments of tribal ritual, Alexander notes that Turner points to "the seeds of cultural transformation, discontent with the way things are culturally," and notes that social criticisms are "always implicit" in liminality.¹⁹⁴ Alexander highlights that, because rituals constitute relationships, communitarian rituals actually create communitarian relationships. Just as we noted in our discussion of Bell that political rites do not merely symbolize the power and cult supporting a king, for example, but that they actually produce those relationships, so also Alexander posits that Turner's theory turns on its head the traditional social-scientific conceptualization of ritual possession. By not

¹⁹³ Alexander, "Correcting Misinterpretations," 31; Turner, *The Ritual Process*, 104–105; 177–78; Turner, *Dramas, Fields, and Metaphors*, 259–60.

¹⁹⁴ Turner, *The Ritual Process*, 28–32.

reducing group-based ritual spirit possession (in this case Pentecostal ritual possession) to an epiphenomenon, that is by not closing off spirit possession's generative or transformative dimension (as this involves the creation of communitarian relations), Alexander postulates that Turner's theory raises new questions about the impulses behind and benefits of Pentecostal ritual. Thus, Alexander argues that ritual possession's opposition to everyday social structure is neither empty nor elliptical protest, it instead actually generates egalitarian relationships. It does not “let off steam.” Alexander’s application of Turner's theory highlights the important fact that ritual is itself redressive activity that concretizes Pentecostals' opposition to a problematic social structure.

Tellingly, retrieving this more nuanced account of Turner’s concept of the liminal and *communitas* required Alexander to sample successively Turner’s writings from 1969 to 1982, lending bibliographic veracity to Bell’s account of Turner’s becoming more even-handed in his own treatment of liminality over a long period of time, perhaps as he acquired the power to represent himself as he wished. She writes,

As a former student of Radcliffe-Brown and Gluckman, among others, Turner’s first book, *Schism and Continuity in an African Society* (1957), extended the latter’s analysis of structural conflict in social life. He argued that many forms of ritual serve as “social dramas” through which the stresses and tensions built into the social structure could be expressed and worked out. *Turner echoed Durkheim* in reiterating the role that ritual, as opposed to other forms of social action, plays in maintaining the unity of the group as

a whole... In *subsequent* studies, however, Turner went beyond the model of society as a closed and atemporal structured system that, when disturbed by conflict, could be returned to harmonious stasis through ritual catharsis. His notion of social dramas led him to envision social structure not as a static organization but as a dynamic *process*. Rituals did not simply restore equilibrium, they were part of the ongoing process by which the community was continually redefining and renewing itself.¹⁹⁵

The 1969 to 1974 accounts of liminality proved to be influential. Turner's earlier emphasis on how ritual preserves structure accordingly worked its way through thinking about rituals of symbolic inversion more forcefully than his later accounts.

Daniel Albrecht

When Dan Albrecht, in his 1992 discussion of Pentecostal spirituality, argued the virtue of using ritual studies to interpret Pentecostalism, he noted that Pentecostal worship creates both liminality and *communitas*. Albrecht acknowledged that "Pentecostals have often objected to or reject[ed] the term 'ritual' (and its implied conceptualization) seeing it as representing something unspiritual (i.e., mechanical religion) even 'dead'" (i.e., meaningless). Though these critiques of ritual are historically situated, in that they are a part of the anti-ritual and anti-hierarchical cultural inheritance that Pentecostalism carried over from revolutionary radical evangelicals, Albrecht does not historicize this

¹⁹⁵ Bell, *Ritual: Perspectives and Dimensions*, 39, *emphasis mine*.

perpetuated viewpoint or the animus it represents.¹⁹⁶ Instead, in his treatment of three modern-day Pentecostal congregations, Albrecht emphasizes Pentecostalism's ability to create *communitas*. Albrecht's account of *communitas* is taken directly from Turner and, in spite of the intense negativity toward denominational and cultural elites that characterizes early Pentecostals, Albrecht presents Pentecostal *communitas* as emotionally and functionally embracing "structure."

Turner produces so much work on liminality that hazarding to define his treatment of its efficacies can feel fraught, but his early passages about the true potential of liminality match up well with some of his later discussions of *communitas* (1981). Notwithstanding Alexander's important intervention, Turner's liminality, even as late as 1981, can easily be read as being in keeping with his earlier accounts. In this comparatively late rendering, liminality "reaffirms the hierarchical principle":

Cognitively, nothing underlines regularity so well as absurdity or paradox. Emotionally, nothing satisfies as much as extravagant or temporarily permitted illicit behavior. Rituals of status reversal accommodate both aspects. By making the low high and the high low, they reaffirm the hierarchical principle. By making the low mimic (often to the point of caricature) the behavior of the high, and by restraining the initiatives of the proud, they underline the reasonableness of everyday culturally predictable behavior between the various estates of society. On this account, it is appropriate that rituals of status reversal are often located either at fixed points in

¹⁹⁶ Instead, Albrecht presents this anti-ritual viewpoint of Pentecostals as being in keeping with the modern Western distaste for the foreign, pre-modern, irrelevant; a "barren symbol of empty conformity." See Dan Albrecht, "Pentecostal Spirituality: Looking Through the Lens of Ritual," 108.

the annual cycle or in relation to movable feasts that vary within a limited period of time, for structural regularity is here reflected in temporal order.¹⁹⁷

Note here that this conservative interpretation is actually prefigured in calendrical rites: “for structural regularity is here reflected in temporal order,” the seasonal rites of reversal, he is saying, are themselves *ordered*. Albrecht patterns his interpretation of Pentecostal liminality after the function of Turner’s. In a section titled, “creating community through *communitas*,” he wrote:

To understand the ritual consequence of *communitas* we look to the noted anthropologist Victor Turner who first applied the term. Turner described *communitas* as the relations among people under liminal conditions. During liminality the ritualists are living outside the norms fixed by the social system. They are “betwixt and between,” in the “interstices” of the prevailing structure states of the society. Partially due to this marginality and to their common plight, a feeling of solidarity often arises among the liminal people. This unity and sense of oneness is “*communitas*.” There emerges a group bonding as people within the matrix of ritual liminality share in their common plight. The conditions and dynamics of a liminal phase, then, can facilitate the community. ¹⁹⁸

It is quite clear that Albrecht’s reading of liminality imports Turner’s emphasis on bonding, commonalities, and that in this it is particularly influenced by the Ndembu initiates’ liminality—that of persons “betwixt and between” social statuses.

¹⁹⁷ Turner, *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure*, 176.

¹⁹⁸ Albrecht, “Pentecostal Spirituality: Looking Through the Lens of Ritual,” 122.

In Albrecht's discussion, Pentecostal liminality does make transformation possible, but these transformations are chiefly spiritual:

Pentecostal ritual creates a liminal dimension which together with the ritual process helps to produce a uniquely ordered social group, which often has the marks of a *communitas*. The liminality of the ritual also works toward a "space" for personal and collective reflexivity, which, in turn, provides a basic stimulus toward transformation, namely, personal conversions, healings, empowerments, Spirit baptisms and dedications to missions, consistent with Pentecostals' understanding of the gospel.¹⁹⁹

Wolfgang Vondey

German theologian Wolfgang Vondey builds a theology of Pentecostalism by way of recourse to classical Pentecostal practices, such as spontaneous outbursts of praise, which he categorizes as *play*. This play, Vondey theorizes, is the hallmark of Pentecostalism's *liminality*. In what follows, I discuss Vondey's use of Turner as a frame for historic Pentecostalism, as his project is now well developed.²⁰⁰ My intention is to show that Turner's structural-functionalist

¹⁹⁹ Albrecht, *Rites in the Spirit: A Ritual Approach to Pentecostal/Charismatic Spirituality*, 217.

²⁰⁰ Vondey is not the only scholar who uses a Turnerian theory as a framework by which to understand Pentecostalism. Other scholars, in addition to Daniel Albrecht and Bobby C. Alexander, such as Mark Jennings use liminality to assess Pentecostalism's kinship with rock music; Chammah J. Kaunda, Margaret M. Poloma, and Lloyd Barba, have also invoked Turner to treat Pentecostalism, though critically (with the exception of Barba) these projects are not concerned with the historic construction of Pentecostal liminality. This project advances a retrospective anthropological treatment of historic Pentecostal ritual liminality. For other engagements with Turner see: Daniel E. Albrecht, *Rites in the Spirit: A Ritual Approach to Pentecostal/Charismatic Spirituality* (Sheffield, UK: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999), chap. 6; Bobby C. Alexander, "Correcting Misinterpretations of Turner's Theory: An

leanings influence Vondey to the point of compromising his account of the history and efficacies of Pentecostal liminality. This is because, notwithstanding Bobby Alexander's valiant attempts to correct misinterpretations of Turner's liminality, Turner himself vacillates in his interpretation of liminality. Young atheist, Marxist-leaning Turner indeed portrayed liminality as serving the *communitas* ideal in contradistinction to jural hierarchy; Turner posited that liminality pressed hierarchy toward serving communitarian ends, those being those of as *higher*, as Bobby Alexander argues. But Catholic convert Turner portrays hierarchy as producing and protecting liminality, and prizes cooperation and balance between hierarchy and liminality. Vondey's reading is more heavily influenced by the complementarian Turner.

African-American Pentecostal Illustration," *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 30, no. 1 (1991): 26–44; Bobby C. Alexander, "Pentecostal Ritual Reconsidered: Anti-Structural Dimensions of Possession," *Journal of Ritual Studies* 3, no. 1 (1989): 109–128; Mark Jennings, *Exaltation: Ecstatic Experience in Pentecostalism and Popular Music* (Bern, Switzerland: Peter Lang, 2014), chap. 4 and 6; Chammah J. Kaunda, "Ndembu Cultural Liminality, Terrains of Gender Contestation: Reconceptualising Zambian Pentecostalism as Liminal Spaces," *HTS Theological Studies* 73, no. 3 (2017): 1–7; Margaret M. Poloma, *Main Street Mystics: The Toronto Blessing and Reviving Pentecostalism* (Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira Press, 2003); Lloyd D. Barba, "California's Cross: A Cultural History of Pentecostalism, Race, and Agriculture" (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Michigan, 2016), 31–37. Of these examples, Barba's historical focus on politically liminal Pentecostalism shares the most overlap with my own use of liminality. Barba's treatment laments the return to the structure of society in ways that Vondey simply fails to account for in his insistence that liminality exists for the structures. Barba writes, "we can certainly see how some events of the revival might have been viewed as a "transgressive space" for ethnic minorities and women. These transgressive acts engendered a spontaneous *communitas*—that is, a momentary leveling-out of the social playing field and the inversion of expected roles. However, as anthropologist Victor Turner reminds us, "it is the fate of spontaneous *communitas* in history to undergo what most people see as a 'decline and fall' into structure and law." Barba, "California's Cross," 32.

This chapter engages Vondey extensively for two reasons: first, Vondey's project demonstrates a persistence in using liminality to define Pentecostalism and a commitment to read this liminality in Turnerian ways, so that Pentecostalism is rendered in a structural-functionalist way but without really engaging in the questions that scholars have raised about liminality's effects (and contra Alexander's reading of pentecostalism as "protest"). Second, Vondey's project is far expansive, more comprehensive than Albrecht's and, critically, it gives an account of early Pentecostalism that is significantly at odds with the account to be featured in chapters three and four. Since this project endeavors to argue that the rise of early Pentecostal liminality was the rise of a Christian *communitas* that defined itself over-and-against structure, it will surface *many* contradictory points to Vondey's already established account.

Vondey's is an elaborate project, which draws on Turner's concept of liminality in two ways. Most important for our purposes, Vondey argues that Pentecostalism is organized around a historic site of primordial, even mythical, while still "true" site of liminality: the Azusa Street Mission Revival in Los Angeles from 1906 to 1909. It is this historical site and fount of liminality which Vondey prescribes as a potential key to mending a breach currently evident in Christendom.

This project agrees with Vondey's on several key points. Most importantly, I affirm Vondey's assertion that Pentecostal life is now, and historically has

always been, centered around the altar. Vondey describes the Holy Spirit as the central actor in Pentecostal spirituality, a spirituality centered on the altar:

The heartbeat of Pentecostal spirituality is the experience of the Holy Spirit, and religious activities derive from the actuality (not merely the possibility) of the experience of the Holy Spirit as an immediate revelation of God that seeks mediation in the life of the human person and the community... Oral narrative and testimony, proclamation, prayer, song and dance, prophecy, and speaking in tongues are some of the native expression of the wonder of that experience... The appeal to experience, Pentecostals have emphasized repeatedly, “demands more than belief in an experience—it demands the *experience of the experience* itself” (italics mine)²⁰¹

Vondey further argues (in language that he repeats as recently as 2018, with which I agree) that the “summit and source of Pentecostal worship, rituals, and practices, from which Pentecostalism can be grasped in its embodied form, is undoubtedly the altar service, and other practices (and their doctrinal reflections) are readily integrated in a central ritual of the altar call and response.”²⁰² He makes the additional claim that the centrality of the altar is a characteristic that is broadly shared by global pentecostalism, and that this has been duly noted by ethnographers:

Undoubtedly, the worship service forms the well-spring of embodied practices among Pentecostals. Rituals, rites and liturgy, once foreign terms to many Pentecostals, have become increasingly the focus of theological attention. Among these practices, the altar call and response stand out as the climax of traditional Pentecostal worship. Contemporary ritual, historical and phenomenological

²⁰¹ Vondey, "Religion as Play: Pentecostalism as a Theological Type," 80.

²⁰² Ibid., 10.

studies of worldwide Pentecostalism affirm certain foundational rites oriented around the altar as the consistent practices and traditions of the Pentecostal movement.²⁰³

I too subscribe to the understanding that American Pentecostal altar-centricity has been significantly carried into global pentecostalism. Thus far, one can note that Vondey's decade-long project on Pentecostalism is built on an ambitious, yet plausible schematic for global pentecostalism—which posits that many present day pentecostalism worldwide organize around the time-space of the altar narratively, liturgically, and theologically. He posits as well that pentecostalism promote a suite of altar-situated rites of the Spirit and that these rites, as a liturgy, have a shared historical source in early Pentecostalism's *revival* era. In keeping with the historical discourse of early Pentecostals, Vondey also interpolates the logic of ultimacy into the altar which is, by turns, *climax*, *summit*, and *source*.

With his liminality-centered Pentecostalism constructed, Vondey then argues that Pentecostalism has something distinct to contribute to theology and something to offer the church universal. In a sweeping account, Vondey recapitulates a liturgical history for a (his) liturgical Pentecostalism that obviously draws from Turner's social drama while elsewhere he also borrows from Turner's work on ritual liminality. In short, Turner is explicitly read twice

²⁰³ Ibid.

into Vondey's play project: once as a classical anthropological type of ritual (i.e. the argument that the pentecostal altar is a time-space of *anti-structure* and *communitas*, categories of ritual best-known by Turner's treatment),²⁰⁴ and once as Turner's processural social drama, which in Vondey's work is about an historical breach for which he will recommend a repair. In "Process, System, Symbol: A New Anthropological Synthesis" (1985) Turner highlights a pattern in social life that he terms "the social drama," which he marks with four phases. *Breach*, the first phase, is occasioned by an infraction of law, rule, contract, or code of etiquette. *Crisis* follows the breach as "other persons and subgroups take sides against the rule breaker" and factions are formed, coalitions made. *Reflexivity* marks a period during which a disturbed group responds either through juridical process, such as through courts of law, or through divination, if the source of upheaval is felt to be magical or supernatural. In doing so, the group attempts to make sense of the breach and assign meaning to it. Once causes of the breach are determined, forms of *redress* are attempted. Finally, in phase four, either crisis persists and develops into *schism* or the breach is repaired and there is finally *reintegration*.²⁰⁵

²⁰⁴ This nevertheless becomes 'theological "play" and becomes meshed with an anthropological "play" via Andre Droogers and Turner, and borrowing too from their respective invocations of Huizinga.

²⁰⁵ Victor Turner, "A New Processural Anthropology," in *On the Edge of the Bush: Anthropology as Experience*, 215-221.

It is as a plot of a Turnerian global liturgical drama that Pentecostalism, in Vondey's work, is best understood. Vondey's work is produced as a form of *reflexivity* in that he is attempting to make sense of Pentecostalism's vitality and the wanness of church structures. His work is also tinged with *ideological* *communitas*. Turner explains *ideological communitas* as at once an attempt to describe the external and visible effects—the outward form, it might be said—of an inward experience of existential *communitas*, and as an effort to spell out the optimal social conditions under which such experiences might be expected to flourish and multiply.²⁰⁶

Vondey's account of historical Pentecostalism as a source of liminality has merit, but I question his categorizing of Pentecostalism as play.²⁰⁷ Vondey's construction of Pentecostalism as play is influenced heavily by Turner's play category. On the whole, Turner's "play" evades important ethical questions. The most serious forms of social conflict that attended the rise of Pentecostalism—

²⁰⁶ *Communitas* is one effect of liminality, coincidental with liminal transition. Turner describes three possible forms of *communitas*: "Thus, it is necessary to distinguish between: (i) existential or spontaneous *communitas*— approximately what the hippies today would call a happening," and William Blake might have called "the winged moment as it flies" or, later, "mutual forgiveness of each vice ; (2) normative *communitas*, where, under the influence of time, the need to mobilize and organize resources and the necessity for social control among the members of the group in pursuance of these goals, the existential *communitas* is organized into a perduring social system; and (3) ideological *communitas*, which is a label one can apply to a variety of Utopian models of societies..based on existential *communitas*" Turner, *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure*, 132.

²⁰⁷ In this respect, I join Nimi Wariboko, who posits that Pentecostalism is play, but that it is a kind of play that profanes. Wariboko argues that Vondey misunderstands the nature of Pentecostalism's mobilization of the sacred in a way that misses Pentecostalism's desacralizing impulses. See Nimi Wariboko, *The Pentecostal Principle* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Erdmans Publishing Co, 2011).

including class conflict and ethnic/racial conflict—do not significantly appear in Vondey’s account, and they are most importantly social sins of structural oppression. The questions that scholars have persisted in asking about liminality would be very appropriate to ask of early Pentecostalism. But racism, sexism, ethnocentrism—the very forms of oppression Azusa Street Mission is celebrated for dismantling—fail to register meaningfully in Vondey’s account of play in Pentecostalism. What surfaces instead is an influence of Turner to minimize sources of conflict in empire and to insist that liminality continue to make the Christian church whole. This holism, I argue, is not true to Pentecostalism’s past and not advisable for its future.

Locating Vondey’s Breach: A Breach in the Church Universal

In *Beyond Pentecostalism* (2010), Vondey diagnoses that Christianity and Christian Theology are presently in state of global crisis: “the crisis of global Christianity is most tangible as a crisis of the liturgy.”²⁰⁸ The outlines of this argument of Vondey’s are a straightforward drama of sociological *breach*, theological *redress*, and an ideological prescription for *reintegration*. The crisis is registered in theology which, having become “too philosophic, speculative, and secular” an enterprise and therefore out of touch with most people’s lives, is at

²⁰⁸ Wolfgang Vondey, *Beyond Pentecostalism: The crisis of global Christianity and the renewal of the theological agenda* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing, 2010), 109.

the same time too predicated on Western thought to serve today's truly globalized church. In a section titled, "The Crisis of the Liturgy" from Vondey's first book-length treatment of this discussion, called *Beyond Pentecostalism*, Vondey begins by defining the crisis:

The twentieth century has exposed a long-standing liturgical crisis. This insight refers not only to the widely discussed problems of liturgical celebration in culture and society but, more importantly, to the potential for renewal that has been acknowledged in this situation...Guardini points out that the modern crisis of the liturgy is also a catalyst for revival of the liturgy, since liturgical action—understood primarily as a historical reality bound to the context of particular cultural and sociological backgrounds—necessarily enters a crisis with each change of the established socio-historical structures.²⁰⁹

Vondey supplies sociological reasons to explain a wanness inherent in Christian liturgy. "Exemplary of the crisis in the late modern world is the complaint that modern Christians who live in an industrial and urban civilization 'find liturgical language and the ideas it contains, and even the very symbolism of the liturgy, empty of content and largely meaningless.'"²¹⁰ *Beyond Pentecostalism* argues that to understand the origins of this crisis, one should look to the Middle Ages, in "the formation of performative structures of the liturgy."²¹¹ Vondey here constructs a historical breach two ways: first, as the somewhat unavoidable

²⁰⁹ Ibid., 110–111.

²¹⁰ Ibid.

²¹¹ Ibid.

breach that comes with a change in modes of economic production; and second, as the breach born out of misunderstanding between Christian clergy and laity.

In Pentecostalism, Vondey finds many clues for healing breaches, and these clues center on the purported liminality of Pentecostalism, again based on playful, laity-inclusive altar practices. His reading of Pentecostal liturgy clearly reveals the influence of Turner's ritual-based liminality:

Central to Turner's argument is the characterization of rituals as transitional events marked by an initial phase of separation of the participants from their familiar world and a concluding state of the consummation of a new state of existence, connected by an intervening, "liminal" phase (from the Latin *limen*, "threshold"). The participants find themselves in this state "betwixt and between the positions assigned and arrayed by law, custom, convention, and ceremonial." In this state of permanent transition the formation of a ritual anti-structure is possible, more precisely, a playful, "ludic deconstruction and recombination of familiar cultural configurations." For Turner, liturgical rituals involve a "play on limits, [or] margins of a frame that are ambiguous." Bonded together by this process, the participants form a *communitas* marked by undifferentiated unity and equality in which the structural assertions of the established society are suspended and transformed. When the community has been thus transformed, the participants can return to society equipped by the ritual process.²¹²

Note that Vondey's appeal to the definition of the liminal phase is drawn from that of the Ndembu initiates. A telling clue can also be gleaned from the last, very Turner-inflected statement: when the community has been transformed, its participants can *return to society* equipped by the ritual process. In this use of

²¹² Ibid., 133.

Turner, Vondey posits that Pentecostalism is a liturgical form of liminality that can revitalize a struggling global church and Christian theology because it creates a threshold, a liminal space, in which people can be playful with social symbols and forms and then this will refresh them to return to society.²¹³ Here, Pentecostal liminality is Turnerian in function. It reinvigorates the structures of Christianity—both the liturgy and theology. This is a liminality in the church, and for the church.

Vondey quickly transfers his theoretical frame from Turner's liminal, a scheduled ritual time "betwixt and between" hierarchical order, marked by undifferentiated unity and equality into Turner's "liminoid" which Turner designates as time of a flow and play that takes place away from work in the Industrial Age.²¹⁴ The medieval age saw clergy distrusting the laity's imagination and taking control of the liturgy, which Vondey will address too, but the

²¹³ Turner's invocations of play inform Vondey's category of play. "The distinction between "subjective" and "objective" is itself an artifact of the sundering of work and play. For "work" is held to be the realm of the rational adaptation of means to ends, of "objectivity," while "play" is thought of as divorced from this essentially "objective" realm, and, insofar as it is its inverse, being "subjective," free from external constraints, where any and every combination of variables can be "played" with. Indeed, Jean Piaget, who has done most to study the developmental psychology of play, regards it as "a kind of free assimilation, without accommodation to spatial conditions or to the significance of the objects. It is only in the social life of industrial and postindustrial civilizations that we find these necessary conditions. Other social theorists, both radical and conservative, have pointed out that leisure is the product of industrialized, rationalized, bureaucratized, large-scale socioeconomic systems with arbitrary rather than natural delimitation of "work" from "free time" or "time out." Turner, "Liminal to Liminoid," 66-68.

²¹⁴ Victor Turner, "Liminal to Liminoid," 67-75. Turner's construction of liminality reads like Durkheim's *collective effervescence* in that it focuses on temporality (the mundane time vs. the slack time). Bakhtin actually bemoans instead the confinement of Carnival to holiday time-space, or mere mood.

Industrial age has shaped the minds of laity into expecting the liturgy to be serious work and they are now not only not invited, but also quite unable to approach the liturgy as co-creators of its play. The liminoid must be addressed to remediate laity's expectations for their own role and thus make way to repair the breach.

According to Turner, the *liminal* is theoretically proper to agrarian cultures and the *liminoid* marks instead the "anti-structure" of the Industrial period.²¹⁵ The industrial period is characterized by an arbitrary separation between work and play; "liminoid" marks the play periods away from work and social processes of rationalization.²¹⁶ Vondey *echoes* Turner's parlance when he asserts that in the Industrial liminoid, "the rules and structures of work appear to be an 'intrusion of normative social structure into what is potentially and *in principle* a free and experimental region of culture."²¹⁷ It is just such an intrusion

²¹⁵ Turner defined structure thusly: "By structure" I mean, as before... social structure," as used by the majority of British social anthropologists, that is, as a more or less distinctive arrangement of specialized mutually dependent institutions and the institutional organization of positions and/or of actors which they imply. I am not referring to... structure" in the sense currently made popular by Levi-Strauss, i.e., as concerned with logical categories and the form of the relations between them. As a matter of fact, in the liminal phases of ritual, one often finds a simplification, even elimination, of social structure in the British sense and an amplification of structure in Levi-Strauss's sense. We find social relationships simplified, while myth and ritual are elaborated. That this is so is really quite simple to understand: of liminality is regarded as a time and place of withdrawal from normal modes of social action, it can be seen as potentially a period of scrutinization of the central values and axioms of the culture in which it occurs. See also Turner, *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure*, 166-67.

²¹⁶ Turner, "Liminal to Liminoid," 66-75.

²¹⁷ *ibid.*, italics mine.

that Vondey problematizes and suggests has happened in traditional Christian liturgies. Turner explains the liminal as the period in which work and play are enacted together in ritual, so that in India one might “play” with the gods Krishna and Vishnu via dramatization that is both dramatically playful and mythically serious. Turner also refers to sex and procreation as examples of the liminal, because the experience of sex—which is improvisational, fun, physical, and absorbing—can also *work* (as in be efficacious with an evident result) to produce a baby. Turner points to the way that Industrialization makes it possible to separate this internal logic in sex, because birth control can more readily distinguish and indeed separate which sexual encounters are intended to produce pregnancy and which are intended for play only.

We can see a shift from the meaning of sex as procreative "work," (a persistent meaning in tribal and feudal societies) to the division of sexual activity into "play" or "foreplay," and the "serious" business or "work" of begetting progeny. Post-industrial birth control techniques make this division practically realizable, and themselves exemplify the division between work and play brought about by modern systems of production and thought, both "objectively," in the domain of culture, and "subjectively" in the individual conscience and consciousness.²¹⁸

This separation of work from play in sex Turner presents as analogous to the sundering of the liturgy in the Industrial age.

²¹⁸ Turner, *From Ritual to Theatre*, 66.

Vondey applies the liminoid in part because he temporalizes the development of Pentecostal liturgy during Industrialization's liminoid era. When Vondey writes, "[t]he notion of work as it arose in the modern age cast the performance of the liturgy in the light of the ideas of productivity, purposefulness, and efficiency" (131), he discernibly echoes Turner, who problematizes how the "work" of the liminoid is "held to be the realm of the rational adaptation of means to ends, of objectivity," and "play" in the liminoid "is thought of as divorced from this essentially 'objective' realm, and, insofar as it is its inverse, being 'subjective,' free from external constraints, where any and every combination of variables can be 'played' with."²¹⁹ In Vondey's work, a utilitarian attitude toward Christian liturgy, and a concomitant trivialization of play, has rendered the liturgy lifeless. Vondey believes that because the liturgy became the sole *work* of clergy, a double helix of play and work that used to be the life force of the liturgy came apart to devastating effect. It now lacks the imagination and drama that early liturgy could boast; this liturgy involved the whole church, both laity and clergy. (It is in this vein of his argument that Vondey, himself Pentecostal, sounds most in continuity with early Pentecostals, who likewise complained of professional liturgies as "dead.") Thus, Vondey advances the notion that Pentecostalism should "go beyond itself" precisely by recognizing its history as a liturgical play form and committing to this liturgical

²¹⁹ Ibid.

play.²²⁰ More broadly speaking, his book is a suggestion that traditions whose liturgies are failing to energize and sustain people take serious consideration of the successes of Pentecostalism and interrogate this success as owed to the playfulness of Pentecostalism.²²¹ Most critically for our purposes, Vondey's play has no sustained thinking about anti-hierarchy in it and is not meaningfully juxtaposed to hierarchy. The liminality of Pentecostal play lies in its capacity to draw people together for a time in which the normal order and its rules are suspended.

Taken together, Vondey positions Pentecostalism as a resistant form of spiritual play which somehow maintained the unity of seriousness with

²²⁰ Vondey diagnoses that Pentecostal revival, once a well-spring of renewal, has instead been made a commodity to be produced and reproduced by mandate. Revival is now too prescribed, even mandated, to be a source of freedom, or so Vondey assesses. In such a quandary, deprived of its first sources of brilliance, Pentecostalism must find new ways to continue to thrive. It must now "go beyond itself," by which Vondey means it must commit to its identity as a religion of play, to *think into* play as a means of sustaining (its) play. We see this when Vondey writes, "What I envision, then, in going 'beyond' the various aspects that define the current state of Christianity, is a fundamental attitude of flexibility and openness, a dynamic of playfulness, that repossesses and liberates traditional theological structures, and by doing so, to transform them in an attitude that releases their full potential for a global Christianity." Also: "If, on the other hand, Pentecostals are able to *maintain their playful imagination*, then we may have found in Pentecostalism a genuine type of religious identity which deserves further attention." Vondey, *Beyond Pentecostalism*, 15; 80.

Where revival is too co-opted to be helpful, Vondey's *play* picks up the essential themes of revival and casts them in a new register and for the same purpose: to renew the church.

²²¹ Nimi Wariboko and André Droogers have also written about Pentecostalism as being play oriented. Critically, neither of these authors is treating early Pentecostalism as play. They also, coincidentally, differ in material ways from Vondey in their accounts of play. See Nimi Wariboko, *The Pentecostal Principle: Ethical Methodology in New Spirit* (Grand Rapids, MI: Erdmans, 2003). See also André Droogers, *Play and Power in Religion: Collected Essays* (Berlin: Walter De Gruyter, 2012) and *Religion at Play: A Manifesto* (Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2014). Critically, for Droogers play is inimical to institutionalization and always under threat by clericalization. See his discussion in *Playful Religion: Challenges for the Study of Religion* (Delft, Belgium: Eburon Publishers, 2006) 89.

playfulness that characterizes the agricultural period into the Industrial period, in which many other Christian churches just allowed their liturgies to die. This means that the liminality of Pentecostalism, as constructed by Vondey, is a potentially structure-affirming liminality, a structure embracing liminality because the structure under consideration here is the universal Christian church. Where ritual theorists and sociologists of religion ask whether liminal rituals perform the work of sanctifying society's structures of oppression, in Vondey's work secular oppressive orders are simply not the structures that church-based liminality affirms or risks affirming. Thus, Vondey truly narrows the scope for interpreting the rise and efficacy of early Pentecostalism, but even in this, we shall see, he is showing the influence of Turner.

Ideological Communitas: Vondey and Turner as Church Apologists

Rationalization and rationality both appear to be at issue in Vondey's sociological treatment of the crisis of the liturgy. In a Weberian sense, Vondey's entire schema is predicated on the Industrial period, its conditions of work, and the misapplication to the liturgy of the expectations appropriate to work. According to Vondey, the liturgy is rationalized with respect to being a purpose-driven act; thus his reading implies Weberian rationalization.²²²

²²² Vondey, *Beyond Pentecostalism*, 121.

But in Turner's account, this separation of work from play is actually in part owed to Protestantism, specifically to how Protestantism responds to industrialization:

Wherever the Calvinist aspiration to theocracy became influential, as in Geneva or in the transient dominance of English Puritanism, legislation was introduced to force men to better their spiritual state through thrift and hard work. For example, English Puritanism affected not only religious worship by its attack on "ritualism," but also reduced "ceremonial" ("secular" ritual) to a minimum in many other fields of activity, including drama, which it stigmatized as "mummery" ...²²³

It is Calvinists who have driven the ludic and theatrical from liturgy.²²⁴

The Act making stage performances illegal cut twenty-odd years from the performance of Jonson's plays. Among the targets of such legislation were, significantly... theatrical productions, masques, pageants, musical performances, and, of course, the popular genres of carnivals, festivals, charivaris, ballad singing, and miracle plays. These represented the "ludic" face of the work-play continuum that had formerly caught up the whole of society into a single process moving through sacred and profane, solemn and festive, phases in the seasonal round. The Calvinists wanted "no more cakes and

²²³ Turner, "Liminal to Liminoid," 69–71.

²²⁴ See also Charles Taylor's similar account of the suppression of Carnival, which he attributed in part to Calvinist forces of productivity, in *A Secular Age* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007), 45–55. And though he constantly refers to Carnival, and does mention Bakhtin (as a utopianist), Taylor's key influence for reading the potential of Carnival is Turner. Taylor writes, "When we curse and swear at the king-elect, we remind him and us that the ruler's rights and prerogatives have a further purpose which is the weal of the whole...The pull to anti-structure can come from beyond society, and even from beyond humanity... The structures of power, property, warrior dominance are challenged by a life which claims to be higher and yet couldn't simply replace the established order. They are forced into co-existence and hence into some kind of complementarity." Taylor, *A Secular Age*, 49. Taylor's interpretation of the purpose of cursing and swearing at the king-elect, to "remind him" that his rights have their purpose in the well-being of the whole, is a thoroughly Turnerian account of how carnival works, and should work.

ale"—or other festival foods that belonged to the work and play of the gods. They wanted ascetic dedication to the mainline economic enterprise, the sanctification of what was formerly mostly profane, or, at least, subordinated to and ancillary to the sacred cosmological paradigms. Weber argues that when the religious motivations of Calvinism were lost after a few generations of worldly success, the focus on self-examination, self-discipline, and hard work in one's calling even when secularized continued to promote the ascetic dedication to systematic profits, reinvestment of earnings, and thrift, which were the hallmarks of nascent capitalism.²²⁵

It does not take much reading between lines to see that the ludic had its place in Catholicism, but that this place was lost through the social process led by Calvinist Protestants. This is key, because at this point Turner stops giving a strictly sociological account, which would more likely problematize the Weberian forces of rationalization Protestantism, instead of Protestantism itself. If Protestantism is in strongest-affinity with capitalism, as Weber has demonstrated, it is not an exclusive relationship.²²⁶ These same rationalizing forces were already at work in Catholicism too, so that Vatican II would precisely pose the need for theology to mature and for ritual to take a back seat to theology. Thus, in a pre-emptive counter-argument to this push and in its place in an argument toward retaining specifically the Latin liturgy in Catholic practice, Turner (as late as 1976) extolled:

²²⁵ ²²⁵ Turner, "Liminal to Liminoid," 69–71.

²²⁶ For Max Weber's well-known account of the affinity between protestantism and capitalism and the widespread effects of this affinity, see *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, trans. Talcott Parsons (New York: Scriber 2003/1958).

The Catholic church has over the ages succeeded in creating a sort of “tribal” community which counteracts the alienation of the growing division of labor and political nationalism and class conflict. The creation of a single body of ritual has been one of its supreme instruments in forming bonds which on a global scale replicate even while they transcend those of tribal society. The dismemberment, the sparagmos, of this ritual body, would represent a defeat for charity, depriving the social process of its religious center. Spiritual creativeness flourishes within the liminal space protected by organic ritual rich in symbolism shaped by history; it is not extinguished by them. I would plead in conclusion that the living tradition of spiritual knowledge cognizantly preserved in the traditional Roman Rite should not be lightly abandoned to the disintegrative forces of personal religious romanticism, political opportunism and collective millenarianism. We must not dynamite the liturgical rock of Peter.²²⁷

After Vatican II, sweeping reforms designed to produce theological unity across Catholic bodies all over the world became occasions for the kinds of structural oppression that do not register in either Turner’s or Vondrey’s account. Take, for example, the attempted suppression of Mexican forms of paschal drama by American priests in the Southwest United States. In particular, attempts to extricate Mexican love for the Catholic church from love for the Virgin of Guadalupe proved difficult for American priests. In fact, it is clear that the Second Vatican Council’s promotion of theology over ritual only made explicit an already ongoing struggle to standardize and coordinate the laity’s religious lives. Long before the Second Council, early Mexican immigrants to California found

²²⁷Clifford Flannigan, “Liminality, Carnival, and Social Structure: the Case of Late Medieval Biblical Drama” in Victor Turner and the Construction of Cultural Criticism: Between Literature and Anthropology (Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1990).

their popular religiosity ill-received. In a rapidly modernizing America, Cardinal Buddy wrote to Cardinal Biondi on April 10, 1940:

A word about Mexican customs ... I tolerate some, however, I have definitely forbidden, for example, opening the Tabernacle during a baptism; dances in the church before a picture of Our Lady of Guadalupe, outdoor processions of the Blessed Sacrament through the public streets, because there was not sufficient reverence or devotion to warrant it. After all, this is America, and we must protect the faith of our people. Many Mexicans have an exaggerated cult to certain saints. They do not say, for example, that the Blessed Sacrament is in the Church; they say the Virgin is in the Church. This after years of Spanish and Mexican administration. I beg to ask is it uplifting to the Mexican to join with them in their meaningless and senseless shouting re Our Lady of Guadalupe, and at the same time neglect the essentials of the Commandments, Easter duty, and valid marriages.²²⁸

Historian of Christianity Timothy Matovina (2012a) further explains that by the time of the Second Vatican Council (1962–1965), the American Catholic church was comprised by various ethnic groups that had, in the years since their immigration, risen from lower-class immigrant roots to become well-established middle- and upper-middle class families. No family more fully represented this rise than the Kennedys. Matovina describes the American Catholic church as having endured two phases of immigration. The first “wave,” from 1820 to 1920, was European—Irish, German, Italians, and Slavs. During this time, for example,

²²⁸ Jeffrey M Burns, “The Mexican Catholic Community in California,” in *Mexican Americans and the Catholic Church, 1900-1965*, edited by Jay P Dolan and Gilberto Hinojosa (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1994), 191-192.

the Irish Catholics who arrived in Northeastern cities were welcomed into “national churches” whose priests were often from the same ethnic background and spoke the same language. Immigration restrictions set in place in the 1920s, however, stymied the influx of European immigrants and instead opened the US border to Latina/o immigrants. Matovina emphasizes class differences, a comparative dearth of Spanish-speaking priests to serve Mexican immigrants, and the formal elevation of theology over popular rituals after Vatican II as jointly reflecting and intensifying a rift between the Mexican faithful and the American parishes.²²⁹

Anthony Stevens-Arroyo also laments that US Catholic leadership not only stymied the ritual life of Mexican Catholics, but also endeavored to “remake existing Mexican Catholicism in the image and likeness of East Coast immigrant Catholicism,” a “pernicious” endeavor in light of the vibrancy and vigorousness of Latino Catholicism.²³⁰ Often this process of delegitimation of Latina/o Catholicism involved actual political neutralization or outright disempowerment of Mexican Catholic clergy. In the context of this struggle between laity and clergy, as well as between Mexican clergy and US clergy, Richard R. Flores’ *Los Pastores: History and Performance in the Mexican Shepherd’s Play of South*

²²⁹ Timothy Matovina, “American religion and the old and new immigration” *Religion and American Culture: R & AC*, 22, 1 (2012), 1-30.

²³⁰ Anthony Stevens-Arroyo, “Pious Colonialism: Assessing a Church Paradigm for Chicano Identity” in *Mexican American Religions: Spirituality, Activism and Culture*. Eds. Gastón Espinosa and Mario T. Garcia (Durham: Duke University Press, 2008), 65.

Texas presents the ritual practice and cultural performance of “Los Pastores” among San Antonio’s *mexicanos*, as a Bakhtinian form of cultural persistence that rehearses the flight of the Holy Family into Bethlehem through a series of comedic routines. The performances (also called *autos sacramentales*) have persisted long beyond the wishes of the Catholic hierarchy.²³¹

These power struggles of the American Catholic hierarchy with their own Mexican Catholic priests (who wanted to retain space for Mexican parishioners to live their faith liturgically) are just one important example of the danger of romanticizing (as Turner does) “a single body of ritual” as “a supreme instrument of creating social bonds.” In the case of Mexican parishioners, it is well-established that there were pre-existing differences between Roman Catholicism as practiced by Americans and the Mexican-folk Catholicism that migrants brought with them into the US Southwest.²³² Those Mexican priests who attempted to forestall the advance of Vatican II into their Mexican flocks found themselves stripped of their clerical power. The attempt to suppress Mexican folk Catholicism’s “tradition of spiritual knowledge” in favor not of *a universal rite* such as Turner imagines, but instead of the US rite constantly in flux and already shaped by ethnocentrism and rationalization, means that readers of Catholic

²³¹ Richard R. Flores, *History and Performance in the Mexican Shepherd’s Play of South Texas* (Smithsonian Press, 1995).

²³² Orlando Espín, “Popular Catholicism among Latinos” in *Hispanic Catholic Culture in the U.S.: Issues and Concerns*, eds. Jay P Dolan and Allan Figueroa Deck, S.J. (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1994), 315–17, David A. Baldillo, *Latinos and the New Immigrant Church*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006), xii–xiv.

convert Turner must be wary of his commitment to the Catholic church, which is constantly insinuated into his work and which doggedly imagines (after his conversion in 1955) that structure and *communitas* must ever go together.²³³ If, as Alexander argues, a Marxist Turner set up structures and institutions which must, through liminality, be sensitized back into spiritual servanthood to the whole through *communitas-as-ideal*, by the time *The Ritual Process* was published in 1969, the once institution-averse Turner had become an “ultramontane” Turner, absolutely convinced that the Catholic church was the “rock of Peter” and fiercely protective of the authority of the pope.²³⁴ Thus, a certain unevenness in Turner, his differing attitude toward the culpability or sanctity of hierarchy, make reading his theory of liminality tricky. Catholic Turner’s liturgical liminality serves to unify the global, Catholic church—unified in part by the existence of the Catholic structural hierarchy whose apex is Rome. Everything else is, by comparison, dismemberment-- and one has to imagine that includes the differing rites of Protestantism.²³⁵

²³³ C. Clifford Flannigan perceptively problematizes Turner’s liminality in response to this quotation: “Although this quotation does not quite sound like a paragraph out of Turner’s professional writings, the connection with his anthropological and social program is clear. Turner defends the structural and hierarchical by reference to the way it creates opportunities for the experiencing of the anti-structural. Or is it the other way around?” See Clifford Flannigan, “Liminality, Carnival, and Social Structure,” 58.

²³⁴ Larsen, *The Slain God*, 187.

²³⁵ In his review of Historian Tim Larsen’s *The Slain God*, American sociologist Christian Smith writes, “The discipline of anthropology is often considered post-religious if not anti-religious. Most working anthropologists profess no religious faith...Larsen’s account controverts the standard, modern secularization narrative. The story of British anthropology is not one of an immature discipline initially tolerating childish matters like religion and then gradually sloughing off religion as it developed a mature, scientific rationality. Rather, the

In Vondey's work he posits that Pentecostalism is a playful liminality, one that "came on the scene" to revive and renew a diminishing Christian liturgy and church in an age of work. Though there is a shift from the liminal into the liminoid, it is clear that Vondey is still presenting Pentecostal altar rites as Turner's liminality, but it is unclear to what degree Vondey has either wittingly or unwittingly imbibed the holism that Turner prizes in the direction of a (re)unified Catholic church.²³⁶ We may assume, however, that Vondey differs somewhat from Turner as *he* portrays the church as liminal in relation to the Kingdom of God. Though this is a schema reconcilable with Turner's, there is not an easy equivalence between structure as the future-Kingdom of God and structure as the Catholic Church universal. The difference is crucial in part because Pentecostals have traditionally been anti-Catholic and anti-institutional: if early Pentecostals created a liminality, could this Roman Catholic one be reconcilable with what they had in mind?

early in-fluential anthropologists (Tylor, Frazer) were rigidly anti-religious thinkers, whereas the latter luminaries in the discipline (Evans-Pritchard, Douglas, the Turners) confidently embraced Christian faith. And so the simple idea of secularization theory—that over time -modern secularity replaces pre-modern -religious credulity—is negated by an exact reverse in the case of leading scholars in the development of British anthropology." In Larsen's well-received work, he persuasively argues, "the methods and theories of the early secular scholars proved to be antiquated and embarrassing to scholars who followed close on their heels; the intellectual contributions of the Catholic anthropologists have better stood the test of time. It was not the secular rationalists, Larsen makes clear, but rather the Catholic believers who produced the higher-quality scholarship." See Christian Smith, "God and the Anthropologists: A Review of *The Slain God*," *First Things*, March 2015.

²³⁶ Vondey's recent work (2018) on Pentecostal altar practices as forms of sacramentality draws heavily from the work of Catholic thinkers on sacramentality, lending a discernible trajectory of reconciliation at play in his account of Pentecostalism, which moves toward repair of the breach with Catholicism.

Some Critical Responses to Vondey

Though Vondey suggests that ritual theory is limited by a certain disconnect with the historical process, his own attempt to interpret Pentecostal liturgy with Turner's concept of liminality is hampered by two significant weaknesses in his historical account.²³⁷ One of these weakness appears as background in his account of the means with which Pentecostalism has resisted the rationalization that made other liturgies into work only, as opposed to work-play. Essentially, Vondey posits black liturgies as a type of incorruptible spiritual play, resistant to rationalization by world-wise resistance to work. He further posits that Pentecostalism, as heir to black liturgical forms of embodiment, can be brought back into real communion with more traditional forms of Christianity and reinvigorate Christian liturgies even today, some one hundred years after its initial growth. But Vondey's rendering of the transference of *black* liturgy from Africa into holiness campgrounds via slavery and into Pentecostalism via travel to urban settings is historically unsatisfying, to say the least, as he treats this transference discreetly within the history of liturgical crisis and change. In short, Vondey disconnects the appearance of slave religion from the paramount social and political histories which caused its interpolation on the American social—not just religious—landscape and in doing so exempts himself from ethical questions

²³⁷ Ibid., 134.

about the suitability of placing black religiosity in service to waning traditional Western church structures. It asks nothing of the likelihood that those same structures corroborated and served to prop up nation states that trafficked in slave trade. This theoretical arrangement is *exactly* the kind of structure-embracing *communitas* that Turner describes but many other scholars problematize. A *communitas* that is always renewing the structures might simply renew oppressive structures. But while Vondey's account of liminality is entirely church-based, early Pentecostals had critical opinions about the entire culture and positioned their liminality as a critique of it.

In addition, Vondey's account situates the emergence of Pentecostalism as a form of ecclesial breach and crisis, but attributes this breach to *ideas*—eschewing the attendant class divergences of the period (discussed in chapter one) over what religion is and should be (whether on the one hand, a matter of correct belief and middle-class behaviors, or on the other hand, more about charisms and ecstatic gifts) as important sources of breach. With no historical account of how structures, whether economic or religious, perform structural oppression, and no real ear for the manifold kinds of breach that actually attended the birth of Pentecostalism, Vondey assigns Pentecostal liminality to an integrating function across a breach *in ideas*, and in so doing compromises his account of the ethos of early Pentecostalism, which concerned itself with social breaches like racism and class domination.

Vondey is almost entirely inattentive, to the questions of how Pentecostal ritual liminality addresses abuses of power, oppressions, or real breaches not based on simple misunderstandings or sociohistorical changes but instead on problems like structural racism, class struggle, or gender oppression. Vondey limits the work that liminality can do to address oppressions in a more aggressive way than, even in contradiction of, the work of Alexander naming Pentecostalism as concrete protest. In canvassing the *risks* that Vondey will allow for in Pentecostal play, he supplies the phrase “risk to challenge,” and restricts the scope of this challenge with the caveat that it would not be “rebellious,” or “dangerous.” Vondey carefully stipulates that Pentecostalism is “not simply averse to particular, established formal structures,” but is instead “a rejection of structural performance as a whole” as a sort of meta-principled and near philosophical anti-structure, though what this principled anti-structure could be based on—in the minds and hearts of Pentecostals—is not apparent in Vondey’s too theological and insufficiently historical work.²³⁸ Theologically and

²³⁸For Turner, the category of play is a form of timelessness that the clown is capable of representing well. In his 1981 article, “Images of Anti-Temporality: An Essay in the Anthropology of Experience,” Turner writes: “Mircea Eliade’s *illud tempus* refers to a mythical, cosmogonic time when the manifest cosmos took shape in a succession of events, waves, vibrations, or divine acts and deeds. This was the first time, the primavera of the world, when its conditions, instrumentalities, and powers were laid out, as it were, in their pristine vulnerability yet naked puissance. Eliade has argued persuasively that “major rituals, viewed cross-culturally, aspire to annihilate measurable temporality, and evoke, in order to reinstate, that generative time of beginnings, to draw on its unfailing, unstinted, and ineradicable efficacies, to redress the failures of the present ‘time,’ to purify it of its stains, sins, and stigmata, and to restore the primaveral past as paradigmatic reality. Forgetting of, declension from, pollution of the constitutive cosmogonic time, is characteristic of the religious narratives central to many cultures.” Note that for our purposes, primavera is a

prescriptively, Vondey's (Pentecostal) liminality exists *for* the structures, and these structures are very broadly conceived: "[t]heology as play involves the risk to challenge both the dominant order of the world and theology's own symbols for the sake of liberating them for play with God."²³⁹ Were Pentecostalism to be a challenge to ecclesial or socio-cultural structures, it is only in the sense that, as a play form, it desires to liberate the structures themselves into *destructuralizing play*, Vondey's own play on the theme of the liminoid. There is no word here on people needing liberation from structures. The range of outcomes for Vondey's Pentecostal play is consciously restrictive, arbitrarily committed to limiting the potential of liminality to playful challenge of political structures.

Explicitly, Vondey's liminality is *for* the institutional church: the church is itself a liminal realm of culture. Confusingly it also has its own structures, but these are not tied to the socio-cultural structures in Vondey's work and will be prevented from becoming "too structural" in their own right by their periodic engagement in Pentecostal-style rituals of play. Vondey's prescribed liminality is an innocent, compliant, good-willed, timeless church-housed liminality that suffered through a period of multiple historical breaches, the fault of mistaken attitudes or ideas for which both sides are to blame: "The liturgy experienced a

stand in for spring. But where Turner's anthropology finds ritual in a mythical origin, pristine and full, which is constantly being brought forward through ritual appeal, early Pentecostals looked back only as far as to the New Testament and anticipated the reinstatement of that time in a manner that included the destruction of the present structures of the world.

²³⁹ Vondey, *Beyond Pentecostalism*, 41.

crisis because the modern world perceived its structures as unproductive, inefficient, and without purpose. It is in the midst of this crisis that we find the emergence of classical Pentecostalism.”²⁴⁰ One unforeseen consequence of this has been that Pentecostalism developed as a free-floating liminality that became gargantuan.

Vondey’s admonishment is that playfulness needs to be restored to traditional church structures, where it can revive their dead liturgies and thus restore Christendom’s breaches. “The origins of classical Pentecostalism have been falsely construed as a rejection of liturgical theology and practice ... I wish to provide direction for constructive theological assessment of the contributions offered by global pentecostalism to address the current liturgical crisis... A Pentecostal liturgy did not develop in conscious opposition to or rejection of established forms of liturgical celebration.”²⁴¹ If indeed the biggest structural problem that Pentecostal liminality could be said to address or redress was in fact post-Industrial work culture, then it would stand to reason that by simply remaining a play religion Pentecostalism might be said to be doing some good. But early Pentecostalism was born in a period of overt structural oppressions—Jim Crow racism, for example—and it remains to be seen how Pentecostal liminality relates to or does not relate to such structures. Critically, Vondey

²⁴⁰ Ibid., 118.

²⁴¹ Ibid., 128–29.

makes no mention of the fact that repair of the breach is only one outcome offered in Turner's social drama, and schism is the other. Historically speaking, it has been schism, perpetual breaks, and not repair that has characterized early Pentecostalism. These perpetual breaks and schism point not to the medieval period but instead to the very real American tensions in which Pentecostalism was begun.

A More Robust Account of the Breaches that Attended Early Pentecostalism

The black liturgies that Vondey posits “came on the scene” to help resolve the crises of medieval liturgical Christianities were part of the religious traditions of persons who suffered traumatic displacement from their natal continent, transport through the slave trade's notorious middle passage, subjection to ontological deprivation of human status, and protracted exposure to an onslaught of physical and symbolic violences—and this, for generations—because brought by force onto *this scene*. It is a surprising choice to analyze the ecclesial crisis of liturgical inertia and in so doing to place the crisis of black religionists in structures of oppression in the far background of one's work.²⁴² Even allowing

²⁴² This tendency of locating the narrative in a European crisis of liturgy reflects Vondey's own location of scholarship. His Eurocentric narrative that grounds such theorization of Pentecostal liturgy is the product (or rather the byproduct) of the particularity of his social imagination. It is worth noting that Vondey published an article on Black liturgy and its influence on Pentecostal worship and spirituality in 2015 —five years after the publication of his *Beyond Pentecostalism*.

that religious rituals hold Turner's beautiful concept of primordial playfulness, there is simply little reason to believe that traumatized slaves would be the persons like to advance Turner's kind of play into religious ritual. The idea that the "play" that African slaves introduced into American Christianity works, happily, to "liberate" the "structures" of American Christianity from misapplying the culture's hermeneutic of "work" to the liturgy seems bafflingly flat-footed as a reading of the racial dynamics that have inscribed Pentecostalism as heir to black liturgy—a cultural claim that Vondey has not hesitated to make repeatedly. Again, if the crisis of Pentecostalism's day could be thought of in terms of work and play, then simply suggesting that Pentecostalism as play can ameliorate the drying up of liturgy might be just fine. But Vondey's invocation of Turner's opposing field for liminality, "structure," is a confusing sampling that sometimes reads as directly referring to denominational structures (as in his treatment of the campmeeting), sometimes seems to refer to the clergy and liturgy of Catholicism, and sometimes slips into a broader invocation like: "sociocultural structures."²⁴³ But the structures of, for example, the Jim Crow south—the sociocultural setting of "Structure" for early Pentecostalism—he does not treat. In his critique of scholars who posit that Pentecostalism can be protest, scholars whom he does not name specifically but which presumably include Bobby Alexander's rendering of Black Pentecostalism as protest, Vondey contradicts the only scholar who is

²⁴³Vondey, *Beyond Pentecostalism*, 128, 134, 168.

attending to this paramount context (if in the modern-day).²⁴⁴ Readings that posit the liminality of Pentecostalism is emancipatory or functions as liberating protest, Vondey says, fundamentally “fail to acknowledge” that liminality “aims to encompass all of life,” yes—*even the structures*. Nothing and no one is meant to be left out. Instead, all are meant to be liberated for *play* with God. Thus, Vondey’s reading of Turner’s liminality shapes his reading of the meaning, purpose, and political potential of Pentecostalism.²⁴⁵

One might note that if Pentecostalism as a black *play* liturgy could not (by definition of the term liminal) protest but *must* instead *serve* to liberate everything, including the structures, and if by *structures* we have to assume everything structural, including social structures of domination; and if black liturgical forms, because a form of liminality, once absorbed into American Christianity could not enact protest against or aim for emancipation from the sociocultural structures that kept them enslaved and subject to ongoing and manifold forms of material violence for hundreds of years, or then by definition not be liminality, then there would be no ethical reason whatsoever to be attracted to this form of liminality and no reason to attempt to revive it or learn from it, except as a negative exemplar, something to be strenuously avoided. Then Pentecostalism would in fact be an instance in which Turner’s liminal could be

²⁴⁴ The scholars whom Vondey identifies as describing Pentecostalism as protest are Bobby Alexander and Frank Macchia. See also Vondey, *Beyond Pentecostalism*, 134–37.

²⁴⁵ Alexander’s argument might allow for Vondey to be reading discourse as separate from the function of liminality.

most obviously a pressure valve that upholds a system. This notion has already been asserted in reference to class struggle by Anderson in *Vision of the Disinherited*,²⁴⁶ and by James Baldwin concerning black American Pentecostals, in *The Fire Next Time*.²⁴⁷ Vondey's lack of attention to the history of the Atlantic slave trade and his bracketing of the oppressive, historical functions of "socio-cultural structures" seriously undermine the credibility of his account of the rise of Pentecostalism.

In a manner that perpetuates the otherworldly detachment by which Pentecostals are often stereotyped, Vondey imagines that the church exists as entirely liminal *now* in relation to the structures of the world in anticipation of the structure of the coming Kingdom of God, a theological and eschatological meta schema. This composite picture seems to suggest this distinctly Christian view of liminality:

This sanctified aesthetic is concerned with this transitional phase of those who have already encountered the Spirit but are not yet perfected eternally and find themselves 'betwixt and between the positions assigned arrayed by law, custom, convention, and ceremonial.' In this liminal state, individuals bond together in a volatile sanctified communion in which cultural assertions are transformed by the tarrying and waiting for the spirit.²⁴⁸

²⁴⁶ Anderson, *Vision of the Disinherited*, 220–22.

²⁴⁷ James Baldwin, *The Fire Next Time*, (1993[1962]:37–43).

²⁴⁸ Wolfgang Vondey, *Pentecostal Theology: Living the Full Gospel* (New York: T&T Clark, 2017), 209.

But this portraiture of the church is unaccountable, from a historical perspective, given many Christian churches' long and multiple histories of playing distinct part in socially structured, worldly affairs. It overlooks the church's part in structural oppressions and is negligent of its social responsibilities in its restrictive otherworldly setting for the liminal.

Yet, even when bracketing the historical context out, it is difficult to understand how Vondey can imagine the elaborate hierarchies of (for one clear example) Roman Catholicism to be part and parcel of the Church's supposed over-arching and thorough-going liminality which, again, is a time that *is betwixt and between social orders* marked by egalitarianism, *communitas*, and a conspicuous absence of hierarchy. Vondey imagines the church as the liminal space of transition for people from the sociocultural orders of this world into the kingdom of God instead. Yet, even in a theoretical sense it is hard to see the church as somehow *entirely* liminal. Given the manifold historical instances of the Church's courting of, attachment to, and alliances with political powers and their habits of legitimating the same even when these powers are behaving unethically, one seeks in vain for Vondey's acknowledgment that the Church's theoretical liminality has never meant its absolute detachment from worldly, temporal structures of power. For a more pertinent example, I would suggest that the US southern churches who, year after year, legitimated the nation's practices of slavery were themselves the part of the nation's elaborate structures of

domination which, yes, had their root in economic domination but had their legitimation in political and religious rhetoric.²⁴⁹ Such churches simply cannot be imagined to be liminal in any real sense but must be acknowledged to be the structures of domination themselves *par excellence*. In positing a foregoing liminal status for the entire Church, Vondey leaves undone the work of evaluating the genesis, efficacies, and meaning of Pentecostalism's social and historical liminality.

Even accepting the frame of the liminoid, in which work is the danger when it infiltrates realms that should be liminoid, Vondey has misdiagnosed the reasons for this infiltration. He entirely misses the history of the rise of American professions and its effects on both clergy culture and the character of religious goods, as recounted in chapter one. One of the surest ways of making the public regard religious goods (in this case, the liturgy) as work products is to professionalize one's credentials, as was covered in the previous chapter.

²⁴⁹ This is the historical case, according to their own respective denominational records. See the internal report created by the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, "Report on Slavery and Racism in the History of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary" in which Albert Mohler states that "In the Reconstruction era, the faculty supported the restoration of white rule in the South. The seminary faculty applauded restoration of white rule reflected in the election of Democrat Wade Hampton as governor of South Carolina and in the broad Democratic victories throughout the South. They supported also the legal curtailment of the civil rights of blacks that these victories promised. William Whitsitt, a lifelong admirer of Hampton, assured his students that "whites will rule in the South." For a primary document that recounts a Presbyterian defense of slavery, see: "A Southern Christian View of Slavery," found in "Minutes of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the Confederate States of America," Vol. I, Augusta, Ga., 1861, Appendix, 55-59. <http://teachingamericanhistory.org/library/document/a-southern-christian-view-of-slavery/>

Protestant church leadership opted to structure their work in similar format as that of the medical and legal professions and then attempted to enforce this shift; the degradation of the liturgy into work would therefore be owed not so much to an attitudinal drift on the part of the laity but instead to the conditions of secular work in the Industrial era.

In a drama in which work is the most important enemy of spiritual liminality, Vondey aims to attribute an inherent religious genius to black religionists who, because they knew work to be thoroughly corrupting of play, instinctively maintained worship as play instead.²⁵⁰ This attribution cannot ameliorate Vondey's framing of the historical rise of American Pentecostalism which is, on the whole, anemic. For one thing, he has completely overlooked the class based, social struggles that professionalizing religion into work entailed in late nineteenth-century in America. Theology has not simply *become* disconnected from the body because too cerebral and so needs to be re-engaged in imaginative, embodied play; there were plenty of black religionists who adopted more refined styles of religious worship! Instead, church leadership

²⁵⁰ According to Vondey: "This made the nature of the work they were required to do evil. It was evil because it grew out of the sinful human evil to subjugate and exploit others. This work ethic stood in contrast to the freedom and justice associated with God. For the African slaves, ritual action was not a "work" of the people but the freedom from compulsion, exploitation, duty, and performance. In the fields and bushes, the slaves were free to pray, sing, dance, shout and "jist turn loose lack." Worship meant enthusiasm, life, and freedom—liturgy as play. The prayer grounds lacked the structural liturgical framework of medieval liturgical performance." Wolfgang Vondey, "The Making of a Black Liturgy: Pentecostal Worship and Spirituality from African Slave Narratives to American Cityscapes," *Black Theology: An International Journal* 10 (2012): 147–168.

actively aimed to disenfranchise agricultural people from their embodied religious traditions, in lock step with a host of other kinds of dispossession, to transform the religious field into a properly respectable field and to monopolize that field.²⁵¹ This field they wanted to be a *part of* the structures in culture: *not* a liminal space apart from the structures. Ann Douglas, in her classic and controversial account *The Feminization of American Culture* (1977) bemoans that religion was not more properly part of structures, lamenting the disestablishment of American Protestant church and wishing for the days of religious magisterium, a short period in American history in which church was so thoroughly married to state that mandatory taxes were collected for the church.²⁵² Disestablishment, however, only made the churches' structural operations less obvious and harder to maintain, not absent. Accordingly,

²⁵¹Ann Douglas' account of profound cultural change in *The Feminization of American Culture* (1977) begins with this set of sociological changes: revolution, Industrialization, and dispossession of skillsets (as opposed to the dispossession of land or, in a related vein, the means of production). Before Industrialization, Douglas notes, "the common productive unit was the rural household; the processing and preserving of food, candlemaking, soapmaking, spinning, weaving, shoemaking, quilting, rugmaking, and many other activities all took place on domestic premises." But by 1830, the North was already experiencing (ahead of other US regions) the advance of the Industrial Revolution which occasioned, by Douglas' account, the replacement of commercial farming with subsistence farming, the barring of midwives from "a newly defined and restricted medical profession." All told, Douglas notes, "self-sufficiency was giving way to specialization" and women seemingly "vanished from a number of occupations" and lost (if temporarily) the right to vote. Though enumerating these manifold forms of dispossession, by her own account experienced more acutely by women, Douglas does not see any struggle between the laity and the clergy over religious knowledges and therefore does not recognize that the feminization of American religion it occasioned reflects a hostile take-over in the field, dispossessing clergy of their establishment and accruing power instead to women in particular, though I would add, to the lower classes as well. Douglas, *Feminization*, 50, 52–60.

²⁵² Ibid., 8, 22–31.

disestablished American clergy later labored to transform religious labor into proper intellectual labor. The rationality of the liturgy and its rationalization, in America, have little to do with medieval clerical opinions about the imagination or the American laity's tastes for efficacy. It has much more to do with the Industrial period's increasing divisions of labor and class, and the aspiration of clergy to be professionals.

In adopting a Turnerian frame for understanding Pentecostal liminality as play, Vondey's liminality exists in a church-bound manner and, because he imagined it to exist only within the time-space of the church, it does not address the harder questions scholars have been asking about liminality for decades. In the process, Vondey has encountered scholars like Alexander who, also using Turner, argue that the worship practices of Pentecostals are good examples of "concrete protest" and demonstrate that congregations like House of the Lord both practice spirit possession and participate in the political process. Thus, Alexander constructs present day liminality with reference to its function toward the social order. In Alexander's work, this is not the typical functionalist liminality that scholars expect, but instead a protest-oriented and culture-critiquing liminality.

Though Vondey attempts to curtail the readings of Macchia (not yet at issue for our work) and Alexander by admonishing that "attempts" to characterize Pentecostal worship as "protest or liberation" fail to understand

Turner, the differences between Alexander's reading of Turner and Vondey's reading of Turner exist within Turner's oeuvre itself. Though Turner's early work studied liminality precisely in reference to the social order, Turner later supplied a timeless reference point for liminality, and elaborated it as sourced form of a primordial fountain of spiritual play. Thus, Vondey is able to write that liminality is "ignorant of everything around it" a form of "play before God."

One can detect an affinity between Catholic-period Turner and Vondey in their propensity to view the church in reference not to other structures in its milieu but to the coming Kingdom of God. A further similarity is detectable in their imaginative embrace of an origin myth—Turner's being sourced in part from Mircea Eliade's articulation and Vondey's from Azusa Street Mission. But the church-based liminality that Turner constructs, and the one to which Vondey speaks and from which he draws, philosophically posits wholeness in *communitas* that was not the starting point for the structural-functionalist account of liminality. Even where anthropological liminality has confronted serious questions about its political functions, it posits as its *a priori* a conflicted social group and demonstrates how this conflicted social group is stabilized. Over time, Turner's liminality grew to posit, instead, a primavera of the world marked by undifferentiated wholeness. According to Turner, liminal rituals retrieve some of those experiences and make people and institutions better in the process. This wholism is so assertive in Turner and by extension Vondey that they stop

attending to the inherent and meaningful conflicts in society. But it does not have to be this way, and it was not this way in early Pentecostal liminality.

Early Pentecostal anti-structure was turned toward politics and culture. Early Pentecostals constructed a liminality in tension with the social order and, far from authorizing this order, instead imagined the order to be so corrupt that they had little interest in engaging it. This is profound critique. In the following chapter, we revisit Azusa Street Mission to find the Pentecostal altar at the genesis of its construction. There we find not *rites of passage* only but the more important rites of seasonal reversals. Bakhtinian Carnival theory posits neither natural wholeness, nor a spring/primavera origin, but instead a nature that undulates with difference and crisis, producing sharp contradiction, and thereby brimming with what is politically important. Carnival's liminality celebrates the world doing what it naturally does-- turning upside down. Kingdoms fall in this proce

Chapter 3: Calendrical Rites: Latter Rain and Harvest in the Pentecostal Habitus

Introduction

This chapter moves toward a reading of the rites of “baptism of the Holy Spirit,” as defined by at Azusa Street Mission, as a Carnival ritual. To do so, I first locate the influence of agrarian thought/practice on Pentecostalism via the collective representations of *latter rain* and *harvest*. I argue that the agrarian character of early Pentecostal thought about the altar suggests the influence of calendrical rites on its social construction and reception. I then situate the status of harvest rites in the US during the Azusa Street Revival period to demonstrate their peak importance in American culture at the time. Harvest rites are “rites of the threshold,” or “rites of transition,” or “rites of reversal” in the work of Pierre Bourdieu. This chapter contrasts his account of these rites with Turner’s because Bourdieu’s account better matches the rhetoric of early Pentecostals with regard to weather. In a similar vein, Bakhtin’s account of Carnival depicts it as a ritual of seasonal reversal, in harmony with Bourdieusian thought but also situating it in the context of large-scale social conflict— which work Bourdieu did not do. When

put into combination, a Bakhtinian-Bourdieuian ritual of *seasonal reversal* proves able to take account of social conflict in a manner that Turner's *seasonal rituals of reversal* simply will not. The chapter closes with a discussion of Carnival that will enable the work of the last chapter—namely, reading Azusa Street Mission alongside Bakhtin's Carnival— a discussion that will illuminate ways to decode their similarities in form and function.

Overview of the Chapter

Early Pentecostals described the altar in agrarian terms: as the threshing site for an ultimate harvest. Although historians have long noted that early Pentecostals understood the movement in terms of a “latter rain,” this framing is not yet well understood. Scholars who discuss “latter rain” commonly explain its meaning as a form of theology, and interpret it as functioning as an apologetic for the resurgence of the charisms of the New Testament.²⁵³ Influential historian Edith Blumhofer distills early and latter rain discourse into her conceptual frame of “restorationism.”²⁵⁴ In her work, the restorationist impulse is the means by which Pentecostals explain the reappearance of charismatic gifts like divine healing and speaking in tongues after a long historical period in which they were noticeably absent. In this usage, early and latter rain explain allegorically the

²⁵³ Donald Dayton, *Theological Roots of Pentecostalism* (Grand Rapids, MI: Francis Asbury, 1987), 26–29.

²⁵⁴ Edith Blumhofer, *Restoring the faith*, 203-204.

temporary cessation of the charismatic gifts, while authorizing their reemergence in proto-Pentecostal churches of the very early twentieth century as a real religious good.

But “latter rain” was more than a way of explaining a new era in church history by appeal to a former one; it signaled instead an agricultural framework operative among early Pentecostals that deserves its own investigation. Rhetoric that describes and enacts the altar as a “threshing” site strongly suggests that agrarian thought influenced the social construction and reception of the Pentecostal altar.

Whereas scholars routinely posit that latter rain discourse refers to passages in the biblical book of Joel, they have not noted its broader coherence with the actual seasonal weather patterns that structured, and made “intuitive,” the metaphorical concepts of “latter rain” in the minds of early and agrarian Pentecostals. Within the frame of agrarian life, early rains refer to optimal spring time periods of planting and latter rains mature the harvest. Together they mark the onset and ending of the wet season which occupies half the agricultural year. Harvest is an all-important event and harvest time is accordingly marked by communal rituals; at the turn of the twentieth century these rituals helped to produce the social cohesion which, in a Durkheimian sense, bequeaths society its sacred status. I conjecture that it is from these rituals —from rituals appropriate to rites of transition—that early Pentecostalism sourced a logic of seasonal

reversals. I propose that Pentecostals not only acquired this logic, but that they innovated rites for the Baptism of the Holy Spirit based on the experience of rites of seasonal reversal. The logic of seasonal reversals is wholly different than the logic that underpins Turner's liminality. Thus, to argue their influence on the construction of the Pentecostal altar and its work is to argue their different politic—away from a reconciling liminality and toward a divisive clash of seasons instead.

By suggesting the influence of harvest rites on the rites of the Holy Spirit, this chapter argues that cultural sociology was influential for the historical construction of Pentecostal altar space. In her well-received 1995 monograph, *Preserving the Family Farm: Women, Community, and the Foundations of Agribusiness in the Midwest 1900–1940*, Historian of American agriculture Mary Neth describes the period from 1900 to 1920 as the “zenith” of the importance of harvest rituals in American life. She observes that while harvest has virtually always held singular importance in the agricultural year, during these decades it acquired an additional, new, and heightened salience of emotional meaning. Given the direct overlap of these decades with the formation and spread of Pentecostalism in America, the reception of the Holy Spirit as a Rain-Harvest plot is a strong sign that Pentecostalism was strongly shaped by a newly urgent status of time-honored ritual, harvest, especially given its sociological setting of rising conflict over the mode of economic production.

By Neth's account, threshing the harvest was the most cooperative, vital, festive time of an otherwise mundane, isolated, dispersed, and often grueling agricultural year. Harvest rituals presented an unparalleled space-time for agrarian festive liminality within American culture. In the context of Industrialization, harvest celebrations became more symbolically important if detectably strained.

It is novel to investigate the influence of harvest festivals as a cultural construct for their influence on the Pentecostal imagination, but the rhetoric with which early Pentecostals described the baptism of the Holy Spirit strongly implies the influence of rites of transition (autumn harvest rites) on the collective reception of the Holy Spirit.²⁵⁵ This discussion will assume two co-eval aspects of harvest festivity as registering influence on the rites of Baptism in the Holy Spirit. First, that harvest observances feature a threshold rite, one which, by ritual magic, helps to usher in the turn of seasons. Second, that the context of social

²⁵⁵ Anthropologist Martin Lindhardt confirms that ritual studies of Pentecostalism are a recent development and tend to follow the frame of ritualization (following Bell) instead of traditional categories of ritual like *rites of passage*. Lindhardt writes, “[o]ne reason for the partial neglect of ritual in much of the existing literature may be that many Pentecostals/charismatics themselves insist on the absence of ritual from their church life. As Coleman notes in his contribution to this volume, “ritual” seems to be a kind of a dirty word among Protestant charismatics. These groups generally associate ritual with what they consider to be the prescribed, formal, and spiritually empty liturgy of mainline churches—a fundamental theological contrast to the spontaneous, informal, and experiential forms of worship characteristic of Pentecostal-charismatic communities. Some scholars have, however, argued that academic analysis should not necessarily be informed by such emic uses of terms and that it does indeed make sense to regard many Pentecostal-charismatic cooperative and spiritually oriented church activities as rituals.” See Martin Lindhardt, *Practicing the Faith: The Ritual Life of Pentecostal-Charismatic Christians*. (New York: Berghahn Books, Inc., 2011).

conflict of the early twentieth century charged threshold rites with more intense representations of the sacred, so that these rites ended up informing the new rites of the Holy Spirit.

This chapter advances the argument that threshold festival culture informed the construction of American Pentecostalism via “revival” for “the harvest” in a manner that lent the altar an *overturning* political pulse—a ritual schematic for political overthrow—or carnivalism. The following section begins by renegotiating the status of the category of the liminal in the interpretation of Pentecostalism to clear space for a reintegration of “rites of seasonal reversal” in the account of Pentecostal liminality.

Creating a Sacred Threshold: Evangelical Altars as Turner’s Liminality

At the turn of the twentieth century, the evangelical altar was already a well-defined place. Departing from the Protestant views that one must be *born again* to be saved, evangelist preachers instead drew their services to a climax of repentance. Accordingly, the sermon was followed by an invitation, sometimes an urging, for hearers to decide to repent and to turn to God. Whether this was Edwards’ angry God, or Whitefield’s, or Wesley’s more emotive God, still the

addressee was compelled to go to the altar, where he or she was called upon to surrender her/his vices and be “made right” before God.²⁵⁶

It is surprising that the altar call is not more often assessed as a form of Victor Turner’s social process, for in significant ways it functions like one.²⁵⁷ One can easily read “breach, crisis, redressive action, and reintegration” into the salvation-oriented altar call. Sinners are purportedly in a state of breach, or alienation, from God; the call invites them to the altar to address this crisis, and returns them to the body of Christ having become integrated into the body as a child of God. The area of the altar space becomes, in that time, a liminal space in which a person is “between” the prior status as sinner and the future status as

²⁵⁶ See *America's God: From Jonathan Edwards to Abraham Lincoln*, 44-50; Elaine A. Heath, *Naked Faith: The Mystical Theology of Phoebe Palmer*, Vol. 108 (James Clarke & Co, 2010).

²⁵⁷ Amy Davis’ unpublished dissertation (Drew, 2010) notes the relative lack of analysis using *rites of passage* in particular for evangelical traditions. The anthropology of Christianity per se is now near twenty years old. Joel Robbins (2014) prioritizes the emergence of a consciousness of the field as a field for itself as part of the qualification of this late dating. Simon Coleman (2014) has noted that, because anthropology itself grew out of Christianized Western cultures, it not only performed a colonial, Western, exoticizing, and even fetishizing gaze on its ritual subjects, it also did not possess the self-reflexivity to study Christian rituals. The presumed secularization and rationality of Western cultures’ self-narration also prohibited rumination on occidental Christian rituals. Thus, Coleman notes Gwen Kennedy Neville’s *Kinship and pilgrimage: rituals of reunion in American protestant culture* (2005) as an excellent prehistory to the anthropology of Christianity. Simon Coleman notes the overprevalence of studies of Pentecostalism in the field, suggesting that studies on pilgrimage—mostly Catholic—can be profitably thought about together with the voluminous literatures on present-day pentecostalism for balance (2014). In a similar vein, Catherine Walker Bynum decries the way materiality and ritual are conveniently produced as Catholic, female, and from the “dark ages.” For more on this theme, see Sally Promey, “Introduction” in *Sensational Religion: Sensory Cultures in Material Practice* (New Haven: Yale UP, 2014), 1–24. For a critique of the anthropological fetish of spirit possession, see Paul Christopher Johnson, “Scholars Possessed! On Writing Africana Religions with the Left Hand” in *Journal of Africana Religions* Volume: 4 Issue 2:2 (2016):154.

member of the body of Christ.²⁵⁸ One is compelled toward the front of the church, into a space a lay person would very rarely otherwise go, to beseech God's forgiveness and acceptance. In the space of the evangelical altar one is able to be transformed from sinner into saint—a transformation meant to be linear. Accordingly, non-Calvinist Protestants are at pains to symbolize the status of a born-again person who returns to an unchristian style or habit of life; once born again, it is not possible to revert to *unborn* status. Thus, the person is instead often referred to as “backslidden” (again, imbued with logics of linearity) or perhaps a “hypocrite,” but one does not become “unborn” and would not be referred to as *aborted* or *miscarried*.

Though this is a typical rite of passage, it contains manifold forms of traditional social conflict, representing a degree of specialization of clerical work that has changed religion from communitarian forms of religion, in which there was little degree of social differentiation, to forms that, like the societies to which they belong, bear the hallmark of class tensions in the form of a hierarchical

²⁵⁸ Shea Watts similarly notes: “The ‘altar call’ augments the altar and underscores the liminality of the space. The altar is marked as the place that bodies congregate in response to the invitation or call. Like the table, it is a place defined by the ways it is used. Sometimes, the altar is a place of repentance. At other times, it is a place for prayers of healing. In its polyvalent expressions, however, the altar remains a dynamic place of great emotional outpouring, such that the bodies are given tacit permission to respond freely: weeping, shouting, laughing, speaking in tongues, and so on.” See Shea Watts, “Ritualizing Bodies: Exploring Religious and Political Affects,” *Berkeley Journal of Religion and Theology* 4, no. 2 (2018): 43. Cf. N. Wigg-Stevenson, *Ethnographic Theology: An Inquiry into the Production of Theological Knowledge* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 64; Andrew Williams, “Spiritual Landscapes of Pentecostal Worship, Belief, and Embodiment in a Therapeutic Community: New Critical Perspectives,” *Emotion, Space and Society* 19 (May 1, 2016): 45–55.

clergy class.²⁵⁹ That seekers are compelled to the altar to seek transformation indicates a belief in the heightened sacrality of the altar space; indeed, these beliefs are implied or directly stated by the clergy issuing the invitation. Thus, the altar space is demarcated as special in part by the rhetorical work of clergy. Clergy's elevated status and their special access to the space further help to maintain the space as sacred.²⁶⁰ In addition, their power over the terms on which lay persons might be admitted to this space defines it in a somewhat antagonistic way toward the laity who are implied to be (by correlation) profane; this demarcated and controlled physical space helps to maintain the laity as laity. Of course adherent response²⁶¹ also helps to construct the space as an especially sacred place; for their part, seekers have to be willing to take on the status of a person in need of some transformation—first a sinner, or perhaps a sick, or even an unemployed person, for example.²⁶² By their short pilgrimage to the altar, seekers help to produce altar space as better able to facilitate transformation to a

²⁵⁹ Otto Maduro, *Religion and Social Conflicts*, 54.

²⁶⁰ Ibid., 83. Rey, *Bourdieu on Religion: Imposing Faith and Legitimacy*, 108–110.

²⁶¹ Otto Maduro similarly notes, “religious work is always collective work...performed by a collectivity of human beings directly or indirectly participating in the development of a worldview.” Maduro, *Religion and Social Conflicts*, 83.

²⁶² Parallelism between transformation of the penitent and transformation of the sick can also be seen in the rites of transition of the Ndembu, where the grass hut serves as the space of transformation for both the girl into woman, as well as the infertile woman into fertile woman. “In Isoma, before this step is taken the patient's husband, if she has one currently, constructs for her use during the subsequent seclusion period a small round grass hut, just outside the ring of a dozen or so huts that constitutes an Ndembu village. Such a hut (*nkunka*) is also made for girls undergoing seclusion after their puberty rites, and the Isoma hut is explicitly compared with this. The patient is like a novice. Just as a puberty novice is “grown ” into a woman, according to Ndembu thinking, so the Isoma candidate is to be regrown into a fertile woman.” From Turner, *Structure and Anti-Structure* (1991 [1969]:21).

greater degree than is the pew.²⁶³ The altar's Turnerian function is plain: once the altar space is gone through, with the requisite prayers for forgiveness, penitents are commuted in status into the *redeemed* and, though they were before an enemy of God, are now welcomed into the family of God as a full-fledged *born again* brother or sister. Having gone from alienation into integration, the function of this kind of Turnerian liminality is reparative. It is a model that fits the description of the *rites of passage* as described by Ronald Grimes, which he posits as proceeding in three phases: separation from community, transition into an especially formative time and space, and reincorporation back into the community.²⁶⁴ The net effect of the ritual passage is to transform the individuals who undergo them.

Converts can access the altar at other points in their lives; they can be “dedicated to the Lord” as infants like Samuel in the Bible²⁶⁵, choose to be baptized into the Body of Christ in altar space, they might be married, and can later be eulogized in this space—each of these is for our purposes a transition in a person's status. Interestingly, altar space can transform objects, too. For example,

²⁶³ Wolfgang Vondey's discussion of the Pentecostal altar frames it as the “summit of Pentecostal liturgy” with which denotation I concur, but which discussion misses the profound forms of class struggle entailed in creating this ritual logic of summit, or pinnacle. See Wolfgang Vondey, “Pentecostal Sacramentality and the Theology of the Altar” in *Scripting Pentecost: A Study of Pentecostals, Worship and Liturgy*, eds. Mark J. Cartledge and A.J. Swoboda (New York: Routledge, 2017) 98–101.

²⁶⁴ Ronald L. Grimes, *Deeply into the bone: Re-inventing rites of passage* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002).

²⁶⁵ 1 Samuel 1:21–28

in blessing Communion or the Eucharist, elements which are otherwise quite mundane—even just a prepackaged dissolvable wafer in a disposable cup—are made sacred, become even the very broken body and blood of Christ, through their consecration via prayer in the altar space. All of these transitions are transitions in status. Accordingly, the person at the altar is a liminary: no longer, for instance, the single person they once were, but not quite yet a married person either.

Differentiating the Pentecostal Altar through Nuancing its Ritual Efficacy

What about the work of Pentecostal revival? At what point did it become possible to distinguish an evangelical altar from a Pentecostal one? What separates the two?

This is a difficult question if we are looking for chronology. It would be nearly impossible to pinpoint the exact moment at which the Pentecostal altar succeeded the evangelical one and problematic to think in terms of supersession anyway, though the logic of supersession and ultimacy was certainly part of how early Pentecostals verbally constructed their altars: as different from and/or as more than those of evangelical spaces.²⁶⁶ Pentecostal altars have always shared

²⁶⁶ Gerald King discusses the historical relationship between Fundamentalists and Pentecostals as one fraught with commonalities, important differences, and real tensions. When fundamentalists critiqued early Pentecostals for being disorderly, and tongues-speech for being lunacy or worse, early Pentecostals marshalled a broad array of counterpoints, some biblical, some historical, and some that appealed to the authenticity of their experiences to defend the practice of “being baptized in the Holy Spirit.” In the course of this contestation, Pentecostals avowed their charisms as ultimate in a hierarchy of blessings. A.J.

substantial overlap with evangelical ones. All the transitions in status named above happen at both evangelical and Pentecostal altars.

Yet, much of what scholars presently use to separate early Pentecostals from their evangelical counterparts can be helpfully classified as experiences in, and accompanying pneumatological phenomenologies of, the altar space. Frequently, in scholarship on American Pentecostals, they are presented as similar in most ways to evangelicals, excepting their valuing of glossolalia, and being slain in the Spirit, for example, in other words more extreme forms of ecstatic embodiment.²⁶⁷ We can go further: American Pentecostals perpetuate value for authentic forms of ecstatic embodiments as symptoms of a believer being baptized by or especially “touched by” the Holy Spirit, while evangelicals more broadly do not readily embrace these worship forms as acceptable or meaningful, and do not seek their circulation in church services. While this line of separation is true enough, it can be further complicated: Pentecostals also spatialize and temporalize these experiences. The place in which one can most readily receive radical endowments of blessings is in the space of the altar. For early Pentecostals, the time at which these blessings were most available and

Tomlinson penned four articles defending the practice of tongues-speaking, ultimately arguing that Mark 16 features Jesus himself placing a premium on the ability. In response to Ruben Torrey’s admonition that the devil could parody tongues, Flavius J. Lee laid claim to tongues being “the greatest of all gifts.” For a fuller discussion of Pentecostals triumphalism about tongues-speech, see Gerald King, *Disfellowshipped*, 80–88.

²⁶⁷ Ibid., 8–9

appropriate is during *revival*, which was called “latter rain,” and at the altar, which was referred to as *the threshing floor*.²⁶⁸

Harvest in Early Twentieth-century America

Although Wolfgang Vondey used the frame of the liminoid to discuss American Pentecostal historic altar practices, a telling clue in this matter must be how early Pentecostals themselves described— that is, verbally constructed— the sacred in reference to harvest time. When Pentecostal forerunner and female preacher Maria Beulah Woodworth-Etter received her call to preach, that call came in the form of a vision of grain ripe for harvesting; later she would proclaim God’s empowerment for women as “hand-maidens of the last great harvest.”²⁶⁹ The best-known full-length treatment of Pentecostal’s latter rain theme is David Wesley Myland’s *Latter Rain Covenant and Pentecostal Power with Testimony of Healings and Baptism* (1910).²⁷⁰ There, Myland carefully articulated popular Pentecostal latter rain eschatology:

Spiritually, the latter rain is coming to the church at the same time it is coming literally upon the land to... bring about the unity of the body, the consummation of the age, and the catching away of the

²⁶⁸ Taylor, *The Spirit and the Bride*, 84. See Appendix B for scans of one of the more explicit treatments of the theme of the threshing floor.

²⁶⁹ Douglas Jacobsen, *Thinking in the Spirit*, 25. Leah Payne, *Gender and Pentecostal Revivalism: Making a Female Ministry in the Early Twentieth Century* (Palgrave MacMillan, 2015).

²⁷⁰ Myland’s “most influential statement of the Pentecostal understanding of the latter rain” posited that the Old Testament scriptures from which the theory was drawn were “literal, typical, and prophetic.” Blumhofer, *Restoring the Faith*, 94-99.

spiritual Israel...the *early* rain was for the sowing and the *latter* for the harvest; one for the beginning and the other for the end; one for the introduction and the other for the consummation of the dispensation.²⁷¹

The latter rain and harvest motif is common throughout the primary literatures of early Pentecostalism. Rhetorically, these themes are a good starting point for re-investigating the sensibilities of the Pentecostal altar. Upon closer inspection of Pentecostals' agrarian rhetorical themes, clues that point to the influence of calendrical rites emerge. Calendrical rites are part of Turner's liminal, not his liminoid, framing, so the influence of these rites will not have registered yet in discussion of Pentecostalism, which is focused either on *the liminoid* or on *play*.

Turner does strongly suggest that the Industrial era will feature the liminoid-- with its leisurely experiences of play and flow²⁷²—and not the liminal. In this lengthy quotation, among other elements one can note the expanse Turner ascribes to the liminal/liminoid, which occurs in settings across the world and across human history, but is still in the main what follows Industrialization:

Liminal phenomena tend to predominate in tribal and early agrarian societies possessing what Durkheim has called "mechanical solidarity," and dominated by what Henry Maine has called "status." Liminoid phenomena flourish in societies with

²⁷¹ Ibid., 73.

²⁷² Turner, following Csizszenmihalyi, argues that liminoid activities often have the absorbing and self forgetting qualities of "flow" (1982:56). For a larger discussion on how anthropologists use Turner to reflect on present-day Pentecostalism, see Martin Lindhardt, *Practicing the Faith*, 8–15.

"organic solidarity," bonded reciprocally by "contractual" relations, and generated by and following the industrial revolution, though they perhaps begin to appear on the scene in city-states on their way to becoming empires (of the Graeco-Roman type) and in feudal societies (including not only the European sub-types found between the tenth and fourteenth centuries in France, England, Flanders, and Germany, but also in the far less "pluralistic" Japanese, Chinese, and Russian types of feudalism or quasi-feudalism). But they first begin clearly to develop in Western Europe in nascent capitalist societies, with the beginnings of industrialization and mechanization, the transformation of labor into a commodity, and the appearance of real social classes.²⁷³

It makes good sense, from the perspective of the quotation, for Vondey to have interpreted Pentecostalism as the sort of play that Turner attributes to the *liminoid*. However, note the manner in which Myland implies the spiritual latter rain is happening in synchronicity with a literal increase in rain in Jerusalem; he writes, "the facts are that forty-three per cent more rain fell between the years 1890 and 1900 than fell from 1860 to 1870," and immediately we are thrown back into Turner's liminal category" (73). We can positively say this rhetoric represents concerns with biological and seasonal rhythms, which are the work and theme of Bell's "calendrical rites" (73). Bell notes:

Like the rites of passage, calendrical rites can be said to impose cultural schemes on the order of nature. These cultural schemes may attempt to influence or control nature, as when rites address the amount of rain or fertility of the land, or they might simply try to harmonize the activities and attitude of the human community with the seasonal rhythms of the environment and the larger cosmos.²⁷⁴

²⁷³ Turner, *From Ritual to Theatre*, 73.

²⁷⁴ Bell, *Ritual: Perspectives and Dimensions*, 103.

In both cases, Bell notes, “they constitute a working interpretation of natural and social worlds.”²⁷⁵ Myland’s rhetoric about the synchronicity of rainfall with spiritual rainfall easily reads as an interpretation of the natural and social worlds that models their unity and aims to harmonize the activities and attitudes of believers with those of the larger environment and cosmos.

Even though some early Pentecostals were becoming industrial workers, their imaginations were still agrarian.²⁷⁶ As late as 1899, Pentecostals were not alone in their agrarian perceptions of the world. The same cognitive frames that had been in circulation in the American farmlands, the same concerns for weather patterns, were common in the city. On February 18, 1899, *The Riverside Daily Press* announced, “The Methodist people of Riverside propose to hold one hundred prayer meetings in their homes during the week commencing February 26, to pray *for the descent of the Holy Spirit and for rain*. Covenant cards will be signed in the congregation tomorrow morning for the carrying out of this plan.”²⁷⁷ Heren we see the same integrating logic that characterizes Myland’s

²⁷⁵ Ibid.

²⁷⁶ “Habitus implies that actors attend to the present and anticipate the future in terms of previous experience. The idea of a hysteresis effect is used by Bourdieu to explain why Algerian peasants did not rapidly adapt their notions of time and labor to the new values of economic rationality. See discussion of structure and habitus in David Swartz, *Culture and Power*, 103–18; Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, 78-79.

²⁷⁷ See appendix for copies of primary sources and additional articles that illustrate the agrarian mindset at work in America at the turn of the twentieth century.

latter rains schema, in which the descent of rain is imagined to happen simultaneously or synchronously with the descent of the Holy Spirit.

In the cultural context of turn of twentieth-century America, rain represented a fulcrum of concern, but it was part of a more general, collective preoccupation with the weather and, in broadest terms, the natural world. Similarly, the American public broadly took earthquakes and storms to be signs of divine judgment, displeasure, or remediation. “Again, in His anger in another storm He passed through Mississippi and lifting a feather bed from its place, emptying it in a pie, ready to be served; then carried away the tick, house and all. God working in a mysterious way.”²⁷⁸ Interpreting storms as divine judgement entailed reporting the damages in a theological way too:

...all of these characters God will work with in storms, earthquakes, and great noise, and with flames of devouring fire. While He was trodding the proud and the drunkards under His foot. I want here to relate some of the incidents of the storm which passed through five West States of America. Recently in passing through the eastern part of the West States of America, it destroyed in its wake over 800 people, injured 3,000; loss to property \$15,000,000.²⁷⁹

The December 27, 1900 edition of *The San Diego Weekly Union* ran a column titled, “The Weather for the Coming Year” in which “weather prophet” James Speight prophesied cold showers in early February, and abundance of showers from April 18th to 25th, and for June, “thundershowers.” Although

²⁷⁸ Jacobsen, *Thinking in the Spirit*, 215–16.

²⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 215.

Speight admitted to being “surprised” by rain in November, which in his own estimation “should have had fine weather,” that rain he interpreted as the generosity of God to the people of Southern California, and gratitude (not doubt about the prophet) was in order. The primacy of the weather in the social imagination and the theological ways that Americans interpreted it suggests that a broadly agricultural mindset was still a collective frame of reference.²⁸⁰

That an agrarian perspective shaped the faith of the early Pentecostals, and by extension, the character of Pentecostalism, has not gone unnoticed by leading historians of the movement. In his discussion of the provenance of latter rain theology, Wacker observes that

Inspired by the early and latter rain (or early and latter harvest) metaphors in Deuteronomy 11:14, Joel 2:23, and James 5:7, Holy Ghost folk dubbed the miraculous events that took place on the Day of Pentecost the “early rain,” and the ones that took place in their own time the “latter rain.” [...] The rationale for this new rendering of history seemed self-evident in the pages of Scripture at least if one read scripture through the lens of restorationist literalism. In both the Old and New Testaments, pentecostals held, the Lord had promised to manifest his power first in an early or former rain to prepare the soil for planting, then again in a late or latter rain to prepare the crops for harvest. ²⁸¹

In the first sustained exposition of Holy Ghost theology, published in 1907, George Floyd Taylor explained that the land of Palestine received “two special rains each year,” one in the early spring, enabling the seeds to sprout and another

²⁸⁰ Source in appendix.

²⁸¹ Wacker, *Heaven Below*, 254.

just before the harvest in the fall, enabling the grain to “mature and mellow.” Since the Lord had designed Palestine to serve as a “miniature world in itself,” its meteorological pattern would be spiritually replicated in the church at large. Still, while the biblical passages Wacker mentions might have inspired the religious imaginations of early pentecostals, given the examples of how Methodists were still praying for *actual* rain in the period, and given Taylor’s hermeneutical coupling of literal rain and the latter rain of the Holy Spirit, it seems overly cerebral to attribute this reading to a Pentecostal *hermeneutic* of “restorationist literalism” alone. No doubt Wacker errs when he posits that understanding natural phenomena such as an earthquake (which he actually admits “loomed especially large in saints’ calculations” as indices of the church entering the time of the “latter rain”) was “more of an afterthought, corroborating documentation at best.”²⁸² Instead, early Pentecostals read the Bible, and the newspaper, with agrarian eyes. Thus, they could readily imagine that an earthquake in San Francisco portended the end of days and the onset of a new era:

The work received its first major impetus from the San Francisco earthquake of April 18th. The quake roused widespread religious concern throughout the nation, and Azusa mission in Los Angeles profited from it. The Dallas Baptist Herald, commenting on the disaster, voiced the sentiments of many people at the time when it

²⁸² Ibid., 255–56. Cecil Robeck’s discussion of the earthquake in question makes it abundantly clear that early Pentecostals insisted on reading natural phenomena as God’s action in the world and bristled at denominational leaders who posited naturalistic explanations with no implied divine intent. Robeck, *The Azusa Street Revival*, 76–81.

said the event was designed to ‘shock us into attention’ to his words that life is by a span and that eternity is all in all.²⁸³

In this mindset, natural phenomena occur in a synchronous and meaningful way as spiritual phenomena.

Accordingly, what is missing from Wacker’s presentation of latter rain theology is an appreciation for the life-structuring, mind-structuring power of harvest season in the agrarian communities, and an eye for how those structuring powers were mediated by ritual. Again, Myland writes, “Palestine has the advantage of receiving the rain from heaven, both early and latter, while Mesopotamia is not a land of the latter rain any more than Egypt, but Palestine is. *God has been true to the spiritual aspect of the Latter Rain Covenant just as much as He is to the literal aspect.*”²⁸⁴ Early Pentecostals were *from* agrarian communities; thus Myland imagines spiritual blessings in perfect synchronicity with literal, earthy blessings.

American Mythopraxis and Habitus

The setting of Industrialization and the fact that we are taking our primary cues from Pentecostal rhetoric obviously complicates how we understand early Pentecostals as relating to latter rain and harvest. The rhetoric I have introduced

²⁸³ Ibid.

²⁸⁴ Myland, *The Latter Rain Covenant and Pentecostal Power*, 127.

suggests that Pentecostals are using agrarian perspectives in the marrying of weather and spiritual interests, and Myland's rhetoric performs the work that Bell attributes to calendrical rites, "an interpretation of the natural and social worlds" that models their unity and "aims to harmonize the activities and attitudes of believers with the seasonal rhythms of the larger environment and cosmos." If, through their rhetoric, the influence of calendrical rites is beginning to surface, in what ways could those rites be mediating the importance of harvest and shaping Pentecostal imagination about seasonal weather patterns?

A key insight here for understanding the influence of agrarian frames during Industrial economic developments comes from Marshall Sahlins, especially when combined with Bourdieu's key concept, the *habitus*. In his work on Polynesian tribal life, Sahlins found that "one of the keys to an understanding of the Tangiia narrative is its particular relationship to political process — the *temporal structure of the narrative is isomorphic with ritual*, and to some extent, historical practice" (Sahlins 1985). Sahlins has termed the narrative reproduction of temporal and ritual structures—in relationship to political process—"mythopraxis," a term he contrasts with practice that is generated through *habitus*, Bourdieu's term for practices generated from "system of dispositions."²⁸⁵ Anthropologist Jeff Sissons explains that for Sahlins there is a critical distinction between structures that are "practiced primarily through the

²⁸⁵ Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, 72.

individual subconscious [i.e., are inscribed in *habitus*] and those that explicitly organize historical action as the projection of mythical relations.”²⁸⁶ However, for Sissons (1989), “ it seems ... that the temporal structures of Rarotongan ceremonial and political life are better understood as inscribed within *habitus* than as explicitly organised projections of mythical relations” (ibid). Sissons suggests that the mythical ritual schematic (which Sahlins notes organizes action in a political process via the Tangiia narrative) can itself be thought of as held within the *habitus* and as generated as strategy from the *habitus*. Sissons’ *The Polynesian Iconoclasm: Religious Revolution and the Seasonality of Power* (2014), surveys mythopraxis as the basis of collective strategy, owing to the powers of the *habitus* to combine ritual and myth with political aims at the level of perception and disposition for action, not as a secondary mode of conscious manipulation of myth and ritual for political aims. Thus, Sissons describes the myth that becomes part of the *habitus* as *rituopraxis*. Sissons explains, “[r]ituopraxis is best conceived not as the putting of prior cosmological understandings into practice, but instead as improvisation upon earlier ritual practices guided by the *habitus*.”²⁸⁷

We will delve further into Sisson’s work in chapter five, but for now his invocation of mythopraxis as being held within Bourdieu’s *habitus* explains why

²⁸⁶ Sahlins, *Islands of History*, 53-54.

²⁸⁷ Jeffrey Sissons, *The Polynesian Iconoclasm: Religious Revolution and the Seasonality of Power* (Berghahn Books, 2014), 136.

early Pentecostals would still perceive, receive, and interpret the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in agrarian terms, even if they were living in one of America's six then-burgeoning metropolises. Bourdieu's *habitus* represents the internalization of social structures into the disposition of an individual. This internalization helps the person to produce his or her sense of the world; sometimes Bourdieu referred to the habitus as the "matrix of perception." For while the habitus is the "basis of perception," it also generates action, being a "set of dispositions that inclines the agent to act in a certain fashion, thus to a great extent shaping his or her practice."²⁸⁸ While I agree with Sissons that Sahlins overstates the differences between mythopraxis and habitus, because discussions of habitus most often suggest their provenance from class-based societies, what Sahlins' "mythopraxis" makes clear is that the habitus can enact strategy not as sourced from class disposition, but instead from myth, ritual, and seasons which can be turned into narrative that addresses novel political contexts and projects. This is of paramount importance for my project, because like Sisson and Sahlins' polynesian groups, I am going to argue that one of the keys to understanding the Pentecostal latter rain-harvest narrative is the temporal structure of its narrative, enacted through ritual. In short, when I argue that early Pentecostals innovated a

²⁸⁸ Some of Bourdieu's earliest analyses treat the bodily incorporation of cultural dispositions as a somewhat separate dimension of the habitus. "In his article, 'Célibat et condition paysanne' (1962) habitus identifies affinities between the bodily comportment of rural French peasants and their attitudes and perceptions of their physical behavior. The bodily and cognitive dimensions of habitus are considered separate but correlated." Rey, *Bourdieu on Religion*, 48; Swartz, *Culture and Power*, 108.

harvest threshold ritual as the baptism of the Holy Spirit, I am suggesting this was possible because of the agrarian mythopraxis they shared in their habitus and that this mythopraxis could be innovated as political strategy. The concepts of mythopraxis and habitus make it possible to interpret the Pentecostal symbolic repertoire of *early rain-latter-rain-harvest-bride- winter-spring* more deeply to reveal the manner in which Pentecostals inculcate rites of reversal into their political commentary on the world, performing an interpretation of the cosmos which reflects their agrarian perceptions and dispositions.

Myth: Harvest as Collective Representation

This section begins a constructive project around the latter rain-harvest motif so popular in early Pentecostalism. It begins by focusing on the ritual underpinnings of this narrative—the calendrical rites. The calendrical rites, of which harvest rites are one subtype, are covered by Bell, Turner, and Bourdieu. The following short section begins by establishing insights about the calendrical rites, their function and purpose, and integrates them with collective representations and effervescence.

According to Turner, calendrical rites are liminal, not a liminoid model. He writes: “Liminal phenomena tend to be collective, concerned with calendrical, biological, social-structural rhythms or with crises in social processes whether these result from internal adjustments or external adaptations or remedial

measures.”²⁸⁹ Turner adds, “Liminal phenomena tend to confront investigators rather after the manner of Durkheim's ‘collective representations,’ symbols having a common intellectual and emotional meaning for all the members of the group. They reflect and probe the history or collective experience of the group over time.

Durkheim introduced the concept of *collective representations* in *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life* (1912). Collective representations are the ideas, beliefs, and values elaborated by a collectivity, which are not reducible to ideas belonging to individual members of the group, even if shared. Instead, collective representations play a key role in creating social coherence.

Representations arise from intense religious rituals, keeping in mind that Durkheim regarded basically all social rituals as inherently religious, and these representations come to exist autonomously, apart from the group. Collective representations help to order and make sense of the world, but they also express, symbolize, and interpret social relationships. Their force or authority comes from their being within a collective and yet, critically, external to the individual.

Durkheim explained great value transformations by reference to the power of this ‘coming together’ (or dynamic density), whereby the religious world is rooted in collective life, leaving the profane to the individual. Assembly of an intense kind generates collective representations, which then survive the disintegration of this

²⁸⁹ Turner, *From Ritual to Theatre*, 54.

higher collective life as *sacred* and therefore morally coercive beliefs, values, and symbols.

In the following section, I continue to add to the constructive task of establishing the ritual part of Pentecostal mythopraxis by attending to the status of *the harvest* at the end of the nineteenth century in America, with an eye toward materializing its specific influence as a *collective representation* in early Pentecostalism, and as part of an effort to establish its force on the mythopraxis that helped to construct Baptism of the Holy Spirit.

Origins of a Collective Representation: Harvest at the Turn of the Twentieth Century

Historian of US agriculture Mary Neth writes,

A rural community sparked to life for the harvesting and threshing of small grains. The threshing was a vital community work ritual [...]

During the first forty years of the twentieth century, most farm people chose to maintain practices and rituals that celebrated physical labor, work skills, community sharing, and gender integrated social patterns. These rituals not only provided symbolic meaning and social unity, but also defined economic relations in the community. [...] The community work associated with harvesting and threshing small grains was in *its golden age* in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. New technology in this period actually enhanced the community nature of threshing. In earlier periods, farm people threshed with hand flailing or horse treading. Family labor or work exchanges with a few neighbors allowed the work to be complete in small amounts throughout the fall and winter. The advent of threshing machines, both horse powered and eventually steam powered ones, meant that farmers would hire a custom thresher to do the work once a year. This

telescoped the harvesting and threshing into a shorter period and increased the need for labor during that time. Threshing became not just one of a number of smaller exchanges between families, but a larger community event.²⁹⁰

The centrality of harvest season in agrarian communities at the turn of the twentieth century has not been factored in as an historical influence on the ethos, discourse, or sensory practices of early Pentecostalism. The history of Pentecostalism has effectively muted the influence of harvest festival culture on the construction of revival-as-harvest. But harvest, as a community celebration, was in its golden period at the turn of the twentieth century in America. This means that the period in which classical Pentecostalism was fomented was the period in which Americans were most emotionally invested in harvest festival.

Harvesting wheat acquired ultimate importance in the agricultural year, and this was true across the US, even in areas where the predominant crops were other than wheat. Neth writes, “Although stories of corn-husking contests and oyster suppers to celebrate the end of the corn harvest do appear in oral histories, they occur much less frequently than stories of the wheat harvest, even in states where wheat was not the main cash crop.”²⁹¹ Farm people recorded the harvest in the same style as they recorded their other seasonal work, but “they devoted more space in each entry to the harvest, constantly reported the wheat’s growth and

²⁹⁰ Mary Neth, *Preserving the Family Farm: women, community and the foundations of agribusiness in the Midwest, 1900-1940* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995), 147–48.

²⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 149.

condition, and started each entry with an account of the harvest activities.”²⁹²

Neth explains that “the large numbers of workers and the total community involvement made harvesting wheat a vital ritual. The annual ritual of harvesting and threshing symbolized sharing and the unity of the participants.

Already an important source of social cohesion, feelings about harvest rites intensified as Industrialization took hold. In oral histories, farm people linked the passing of the group harvest to the loss of neighborhood mutuality, the decline of rural communities, and the increase of selfish, individual wealth seeking.”²⁹³ In this context, it is telling that most farm people chose to maintain harvest rituals throughout the first four decades of the twentieth century.

Harvest and Collective Effervescence

Pentecostals were not the only persons in American culture to subscribe to an early rain-latter rain agricultural schematic to describe the eschatology of the world, but they were singular in tying the rain motif to the *collective effervescence* they interpreted to be the baptism of the Holy Spirit.²⁹⁴ Again, in *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life* (1912) Durkheim makes a foundational and critical distinction between profane time, which is “monotonous, clack, and humdrum,” and sacred time, which he defines as “collective effervescence.”

²⁹² Ibid.

²⁹³ Ibid., 179–83.

²⁹⁴ Blumhofer, *Restoring the faith*, 95–96.

Life in Australian societies alternates between two different phases. In one phase, the population is scattered in small groups that attend to their occupations independently. Each family lives to itself, hunting, fishing—in short, striving by all possible means to get the food it requires. In the other phase, by contrast, the population comes together, concentrating itself at specified places for a period that varies from several days to several months. This concentration takes place when a clan or portion of the tribe either conducts a religious ceremony or holds what in the usual ethnographic terminology is called a *corroboree*.²⁹⁵

The two phases stand in the sharpest possible contrast. The first phase, in which economic activity predominates, is generally of rather low intensity. Gathering seeds or plants necessary for food, hunting, and fishing are not occupations that can stir truly strong passions. The dispersed state in which the society finds itself makes life monotonous, slack, and humdrum. Everything changes when a corroboree takes place... There are transports of enthusiasm... They very act of congregating is an exceptionally powerful stimulant. Once the individuals are gathered together, a sort of electricity is generated from their closeness and quickly launches the into an extraordinary height of exaltation... passions so heated and so free from all control cannot help but spill over, from every side there are nothing but wil movements, shouts, downright howls, and deafening noises of all kinds.²⁹⁶

While Blumhofer notes that proto-Pentecostals embrace restored charisms from the New Testaments as part of their unique definition of *the latter rain*, this passage's symmetry with descriptions of Azusa Street's "howling, gymnastics," and strong passions (to be covered later in this chapter) makes clear that early

²⁹⁵ Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, trans. Karen Fields (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1995/1912), 216-18

²⁹⁶ Mark Jennings treats Pentecostal worship within the frame of collective effervescence. See Jennings, *Exaltation: Ecstatic Experience in Pentecostalism and Popular Music* (Bern, Switzerland: Peter Lang AG, 2014), 216-218.

Pentecostals also subsumed Durkheimian effervescence under the same category: as the working of the Holy Spirit.

The “latter rains,” by which proto-Pentecostals meant the myriad revivals (such as those in Wales) that they interpreted as being the work of the Holy Spirit, were a prelude to the reaping of the *harvest*. This terminology reveals that, though they may have been on the cusp of living Industrial lives, they still understood the sacred in reference to agricultural rhythms. In fact, industrializing forces likely triggered a greater valuing of the collective effervescence of harvest festivities. Neth notes that, in addition to their beginning described at greater length than any other rite in farmpersons’ journals, Americans persisted in celebrating harvest rituals well into the 1970s, decades after Industrialization made the practices far more symbolic than productive.²⁹⁷ The most important divisions of time, in harvest celebrants’ minds, were not between work and play, as Turner’s *liminoid* presupposes, but instead the opposition between the slack, humdrum time of more isolated family farm labor and the effervescence and sense of community that characterized the harvest.²⁹⁸

²⁹⁷ Though the effects of Industrialization look even more attenuated during the early stages of Industrialization when early Mexican converts to American Pentecostalism are taken as more central to the historical account of Azusa Street, where they have been for too long marginalized in the narrative. Historians Lloyd Barba and Daniel Ramirez works on Apostolic Pentecostalism both interpret their narratives within the frame of Mexican immigration and agricultural labor on California’s agricultural circuits. See Barba, “California’s Cross,” and Ramirez, *Migrating Faith*.

²⁹⁸ Locating collective effervescence in harvest celebration is in keeping with Turner’s discussion of liminality. Turner himself ties the *liminal* of the Ndembu tribe directly to the agricultural practice of threshing. His discussion on these themes reads as decidedly more philosophical than, but not on the whole completely unrelatable to, that of early Pentecostals.

Neth's work helps readers at a historical distance unpack the importance of harvest at the turn of the twentieth century, a period in which new technology made bringing in the harvest a communal affair requiring all hands to the plow. The harvesting season, Neth stipulates, was compressed into a shorter period of time with the aid of new technology, and this time stood out as the most special of the year. During this period, farmers hosted their neighbors and in turn traveled to their neighbors' properties to exchange labor as a neighborly favor. Women contributed lodging for workers who came to help from neighboring towns, workers they endeavored to impress with their superior cooking abilities. Harvest brought together men, women, and children from across a community for hard work *and play*—a time of intense social exchanges that was simply unparalleled the rest of the year. Both labor intensive and a tremendous amount of fun, harvest festivals plausibly correspond to Durkheim's schema, those times of the year in which a collective effervescence disrupted the monotony of isolated life and brought people together for the most exciting time of the year. If, additionally, American harvest rituals were in their zenith, their golden age, it suggests that their symbolic importance at this time, under a certain amount of duress due to urbanization and industrialization, acquired new salience within

“Manifestation, to revert to the ‘thrashing’ metaphor, is the ‘grain’ and ‘husk’ of social life, of the valued and antivalues, of the relationships of amity and enmity, which are revealed in the often passionate action of the social drama...” Turner, “The Anthropology of Performance” in *On the Edge of the Bush*, 198-99.

the social processes that led to rites known as Baptism in the Holy Spirit.

Having compared rhetorical cues from early Pentecostal rhetoric, I have posited that early American Pentecostals possessed an agrarian habitus. Because, for example, early Pentecostals termed earlier revivals “the early rains” and sought the baptism of the Holy Spirit as “the latter rain,” and because they also believed that this latter rain would “mature the crop for harvest,” I posit that the specific, culturally significant experience of harvest rites structured early Pentecostal reception of the Holy Spirit as a rite of the threshold, or “the threshing floor.” Pentecostals explicitly referred to the altar as the threshing floor, as I will exemplify later. I also posit that the effervescence of the harvest collectivity was in part a source of the mythopraxis of the altar.

For our purposes, *harvest* in Pentecostal rhetoric entails first, an agrarian form of ritual, the threshold rite; second, a specific cultural sociological weight which gave harvest an exaggerated importance during the decade that early Pentecostalism was fomented; and third, physical reference points to the actual harvest, rain, and threshing floor, and a material reference point for the “time” of harvest. All in all, it was a mythopraxis in the habitus that could engineer the baptism of the Holy Spirit in reference to this time, these elements, and this altar space, and the cyclical-ecological period in which harvest plays an all-important part.

Looking back at the second point, which noted the specific sociological weight that gave exaggerated importance to harvest in the period from 1880 to 1920, at issue is the social conflict of this period. Industrialization and urbanization were, as farmers of the period noted, undermining the cohesion of society which, they thought, resulted in the loss of the ritual. As Neth reported, they linked the passing of the group harvest to the loss of neighborhood mutuality, the decline of rural communities, and the increase of selfish, individual wealth seeking.²⁹⁹

The following section assesses the abilities of rites of seasonal transition to register and negotiate social conflict, with an eye toward the arrangement of seasons and their temporal progression as enacted by rituals of seasonal transition. Though this is an interesting question in and of itself, here this angle of inquiry is undertaken specifically for its appropriateness for early Pentecostal discourse, in which winter and spring are arranged in important mythical ways and perform important rhetorical work.

²⁹⁹ Although outside the scope of this dissertation, the expansion of America's Second Industrial Revolution into colonized nations and communities presents as a compelling trajectory for investigation of the efficacies of the harvest motif in early Pentecostalism, as it missionized into global Pentecostalism. The mobilization of harvest as a theme with one meaning in the US, during a Golden Era of harvest time celebrations, into distant settings in which colonial extraction is literally then taking place suggests a (potentially) uncanny doubling of this collective representation. My future work on these themes will include investigation of the possibility that the rain and harvest motifs might have, instead, sanctified the extraction process put to work during this exact same period, 1880-1920, abroad.

In the following section, this chapter embarks on a comparative reading of the seasonal structure and time-keeping implicit in Turner and Bourdieu's respective discussions of harvest as a threshold rite. As will become clear through a comparative reading of Turner and Bourdieu's account of rites of passage, their differing modes of cosmic timekeeping are key to understanding their different accounts of rites of the threshold.³⁰⁰ While this continuance of conversation about Turner might feel like a simple extension of former themes about the suitability of Turner for studying and diagnosing Pentecostal liminality, actually Turner here becomes more of a foil for producing a nuanced understanding of the political construction of seasonality in accounts by Bourdieu and Bakhtin, and within Pentecostalism.

The most rewarding outcome of this comparative conversation is the recognition of deep congruences between Carnival and Azusa Street Mission. (A side-by-side comparison of their upside-down worlds does not come until later, after this upfront comparative discussion on Turner and Bourdieu.) This structure produces the power to recognize the symmetry of ritual construction *and function* between Carnival and Azusa Street Mission Revival. By the time this

³⁰⁰ Michael Gardiner notes, "Popular festivities during this period were intimately intertwined with the vegetative and climatic cycles of nature, which explains why carnival symbolism was heavily invested with images of growth, regeneration, and fertility. According to the logic of the carnivalesque, all that was new (spring-time vegetation, the phases of sun and moon, agricultural cycles, etc.) was portrayed as regenerative and positive. Indeed, as the cultural historian Peter Burke suggests, carnival itself was often personified as "nature," and the festive period was universally considered to be a time when the normal rules of civilization were suspended or overturned." Gardiner, "Green Social Theory," 771.

chapter embarks on a comparison of the acrobatic reversals of Carnival and those of Azusa Street, the following discussion on rites of seasonal reversal enables recognition of the broad significance of these inversions—corporeal, ecological, cosmological, *and* political. I argue that the early Pentecostal altar aimed to produce all of these “reversals” by means of its altar being a threshold of seasonal reversal. Without doing this deeper dive into the seasonal structure and movement of Bourdieu’s accounts of the rites of passage, the ritual similarities between the Azusa Street Revival and Carnival might only appear phenomenological, or worse, cosmetic. For example, both “feature” laughter and drunkenness, and bodily inversions. I include some examples from popular culture, keeping in mind Turner’s extensive use of the same method and with a view to making the differences being discussed more graspable, and perhaps, more engaging.

Because Bakhtin’s Carnival theory is theory and early Pentecostalism is historical fact, the congruences between their seasonal-cosmic temporalities and performative ritual categories is compelling confirmation of Bakhtin’s imaginative account.

Anti-Temporality: Turner as Foil to Bourdieu’s World Upside Down

Turner’s discussion of liminality bears a reference to time, but it is *not in*

the main a material reference to harvest, as has been noted is the case with the examples in Durkheim. Instead, Turner's liminal has a philosophical source and an origin myth. This myth and philosophy imply an integrating holism that detectable, even later discussions by Turner on liminality, but such holism never appears in Bourdieu's account of rites of passage. In the following quotations, Turner's holism becomes obvious when he treats the primordial origin of "anti-temporality."

Thus we have two kinds of anti-temporality: the perennially sacred, rooted perhaps in the primordial manifestation of the eternal, generative unmanifest, the Logos, that was "in the beginning," ... [and] the perennially sacrilegious, human freedom to resist and even transgress the culturally axiomatic, the most sacred texts, the mightiest rulers and their commandments" from Anti-temporality.³⁰¹

The clown is obviously a symbolic type, and hence timeless. He is partly the voice of the cosmology which frames his action, condemning the foibles of time, casting down the mighty, and at the same time representing what Mikhail Bakhtin might have called "the people's second world," the racy and earthy folk meta-commentary on *Homo hierarchicus*. He represents a sort of sacred secularity, whose ridiculing of solemn pretension by "stunning unpretension" (to borrow Emily Dickinson's phrase) has something imaginative and poetic about it, escaping didacticism and moral hauteur. As has been said about kyogen, the traditional farces of Japanese drama, inserted in performance between aristocratic No plays which they often parody, the Kutiyattam clown seems to state that laughter is lord over all, beginning with the bucolic but extending ultimately to *embrace humankind*.³⁰²

³⁰¹ Turner, "Images of Anti-temporality," 236-7.

³⁰² *Ibid.*, 242-43.

This is one of the few direct mentions Turner will make of Bakhtin's work, though he does mention Rabelais, specifically *Gargantua and Pantagruel*, more often than he does Bakhtin.³⁰³ And though he is no doubt referring to work by Bakhtin, he almost never properly mentions the two together in a discussion. The same is true of Charles Taylor.³⁰⁴ At any rate, note that Turner's interpretation of Bakhtin's "second world" is racy, is folk, and is ridiculing. Yes, it is bucolic (and therefore, pleasant and agrarian), but like Turner's own liminality, ultimately it embraces all humankind.

For establishing an understanding of Turner's philosophy of the liminal, one could consider one of the best examples of the holy fool to have arisen in the last thirty years: the protagonist of Roberto Beghini's Academy-award winning

³⁰³ On this point, I owe many thanks to Dr. Timothy Larsen. In the course of authoring *The Slain God*, his compelling text on the role of faith in the lives of key thinkers in anthropology, Larsen had opportunity to develop a friendship with Edith Turner. Of the slippage of Bakhtinian themes into Turner's 1977 essay revisiting liminality, without evident citation of Bakhtin himself, Larsen point to the fact that Turner, at this point is at the end of his tenure at University of Chicago, was ensconced in an interdisciplinary program (Committee on Social Thought) that saw him teaching Dante, Blake, and Kierkegaard, for examples. The easier essay format, Larsen opines, Larsen notes, is a "citation free zone" and not outfitted with other attributions which might (by compared omission) indicate a real elision of the voice of Bakhtin. I find Larsen's reading persuasive: the list of authors that Turner invokes for carnivalized literatures begins with Rabelais and includes authors like Kristeva, but also cites additional authors—Woolf, for instance, which suggests the voice of Turner in his interdisciplinary setting, teaching literatures. Still, I note the missed opportunity of seeing the two theories—liminality and carnival—put into direct comparison by Turner himself. Timothy Larsen, email message to author, October 25, 2018.

³⁰⁴ See Charles Taylor's *A Secular Age* (2007) for a very Turner-inflected discussion about the effect of the Protestant ethic (law, order, and productivity) on Carnival traditions. Taylor writes, "Carnival and revolution can never coincide, no matter how close playful revolutionaries try to bring them. The dream of revolution is to replace the current order...It is the anti-structure to end all anti-structure," 54–55. Taylor also takes up Turner's primary category: time, in reference to kairotic time.

Life is Beautiful (1997). The Italian-language film introduces two characters, a man named Guido Orefice and the love of his life, Dora, as they meet, fall in love, marry, and have their son, Giosuè. Through this initial part of the movie, the audience comes to understand Guido's love of life, his family, and love itself in part through his humorous, out of the ordinary approach to them. One scene features Guido bidding for the love of his future bride by interrupting her engagement party to another man (whose suitability bored her but marriage with whom would have been in conformity to the traditional social order) while on the back of a gorgeous white horse, somehow tinted a distinctly Italian pistachio green from the shoulders down! In this movie, Guido is clearly a clown and their passionate, good humored love becomes itself a holy liminality that is powered by his sacred folly—Guido is nearly never serious, only earnest— and by their love. But this is all deeply challenged by the imprisonment of Guido, who is Jewish, and their son, in a concentration camp under Nazi rule. Thereafter, Guido maintains his holy foolishness, making up games and dramas in the camp that allow (the approximately) four year-old Giosuè to believe that the entire imprisonment is a farce, right up until the moment that Guido is shot to death off-screen and out of sight of Giosuè. The movie is a stunning meditation on the triumph of the human imagination and spirit in the face of utter despair, and it won the Academy Award for Best Picture in 1998.

Not for nothing is the antagonist here an austere, humorless totalitarianism. Begnini praised the ability of *laughter* to witness to instead to truth, to arrive at beauty even in suffering and despair, reasoning: "to laugh and to cry comes from the same point of the soul, no? I'm a storyteller: the crux of the matter is to reach beauty, poetry, it doesn't matter if that is comedy or tragedy. They're the same if you reach the beauty."³⁰⁵ The affective power of Begnini's story, its ability to induce tears and laughter, betrays the lie of the "world order" of Nazism. It is a powerful witness to National Socialism's emptiness, untruth, and inhumanity.

Of critical note for our purposes is the fact that the Nazi regime is antithetical to the holy foolishness that Guido embodies, and is so in a manner that *cannot be reconciled* with infinite damage to holy foolishness. Guido, accordingly, keeps his play liminal— out of the sight of the Nazis who run this camp. In doing so, he creates a liminality *for his child*, whom he also shields from the structures of domination that completely surround him and his young son. We are meant to understand the incredible force of will, self-possession, love, and humor it took for Guido to construct an alternative reality for Giosuè in the eaves of both the camp and with death and suffering constantly present. Contrary to Vondey's reading of Turner's play, it is obvious that this play world served, at a

³⁰⁵*La Vie Est Belle = La Vita E Bella*. Directed by Roberto Benigni. By Roberto Benigni. Performed by Roberto Benigni. Italy: Miramax, 1999.

minimum, as a form of protest to the structures by disavowing them completely.

But would we consider this holy play to have desired to “liberate the structures for play with God?” Vondey has intimated that destructuralizing play desires to “encompass all of life,” and that scholars who posit that the liminality aims to protest, liberate, or empower the liminaries “have failed to acknowledge” that liminality endeavors to contain “all of life.” But liminality *must* sometimes function in opposition to or as a protest against oppressive structures. It must refuse to admit of some structures or else it would be too compromised to be play. If holy liminality partakes in a primordial font of holism for humankind, as Turner posits, it is not clear that it does or should encompass all of humankind in certain particular iterations. Some humans, some structures, are so oppressively evil that they must not be included. In these cases, liminality performs its most important work as a space away from and in judgment of these structures, rather than in trying to incorporate them through “destructuralizing” them.

In Turner liminal holism is sourced from humankind’s earliest time, a Spring, and rituals allow for a dipping therein as a retrieval. Thus, they premise and promise holistic union for society. No matter what “time” it is in the mundane world, in this way liminality arrives as a burst of playful Spring, to bring about a renewal. This kind of liminality belongs to the child.

Rites of Passage Predicated on Social Conflict: Pierre Bourdieu

Pierre Bourdieu's account of the rites of seasonal reversal feature a notably different conceptual framework: one that premises and registers social conflict through binaries and whose seasons register *clash*.

The transitional periods have all the properties of the threshold, a sort of *sacred boundary between two spaces*, where *the antagonistic principles confront one another and the world is reversed*. The rites of these moments...aim to ensure the concordance of the mythical calendar, which requires rain to come *at the right moment*, ploughing time, and the climactic calendar, with its whims and vagaries, by facilitating the passages, accompanying or if need be accelerating the passage from the dry to wet in autumn or from the wet to dry in spring... autumn is also the point where the course of the world turns around and everything is turned over to enter its opposite, the male into the female, the seed into the womb of the earth, men and beasts into the house, light into darkness, until the return of spring, which will set back on its feet *a world turned upside down*...³⁰⁶

Here, French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu must be rendered as what he has always also been but is less noted for being: the *anthropologist* Bourdieu. In *Outline of a Theory of Practice* (1977) Bourdieu gives a different etymology of rites of seasonal transition, one which gets at a different logic of relationship between liminality and structure. Instead of the complementarity between these two spheres—structure and liminality—Bourdieu charts instead a course of collision and inversion, clashes based on antagonism! This antagonism is an

³⁰⁶ Bourdieu, *Theory of Practice*, 130, emphasis mine.

entirely different account of the bases for rites of passage and is able to accommodate conflict much better into its accounts than Turner's *primavera* holism.

For comparison, recall that Turner mentions the reversals of public liminality as being a measure of compensation: "But by way of compensation, such major rites as sowing and harvest festivals, first-fruit festivals, change-of-season rites or rites celebrating important points on the sun's ecliptic from northern to southern solstice very frequently involve symbolic status-reversal or the creation of mock-hierarchies for the mundanely poor and humble."³⁰⁷ Thus, in the setting of the first-fruit festivals one can readily see how status reversals of mock hierarchies make some *compensatory* sense, if at its root still a potentially exploitative compensation, for one must surrender real goods to the state and, in exchange, might welcome even a mock and very temporary status reversal. In her compelling treatment of the agrarian cultures of the biblical world, *Scripture, Culture, and Agriculture* (2009) Ellen F. Davis observes that during the period of Egyptian captivity, harvest time became a reappropriating process:

At harvest time, the landowner or his agent went out to the fields with the peasant laborers and a host of other surveyors and scribes. Every centralized economy requires its bean counters, and in the ancient world, Egypt's was, over centuries, the most stable and most intensely centralized government in existence; Jaquetta Hawkes describes it as "an essentially totalitarian regime." In theory all the land belonged to Pharaoh; and in fact, a significant percentage of the grain crop—up to half the total yield—was

³⁰⁷ Turner, "Chapter III: Variations on a Theme of Liminality", 38–39.

appropriated for the royal granaries... Exploitative agricultural economies were for a millenia a fixed feature of various Near Eastern societies, including that of Israel and Judah in the period of the divided monarchy[reflecting] the economic dominance of centralized agriculture under state control. All had some form of a “redistributing” agricultural economy, with the wealth concentrated within a very small upper class.³⁰⁸

One can therefore see in this setting a dependency of the-powers-that-be of obtaining these first-fruits and therefore, perhaps, the needfulness of enduring such time-specific and limited exposure to festive status lowering.

Bourdieu, however, invokes a ritual principle of practical division. “Principles,” he notes, are antagonistic. They “confront one another” in the change of seasons, and the world is “reversed” or “overtuned.” Turner’s belated discussion (1981) does not subscribe to the mode of agrarian thinking which has divided the world into relations of opposition, i.e. the “wet” season of autumn and the “dry” season of the summer, and he is, therefore, unable to get at the clash and “reversals” that Bourdieu posits as integral to the ritual without violating his ideal of liminality as a holism. For Turner, the cosmos is not divided by practical oppositions. In his account, divisions only *emerge* in protracted crisis:

[f]actions emerge, whether traditional or new-born round an unprecedented issue, coalitions are formed, scapegoats pointed to, degrees of opposition—from harsh words to physical violence—are mooted and/or resorted to; if things are left to themselves the crisis may manifest that ultimate dichotomous cleavage which thinkers

³⁰⁸ Ellen Davis, *Scripture, Culture, and Agriculture*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 71-72. For more on these themes, see Roland Boer, *The Sacred Economy of Ancient Israel* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2015).

from Zoroaster to Marx saw as the problem confronting all human attempts at group unity, empirical or metaphysical.³⁰⁹

In this quotation, for Turner dichotomous cleavages register crisis in a manner that is *not ontologically proper to liminality as Turner believes liminality should be*. Turner's public liminality charts the different positions of the sun—not an obvious bipolarity.³¹⁰

³⁰⁹ Though he does note critically the play of binaries—white:cold:female v red:hot:male—are put into “a curative process” meant to rejoin them for producing a baby, an illustrative case of ritual means for redress toward reintegration. Then Turner cautions: “These positive and negative qualities are suprasexual in their attribution, and I believe that it would be a mistake to equate them too narrowly with sexual differences. The latter are more closely linked with the left-hand/right-hand opposition. In this set, it can hardly be said that the patient, her white pullet, and the cultivated roots supplied by the women have the inauspicious connotations allocated to the grave/death/heat symbolism of the first set. I mention this because other writers, such as Herz, Needham, Rigby, and Beidelman, admittedly in regard to other cultures, have tended to list as members of the same set such pairs as left/right, female/male, inauspicious/auspicious, impure/pure, etc., thus regarding the linkage between femininity and inauspiciousness as a frequent—indeed, almost a universal-human—item of classification. Nor should the below/above dichotomy be correlated, in Ndembu culture, with the sex division.” Turner, *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure*, 28–33.

³¹⁰ Turner's resistance to thinking in terms of a “productive union of opposites,” which the rites of transition are thought to facilitate, appears somewhat at odds with the example of the infertile female features *exactly* the ritual bringing together of (perceived) opposites to achieve productive union, with the built-in assumption that there may be a malady preventing this success in one or the other (sexed) person. Thus hot and cold waters, and spatial oppositions of top and bottom are ritualized. The quote in note 29 indicated that other writers have in fact named sex differences as—not just one, but really the major—binary opposition needed for producing life, here a baby, but also a harvest. The discussion of the co-temporal placement of harvest rites and marriage rites at the change in seasons that follows, from Bourdieu, indicates why Turner's willingness to think in terms of left-hand v right-hand, but not male-female poles seems partial. But on this point a recent observation by Lundius and Lundahl (2012) might be germane. He notes that “Van Gennep disagreed with James Frazer, who considered *rites de passage* as merely a form of fertility ritual. However, he shared Frazer's conclusion that these kinds of rituals are often connected with fertility and physical maturity, but stated that these motives are of secondary importance. All ritual acts are symbolic. Sometimes they may express significant social ideas by associating the physical with the symbolic, but the symbolic meaning is always related to wider social significance.” The word *mere* here is telling. Frazer's own disdain for religion, which he decried as on the whole mostly “vegetation myth,” had been a forceful influence on

In contradistinction to Turner’s account, this lengthy Bourdieusian quotation helps explain how a practice of identifying contrasts and then placing contrasts into amalgamated analogies has been noted to structure agrarian thinking:

Ritual practice effects a *fluid*, “fuzzy” *abstraction*, bringing the same symbol into different relations through different aspects or bringing different aspects of the same reference into the same relation of opposition; in other words, ... [t]he universe undergoes a division which can be said to be logical, through it seems to break all the rules of logical division (for example, by making divisions which are neither exclusive nor exhaustive) for all its dichotomies are infinitely redundant, being in the last analysis the product of a single *principium divisionis*. Because the principle opposing the terms which have been related (e.g. the sun and the moon) is not defined and usually comes down to a contrariety (whereas contradiction implies a preliminary analysis) analogy (which is...expressed elliptically—“woman is the moon”) establishes a homology between positions (man:woman::sun:moon) set up in accordance with two indeterminate, overdetermined principles (hot:cold::male: [v.] female::day:night::etc) which differ from the principles generating other homologies into which either of the two terms in question might enter (man:woman::east:west or sun:moon::dry:wet) ... In short, the “analogical sense” inculcated in the earliest years of life is, as Wallon says of thinking in couples, a sort of “sense of the contrary” which gives rise to countless application of a few basic contrasts capable of providing a minimum

anthropology early in the formation of the discipline. Turner’s insistence then, on the symbolic or “suprasexual” work performed in and by rites of passage is probably a case of too forcefully thinking away from the body or the earth, since as Bourdieu shows in the discussion that follows, there is a cosmogonical agreement in agrarian parlays between seasons, weather, the body, and politics—what we might call gendered politics. The “suprasexual” or symbolic work that Turner is highlighting achieves its symbolic coherence precisely through its invocation of embodied sexual relations and human relationship with the earth. See Jan Lundius and Mats Lundahl, *Peasants and Religion: a Socioeconomic Study of Dios Olivorio and the Palma Sola movement in the Dominican Republic* (New York: Routledge, 2012) 661 fn17. For a hilarious account of the biases that Frazer advanced against religion, which should also be judged for their misogyny, see Timothy Larsen’s *The Slain God: Anthropologists and the Christian Faith* (New York: Oxford, 2014) chapter 2; *ibid.*, 40–41.

of determination (a man is not a woman::a toad is not a frog) and cannot give any information about the relations it relates, because *it is precisely their indeterminacy and fuzziness that permit it to operate.*³¹¹

When Bourdieu references antagonistic principles, he is describing in anthropological terms schemas in the agrarian worldview; the world divided into opposing principles eventually includes everything from which foods can be eaten when, to which rooms in the house are off limits during certain periods of the seasonal year, all combined into an elaborate schema of practical knowledge that is *never written down* but developed and passed down over generations. (See chart below.) This knowledge is sensory and bodily, if it is also conceptual, that is not explicitly articulated. Critically, in Bourdieu's account these divisions are lived quotidianly, they have *not* arisen by some protracted breach as do the divisions that Turner theorizes.

³¹¹ Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, 112, emphasis mine.

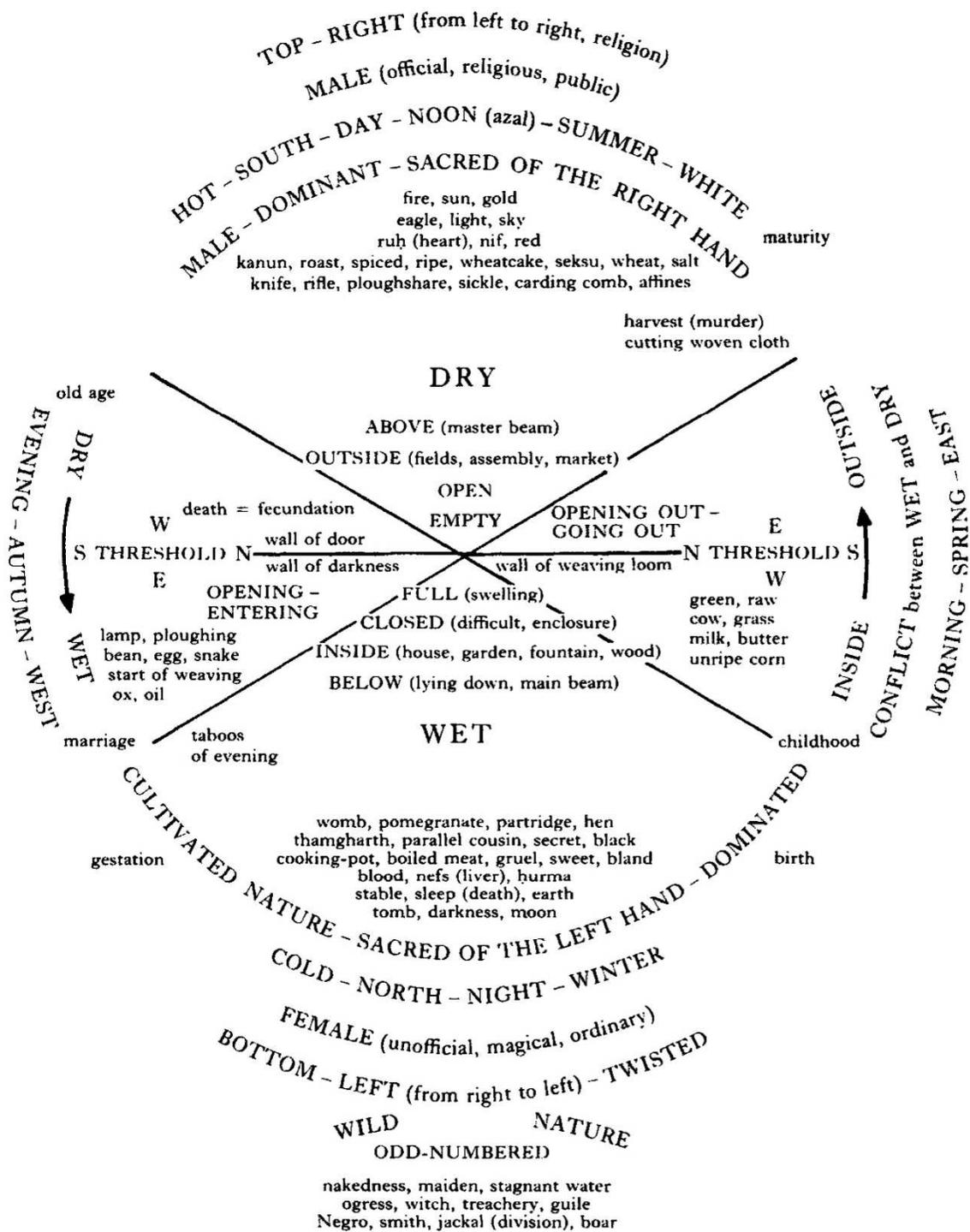


Fig. 9. Synoptic diagram of pertinent oppositions

The antagonistic principles of agrarian life are, instead, dispositional and practical, and they organize seasons into antagonistic or opposing relations, with summer thought to be the opposite of winter, for example. The wet and dry months have their opposing periods, though “periods” suggest a familiar unit of duration to the reader that Bourdieu advises is only a rough equivalency to the way that the agrarian people he is here referencing— the Kabyle— experience and participate in time keeping. Still, because the Kabyle have fused analogically, for example, Fall—the wet season—with darkness—with lamps—with the roasting—in a certain-part-of-the-house vs. the cow-to-be-milked, which differently belongs to a series of analogues that portend and denote Spring, it is possible to understand autumn and summer as thoroughgoing principles which are opposed to each other, as Bourdieu presents that Kabyle agriculturalists do.

The rites of seasonal reversal—again, *not* seasonal rites of reversal, which can indicate time for performing them instead of the oppositional relationship between the seasons themselves— attend to the meeting of these opposing antagonists as necessary means of help in the process of meeting that is included in rites of transition:

The times of separation, when the opposing principles may be said to exist in their pure state, as in summer, or to threaten, in the case of winter, to return to it, and the times of reunion, when the dry returns to the wet, as in autumn, or the wet returns to the dry, as in spring, are moments opposed to one another; but they are also

opposed in a different way, as moments in which reunion and separation are accomplished without any more than symbolic participation on the part of man, to the times when reunion and separation take on a critical form because *it falls to man himself to bring them about*.³¹² It is precisely here that the structure of ritual practice is articulated with the structure of farming activity: the opposition between the propitiatory rites of the transitional periods and the sanctioning rights which are obligatory for the whole group and above all for the men, during the periods of human intervention in nature, harvesting and ploughing, appears in fact as the retranslation into the specific logic of ritual of the opposition — structuring the agrarian year— between the time of work and the much longer time of production, during which the grain —like the pottery set out to dry— undergoes a purely natural process of transformation. The high moments in the agrarian year, those which Marx designates working periods, are marked by rites contrasting their gravity, their solemnity, and imperative character with the rites of the production periods, whose sole function is to lend magical assistance to *nature in its labour*.³¹³

And in the short quotation that follows, Bourdieu gives a good rearticulation of the elements we have just seen elaborated in the quotation above:

It is thus possible to describe the whole system of ritual symbols and actions by means of a small number of *antagonistic symbols* (the paradigm of which is the opposition between the sexes, and which are produced from a small number of schemes) and a small number of (logical and biological) *practical operators* which are nothing other than natural processes culturally constituted in and through ritual practice, such as marriage and ploughing, seen as the

³¹² Important to my argument is this sense of efficacy in ritual aimed at season maintenance and seasonal reversal, so that rites of seasonal transition are not only observing natural changes, they are participating in them. This logic emerges clearly when, in fact, the rites are sometimes performed in a purely symbolic mode, out of step with nature, with the logic of encouraging nature to become once again fecund. “Resurrection can only come through the repetition of the primal marriage between sky and earth and for this reason the harvest rites reapply the logic of the rain-making rites at a time when ...rain is not required and can only serve the purpose of revivifying the sacred strength of the corn or field.” Bourdieu, *Outline of a theory of Practice*, 135.

³¹³ Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, 132; emphasis mine.

union of contraries, and murder or harvesting seen as the separation of contraries... Because the union of contraries does not destroy the opposition (which it presupposes), the reunited contraries are just as much opposed...³¹⁴

Thus, Bourdieu's rites of reversal invoke upending the entire world for a different season, turning it over for dominance by the opposing set of principles, that is, an opposing and contradicting season of wetness during autumn (and all that this season is "in league" with), a wetness that is absolutely vital for the reproduction of the harvest.

Given this embodied and cosmological sense of the seasonal needfulness of upside-downness, Turner's account of the status reversals of harvest rites appears too constricted, unable to vouch for the logic of maximum contrast belonging to agrarian times, which take as their point of departure the extreme weather contrasts of seasons that ultimately ensure the vitality of the earth and not just the "different emplacement of the sun through a celestial route." There is a kind of holism in Bourdieu's schema –that of the needfulness of reproduction as the common condition of flourishing. But within this logic there is also an inherent place and need for opposites, i.e. opposing principles and forces. A whole cosmology of opposing principles are necessary for survival in agrarian thought-practice, and at the change of seasons these antagonistic principles meet

³¹⁴ Ibid.

and power changes from “winter” to “spring” and back again.³⁴⁵ This binary opposition and movement, as articulated in Bourdieu’s appraisal of the rites of transition, is a good fit for the logic of seasonal contrast that plays an important part in Azusa Street Mission Revival’s theology and eschatology.

This oppositional seasonal logic is a key part of the deeper level of coherence between Azusa Street Mission Revival and Bakhtin’s Carnival. In this next and final section of this chapter, the discussion focuses on Carnival as an elaboration of the rites of seasonal reversal. Bakhtin’s model attempts the work of

³⁴⁵ Turner’s distaste for oppositional binaries betrayed his sense that these kinds of oppositions were seepings of structure into the maximally fluid realm of the liminal. “Undoubtedly, in the specialized genres of complex societies such as philosophical, theological, and formal logical systems, symbols, and the signs derived from their decomposition, do acquire this “algebraic” or logical quality, and can be treated effectively in relations of “binary opposition,” as “mediators,” and the rest, denatured by the primacy of specialist cognitive activity. But “les symboles sauvages,” as they appear not only in traditional “tribal” cultures but also in the “cultural refreshment” genres (poetry, drama, and painting) of post-industrial society, have the character of dynamic semantic systems. They gain and lose meanings—and meaning in a social context always has emotional and volitional dimensions—as they “travel through” a single rite or work of art, let alone through centuries of performance, and they are aimed at producing effects on the psychological states and behavior of those exposed to them or obliged to use them for their communication with other human beings.” Later in the same article, Turner again admonishes, “Various Levi-Straussian models, such as the one dealing with metaphorical and oppositional logical relations and the transformation to humanity, from nature to culture, and the geometric model which utilizes two sets of oppositions in the construction of a ‘culinary triangle,’ raw/cooked:raw/rotten, seem to me to be applicable mainly to tribal or early agrarian societies where work and life tend to be governed by seasonal and ecological rhythms. The models apply in situations where the rules underlying the generation of cultural patterns tend to seek out the binary “Yin-Yang,” forms suggested by simple “natural” oppositions, such as hot/cold, wet/dry, cultivated/wild, male female, summer/winter, plenty/scarcity, and the like. The main social and cultural structures tend to become modeled on these cosmological principles, which determine even the layout of cities and villages, the design of houses, and the shape and spatial placement of different types of cultivated land. It is not surprising that liminality itself cannot escape the grip of these strong structuring principles.” See Victor Turner, “Liminal to Liminoid, in Play, Flow, and Ritual: An Essay in Comparative Symbology.” *Rice Institute Pamphlet - Rice University Studies*, 60, no. 3 (1974), 55-61.

imagining how a rite of seasonal reversal might develop into a *mythopraxis* of political critique in a situation of social conflict. The goal of the following close reading of the seasonal mechanics of Carnival is to construct Bakhtin's Carnival as a model for examining how a Bourdieusian rite of seasonal reversal might work in a situation of protracted alienation between monarchical and religious powers and agrarian folk populists. Thus, the comparative work of chapter four will treat Azusa Street Mission Revival through a Bourdieusian-Bakhtinian model and hermeneutic with the aims of making early Pentecostalism eminently more understandable, and diagnosable in terms of its politics. As a bonus, I hope it will add credibility to Bakhtin's theory as one inherently luminous, powerful, and *correct*.

Tracing a Carnivalistic Seasonal Progression: Opposition, Confrontation, Reversal

The phrase *rites of transition* can invoke similarities between rites of transition for the individual, from boy to man, and rites of transition through seasons of a year, for instance, from summer to fall to winter and then to spring. This is why they are grouped together, for instance in Turner's thought as two types of liminality.³¹⁶ At times these ideas have even been put together, or

³¹⁶ As in this quotation: "In complex large-scale societies, liminality itself, as a result of the advancing division of labor, has often become a religious or quasi-religious state, and, by virtue of this crystallization, has tended to reenter structure and acquire a full complement of structural roles and positions. *Instead of the seclusion lodge, we have the church.* More than

conflated, so that it is possible to think of transitions in life status as transitions through an individual's seasons of life, or time periods of a day. For example, an elderly person is said to be in the twilight of her life, i.e. near the day's end; we readily associate baby animals with springtime so that they both represent spring and are in the spring of their lives; more broadly we refer to retirement as a new season in a retiree's life. One humorous example of use of this seasonal temporalizing of an individual's life occurs in the 2001 movie *Bridget Jones's Diary*. In a scene which features Bridget's self-absorbed mother complaining that she has not made full use of her life, in which she also laments Bridget's own existence to Bridget (her only child), the following seasonal metaphors occur:

To be honest, darling, having children isn't all it's cracked up to be. Given my chance again I am not sure I'd have any. And now it's the winter of my life and I haven't actually got anything of my own. I've got no power, no real career, no ... no sex life. I've got no life at all. I'm like the grasshopper who sang all summer.³¹⁷

this, I wish to distinguish two main types of liminality— many others will undoubtedly be discovered— first, the liminality that characterizes rituals of status elevation, in which the ritual subject or novice is being conveyed irreversibly from a lower to a higher position in an institutionalized system of such positions. Secondly, the liminality frequently found in cyclical and calendrical ritual, usually of a collective kind, in which, at certain culturally defined points in the seasonal cycle, groups or categories of persons who habitually occupy low status positions in the social structure are positively enjoined to exercise ritual authority over their superiors; and they, in their turn, must accept with good will their ritual degradation. Such rites may be described as rituals of status reversal. They are often accompanied by robust verbal and nonverbal behavior, in which inferiors revile and even physically maltreat superiors.” Turner, *The Ritual Process*, 167; emphasis mine.

³¹⁷ *Bridget Jones's Diary*. United States: Universal Studios, 2004. Film.

Invoking seasonal progression in the lifespan of an individual is familiar, and here the transitions appear in sync: as the mother ages, the seasons progress to winter. Here a life span is actually crammed into one full cycle of seasons, essentially a year.

But this logic is not welcomed in the cases of governments or institutions! Invoking linearity for an institution by way of appealing to individual life cycles would be very threatening as it would portend an eventual end of life. No school, in celebrating its long history, would compare itself to an elderly person; to do so would threaten the school with demise. Institutions would also resist any kind of winterization of their existence. Instead, one university celebrates itself by citing that, “the sun never sets on a Southwesterner.” This phrase celebrates the globe-spanning presence of its alumni throughout the circular planet, a form of planetary domination that empowers it to flout even daily rhythms and adopt (by way of expansion) a circular planetary, not linear, biology! This logic of perpetuity seemingly originates during the period of universal empires. It was said precisely of the “universal reign” of Charles V that the *sun did not set* on his empire. One supposes instead, in the mythical time of this reign, it is ever midday and, analogously, probably summer.

This *universal reign* plays critical part of the background of the composition of *Gargantua and Pantagruel* (1534), which is Bakhtin’s source material for developing Carnival theory and forms part of the basis of his critique

of monarchies' endless summer-day worldview. "Charles V was best known for his promotion of Catholic reform and his fight against Protestantism. The choleric Pichrocole ("bitter bile") found in Gargantua is Rabelais' caricature of Charles V. Pichrocole and serves as a foil to Rabelais' wise giant-kings, Grandgousier and his son Gargantua."³¹⁸ This contrast between Pichrocole and the Giant-Kings is à propos of this dissertation. Kingdoms past and present, all empires and some dictatorships, aim for perpetuity. Yet, no kingdom is a perpetual kingdom, however ubiquitous this wish seems to be. *You are a priest forever, your kingdom shall have no end*: the wish of rulers for permanence sets up the seasonal vicissitudes of nature themselves as antagonist to the wish for perpetual power (as in 2 Sam 7:16 and Psalm 110:4).³¹⁹ While a monarchy seemingly persists through bloodline, individual monarchs still die. The political philosophy of the King's "two bodies" arose precisely to mystify the King into a kind of permanency. In contradistinction to the King's natural body, the King's

³¹⁸ Margaret Harp, "Charles V, 1500-58" in *The Rabelais Encyclopedia*, ed. Elizabeth Chesney Zegura (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2004), 34.

³¹⁹ Craig Brandist places Bakhtin's anti-priestly attitude within the historical context of the Renaissance Europe. He explains: "Bakhtin interpreted the European Renaissance as the age in which the self-enclosed worlds of the official and the popular began to break down. The profane, carnivalistic popular culture of the Middle Ages is said to have introduced the 'permanent corrective' of laughter, profaning the sacred and canonized conceptions of the state, but to have remained enclosed in the cyclicity of the agricultural cycle. This isolation of the popular, profane culture of the Middle Ages from the sense of becoming abstractly developed in the official, priestly culture of ruling stratum, limited its understanding of the social whole. The uncrowning of the sacred spheres was, however, a bringing down of the sacred to the level of the of scientific experiment, into contact with the concrete laws of nature." See Craig Brandist, "Introduction: Carnival and Cultural Politics," in ed. Craig Brandist, *Carnival Culture and the Soviet Modernist Novel* (London: MacMillan Press, 1996), 11-12.

body *politic* was purported therein to be “utterly void of infancy and old age.”³²⁰

In this way, nature itself via night or winter—the hiding of the sun—presents as Bakhtinian status reversal.

[The king] is abused and beaten when the time of his reign is over, just as the carnival dummy of winter or of the dying year is mocked, beaten, torn to pieces, burned, or drowned even in our time...The abuse and thrashing are equivalent to a change of costume, to a metamorphosis...Abuse is death, it is former youth transformed into old age, the living body turned into a corpse.³²¹

Rabelais presents abuse of the King as part and parcel of nature’s discrowning, drawing from the popular-festive tradition of his time. Quoting Seneca, Rabelais muses that kings and clowns “share the same horoscope.”³²²

The importance of this knowledge still plays a part in popular Western culture. A trailer for a 2019 release of a live action Disney’s *Lion King* features a voiceover by James Earl Jones as the good king Mufasa, reasoning to his son Simba in booming bass tones, “Everything the light touches is our kingdom. But a king’s time as ruler rises and falls like the sun. One day, the sun will set on my time here and will rise with you as the new king.” The sun *will* set on Mufasa.

³²⁰ Ernest H. Kantorowicz, *The King’s Two Bodies: A Study in Medieval Political Theology* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957), 7.

³²¹ Bakhtin, *Rabelais and his World*, 198.

³²² Ibid. In this extended discussion on the interchangeability between the clown and the king, important cleavages appear between Bakhtin’s treatment of clowning and Turner’s. Turner’s clown is coterminous with Spring and childhood. In this passage, Bakhtin’s clown is subjected to thrashing and abuse, a *winter* in Bakhtin’s terms. But in Turner’s treatment the clown lives in *spring*. Bakhtin’s children, unlike Turner’s, gleefully bid their fathers *death to thee!* Bakhtin, *Rabelais and His World*, 334-5, 352.

This display of Mufasa’s sense of his own finitude—his sense that the kingdom (coeval with nature or “light”) will and should outlive him, and his embrace of his son as the rightful next heir in line—allows the audience to grasp the substantial difference between him and his evil brother, Scar, who usurps the throne by murdering his brother, sowing division in the kingdom and falsely blaming Simba for Mufasa’s death.

The movie implies that a good king will remember that he plays an all-important role in the kingdom, but that his role is a service to the kingdom to be played in harmony with nature. Against such a king, natural finitude could not be a threat. Instead, the rhythms of nature are ones with which he harmonizes, to which he even willingly consents, including even to the terms of his own death. This nobility in Mufasa makes his untimely death by murder feel all the more tragic. It is a corporate sense of the natural finitude of monarchs (and their courts) that funds the raucous carnival that Mikhail Bakhtin introduces via his reading of *Rabelais and His World*.³²³ Bakhtin situates his carnival as an

³²³ Michael Gardiner advises, “It is important to stress that *Rabelais and His World* is not a work of literary criticism in any standard sense; nor are the startling and controversial insights it generates only relevant for a historical understanding of a bygone era. Rather Bakhtin uses the figure of Rabelais as a kind of sounding board through which to interpret his real subject: the ‘thousand year old development of popular culture, which he feels has energized significant forms of European literature and culture since pre-classical times and which continues to be a potent (although somewhat dissipated) force even today. See Gardiner, *Green Social Theory*, 767. Similarly this dissertation uses Bakhtin as a kind of sounding board through which to interpret Pentecostalism, a quasi-Bakhtinian method.

intervention into a monarchical-ritual culture that has become far too serious—

too linear. He writes:

Through all the stages of historic development, feasts were linked to moments of crisis, of breaking points in the cycle of nature or in the life of society and man. Moments of death and revival, of change and renewal always led to a festive perception of the world. These moments, expressed in concrete form, created the peculiar character of the feasts. In the framework of class and feudal political structure this specific character could be realized without distortion only in the carnival and in similar marketplace festivals. They were the second life of the people, who for a time entered the utopian realm of community, freedom, equality and abundance.

On the other hand, the feasts of the Middle Ages, whether ecclesiastic, feudal, or sponsored by the state...sanctioned the existing patterns of things and reinforced it. The link with time became formal; changes and moments of crisis were relegated to the past...Unlike the earlier and purer feast, the official feast asserted all that was stable, unchanging, perennial: the existing hierarchy, the existing religion, political and moral values, norms and prohibitions. It was the triumph of a truth already established, the predominant truth that was put forward as *eternal* and indisputable.³²⁴

Here Bakhtin ties harvest feasts to a holism, but more than that to holistic awareness of the cyclity of natural processes—not stasis— and their inevitable crises. These crises become suppressed by overly serious officials and their political rites, in which Powers present themselves as permanent and, interestingly, to be taken only seriously. Monarchs, in the Bakhtinian setting, attempt to freeze time, to dominate and quell nature into something stable,

³²⁴ Bakhtin, *Rabelais and His World*, 9.

unchanging, eternal. This had a palpable effect on the rituals of power, now performed in an entirely serious manner:

In the early period of the Roman state the ceremonials of the triumphal procession included on almost equal terms the glorifying and the deriding of the victor. The funeral ritual was also composed of lamenting (glorifying) and deriding the deceased. But in the definitely consolidated state and class structure such an equality of the two aspects became impossible. All the comic forms were transferred, some earlier and others later, to a non-official level. There they acquired a new meaning, were deepened and rendered more complex, until they became the expression of folk consciousness, of folk culture. Such were the Carnival festivities of the ancient world, especially the Roman Saturnalias, and such were the medieval carnivals. They were, of course, far removed from the primitive community's ritual...³²⁵

Accordingly, laughter itself, a natural capacity, acquired an acerbic, derisive, and potentially revolutionary energy. “This is why festive folk laughter presents”—that is, becomes able to represent—“an element of victory not only over supernatural awe, over the sacred, over death, it also means the defeat of power, of earthly kings, of the upper classes and all that oppresses and restricts.”³²⁶ Carnival becomes the form of, the source for, the space taken over *by the people's laughter*, the means by which “laughing truth degrades power” in curses, ridicule, obscenities, and grotesquerie.³²⁷ All of these humorous forms take their point of

³²⁵ Bakhtin, *Rabelais and His World*, 6-7.

³²⁶ *Ibid.*, 92.

³²⁷ *Ibid.*, 93.

departure from the finitude of any and all hierarchical powers.³²⁸ Thus, in carnival, “the people” develop their own political rites, symbolic inversions of the hierarchical political rites that Bakhtin problematizes, or or rites of *anti-hierarchy*.³²⁹ Their performative reversals, and the verbal manner in which they subject the high and sacred to scatological humor (for example), add to the fact that what does up, will go down—or rather, whoever has gone up will shortly also come down.

Crown a king, discrown a king. The mock crowning and subsequent decrowning of the carnival king is the carnival’s signature, flagrant politic. In this passage, Bakhtin connects acts of crowning and discrowning to death and renewal, which he interprets as lending an overriding *relativity* to structure and order—a different account of power than that of universal monarchies with religious claims to their status being divinely willed. And a different role than that

³²⁸ Geoffrey H. Hartman correctly notes that Bakhtin here is arguing for the “lawlessness of a laughter.” See Geoffrey H. Hartman, *Saving the Text: Literature/Derrida/Philosophy*, p. 146. Commenting on this issue of the subversive nature of laughter in Bakhtin, Tyvin East and Jay Baker point out that in Bakhtin, “Absurdity becomes transformative when it strips bare the pretense of authority.” Tyvin East and Jay Baker, “The Carnival de Resistance: Dreams, Dances, Drums, Disturbances” in ed. Ched Myers, *Watershed Discipleship: Reinhabiting Bioregional Faith and Practice* (Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2016), 193.

³²⁹ John T. Matthew explains: “By concentrating on the power of the people to challenge all official truth through their practice of carnival, Bakhtin also suggests the structural opposition in any society between the upper and lower strata, between authorized and unauthorized truth, between the designed work of reform and the heedless play of revolution. *In Carnival, everything is at risk.*” John T. Matthew, “The Autograph of Violence in Faulkner’s *pylon*” in ed. Jefferson Humphries, *Southern Literature and Literary Theory* (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1990), 252. In the words of Alexander L. Kaufman, “Bakhtin sees carnival as an expression by the folk who. . . willfully subvert the status quo and the ruling hierarchies.” See Alexander L. Kaufman, *The Historical Literature of the Jack Cade Rebellion* (Surrey, UK: Ashgate, 2009), 97.

of the liminality described by Turner at any point in his oeuvre. Carnival *trivializes* the structure:

The ritual is encountered in one form or another in all festivities of the carnival type: in the most elaborately worked out forms—the saturnalia, the European carnival and festival of fools (in the latter, mock priests, bishops or popes, depending on the rank of the church, were chosen in place of a king [...]) Under this ritual act of decrowning a king lies the very core of the carnival sense of the world—the *pathos of shifts and changes, of death and renewal*. Carnival is the festival of all-annihilating and all-renewing time [...]. Crowning/decrowning is a dualistic, ambivalent ritual expressing the inevitability and at the same time the creative power of the shift and renewal, the *joyful relativity* of all structure and order, of all authority and all (hierarchical) position [...]. From the very beginning a decrowning glimmers through the crowning. And all carnivalistic symbols are of such a sort: they always include within themselves a perspective of negation (death) or vice versa.³³⁰

And in the following passage, Bakhtin introduces his readers to Carnival's time-keeping:

The [carnival use of the] grotesque image reflects a phenomenon in transformation, an as yet unfinished metamorphosis, of death and birth, growth and becoming ... At the early stage of the archaic grotesque, time is given as *two parallel (actually simultaneous) phases of development, the initial and the terminal, winter and spring, death and birth*. These primitive images move within the *biocosmic circle of cyclical changes, the phases of nature's and man's reproductive life*. The components of these images are the changing seasons: *sowing, conception, growth, death*.³³¹

This passage is key for our purposes. Bakhtinian time keeping appeals not to an unblemished Spring of the World past, unified, but instead to nature's archaic

³³⁰ Bakhtin, *Problem with Dostoevsky's Poetics*, 125–26, emphasis mine.

³³¹ *Ibid.*, 25.

grotesque, which always bore in it two parallel phases of development: initial and terminal, winter and spring, death and birth. In the italicized portions of these two quotations we can detect parallels to the seasonal rites of transition. In the first quotation, we see that Carnival celebrates all-annihilating and all-renewing time as garnered from “the pathos of shifts and changes.” In the second quotation, we see that these shifts are common in the “biocosmic circle of cyclical changes”— marked agriculturally as *sowing*, *conception*, *growth*, and *death*. The components, Bakhtin specifies, mark the *changing* seasons, commonly mediated as rites of transition.³³²

Bakhtin’s sensibilities are Bourdieusian in that they detect the sharp opposition and confrontation in the meeting of these phases of a human’s reproductive life. One of the most compelling images of the Carnival grotesque, Bakhtin notes, is the pregnant hag. He points to the “famous Kerch terracotta collection” in which are found figurines of senile, laughing pregnant old hags. Bakhtin explains, “This is a typical and very strongly expressed grotesque. It is pregnant death, a death that gives birth. There is nothing completed, nothing

³³² Commenting on the human and nature relations in Bakhtinian works, Michael Gardiner notes: “At a fairly abstract or metatheoretical level, one could begin with the observation that Bakhtin was first and foremost concerned to examine and conceptualize the forces of flux, change, and difference that lay at the very heart of the social and natural world. He felt that reality was the terrain of a ceaseless battle between the forces of stasis and fixity on the one hand, and movement, change, and creativity on the other. Bakhtin postulated the constant subversion of stability and closure by forces of multiplicity and openness, a process he designed by the overarching concept of ‘unfinalizability.’” Michael Gardiner, “Ecology and Carnival: Traces of a “Green” Social Theory in the Writings of M.M. Bakhtin,” *Theory and Society* 22/6 (December 1993): 769.

calm and stable in the bodies of these old hags. They combine a senile decaying and deformed flesh with the flesh of new life.”³³³ The pregnant hag is perhaps the harshest juxtaposition, but one still “natural”: the physical unity of the opposites of winter and spring represented in a laughing female form.³³⁴

Carnival is premised on a harvest rite of transition, which moment mediates the transition into winter. Bakhtin posits that under monarchical repression, Carnival became a more elaborate celebration of the rites of seasonal transition, and with the force of its populist festivity it authorizes the confrontation of Winter to every linear pretension.³³⁵

³³³ Bakhtin, *Rabelais and His World*, 25.

³³⁴ Ibid.

³³⁵ Shanti Elliot is correct when she argues that “Bakhtin takes the idea of carnival from its agricultural and Christian origins.” For further discussion see Shanti Elliot, “Carnival and Dialogue in Bakhtin's Poetics of Folklore,” *Folklore Forum* 30:1/2 (1999): 131. In the similar vein, Ken Hirschkop argues that the central mode of thought in Bakhtinian theory of carnival is the cycle in the agrarian life. His explanation is worth quoting in full: “[W]hile the principle of ambivalence, expressed in the images and language of carnival culture, is clearly a descendant of the principle of dialogism, it is no longer, strictly speaking, an axiom in the philosophy of language. Dialogism can enliven the deadening narratives of literary culture by drawing on the languages of a vibrant civic society; ambivalence recontextualises intimidating images of death and squalor by reintegrating them into *the cycle of agricultural life*. Its historical basis is not the materiality of language but the inextricable intertwining of birth and death; production, consumption and excretion; labour and the fruits thereof. Once again Bakhtin's appeal is to a crudely material and physical context, but with the difference that it is an already historicised material, a material, so to speak, in motion. So central to the natural cycle and the agricultural labour corresponding to it, that Bakhtin confidently assumes that it can be used as *a model for all forms of history, personal, civil and political*. Encompassing both the private dramas of domesticity of labour, and the rise and fall of states and kings, ambivalence is presented to us as the principle through which severed histories may be linked. *Rabelais* has been described as constellating the moment of Stalinism with that of absolutism, but it could also be described as imposing the figure of modernity on an image of medieval culture. The change and ceaseless rush of the modern reappears, but with the added claim that the relativity of history is a ‘joyful relativity,’ because historical change itself appears in the tangible form of *agricultural labour*. It is, Bakhtin assures us, productive change.” See Ken Hirschkop, *Bakhtin and Cultural Theory* (Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 1989), 34; italics mine.

To sum up, Carnival is premised on a harvest rite of transition, a moment that mediates the transition into winter. Bakhtin posits that under monarchical repression, Carnival became a more elaborate celebration of the rites of seasonal transition, and with the force of its populist festivity celebrating the confrontation of Summer and Winter became a parallel to the “sun setting on” a monarch, thus a ritual discrowning.³³⁶ Bakhtin’s carnivalists encourage rites of seasonal reversal by maximizing their visibility and radicalizing their political import—certainly an innovation on both Bell and Bourdieu’s commentary, which suggests that the rites of transition are thought to help ensure that the transitions of the seasonal progression happen as they need to, and a political one, but still recognizable as work in keeping with to the rites of transition. Perhaps the force of populist energy encouraging winter to take over a “summer” reign might best be thought about with one of Bourdieu’s phrases, in which rites that mediate seasonal reversal can be performed in the interest of “making sure” that such reversals do in fact happen, or “go off.”

Having established the rites of seasonal reversal as implicit in Carnival, this chapter closes with a final elaboration of Carnival, again in an effort to finalize it as a model for the basis of the comparative work in chapter four. Bakhtin situates the rite of transition within a sociology of conflict. It is this

³³⁶ For further discussion on the political significance of winter and spring in Bakhtin, see Craig Brandist, “Bakhtin and Russian Populism” in ed. Craig Brandist and Galin Tihanov, *Materializing Bakhtin: The Bakhtin Circle and Social Theory* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2000), 87ff.

conflict which makes the upside-down world, the world in reverse or inverse, make full sense.

Carnival: Celebration of Seasonal Reversal as Political Reversals

When Mikhail Bakhtin wrote his daring doctoral dissertation on François Rabelais' *Gargantua and Pantagruel*, the book had been a staple of Russian literary criticism for more than than one hundred years.³³⁷ Bakhtin's critical intervention turned the scholarship on its head, undermining four hundred years of interpretation.³³⁸ Lamenting that scholars had missed the "bodily substratum" of the book, Bakhtin unearthed from within the novel's comic bodily over-turnings, lashings, curses, and scatological humor the novelization of Carnival and the echoic traces of its laughter. Bakhtin's excavation of the cultural work of Carnival juxtaposes the serious and official tone of everyday medieval life with the raucous atmosphere of Carnival, in which medieval French *laughing people* critique the empowered class for their pretenses of being whole, finished, sacred,

³³⁷ The book on Rabelais was originally submitted as a doctoral dissertation in 1947 (although he did not get the degree) but was not published until 1965, a year after the second edition of his book on Dostoevsky was out. The appearance of these two books, according to Michael Holquist, "created a sensation in the Soviet Union." For further discussion on Bakhtin's life in relation to his publications, see Michael Holquist, *Dialogism: Bakhtin and His World*, second edition (London: Routledge, 2002), ch. 1. For further discussion on Bakhtin's life in relation to his publications, see also Tzvetan Todorov, *Mikhail Bakhtin: The Dialogical Principle*, *Theory and History of Literature* 13 (Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 1984), chap. 1; Alastair Renfrew, *Mikhail Bakhtin*, *Routledge Critical Thinkers* (London: Routledge, 2015), chap. 2.

³³⁸ Holquist "Prologue," *Rabelais and His World*, xiv.

permanent, and final—or to use our previous terminology, for being perpetually linear or in endless summer.³³⁹ Bakhtin’s carnivalists possess a cultivated historical consciousness of powers’ inevitable rises and falls, based on their cultivated perception of the death and renewal inherent in nature, and maintain a visceral identification with the earth’s seasonal vicissitudes as, via dependable rises and falls, contrary to the lofty pretensions of power for permanence and indestructibility. Instead, it is Bakhtin’s carnivalists who represent and channel an indestructible force, broadly construed as *the people’s ambivalent laughter*. Their topsy-turvy perspectives and jeer-filled discourses have, according to Bakhtin, permeated manifold forms of culture, primarily world literatures, but also film and art, though the Carnival rite itself has been tempered and distorted. It is the carnivalesque in culture, especially the carnivalesque in literatures as-situated- in-cultures, that occupies Bakhtin and his work in literary theory. In the writings of Molière and Dostoyevsky, Sterne and Cervantes, Bakhtin hears the echoes of agrarian laughing peoples. His work has amplified a set of folk traditions and sensibilities that, before his work, had become totally obscured

³³⁹ Emerson, *The first hundred years of Mikhail Bakhtin*, 7; Bakhtin, *Rabelais and His World*, 44–45. See Michael Gardiner’s discussion on the Aristotelian logic of the Great Chain of Being. He writes, “the body politic was organically modeled on the organic unity of the human body and as a hierarchy of social groups...as the hierarchy was held to be ordained by God, the monarchy was construed as the visible, earthly manifestation of divine will. It was often suggested that insect colonies such as bees or ants were ideal metaphors of this hierarchical order. It is precisely this ideology (however natural) that functioned as a bulwark for class privilege and social control within the feudal epoch. Gardiner, “Green Social Theory,” 768.

Now more than one hundred years since the publication of Bakhtin's thesis, his Carnival theory has proved to be an exciting cultural and literary hermeneutic, even as it forms the foundation of Bakhtin's own elaborate philosophical architectonic.[2] Detractors have complained that Bakhtin's carnivalized readings of François Rabelais and Fyodor Dostoevsky reconcile better with Bakhtin's own philosophical aesthetics than they do to with either Rabelais or Dostoyevsky.³⁴⁰ Likewise, some scholars opine that Bakhtin's reconstruction of the medieval French Carnival is instead a universalized utopian myth, an amalgam of cultural fests and one overly informed by Bakhtin's own life-long distaste for *ofitsioz*, "officialese culture."³⁴¹ However, "many defend Bakhtin's admittedly lopsided reading of the great novelist as simply illustrative of something more important—the way Freud used the literary image of Oedipus to illustrate his powerful discoveries about the human psyche" and find that Carnival theory is "stronger than its own argumentation and point of departure."³⁴² In this same vein, I agree with Russian cultural theorist Grigory Pomerants, who embraces Bakhtin's Carnival as a "much later rethinking of holiday rituals that arose considerably earlier, in the atmosphere of another culture more primitive, more integral, more emotional."³⁴³

³⁴⁰ Emerson, *The First Hundred Years of Mikhail Bakhtin*, 137.

³⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 165.

³⁴² *Ibid.*, 134, 177.

³⁴³ *Ibid.*, 177.

“A Boundless World”:
Carnival and the origins of the Culture of Folk Humor

Laughter and its forms represent... the least scrutinized sphere of the people's creation.... The element of laughter was accorded to the least place of all in the vast literature devoted to myth, to folk lyrics, and to epics. Even more unfortunate was the fact that the peculiar nature of the people's laughter was completely distorted; entirely alien notions and concepts of humor, formed within the framework of bourgeois modern culture and aesthetics, were applied to this interpretation. We may therefore say without exaggeration that the profound originality expressed by the culture of folk humor in the past has remained unexplored until now. And yet, the scope and the importance of this culture were immense in the Renaissance and the Middle Ages. A boundless world of humorous forms and manifestations opposed the official and serious tone of medieval ecclesiastical and feudal culture.³⁴⁴

In this passage are important germs of a distinctly Bakhtinian treatment of *folk culture*. Bakhtin places primacy on laughter from the beginning of his discussion, and this is key, for although passages to come will sound remarkably similar to Turner's later discussions of *liminality*, Bakhtin's evaluation places the liminal in reference *not* to personal changes in social status, even less so to the predictable changes in status that mark a biological progression of life, but instead to power relations.³⁴⁵ Bakhtin's theory depends on comprehending the inadmissible character of laughter in a situation of unequal power relations, but his preference for laughter does not by definition preclude seriousness. Instead,

³⁴⁴ Bakhtin, *Rabelais and his World*, 4.

³⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 8. Bakhtin, *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics*, 172.

Bakhtin predicates Carnival on a line of sociological thought that gets relatively little attention elsewhere: that there was a time when the comic aspects of the world and of the deity were equally sacred, equally 'official' as the serious (9). Bakhtin makes a necessity of this aesthetic balance, feeling that the comic and the serious are each needful for a truthful perspective of the world. Yet, over time, an intensifying austerity set into the politics of the ruling class, one which bracketed out what Bakhtin calls “the bodily substratum”—everything that defecates, but also, that which renews.

In their transference to a non-official level, comic theatrical forms became *banished laughter* and gradually took on a newly acerbic quality in carnival, acquiring by virtue of their domination as a cultural form the impetus for more biting forms of criticism and a genuinely heightened need for their expression (10). Over time, Bakhtin suggests, this refusal of power to allow itself to be derided—“times of absolute monarchy”—occasioned the radicalization of laughter, while the increasingly forceful assertion of power threatened to infect the people with stultifying awe or even terror.³⁴⁶ This not only had a lamentable effect on the emotional life of the people, so that they imbibed the “fear and suffering” inherent in their “religious, social, political, and ideological forms,” but also compromised the aesthetics of the culture so that “in the new official culture,

³⁴⁶ Bakhtin, *Rabelais and his World*, 72.

there prevails a tendency toward the stability and completion of being, toward one single meaning, one single tone of seriousness.”³⁴⁷ And so Carnival festivities came to contain “comic forms of the people’s laughter” (Bakhtin)—laughter capable of deriding power that sets itself too high, takes itself too seriously, and especially power that is consecrated by the Church and is, at the same time, oppressive, abusive, exploitative, or coercive.³⁴⁸ Against oppressive political rituals, Carnival grew resistant and rebellious with a laughter meant (at times) to deride power, but more importantly, to purify the people from fearful obeisance. “Laughter at the feast of fools” Bakhtin specifies, “was not, of course, abstract and purely negative mockery of the Christian ritual and the Church’s hierarchy. The negative derisive element was immersed in the triumphant theme of bodily regeneration and renewal.”³⁴⁹ The triumph is in the loss of austerity and fearfulness of the soul. In the atmosphere of Carnival’s triumphant laughter, “it was the victory of laughter over fear that most impressed medieval man. It was not only a victory over mystic terror of God, but also a victory over the awe

³⁴⁷ Ibid., 73, 95. Hartman, *Saving the text: Literature/Derrida/Philosophy*, 146.

³⁴⁸ For further discussion on the carnival laughter as a subversive folk culture against the official hierarchy of the church in Bakhtin, see Caryl Emerson, *The First Hundred Years of Mikhail Bakhtin* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000), 98–100; Michael Holquist, “Bakhtin and Rabelais: Theory as Praxis,” *Boundary 2* 11:1/2 (Autumn, 1982 - Winter, 1983): 5–19; Charles Lock, “Carnival and Incarnation: Bakhtin and Orthodox Theology,” *Literature and Theology* 5/1 (March 1991): 73ff; Ruth Coates, *Christianity in Bakhtin: God and the Exiled* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), chap. 7; Lachmann, “Bakhtin and Carnival: Culture as Counter-Culture,” 118–19; Hub Zwart, *Ethical Consensus and the Truth of Laughter: The Structure of Moral Transformation* (Kampen, Netherlands: Kok Pharos Publishing House, 1996), 53ff.

³⁴⁹ Bakhtin, *Rabelais and his World*, 75.

inspired by the forces of nature and most of all over the oppression and guilt over all the was consecrated and forbidden.”³⁵⁰

The humor in *carnival categories* is replete with references to excrement, sex, and death, which Bakhtin refers to as the “grotesque body” and “the material bodily principle.”³⁵¹ The “world-inside-out” brims with excitement and possibility, with laughter and revelry, presenting both high-spirited excesses and hilarious debasements. Disproportions of figure like gigantic noses and huge stomachs; animals and animal like behavior; drunkenness; filthy language and curses: all these together mocked philosophers’ faulty aesthetics of virtue and the embodied values of the privileged classes. “The Renaissance saw the body in quite a different light than the Middle Ages, in a different aspect of its life, and a different relation to the exterior non-bodily world. As conceived by the canons, the body was first of all a strictly completed, finished product.”³⁵²

By contrast, the *carnival grotesque*,

reflects a phenomenon in transformation, an as yet unfinished metamorphosis, of death and birth, growth and becoming. In

³⁵⁰ Ibid., 91.

³⁵¹ Bakhtin, *Rabelais and His World*, 19.

³⁵² Bakhtin, *Rabelais and his World*, 29. “It was during the High Middle Ages, [the period directly preceding the the Renaissance] that the sacrament of the Eucharist, which promised that Christ's body, however often made present in the host, however often consumed and digested by the parishioner, remained complete and undiminished in its identity, began to suggest that the bodies of saints and of other human beings could retain a similar wholeness even in their partition. It was at this time that a saint's finger was believed to constitute not just a minor part of the saint but the saint as a self, and was believed to be able to perform miracles for that reason” in Karen Sullivan, *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 7, no. 3 (1997): 434–37. See also, Caroline Walker Bynum, *The Resurrection of the Body in Western Christianity*, 200–1336 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995).

[grotesque images] we find both poles of transformation, the old and then new, the dying and the procreating, the beginning and the end of the metamorphosis. The relation to time, its perception and experience, which is at the basis of these forms, was bound to change during their development over thousands of years. At the early stage of the archaic grotesque, time is given two parallel (actually simultaneous) phases of development, the initial and the terminal, winter and spring, death and birth [...]

The concept which was contained implicitly in these ancient images was that of cyclical time, of natural and biological life. But grotesque images did not, of course, remain at that primitive level of development. *Their sense of time and of change was broadened and deepened, drawing into its cycle social and historic phenomena.* It is quite obvious from the point of view of these [classic canons that] the body of grotesque realism was hideous and formless. It did not fit the framework of the “aesthetics of the beautiful” as conceived by the Renaissance.³⁵³

The symbols and rites of carnival borrow from the *archaic grotesque* sense of time and, Bakhtin explains, have absorbed into this sense of time an additional sense of historical change so that the winter and spring, death and rebirth are superimposed onto political history in contradiction to the tendency of powers to

³⁵³ Bakhtin, *Rabelais and his World*, 25, 29, emphasis mine. Carnivalists’ folk festive mentality captured a conception of the cosmos and human-nature relations that emphasized growth and dynamism that Bakhtin posits had an impact on the naturalist science of the Renaissance. The philosophy of the Renaissance suggested that nature was a complex holistic organism characterized by immanent self-evolution and vitalistic change, thought to be a cosmic whole like the great chain of being, but imagined most often to be a woman. Critically, all components of the universe were perceived to be of equal value. The key social exemplar was not the insect colony but instead the egalitarian, communal village in rural areas. Such naturalist philosophies, Gardiner writes, were a key component of the radical social ideologies of the Diggers, Levellers, and other millennial sects. Gardiner, “Green Social Theory,” 769.

linearize history.³⁵⁴ In carnival, lofty pretensions are brought down to earth, down to the body as harbinger of grotesque time, through degrading insults and scatological humor.³⁵⁵ One example of this “bringing down to the material level” can be found in *Gargantua and Pantagruel*, in which a scene features a play on words that revolves around the idea of the Giant Gargantua peeing on Paris; Bakhtin understands this discourse as an intervention that aims to bring renewal to the political sphere, even while some of the energy here is without a doubt critique. To wit, Gargantua’s piss-flood at first mistakenly kills hundreds of

³⁵⁴ Bakhtin makes it clear that Rabelaisian chronotope should be understood in the context of “a pre-class, agricultural stage in the development of human society.” He explains further: “A powerfully and sharply differentiated feeling for time could arise only on a collective, *work-oriented agricultural base*. Here was first constituted that feeling for time that had at its heart a taking-apart and putting-together of social everyday time, the time of holidays and ceremonies connected with the *agricultural labor cycle, with the seasons of the year*, the periods of the day, the stages in the growth of plants and cattle.” (emphasis mine) See Mikhail Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays*, ed. Michael Holquist, trans. Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1981), 206.

³⁵⁵ Commenting on the importance of the Bakhtinian analysis of grotesque body in Rabelais as response to the western Europe philosophical tradition, especially in neo-Kantian notion of subjectivity, Galin Tihanov writes: “Bakhtin is probably the single most gifted and persuasive exponent in the 20th century of that particular strain of humanism without belief in the individual human being at its core, a distant cosmic love for humanity as the great survivor and the producer of abiding and recurring meaning that celebrates its eventual homecoming in the bosom of great time. In *Rabelais*, this new decentred humanism takes on the form of a seemingly more solidified cult of the people, but even there it rests on an ever changing, protean existence of the human masses that transgresses the boundaries between bodies and style registers and refuses their members stable identifications other than with the utopian body of the people and of humanity at large. This new brand of decentred, indeed dislocated, humanism without subjectivity is Bakhtin’s greatest discovery as a thinker and the source, it seems to me, of his longevity on the intellectual scene where he ushers out vogue after vogue, staging for each new generation of readers the magic of witnessing the birth of proximity without empathy, of optimism without promise or closure.” See Galin Tihanov, “The Gravity of the Grotesque: Bakhtin’s Dislocated Humanism” in ed. Laurynas Katkus, *Grotesque Revisited: Grotesque and Satire in the Post/Modern Literature of Central and Eastern Europe* (Newcastle, UK: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2013), 16. See also David Danow, *The Spirit of Carnival: Magical Realism and the Grotesque* (Lexington, KY: University of Kentucky Press, 1995), chap. 2.

thousands of Parisians, but later the giant uses his piss against his foes intentionally. Carnival aims to bring low what has gotten too high, and is at the same humor meant to be an important source of cultural renewal.³⁵⁶

Bakhtin's carnivalists resist the preferred chronotropes of the powerful to maintain their own sense of circular time, innovated into a hybrid amalgam that nevertheless tilts toward the circular overpowering the linear. Aware of the intricacies of feudal power relations between peasantry, nobility, and king, for example, aware too of the former king and of the reality of the king that will replace the one currently in power, carnivalists perceive not so much a history of specific rivalries, clans, ascendancies, and replacements in office, alliances, treaties and the like, but instead they absorb these political intrigues and sagas within the scope of a naturalistic timekeeping that anticipates political rises and falls as natural, foreseeable, acceptable, and at times humorous. Where necessary for the health of the kingdom, the "falls" of nature Carnival *then* forwards as an inescapable schematic that no one change. The sun will set, winter will come, death ends life, and kingships end, one way or another.

The deafening peals of laughter which progressive Europe burst into while pushing century old feudalism into the grave was a gay and obvious proof of her sensing change of atmosphere. These peals of laughter with historic overtones shook not only Italy, Germany or France...but found a might echo beyond the Pyrenees...This was a mobilization of all the century old celebrations: the gay farewell to winter, to Lent, to the old year, to death; and the gay welcome to

³⁵⁶ Screech, *Gargantua and Pantagruel*, 137.

spring, to Shrovetide, to the slaughtering of cattle, to weddings, and to the new year. In a word it was the mustering of all the long matured images of change and renewal, of growth and abundance. These images, saturated with time and the utopian future, reflecting the people's hopes and strivings.³⁵⁷

Thus, in this quotation one can find the connections between all the themes under discussion here: winter and spring, change and renewal, the future, and Revolutionary laughter. One additional aspect to notice here is the overlap between “the slaughtering of cattle” and “weddings.” A quick reference back to the chart on page 37 demonstrates that the rights of slaughter and marriage rites are both rites of transition and therefore happen in synchronicity with calendrical rites of transition. Slaughtering takes place during the period of transition from the wet to the dry season, and marriages happen during the period in transition from the dry to the wet season. Here we see the rites of seasonal transition implied in Bakhtin's discussion of reversals, both biological, ecological, and revolutionary.

The Bahktinian grotesque emphasizes the overturnings of history through creating experiential juxtapositions between high and low, old and new; that is, by uniting natural disparities. In the wildly popular television series *Game of Thrones*, seven warring kingdoms are pressed to put aside their differences because, as is said often enough to become the show's unofficial byline, *Winter is*

³⁵⁷ Bakhtin, *Rabelais and his World*, 99.

coming. The winter that threatens the Seven Kingdoms is not just a season—yes, a literal winter—but also an army of wraiths, *undead* who can kill humans in a frenzied manner only to resurrect them into man-destroying wraiths. The undead of winter represent a ravenous, never-ending zombie death; that is, there is no counterbalance of birth and renewal or spring within the series' menacing supernatural winter. The grotesque of the world of the Seven Kingdoms is so unilaterally threatening, so full of other-malice, that all the leaders of the competing Kingdoms are compelled to unite against this threat.

Bakhtinian grotesque is quite the opposite, featuring not undead monsters per se, but dwarves and giants—not a supernatural evil, but natural if extreme variations. Sharpened but ultimately natural seasonal juxtapositions characterize Carnival's grotesquerie; thus every winter is ultimately a necessary harbinger to every spring.

The Bakhtinian grotesque is a source of down-to-earth, bawdy confidence; a high-spirited, drunken version of *This too shall pass-- and pass and pass again!* Importantly, Carnival is not an idea. It is not a conscientizing or rational argument against oppression. It is instead an experience, an otherworld and, in Bakhtin's estimation, a source and episteme of liberation:

During the century-long development of the medieval carnival prepared by thousands of years of ancient comic ritual, including the primitive Saturnalias, a special idiom of forms and symbols was evolved—an extremely rich idiom that expressed the unique yet complex carnival experience of the people. This experience,

opposed to all that was ready-made and completed, to immutability, sought a dynamic expression; it demanded ever changing, playful, undefined forms. All the symbols of the carnival idiom are filled with this pathos of change and renewal, with the sense of the *gay relativity* of prevailing truths and authorities. We find here a characteristic logic, the peculiar logic of the “inside out” (*à l’envers*), of the “turnabout,” of a continual shifting from top to bottom, from front to rear, of numerous parodies and travesties, humiliations, profanations, comic crownings and un-crownings. A *second life, a second world* of folk culture is thus constructed; it is to some extent a parody of the extracarnival life, a “world inside out.”³⁵⁸

The function of carnival’s acrobats, in their circular bodily inversions, effectively mirrors the the most important political ritual of Carnival: the mock crowning of a Carnival king who is then subjected to lashings. Carnival’s effects are profitably categorized into those aspects which evoke another world, like special musical traditions; those that disavow the mundane world, such as the suspension of work and the wearing of masks; and carnival’s signature ritual schematics: the over-turnings and the inversions that signify the supplanting relationship between Carnival and the mundane world—reflecting the inherent cyclicity of carnivalesque time.

Conclusion

This chapter has argued for a switch of interpretive frame for early Pentecostal liminality from Victor Turner’s concept of the *liminoid* to, instead,

³⁵⁸ Ibid., 11; emphasis mine.

the liminality of a properly agricultural ritual. The beginning of this discussion recast early Pentecostals' provenance to make better sense of their decidedly agrarian rhetoric. References to the altar as a threshing floor, for example, and a contemporaneous cultural priority for harvest festivals suggests that the Pentecostal altar is a significantly agrarian construction. Early Pentecostal invocation of the latter-rain and harvest as tropes, I argue, function as collective representations that form the symbolic foundation for discerning early Pentecostal mythopraxis and habitus.

Harvest rites, which celebrate the successful end of autumn and mark a transition into winter, are rites of seasonal transition. Through a reading of the differing temporalities and seasonalities in Turner and Bourdieu's account, I concluded that Bourdieu's construction of opposing seasons is able to make clear the conflicted seasonal schema of the Carnival, in which seasons meet and reverse. The chapter closed with an account of how the ritual of seasonal reversal is amplified in the politics of Carnival. Together a Bourdieusian-Bakhtinian account of the rites of seasonal reversal make possible a new reading of Pentecostal eschatology and the Pentecostal altar, which, as we will see in the final chapter of this work, will make comprehensive reversals possible: bodily, ecological, cosmological, and political.

Chapter 4: Carnival of the Spirit

Heaven Below: A Carnival Otherworld of Cosmological Reversal

Chapter one produced an account of the Pentecostal body in a mode of resistance. Against the backdrop of an industrializing America and within the Industrial era's protracted religious competition, radical evangelicals resisted the rise of denominational hierarchies and middle-class protocols to maintain their bodies as sacred, that is, as capable of producing sacred experiences. In chapter one, I argued that the innovation of tongues speech was a form of competitive capital for the religious field, in that it was produced as a higher blessing and alongside rhetoric which nullified the goods of clergy.

In this chapter, the newly Pentecostal body is in a mode of (de)construction. Thus far, we have discussed the rites of hierarchy, or the political rites, less than those of the rites of liminality, anti-structure, or the rites of seasonal reversal. However, upon deeper consideration of Pierre Bourdieu's *habitus*, we can see that the rites of hierarchy are embodied in almost all of them. The *habitus*, as a concept, is designed to make it possible to think of agency and structure together. Bourdieu's *habitus* introjects social structure both into schemes of mental perception and disposition, but also via bodily dispositions.

Thus, a theoretical antecedent to habitus is bodily *hexis*.³⁵⁹ Bourdieu's fields, arranged as a socio-cultural hierarchy, are the structures that inform the habitus, so that the habitus is constant orientation to social hierarchies. The habitus helps a social agent to generate strategies for maintaining her status in the social hierarchies that she inhabits. By virtue of this labor, this generative work, the field (as a social hierarchy) is given body, is perpetually remade, so that we might say that one gives body to the hierarchical social order.³⁶⁰ By observing one's place in the social order and acting appropriately to it, one gives that order body.³⁶¹ For example, by keeping company with some people, and staying away from others, or by performing a body as "finished" and closed, say as prim and

³⁵⁹ Schwartz, *Culture and Power: The Sociology of Pierre Bourdieu*, 108. Rey, *Bourdieu on religion: Imposing faith and legitimacy*, 48, 66.

³⁶⁰ Connell and Mears argue that Bourdieu, for American scholars especially, has brought the body into back into sociology. "The work of Pierre Bourdieu, principally through the concepts of *habitus* and embodied cultural capital, continues to provide a framework to see how class position is written on the body and expressed through classed styles of walking, talking, gesturing, eating, drinking, and so forth." The authors demonstrate Bourdieu's dialectic between the class structure and the individual body. See Catherine Connell and Ashley Mears, "Bourdieu and the Body" in *The Oxford Handbook of Pierre Bourdieu* (London: OUP, 2018), ch. 26.

³⁶¹ Pamela Klassen's essay on ritual closes by advocating, not just a turn to the body, but a turn to the body that is cognizant of the historical and social contexts of that body in ritual, very largely construed. Klassen offers that, "to ignore these historical conditions in trying to make sense of the effects of ritual on the body or the emotions is, in effect, to limit our questions and sphere of analysis to a clinical gaze shorn of any awareness of the ambivalent emotional and moral discourses in which ritual is situated and which it participates in constructing. Our task as scholars, in my own admittedly emotional and reasoned view, is to self-reflexively search for generalities that can open up conversations and allow us to see commonalities and differences, while also attending to the particularities that shape not only the lives and emotions of those we study but our own lives and emotions as well" See Klassen, "Ritual," in *The Oxford Handbook of Religion and Emotion*, ed. John Corrigan (OUP 2009).

not loud, for instance, one communicates order and embodies it.³⁶² When and where we perform our social roles is mundane time; we have mundane relations—serious, official ones. This is the world of official hierarchies of governance and official parades. *Observance* and *restraint* characterize this world.

But one can also give body to Carnival; to license, to merriment, to laughter, and high-spiritedness.

Because people obviously know and operate in the mundane world, Carnival can be described (as Bakhtin does) as the people's *second life*. The way people give body to Carnival is by collective action through what Bakhtin calls Carnival categories: *free contact on the public square. Drunkenness; Revelry; the Grotesque Body. The Carnival mésalliance*. One can signal Carnival, for instance, by wearing pants on the head and a shirt as trousers. A collectivity of people can also invoke carnival by spotlighting eccentricities, like dwarves and giants, whose out-of-the-ordinary figures are especially capable of giving body to the *upside-down world*. One can *speak* Carnival by cleverly using language to bring something or someone too high “down to earth.” In medieval French, one

³⁶²See Caroline Walker Bynum's *The Resurrection of the Body in Western Christianity, 200-1336* (New York: Columbia University Press: 1995), 59–137. Walker Bynum's survey of Christian art history reveals an enduring preoccupation with bodily integrity that surpasses the dismemberment of death. In the Middle Ages, sacred value was placed on the closed body, as vivified in the hagiographies of martyrs and saints who faced death still virgins, or not having eaten for an incredible amount of time, or without bodily fluids such as saliva or urine. These values Walker Bynum traces to Augustine who “equates resurrection with escape from the process[es]” of decay. It would appear that Carnival's value for the open, grotesque body stands in direct opposition to this desire for immutability, bodily continuity, and integrity.

could say *sacre bleu!*, in so doing taking a holy phrase about Mary and remaking it into a vulgar, humorous exclamation. Bakhtin's Carnivalists bring everything down to earth, down to the body, down from the head to "the bodily substratum." Through feasting, excess, music, through the unleashing of pent up energies in manifold directions, carnivalists invoke a different world, a world inside out and upside down. And because the body is porous, because the senses can take in the world when it is "right side up" and when it is "upside down," because the body can appreciate the juxtaposition of these two worlds, Carnival's lights, sounds, sights, Carnival's inebriation, high-spirits, revelry, and irreverence remake the participants, who are given over to a new episteme, who enter into a different world and into a different engagement with the world. The people build the carnival, give themselves over to it, and it gives new birth to them in return. Carnival is phenomenological: it is *not* an idea, it is performed, but "without footlights."

Bakhtin's concern for emotional attenuation under oppressive hierarchy, his concern for the monologization of the serious in the cultural mindset, for the loss of comic truth—all these reflect the constraints of his own historical context. Leading American scholar of Bakhtin studies Caryl Emerson advises that twentieth-century Russian thinkers, "especially those of Bakhtin's stature who have been widely and successfully translated" suffer when read apart from their contexts. For most of Russian culture—from the tenth through to the twentieth

centuries—the printed word was viewed as sacred and it was, she says, “to varying degrees unfree.”³⁶³ In the succession of Russian Empires during these centuries, “omnipresent censorship of real-world events tended to make literature the best refuge of honest ideas. And for at least the last 150 years, progressive Russian readers were trained to see nonfictional reference behind every fictional surface... Unlike America in much of its modern phase, literary accomplishment and criticism in Russia has mattered. You could get arrested and killed for it; thus educated society revered its poets and considered literary progress to be a bellwether of its own.”³⁶⁴ This protracted constriction of free inquiry meant that philosophy, theology, economics, politics, and sociology in Russia had to “invade fiction” to survive into print.³⁶⁵ Emerson muses that it was in the Soviet Union, “that most politically harassed and harangued of modern states, that Bakhtin counseled his compatriots (with the necessary Aesopian tact) to begin their search for agency and personhood elsewhere, not with political consciousness.”³⁶⁶ In such a context, Bakhtin’s Carnival becomes time-space that houses both an all-important tradition of humanistic laughter and, critically, the very experience which can beget a liberation of mind via the body and resist the psychic colonization of mind and body altogether. Emerson reflects, “First we cultivate

³⁶³ While Michael Holquist warns there is also danger in restricting Carnival to Bakhtin’s Russian context. Holquist, “Prologue,” *Rabelais and His World*, xiv-xv.

³⁶⁴ Emerson, *The First Hundred Years of Mikhail Bakhtin*, 10.

³⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 26.

³⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

laughter as a route to knowledge.’ This was Bakhtin’s point at his dissertation defense: you laugh, you cease to be afraid, you can then investigate, and there is no surer path to a self-confident humanism and control over one’s resources, both inner and outer, than this.”³⁶⁷ The scale of carnival was an important aspect of its liberatory and purifying properties: anti-hierarchical Carnival competes with the mundane, hierarchical world for the quality of verisimilitude. Through the experience of carnival, “[p]eople were, so to speak, born for new, purely human relations. The utopian ideal and the realistic merged in this carnival experience.”³⁶⁸

In the following section, I build Bakhtin’s Carnival using his own Carnival categories. To show their degree of coherence, I invoke Azusa’s matching characteristics alongside those of Carnival. Though our discussion will deepen to study the rituals of reversal that inform both Carnival and Azusa Street, what the following short discussion makes clear is that the world of Azusa Street Mission Revival, a world seemingly very unusual and chaotic to outsiders, and wholly unique to insiders, bore striking similarity to other worlds, created other places, that were seemingly unconnected.

Azusa Street Mission: Anti-Structural Integrity

³⁶⁷ Ibid., 204.

³⁶⁸ Bakhtin, *Rabelais and his World*, 10.

On the Acquisition of Scale, Collapsing of the Hierarchical Order, and Suspension of Time in the Tradition of Carnival & These Characteristics as foundations of The Azusa Street Mission Revival

THE FIRST FEATURE OF CARNIVAL:
Free Contact on the Public Square

Closing the distance that keeps people apart. Bakhtin presents the carnival as a feast in opposition to what he calls “the official feast.”³⁶⁹ The “official feast” celebrated the mundane world and its hierarchical order. Carnival instead celebrated liberation from the prevailing truth and from the established order; it marked the suspension of all hierarchical rank, privileges, norms, and prohibitions. Carnival was the true feast of time, the feast of becoming, change, and renewal. But it was the suspension of all hierarchical precedence during carnival time that was of particular significance. Rank was especially evident during official feasts. Everyone was expected to appear in the full regalia of his call, rank, and merits and to take his or her assigned position. Carnival consecrates inequality and everyone has a specific role to play in it.

Instead, Carnival is all encompassing and universalistic. Bakhtin writes,

In Carnival, everyone is an active participant...all distance between people is suspended, and a special Carnival category goes into effect: free and familiar contact among people. This is a very important aspect of a Carnival sense of the world. People who in

³⁶⁹ Ibid., 9–10, 74–75.

life are separated by impenetrable hierarchical barriers enter into free familiar contact on the Carnival square.³⁷⁰

All were considered equal during carnival. Here, in the town square, a special form of free and familiar contact reigned among people who were divided by the barriers of caste, property, profession and age. The hierarchical background and the extreme corporative and caste division of the medieval social order were exceptionally strong. Therefore such free, familiar contact were deeply felt and formed an essential element of the carnival spirit. People were, so to speak, reborn for new, purely human religion. These truly human relations were not only a fruit of imagination or abstract thought; they were experiences. The utopian ideal and the realistic merged in this carnival experience, unique of its kind.³⁷¹

In Carnival, this heightened degree of social egalitarianism allowed for free interaction, including free sexual contact. In comparison, the contact at Azusa appeared so free that outsiders encouraged the Mission to explore “free lovism” and the insiders were at times accused of having done so.³⁷² “The stereotype of pentecostals as libertines on the lam is almost as old as the revival itself.”³⁷³ Indeed, Charles Parham accused Holy Ghost missions in the Midwest and California of hosting “fanatical meetings, where the contact of bodies in motion is as certain and damning as in the dance hall, [and] leads to free-love, affinity-

³⁷⁰ Bakhtin, *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics*, 122-23.

³⁷¹ Bakhtin, *Rabelais and his World*, 10.

³⁷² Robeck, *The Azusa Street Revival*, 164. Precedence for using accounts from rituals past, even by evangelists, can be found in anthropology at large. For pertinent examples, see Jeffrey Sissons, *The Polynesian Iconoclasm* (New York: Berghahn Books Inc., 2014), 15–16.

³⁷³ Wacker, *Heaven Below*, 125.

foolism and soul-mating.”³⁷⁴ Fundamentalist critics roundly complained that Pentecostal men and women “lay indecently supine for hours.”³⁷⁵

More shocking, however, was the degree of familiarity across racial barriers. “Men and women embraced each other in apparent agony of emotion, whites and negroes clasped hands and sang together,” wrote one reporter. Azusa Street Mission began printing their own newspaper in 1906, in part, “to argue that Spirit-baptism brought people together in Christian unity across all man-made racial, social, and ecclesiastical boundaries.”³⁷⁶ Just as important for a Carnival atmosphere was that Azusa’s revival featured free and familiar contact across classes. The young and the elderly, the wealthy and the poor all mixed into Azusa Streets pews indiscriminately.³⁷⁷ Historian Gastón Espinosa posits that the power and attraction of Azusa Street Mission “lay in Seymour’s ability to create a Christian transgressive social space wherein people from diverse backgrounds could” interact freely.³⁷⁸ Harvey Cox muses, “sometimes black or white women stood to preach or testify. Often many of the worshippers repaired to a small cottage behind the main building where they ate in the same mixed company” and this, he notes, during the “cruel nadir of Jim Crow and lynching in America.”³⁷⁹ Azusa Street Mission matched Carnival’s universalistic atmosphere

³⁷⁴ Goff, *Fields White unto Harvest*, 125.

³⁷⁵ King, *Disfellowshipped*, 74.

³⁷⁶ Espinosa, *William J. Seymour and the Origins of Pentecostalism*, 56.

³⁷⁷ Robeck, *The Azusa Street Revival*, 13.

³⁷⁸ Espinosa, *William J. Seymour and the Origins of Pentecostalism*, xvi.

³⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

by closing the distance that normally separated its participants, scandalizing neighbors and alienating hierarchical church leaders in the process. From the purview of political rites which consecrate the social order, this also created an atmosphere quite at odds with the social order.

THE SECOND FEATURE OF CARNIVAL: THE SUSPENSION OF TIME

Carnival time. At Azusa Street, as in Carnival, time was seemingly suspended. Carnival is “not a spectacle seen by the people; they live in it, and everyone participates because its very idea embraces all the people. While carnival lasts, there is no other life outside it. During carnival time, life is subject only to its laws, that is, the laws of its own freedom.”³⁸⁰ Meetings at Azusa Street were scheduled daily at 10 a.m., 3 p.m., and at 7:30 p.m. but

[d]espite the posted schedule, the services at the mission often ran into one another, not only hour to hour, but day to day—melding, almost, into one long, three-year service through the course of the revival. People simply lost track of time as they entered into the presence of the Lord. The African American preacher Mother Cotton, for example, described what in her mind had become a single, seamless meeting, running ‘for three years, day and night, without a break.’³⁸¹

³⁸⁰ Bakhtin, *Rabelais and His World*, 7.

³⁸¹ Robeck, *The Azusa Street Revival*, 36.

Wacker notes that the literatures brim with accounts of services that began at 5:00 a.m. or last until 5:00 a.m., or ran “for ten or twelve hours at a stretch.” Azusa pioneer AG Osterberg, he notes, remarked that during the revival, days passed into weeks, and weeks into months, “without any clear reckoning of the date.”³⁸² The expansion of time into timelessness is fundamental for experiencing the otherworldliness that is so characteristic of carnival. For carnival to blot out the mundane world effectively, it must assume proportions that fill the senses. The suspension of time helps to create the sense that life is outside of its usual rut.

THE THIRD FEATURE OF CARNIVAL: HIGH SPIRITED TIME OF FEASTING AND DRUNKENNESS

Drunkness. Carnival is a high-spirited time of feasting and drunkenness. While it is hard to imagine that an evangelical Christian worship rite could be an actual bacchanalia, Pentecostal revivalism values inebriation. Alberta Hall testified in *The Apostolic Faith*, the publication of the Azusa Street Mission, to being “under the power of God for about three hours. I was drunk on the wine of the kingdom.”³⁸³ Being “drunk in the Spirit” features in several accounts in Margaret Poloma’s *Main Street Mystics* (2003), which documents the Toronto

³⁸² Wacker, *Heaven Below*, 103.

³⁸³ McQueen, “Early Pentecostal Eschatology,” 151.

Airport Revival (note that an airport, as a place where peoples typically kept apart in normal life meet, is a classic Bakhtinian square)³⁸⁴ and which, for our purposes, can be readily considered in the tradition of North American Pentecostal revivalism.³⁸⁵

The outbreaks of laughter continued to gather momentum. Mote proclaimed, 'God is throwing one major party.' He then opened to the first chapter of Luke [...] As people kept laughing, Mote's speech became slurred. 'The virgin had no attachments to the world when she was betrothed to a man from the house of David.' He sat down trying to gain composure, looking like a drunk... Mote soon fell to the floor, 'drunk in the Spirit,' as people laughed and applauded.³⁸⁶

Both Carnival and American Pentecostalism value drunkenness as part of a party atmosphere. By sanctioning drunkenness as part and parcel of the

³⁸⁴ Bakhtin, *Rabelais and His World*, 145.

³⁸⁵ Yvette Garcia's forthcoming dissertation (Baylor University, 2019) discusses the similarity of Brownsville Revival to Azusa Street Mission Revival, which is owed in part to the overt influence of the myth of Azusa Street Mission Revival on the leaders of the Brownsville (1995-2000) revival, which drew four million visitors into its Florida church over the course of its five year period. Here is an account of that influence on its lead pastor, Steve Hill: "Before you sit down. Every night I've been reading a little bit from the Azusa Street. I'm a church historian. I love studying church history. I like to find out where we came from. And I find myself thanking people like Count Zinzendorf, who led the Wesley's to the Lord. Have you ever thanked God for Zinzendorf? 'I've never even heard of him, brother.' He's the one that ignited Wesley. Thank God for Henry Scougal that wrote a little book, *The Life of God in the Soul of Man* that George Whitefield read. Read that and turned his life over to Jesus Christ, and from that ignited a revival here in this country. We came out of all that, friend. That's where we came from. So I love studying church history. And when the Holy Ghost started moving in our meetings, ever since January 19 of this year, the Holy Spirit started moving in an incredible way. People are falling and some of them are violently shaking under the power of God. Others are being hit like a, a crack in the air. It's like lightning hits them and they fall to the ground. And others, they describe like electric rivers flowing through them when we pray for them." From Pastor Steve Hill, "Our Obligation is to the Work of the Lord," Brownsville Assemblies of God, June 22, 1996.

³⁸⁶ Poloma, *Main Street Mystics*, 5.

experience of Holy Spirit, Azusa Street Mission Revival mobilized new aesthetics of the sacred. In conjunction with the plain-speech that characterized early Pentecostal worship experiences, the ambience of the Revival appears low-brow, festive, and when punctuated by holy foolishness, hilarious.

THE FOURTH FEATURE OF CARNIVAL: VARIETIES OF MUSIC AND SINGING

Soundtrack or Sung Tradition. Azusa Street and Carnival feature festival-specific styles of singing. Carnival's dithyrambic song, according to Bakhtin, has its roots in Grecian festivals honoring Dionysus. In ancient Greece, inebriated worshippers crowded around a blazing altar to sing the wild lamentations and joys that feature in the adventures of Dionysus.³⁸⁷ In *The Azusa Street Mission &*

³⁸⁷ Bakhtin scholars have identified a wide range of sources for Bakhtin's Carnival. Hillary Bagshaw (2013) emphasizes the place of religion in Bakhtin's intellectual worldview. Bagshaw looks specifically at the influence of James Frazer's *The Golden Bough* on Bakhtin, which influence was not particular to Bakhtin or particularly forceful compared to others in the stream of Frazer's wide literary reception. Frazer's work covers carnival and Saturnalia, and Bagshaw interprets Bakhtin's construction of carnival as having been sourced at least in part from Frazer (83). Bakhtin's linking of the Carnival to Saturnalia supplies important historical materialism to his argument since Harvard University Press has recently published an improved English version of Macrobius' *The Saturnalia*, originally written in Latin in the fifth century BCE. Macrobius details many aspects of Roman culture, including its most important holiday "Saturnalia," which was a precursor to Carnival in its reversals (masters serving slaves) and in its humiliation and beating of a Carnival King. It is quite possible to read the mock crowning of Jesus as the King of the Jews (Matthew 27:29–30; Mark 15:17–19; John 19:2–3) as a Carnivalization both of the literature and possibly even of the historical event itself. On this note, Emerson observes: "Many Russians would concur with Natalia Reed's wary remark in response to Turbin's (obviously exultant) recollection of Bakhtin's insistence that the Gospels were Carnival, too: 'Indeed they are. Up to and including the mob

Revival (2006), Robeck provides a compelling parallel to dithyrambic song in his account of “the heavenly chorus.” The heavenly chorus was a choir of women who sang in indecipherable tongues, impromptu, and whose melodies and harmonies were “weirdly beautiful.”

A colored woman with the voice of a Patti began singing in a tongue that never before was heard. Her voice joined by a contralto of great depth and richness but singing another tongue. Others took up the chant, each after her own tune and ‘tongues,’ till the building was vocal with the tones of golden mellowness. They say that the Holy Ghost tunes their voices. During this manifestation several who had prayed for the coveted gift fell upon their faces in frenzied appeal and acted otherwise after the manner of persons obsessed.³⁸⁸

This “heavenly chorus,” spontaneous, emotive, beautiful, and frenzied, bears striking resemblance to Carnival’s dithyrambic song. These musical rites drew out the hearer’s emotions, creating an atmosphere particular to the festival. In the case of Azusa Street Revival, many reported being drawn into Pentecostalism based on the otherworldly beauty of the heavenly chorus alone. Where suspension of time can be considered a dismantling of mundane time, both drunken affect and musical traditions can be considered constitutive of Carnival—and Azusa’s otherworld—presencing a festive spirit through ritual traditions particular to the time space of the respective festivals.

lynching of Christ’ (OHMB: 175). See Hillary Bagshaw, *Religion in the Thought of Mikhail Bakhtin: Reason and Faith* (New York: Routledge, 2013), Ch.5.

³⁸⁸ Robeck, *The Azusa Street Revival*, 110.

THE FIFTH FEATURE OF CARNIVAL:
LINGUISTIC DISRUPTION

Unique Festival Linguistic System. Bakhtin writes that in the Middle Ages,

This Carnivalization also affected the verbal life of European peoples. The whole strata of language—the so-called familiar speech of the street—were permeated with the Carnival attitude to the world, and a huge fund of liberated Carnivalistic gesticulation was created. The familiar speech of all European peoples is filled to this day with the relics of Carnival, especially in its profanity and expressions of ridicule.³⁸⁹

The temporary suspension, both ideal and real, of hierarchical rank created during carnival time a special type of communication impossible in every life. This led to the creation of special forms of marketplace speech and gesture, frank and free, permitting no distance between those who came in contact with each other and liberating from norms of etiquette and decency imposed at other times. A special carnivalesque marketplace style of expression was formed.

Like Carnival's *jeers and oaths* linguistic system, Pentecostalism, too, has generated its own language system, which is arguably a language of the people. Noting modern-day Pentecostalism's heavy concentration in socio-economically impoverished areas, philosopher James K.A. Smith quips: "[t]he proletariat speaks in tongues."³⁹⁰

³⁸⁹ Bakhtin, *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics*, 107.

³⁹⁰ Smith, *Thinking in Tongues*, 14.

There is an aesthetic commonality between Carnival and Pentecostal tongue-speech. In both languages,

man's behavior, gesture, and word are liberated from the authority of all hierarchical positions (of estate, rank, age, and property status which define them totally in non-Carnival life), and they become, from the point of view of normal, non-Carnival life, eccentric and inappropriate.³⁹¹

Newspaper reporters were quick to hear the humor in tongues-speech and to depict it as eccentric and humorous. Yet, at a most basic level corporate tongues-speech serves the function of informing Pentecostals that they have crossed a threshold and are in a different reality, much like traveling into a foreign country where one expects to hear a different language. In fact, early Pentecostals did report hearing multiple foreign languages in Azusa's throngs as well, such as Spanish, French, Latin, Greek, Hebrew, and Hindustani.³⁹²

Certainly, tongues-speech is eccentric, but it is not eccentric *sui generis*. The evolution of plain-speak into the lingua franca of the church could be said to have begun with the Reformation with the supplanting of Latin by English. The revolutionary age further intensified this development, supplanting the King James' English for the plain-speak of American revolutionaries. As a new kind of populist clergy person flooded the Methodist and Baptist ranks, "the people" took over existing hymns, shot them through with satire, and so perpetuated a new kind of humorous discourse. Thus, the satirized Calvinist hymns we covered in

³⁹¹ Bakhtin, *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics*, 122-3.

³⁹² Espinosa, *William J. Seymour and the Origins of Pentecostalism*, 55.

chapter one are themselves an excellent example of carnivalized discourse, in which elites and their sacred aesthetics are brought low, down to earth, within the reappropriated and weaponized vehicle of a hymn. Evincing an indisputable carnival energy, evangelicals of the revolutionary period enjoyed the opportunity to scorn the pretensions of high-falutin' clergymen by means of disparaging verse. Hatch writes,

Better than any other source, popular poems and songs capture the force of the early Republic's religious populism. Severely anticlerical yet overtly Christian, this verse is tangible evidence of the success of populist religious leaders in articulating the interests of ordinary people. In turn, these poems, ballads, and song are ingenious tools of communication. They translate theological concepts into the language of the marketplace, personalize theological abstractions, deflate the pretension of privileged church leaders, and instill hope and confidence in popular collective action. This verse demonstrates the full range of rhetorical weapons available to outsiders in the wake of the democratic revolutions. Using biting sarcasm and a Jeffersonian sense of history, insurgent authors wrest theological discussion from the rules of orthodoxy in order to bring it from the court of public opinion.³⁹³

This tradition clearly continued into early Pentecostalism. Grant Wacker notes,

Poking fun, albeit bitter fun, at one's ecclesiastical betters had long been a staple in radical evangelical circles and remained so among pentecostals. It might be called the 'comeuppance' narrative. In this time-honored scenario, the seminary-educated denominational clergyman senses the vapidness of his message, experienced a conversion and Holy Spirit baptism, and then—but only then—displayed a truly empowered ministry. Pentecostals loved to tell of people, especially uptown parsons who abandoned the mausoleums that passed for church after they witness the vitality of a real Holy Ghost meeting. "Proud well dressed preachers come into

³⁹³ Hatch, *Democratization*, 227.

investigate,” ran one typical account. “Soon their high looks are replaced with wonder, then conviction comes and very often you will find them in a short time wallowing on the dirty floor, asking God to forgive them and make them as little children.³⁹⁴

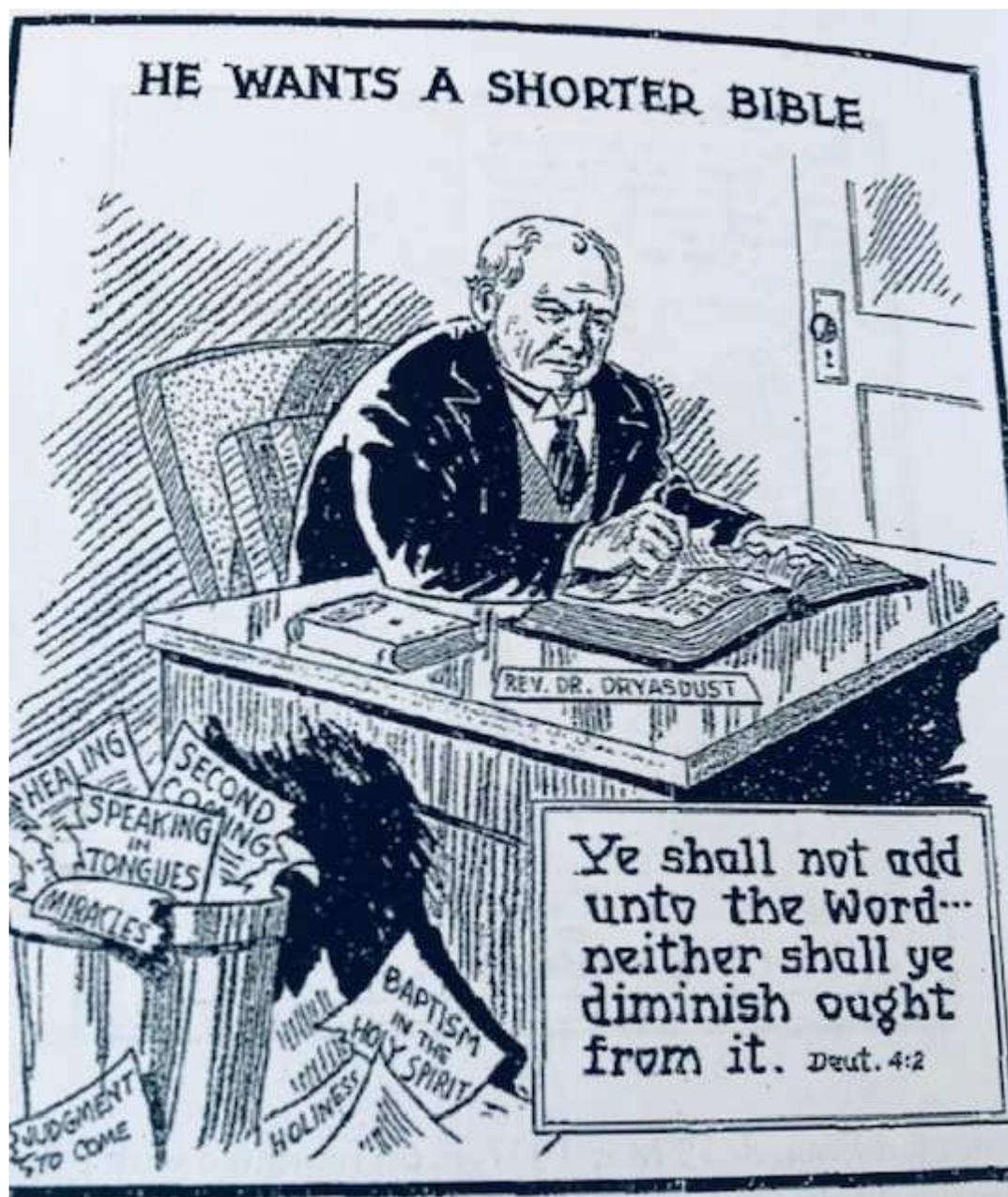
This quotation manifests several characteristics of the logic of reversals.

Note that Pentecostals loved to tell story about “uptown” parsons who end up on “the floor.” These are carnival logistics. Again, soon their “high looks are replaced” and they are reduced from “proud” preachers to children asking for forgiveness.³⁹⁵

Beyond carnival logistics, we see two additional characteristics of the Pentecostal altar here. First, that the Holy Spirit enacts a debasing confrontation with people of higher social stations; and second, that this experience ultimately makes the person’s ministry vital whereas before it was dead. The humbling experience does ultimately serve to make the person and his ministry better or more real than before. Still, most important for our purposes is the manner in which early Pentecostals elaborated a fresh discourse about the power of the Holy Spirit to bring down the uppity, and that this leads to a populist lay pneumatology. This discourse evidently had staying power, as these illustrations from the 1930s demonstrate:

³⁹⁴Wacker, *Heaven Below*, 193.

³⁹⁵Taylor, *The Spirit and the Bride*, 95.



In the first drawing, from *Pentecostal Evangel* in 1940, a Rev. Dr. DryasDust is seen at his desk, with Pentecostal themes thrown into the wastebasket. In his trash are papers that are headlined as follows: *The Second Coming*, *Healing*,

Speaking in Tongues, Holiness, Baptism in the Holy Spirit, Judgment to Come, and *Miracles*. These pages are coming from the “Rev. Dr.,” who is tearing pages out his Bible. Thus, the inscription: “He Wants A Shorter Bible.”³⁹⁶ A second cartoon depicts a false shepherd abandoning the sheep for the path of compromise. Produced in 1937, again it appeared in *Pentecostal Evangel*:

³⁹⁶ King, *Disfellowshipped*, 240.



This drawing cautions that “[I]mpotent wordiness in the pulpit leads to subtle worldliness in the pew.”³⁹⁷ The critique of elites and their true impotence was an

³⁹⁷ Ibid., 239.

ongoing theme of early Pentecostalism, and played a critical role in developing Pentecostal sensibilities and humor. As the opening anecdote to this dissertation aimed to show, Pentecostals *like* taking the high and mighty down a few notches. They will take something serious like a hymn or a funeral, and carnivalize it with frank speech, insults, and humor. Such depictions are similar in political import to the “pan-European tradition of world-upside down drawings and prints which, James C. Scott notes, in *Domination and the Arts of Resistance* (1990) became very popular throughout Europe. Scott explains that, during the sixteenth century, the printing press made widely available broadsheets that depicted reversals of the hierarchical order, the order of predation, or both. “Mice ate cats, children spanked parents, the hare snared the hunter, the cart pulled the horse, fishermen were pulled from the water by fish, the wife beat the husband, the ox slaughtered the butcher”: all scenes depicted reversals of customary relationships.”³⁹⁸ When early Pentecostals depicted the uselessness of professional preachers, they partook in a popular art form of resistance that has played a significant part in disseminating carnival culture.

THE SIXTH FEATURE OF CARNIVAL: LAUGHTER

Laughter. Laughter is the essence of Carnival for Bakhtin. He writes,

³⁹⁸ Scott, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance*, 166-67.

Laughter was eliminated from religious cult, from feudal and state ceremonials, etiquette, and from all the genres of high speculation. An intolerant, one-sided tone of seriousness is characteristic of official medieval culture. The very contents of medieval ideology—asceticism, somber providentialism, sin, atonement, suffering as well as the character of the feudal regime, with its oppression and intimidation—all these elements determined this tony of icy petrified seriousness. It was supposedly the only tone fit to express the true, the good, and all that was essential and meaningful. Fear, religious awe, humility, these were the overtones of this seriousness.

Early Christianity had already condemned laughter. Tertullian, Cyprian, and John Chrysostom preached against ancient spectacles, especially against the mime and the mime's jests and laughter. John Chrysostom declared that jests and laughter are not from God but from the devil. Only permanent seriousness, remorse, and sorrow for his sins befit the Christian. During the struggle against the Aryans, Christians were accused of introducing elements of the mime—song, gesticulation, laughter—into religious services. But this intolerant seriousness of the official church ideology made it necessary to legalize the gaiety, laughter, and jests which had been eliminated from the canonized ritual and etiquette. Thus forms of pure laughter were created parallel to the official forms.³⁹⁹

Holy laughter is an aspect of American Pentecostal revivals that receives little scholarly attention beyond its documentation. Frequently recorded in tandem with being *drunk in the Spirit*, holy laughter sets the ecstatic believer into a laughing spell sometimes described as “gut-busting” that has no evident earthly reason and lasts for a span of at least several minutes.⁴⁰⁰ The phenomenon of a

³⁹⁹Bakhtin, *Rabelais and His World*, 73-74.

⁴⁰⁰Margaret Poloma, *Main street mystics: The Toronto blessing and reviving Pentecostalism* (Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira Press, 2003) 5.

holy, laughing, spiritually drunk person who attempts to testify, but who cannot do so without slurring her words, is beyond doubt an instance of American Pentecostalism producing its own “holy fools” and is received as humorous by the crowd, which laughs, too, in response.

Here it is pertinent to acknowledge that two preeminent Russian medieval scholars have made an argument that has similarities to that of this chapter. Leading American scholar of Bakhtin studies, Caryl Emerson canvasses their work:

Inspired perhaps by the universalism of Bakhtin’s claims, some Russian cultural historians began to explore the ‘transposability’ of Rabelais-style grotesquerie into specifically Russian history. In 1976, the *great* medievalist Dmitri Likhachev, in collaboration with A.M. Pachenko...drew suggestive parallels between the Bakhtinian-Rabelaisian Carnival laughter and Russian medieval theatricals and... holy foolishness.⁴⁰¹

Emerson herself refers to this argument as “speculative academic folly” and sides with the “Tartu school scholars” who in their “lengthy, thoughtful rebuttal” insist that Likhachev and Pachenko had read Russian medieval behavior out of context. The Tartu school scholars countered that Russian medieval life “was governed by a different, more rigid binary, the opposition of sanctity and Satanism,” and asserted that Russian medieval theatricals were not participatory like Bakhtin’s Carnival, but didactic and judgmental. They also disagreed with Likhachev’s

⁴⁰¹ Emerson, *The First Hundred Years of Mikhail Bakhtin*, 166; emphasis mine.

treatment of holy fools as Carnival jesters, with the assertion that “their outrageous behavior was meant to humiliate, in imitation of Christ, either the spectator or the fool,” but that this behavior was in neither case meant to “liberate or to empower.” Finally, they cautioned that laughter and the inversion of values were not considered emancipated behavior.⁴⁰² The Tartu scholars, however, did leave open the possibility that these conditions of Carnival as holy foolishness might obtain in other cultures (they named Western European cultures).

In contrast to Russian medieval life, holy laughter in American Pentecostal revivals is a sign of liberation and has no taint of humiliation for the spectator or the laugher. Freedom and power are perennial bywords in American Pentecostal characterization of the work of the Spirit.⁴⁰³ The altar space is definitively the space for congregational participation in the sacred, and is sometimes entered into without invitation, sometimes spontaneously taken over.⁴⁰⁴ The eruption of Pentecostal laughter in American evangelicalism was in the context of repression

⁴⁰² Though scholar of Russian studies Priscilla Hunt posits that Pachenko and Likhachev’s argument has correctly named a vibrant Russian tradition. See *Holy Foolishness in Russia: New Perspectives*, Priscilla Hunt and Svitlana Kobets, eds., (Bloomington, IN: Slavica Publishers, 2011), 1–14. Angela Brintlinger concurs, citing Panchenko and Likhachev’s work (this exact argument), noting that it is actually foundational to the study of holy foolishness in Russia. Their work treated holy foolishness as spectacle and social protest. See Angela Brintlinger, “Holy Foolishness in Russia: New Perspectives, by Priscilla Hunt and Svitlana Kobets, eds.,” *Canadian-American Slavic Studies* 52, 4: 463–466.

⁴⁰³For an example of the theme of empowerment within Pentecostal theology, see Frank Macchia, *Baptized in the Spirit: A Global Pentecostal Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2006), ch.3.

⁴⁰⁴ Anderson, *Vision of the Disinherited*, 37.

by, rejection of, and competition with the political and hierarchical rites of denominational Christianity, and so became a subversive and resistant form of laughter. It may be that in Russian medieval culture robust laughter “was always unambiguously blasphemy,” but in American settings, in Pentecostal churches and perhaps in Pentecostal revival ecstasy alone, ecstatic laughter is and has been from its inception populist, sacred, and regular enough to be recognizable.⁴⁰⁵

It is also well-documented. In 1909, Frederick Henke, a Northwestern University theology professor visited a Pentecostal service in Chicago. There he observed “some shouting, some violent jerks, some screaming, and some laughing aloud.”⁴⁰⁶ About the same time in Iowa, Faithists caught the attention of the Ottawa newspaper for their “laughing, high-trebled, and piercing exclamations.”⁴⁰⁷ At the Toronto Airport Revival (1994-6), which is seen as a recurrence of Azusa style revival alongside the Brownsville Revival (1995–2000). Many of the carnivalistic phenomena here under discussion were seen again,

⁴⁰⁵ Eric Hoenes de Pinal’s work with Q’eqchi-Maya Catholics in Guatemala funds his argument that much of the difference between charismatic evangelicals and their Catholic counterparts is the embrace of festivity and merriment as part of the worship experience on the part of the Pentecostals. Hoenes de Pinal notes that Catholics strongly associate somber affect as reflective of true worship. This bifurcation of emotion on the part of the Catholics (Pentecostals embrace mournful weeping as well as well as festivity) rehearses the split of perspectives, which Bakhtin problematizes. See Eric Hoenes de Pinal, “Towards an Ideology of Gesture: Gestures, Body Movement and Language Ideology among Q’eqchi’-Maya Catholics.” In “Beyond *Logos*: Extensions of the Language Ideology Paradigm in the Study of Global Christianity(-ies),” Special Section of *Anthropological Quarterly* 84 (3) (Summer 2011): 595–630.

⁴⁰⁶ Wacker, *Heaven Below*, 101.

⁴⁰⁷ Ibid.

including holy laughter.⁴⁰⁸ In light of these overlaps between the laughter of Carnival and American holy foolishness, it is interesting to note the case of the Russian Molokans. Nowhere is Pentecostal Carnival's transposability more historically vivid than in the case of the Russian "milk drinkers," who defied Orthodox restrictions against milk and, under intense political persecution, "experienced an outpouring of the Holy Spirit," which transformed them into "holy jumpers." The Molokans, who moved to Los Angeles on the advice of the Holy Spirit, integrated into Azusa's laughing altars with little problem.⁴⁰⁹

THE SEVENTH FEATURE OF CARNIVAL: THE WORLD-UPSIDE-DOWN STATUS

Carnival King, Discrowned. Carnival's world-upside-down function is totally dependent on its conspicuous status reversals. In the most important Carnival performance, a Carnival king is crowned first, and then discrowned;

⁴⁰⁸ Poloma, *Main Street Mystics*, 4–5; 77–78.

⁴⁰⁹ Robeck, *The Azusa Street Revival*, 57; 138; 190. The 1833 outpouring of the Holy Spirit on Russian Molokan-Jumpers is at yet under-researched. However, Nicholas Breyfogle and Glenn Dynner have together and separately documented the emotionalism and prophetic nature of Molokan worship rituals and their concomitant political oppression under Tsar Alexander II, which continued from 1855, through Alexander III (1881–1894), and Nicholas II (1894–1917). When facing the threat of war from the Ottoman empire, Nicholas II pushed Molokans, already geographically on the Russian periphery, to evacuate Russia altogether. Molokans landed in Los Angeles, where Robeck notes their participation in Azusa Street). See Glenn Dynner, et al., *Holy Dissent: Jewish and Christian Mystics in Eastern Europe* (Detroit, IL: Wayne University Press, 2011). See also Nicholas Breyfogle's *Heretics and Colonizers: Forging Russia's Empire in the South Caucasus* (New York: Cornell University Press, 2005) for a detailed history of Molokan oppression, including their pacifist stands against their government.

praised, then abused. There is an obvious choice for the historical figure who could be considered Azusa Street's Carnival King: Charles Parham. The historical rise and fall of Charles Parham, as father of Pentecostalism, plays an important role in substantiating the carnivalesque character of early Pentecostalism.

Charles Parham was a gifted preacher from Kansas who left the Methodist ministry in 1895 to open a healing home in Topeka. Parham associated with a little network of holiness preachers who advocated a return to "apostolic lines," for whom this meant an emphasis on signs and wonders mixed with their shared commitment to white supremacy. As early as 1900, Parham taught that the gift of *xenolalic* tongues, for missions' work, was the evidence of the baptism of the Holy Spirit. That year Topeka Bible School student Agnes Ozman spoke in tongues. This event made local news, and soon thereafter Parham went on an excited preaching tour through Kansas, Missouri, and Texas. During this extended tour, Parham met William Seymour and agreed to disciple him in the "apostolic faith," albeit within certain racist parameters.

Racism here (as everywhere) had a spatiality, and this spatiality was likewise given body. The racist structure of William Seymour's participation in Charles Parham's Apostolic work included the following conditions: Seymour could not seek the baptism at the same altar as whites, could not sit in the same classrooms, and while he had a mandate to pray for others to receive the blessing, Seymour was not to pray for whites. Racism, as a hierarchical social order, has to

do with the arrangement of bodies. There was not to be, as Bakhtin terms it, “free contact in the public square” between blacks and white in early twentieth-century America. Laws and customs which separate areas for whites from areas for black were then, as they are often now, to be deduced, observed, kept—and this quite apart from the wishes of white people, for instance. Their place in the race hierarchy came with certain conditions, to which they were expected to give body. Accordingly, Robeck, in his interpretation of Parham, rationalizes that “Parham would not violate the letter of Jim Crow laws.”⁴¹⁰ But there is actually no evidence to suppose that he might ever have wanted to do so. Instead, Parham’s revealing reaction to Azusa Street’s Revival was primarily one of unvarnished horror at its lack of racial boundaries!

William Seymour, a man nearly indefatigably oriented toward unity in the Spirit, had extended an invitation to Parham to “lead one great reunion revival starting at Azusa Street” and “with *great anticipation*, Seymour advertised Parham’s arrival” (ibid., emphasis mine). However, when Parham arrived, he disapproved vociferously of participants’ altar practices, declaiming their *fanaticism* and decrying their interracial contact. Parham attempted to take control of the Mission in order to rein it in, but he failed. He was instead disinvented from the mission. When he set up a rival mission just blocks away, *The Apostolic Faith*, the newspaper of Azusa Street Mission, released a statement

⁴¹⁰ Robeck, *The Azusa Street Revival*, 42–45.

saying, “We thought of him to be our leader, before waiting on the Lord. . . We can be rather hasty. We now see that the Lord should be our leader.”⁴¹¹

Any defense of Parham can begin, and possibly end, with the due acknowledgment that Parham’s desire to build an apostolic movement with racist divisions was only a mirror of the race hierarchical divisions operative in the wider US culture. Yet this is precisely my point. Bourdieu theorizes that such a matching hierarchical arrangement between the social order operative in culture and the version of Pentecostalism that Parham would have preferred, is a principle of *homology* between *fields of power*.⁴¹² This is, for our purposes, a quite critical point. Racial hierarchy, class hierarchy, gender hierarchy in the church is hierarchical structure *in the church*. Bodies arranged according to this order, in the form of a Church congregation or denomination, is the hierarchical order given body in the church. From this vantage point, the notion that the church simply is liminal, as envisioned by Vondey and noted in chapter three, is less a historical reality than simply an ideology. Instead, the church’s homology to the racial order in the practices of Christian ritual was absolutely the norm in American Christianity then and quite obviously remains the norm today.

As discussed in chapter one, the work of every field of power is to mimic and therefore authorize the social order as a hierarchy of *merit*, which Bourdieu problematizes as both a farce, not truly organized around merit, and as a social

⁴¹¹ Ibid., 128.

⁴¹² Schwartz, *Culture and Power: The Sociology of Pierre Bourdieu*, 6–10.

ill, i.e. actually a hierarchy of oppression. From this vantage point, readers can think of the British Israelite theology to which Parham subscribed as an example of an overt theologizing of a racial order which was everywhere actually practiced, if most often implicitly. Failure to observe this order was exactly that— *failure to observe*, and could be redressed by laws, by lawful punishment, and with vigilante violence that would often be excused or receive a symbolic slap on the hand. Everyone participates in and replicates the hierarchical social order. Through their observation of social mores and competition over capital, everyone carefully recapitulates the orderly, mundane, oppressive world that Bakhtin's carnival turns upside down. Starting with the king first, but continuing on with "free contact in the public square," carnival upends social categories and levels hierarchy, even turns it upside down. But while Turner posits that the social order is completed and balanced by periods of liminality that renew it and that entail suspensions of the order, the US racial order was not such a structure. The US race hierarchy at the turn of the twentieth century did not embrace liminal periods of egalitarianism and *communitas*.

Yet, in this context, Azusa Street Mission deconstructed the US race hierarchy and constructed, instead, the baptism of the Holy Spirit as a carnival, inverting the social hierarchy so that black people led whites and so that children, too, delivered sermons. This upside-down world, marked by free contact between

people who were otherwise kept apart, they named the world of the Holy Spirit.

At Azusa blacks, whites, and other nationalities worshipped together in racial harmony in a black person's home in the black section of Los Angeles [...] The socially transgressive nature of Seymour's message and revival practices is clear when compared to the race riots that erupted that same month in Springfield, Missouri. On April 14, 1906, the day before Azusa opened its doors, three African Americans named Horace Duncan, Fred Coker, and Will Allen were dragged by an angry club-wielding mob of seven thousand whites to the town square and hung until their lifeless bodies dangled in the air.⁴¹³

Charles Parham wanted, instead, an upright Pentecostalism, in which the social order was visible and secure.

Given his way, there would be no Carnival in Pentecostalism. Although Michael McClymond assesses the eventual historical rift between Seymour and Parham as tragic in light of Parham's explicit subscription to white supremacy, Parham's awkward, heated public displacement as "father of Pentecostalism" might equally be read as comic. Parham's British Israelite theology transferred the chosenness of Israel to Anglo-Saxons—in other words, he was a rank and file race hierarchalist. Therefore, Parham's disenfranchisement from early Pentecostalism obtains for our historical narrative a palpable sense of *comic relief*.⁴¹⁴ If there is any pathos in the memory of Seymour having to study the Bible by himself in the hallways of Parham's school, then there is certainly humor

⁴¹³ Espinosa, *William J. Seymour and the Origins of Pentecostalism*, 57.

⁴¹⁴ Robeck, *The Azusa Street Revival*, 45–47.

in his carnivalistic ascendancy to the headship of Azusa Street Mission's Revival over a furious Parham. *Laugh!* History might have borne an openly racist Pentecostalism, but instead we have the gentle figure of Seymour, son of Louisiana slaves. Parham wanted the mysticism, visions, and tongues speech without the manifold disorder of a Carnival, and thus found himself barred from the pulpit of the movement he had labored to create. He himself was *taken down*.

Upside Down Hierarchy. At Azusa Street Mission, William Seymour was the pastor. Many of the persons on the leadership board were also black. Seymour's position of leadership over white attendees is the foundation of Azusa Street's world-upside-down structure. Women, too, were able to participate in leadership to a great degree in early Pentecostalism. At times, even children delivered messages to the Azusa Street body, where "saints did not treat children as children but as adults endowed with special spiritual authority. Like adults, they not only spoke in tongues but reportedly spoke intelligible languages such as Spanish and Latin."⁴¹⁵ These reversals bespoke the specialness of the environment in which they occurred, a uniqueness that has become the most potent source of nostalgia in American Pentecostal oral tradition.

Appraisal of Azusa Street reveals that a carnivalized atmosphere, featuring inversion of social norms, reversals of hierarchy, and suspension of

⁴¹⁵ Wacker, *Heaven Below*, 105.

mundane time and activities formed the ritual basis of its now long-famous effervescence. Charles Parham's outrage was completely unfounded as it only reflected upended common-sense expectations: the preservation of differences between men, women, and children and between ethnic groups; and respect for hierarchies of gender, race, and age. In short, this was the order of society and this order seemed sacred. In a real sense, Parham was a faithful witness to the ritual logics of Azusa Street. He understood what he rejected. Azusa Street presented a carnivalized social order as the time-space of the Holy Spirit, i.e. the new height of spiritual experience. The Carnival element of Pentecostal worship is what Charles Parham found revolting about Azusa Street. His censure is painful and *shocking*. In this quotation, he bemoans carnivalistic *mésalliances*, in this case the pairing of one person from a (supposed) higher status with one of a lower one, of "whites and blacks, [who] knelt together or fell across one another; ...[of] a white woman ... [who] could be seen thrown back in the arms of a big 'buck nigger'."⁴¹⁶ Note how Parham invokes Bakhtinian logics of *mésalliance* in censuring this contact by mashing the category of human and animal in a derogatory way—adding the descriptor "buck."⁴¹⁷

⁴¹⁶ Robeck, *The Azusa Street Revival*, 141.

⁴¹⁷ Carlyle van Thompson writes, "The concept of the black man as a buck resides in the historical breeding of black men and women in effort to increase the number of slaves...Many slave owners did use black males as studs; here the black man as buck was born...Linking black male slaves to animals, white society considered slaves literally subhuman, beasts... they were potential rapists of white women." See Thompson, *The Tragic Black Buck: Racial Masquerading in the American Literary Imagination* (New York: Peter Lang, 2004), 2.

Parham felt compelled to take a hardened stance against the upside-down politics of Azusa Street, stating: “[w]e conduct *dignified* religious services, and have no connection with the sort which is characterized by trances, fits and spasms, jerks, shakes, and contortions. We are wholly foreign to religious *anarchy*” .⁴¹⁸ Parham correctly understood the revival’s lack of hierarchical order as its “anarchy” (20). Pentecostals’ Carnival is the world that famous evangelist Aimee Semple McPherson, who would become the head of 5,300-seat Los Angelus Temple, vigorously denied when she claimed that Pentecostalism was “not marked by hysteria” but by “deep, holy, sober, godly, *reverent*, prayerful *exaltation* of the gentle Christ of Galilee.”⁴¹⁹ Sober? Gentle? *Reverent*? Azusa Street’s detractors paint the contrary picture: a revival that *was* hysterical, amusing, disorderly, undignified, and socially aberrant.

But not everyone appreciates the world turned upside down.

THE EIGHTH FEATURE OF CARNIVAL: ECCENTRICITY AND GYMNASTICS

⁴¹⁸ Robeck, *The Azusa Street Revival*, 128. Parham was not alone in equating the bodily ecstasies of nascent Pentecostalism with anarchy. At the Keswick Convention (1905), evangelist A.T. Pierson described the “out of control” emotionalism, tongues-speech of the all-night meeting of three hundred Welsh delegates as “disturbing anarchy” and “a Satanic disturbance.” Dana Robert, *Occupy Until I Come: A.T. Pierson and the Evangelization of the World* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2003), 260–62.

⁴¹⁹ Blumhofer, *Everybody’s Sister*, 186.

Eccentricity. Bakhtin posits that “scandals and eccentricities destroy the epic and tragic wholeness of the world, they make make a breach in the stable, normal (‘seemly’) course of human affairs and events, they free human behavior from the norms and motivations that predetermine it.”⁴²⁰ Accordingly, Carnival performances featured dwarves, giants, and animals, juggling acts and acrobatics. Some conspicuous features of Pentecostal worship make interesting parallels to these aspects of Carnival. Journalists often referred to revivalists’ rolling, shaking, jumping and other bodily gyrations as Pentecostal “gymnastics,” which parallel Carnival’s amusing acrobats. Likewise, reporters quickly picked up on animalistic elements at Azusa:

She was talking in the strange tongues that the Holy Rollers affect, but it sounded more like an old speckled hen had laid an egg in the corner of the barn and wanted everyone to know it. If the old hen idea hadn’t spoiled the effect of the thing it might have been awesome or tragical or pathetic or something else, but as it was it was simply ludicrous.⁴²¹

A University of Southern California student who was writing a research thesis on speaking in tongues visited some neighboring pentecostal missions in 1913. There he noted that “pandemonium reigned” – which he described as people jumping up and down, barking like dogs, hooting like owls.⁴²² Newspapers documented Pentecostals in ecstasy as “howling like coyotes.” Early Pentecostal services were

⁴²⁰ Bakhtin, *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics*, 117.

⁴²¹ Robeck, *The Azusa Street Revival*, 157.

⁴²² Wacker, *Heaven Below*, 102.

known to be so full of eccentricities, that often people visited to watch the spectacles therein.

Elision into animalistic behavior has a more intense carnivalesque character beyond being an obvious scandal or eccentricity. Bakhtin highlights “Indian Wonders” as an important literary source of grotesque bodily images. He writes, “Some of them are half human, half animal: the hippopods with hooves instead of feet, sirens with fishtails, ‘sinucephalics’ who bark like dogs...There are also giants, dwarves and pygmies.”⁴²³ Bakhtin reads the mash up of human and animalistic characteristics as “the transgression of the limits dividing the body from the world.”⁴²⁴ The animal-human hybrid is one example of a *carnivalistic mésalliance*, which presents “all things that were once self-closed, disunified, distanced from one another by a noncarnivalistic hierarchical worldview” as drawn together into carnivalistic contact and combination.⁴²⁵ Animalistic behavior is intelligible, too, as a form of anti-hierarchy. Sociologist of religion and environment studies professor Laurel Kearns points out that “an undoing of the human/animal dualism” can be noxious to some who “through their lens of human exceptionalism...may see it as demoting humans,” and posits this hierarchy is foundational “to human hubris, anthropocentrism, and elitism.”⁴²⁶

⁴²³ Bakhtin, *Rabelais and His World*, 345.

⁴²⁴ *Ibid.*, 347.

⁴²⁵ Bakhtin, *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics*, 123.

⁴²⁶ Laurel Kearns, “Foreword,” in *Divinanimality: Animal Theory Creaturely Theology*, eds. Stephen Moore and Laurel Kearns (New York: Fordham University Press, 2014), xiii.

Kearns also connects the restriction of animals to profane life to Protestant disenchantment: “Hand in hand with this disenchantment of the world, as Max Weber would have it, is the line of thought, most familiar to us through Descartes, that indeed animals cannot communicate because they cannot think, they cannot feel, they cannot know, and, therefore, would have nothing to communicate.”⁴²⁷ Just as their claims to miraculous healing resisted the disenchantment of believer’s bodies, so to did early Pentecostal practices of divinity register both a forceful anti-hierarchy and a claim to superior spiritual power.

Los Angeles’ newspaper reporters were not *necessarily* exaggerating: the aforementioned Toronto Revival (1994–1996), which continued this tradition, infamously featured people roaring like lions and braying like donkeys, and led to the same scandalized news coverage.⁴²⁸

Reception of Azusa Street Mission as Carnavalesque

Azusa appeared carnivalistic to both insiders and outsiders. Upside-down logics permeated newspaper reports and detractors’ denunciations. A newspaper depiction read: “Several women spent at least a part of the night lying flat on their backs... each endeavoring to kick her heels higher in the air than the others.

⁴²⁷ Ibid.

⁴²⁸ Poloma, *Main Street Mystics*, 67.

As a result the fanatical and almost hysterical females were practically standing on their heads,”⁴²⁹ which certainly suggests an upside-down world, while Pentecostalism’s being “the last vomit of Satan,” or “turkey buzzard vomit”⁴³⁰ evoke the nausea of topsy-turvy movement. Other denunciations which also invoke carnival and symbolic inversions included: “rulers of spiritual Sodom” and “climax of demon worship,” the rhyming triplet: “jugglers, enchanters, necromancers,” “howling dervishes, pandemonium,” “lunacy and infidelity.”⁴³¹ More important, however, was that insider logic also invoked its own inversions. The title of Grant Wacker’s seminal book on American Pentecostalism, *Heaven Below*, (for our purposes, *Upside Down*), is taken from poetic testimony that suggests its own symbolic inversion and otherworldiness: “We have no need for organs or pianos, for the Holy Ghost plays the piano in all our hearts. It is so sweet. It is heaven below.”⁴³² The simultaneity of registers of reversal, often converging on a Pentecostal scene at one time, are well-described in this passage:

The published testimony of a young girl who claimed to have been “taken up two or three feet from the floor by the Holy Spirit and held there until some of the audience became frightened and put their hands on her was followed by an attempt at explanation: “Well the great day is just before us when the laws of gravitation shall be reversed, and we need not be shocked if God shows us a little foretaste of it occasionally in these wonderful days of the “Latter

⁴²⁹ Robeck, *The Azusa Street Mission*, 176.

⁴³⁰ Blumhofer, *Restoring the Faith*, 101.

⁴³¹ See Vinson Synan, *The Holiness-Pentecostal Tradition*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, [1971] 1997).

⁴³² Wacker, *Heaven Below*, xv.

Rain.”⁴³³

Here the logic of reversals effects a down-to-up positionality change in immediate space, but there is also an appeal to the reversal of ecological laws of gravitation and a reference to the latter rain, which is not obviously a reversal but will be made clearer as one, too. The fact that the spiritual virtuosi in this passage is a “young girl” adds a carnivalistic element, too, turning upside down normal hierarchies.

In assessing these logistics, this discussion does not stress marginal aspects of early Pentecostalism. In a chapter that argues that early Pentecostals are (contrary to established scholarship) not best understood as dispensationalists of any sort, Larry McQueen offers,

The holistic worldview of the Azusa Street participants may be called apocalyptic in that the realms of heaven and earth were often perceived to be *intermingled*. While they certainly believed in heaven as a future state, they also experiences an immediate sense of ‘heaven below.’ Thus, Nellie Burnwell wrote, ‘It is heaven to go to heaven in.’... Maggie Geddis reported a vision of ‘the New Jerusalem coming down out of heaven, and the rainbow encircled throne, just a portion of that given in Revelation. A vision of hell convinced Thomas Junk that hell is a literal place, and that he should preach it that way.’⁴³⁴

Pentecostal saints experienced not only an upsetting of the social order, and not only its overturning. They experienced a cosmological carnival, in which a three-tiered universe sometimes reversed position, opened up, and also became a site

⁴³³ Blumhofer, *Restoring the Faith*, 94.

⁴³⁴ McQueen, “Early Pentecostal Eschatology,” 150.

of carnivalization. Blumhofer notes, “frequent dreams, visions, and transports mediated interpretation of the divine significance of everyday occurrences” for early Pentecostals.⁴³⁵

In this section, I have endeavored to show three kinds of logistics at work at Azusa Street Mission revival. There was the logic of bodily inversions or carnivalizations, such as holy rolling and *mésalliance*, such as when humans adopt animal-like behavior. There were also political inversions: a discrowning of a would-be king or father of Pentecostalism and his displacement by a former slave, an African American preacher Parham once required to sit in a hallway. This is a clear case of a reversal of the social-racial order. There were also the debasing reversals that feature doctors and professional clergymen spiritually humiliated. Taken together, all of these reversals were comprehensively received as a *cosmological* reversal, a *heaven below*, complete with visible mist.⁴³⁶ At Azusa Street Mission, the carnivalism was polyvalent: carnivalized bodies represented a carnivalized heaven that also carnivalized the social order.

Discerning a Ritual within a Festival: Carnival and Mennipea

In the following section, our discussion narrows to the Pentecostal altar. Having covered Azusa Street Mission Revival as carnivalistic, I now endeavor to materialize this upside-down world as centered on an altar capable of producing

⁴³⁵ Blumhofer, *Restoring the Faith*, 94.

⁴³⁶ McQueen, “Early Pentecostal Eschatology,” 150.

seasonal reversals. If Carnival is a festival, then I argue that the rite of seasonal reversal, one premised as a confrontation between opposites and which seeks to mediate this confrontation into a reversal—a world upside down—is the ritual that is structurally underneath or within the carnival, so to speak. To make this ritual logic and work clearer, our discussion once again picks up Bakhtin’s thinking about carnival, but more specifically within his discussion of the three-tiered cosmology of Mennipean satire.⁴³⁷

Bakhtin’s discussion of mennipea, as key source material for Carnival, is instructive for two reasons. First, it names the *Acts of the Apostles* as the best source of menippea in the Gospels, effectively providing a source of carnivalization for early Pentecostals, for whom Acts (especially the second chapter) played an *all-important* role in giving a primary model for the baptism of the Holy Spirit.⁴³⁸ To be clear, Bakhtin presents the mennipea as a carnivalized

⁴³⁷ Bakhtin outlines fourteen characteristics of the mennipean genre as found in ancient literature. These include: (1) comedic elements; (2) freedom from plots typically characterized by history; (3) elements of fantasy and adventure that function solely to focus the narrative toward a philosophical or universal truth; (4) settings in crude places such as brothels, prisons, and marketplaces; (5) ultimate philosophical questions being addressed; (6) three-planed construction: action occurs on the earth, Olympus, and the nether region; (7) experimental fantasticality—observations are often made from interesting and different points of view; (8) moral psychological behavior exhibited in characters resulting in the dialogic nature of the individual; (9) scandals prevalent, including inappropriate behavior; (10) sharp and oxymoronic contrasts; (11) social utopian elements; (12) use of other genres integrated cohesively within the narrative; (13) multi-styled and multi-toned nature; and (14) emphasis upon current issues. Scholar of early Christianity and gender studies Christy Cobb writes, “Unlike many of his other terms, Bakhtin outlines the characteristics of the genre of menippea with great care.” This systematic description can be found in Bakhtin, *Problems of Dostoevsky’s Poetics*, 114–19. Christy Cobb, “Slave-Girls Speaking Truth: Slavery and Gender in Luke-Acts and Other Ancient Narratives,” (Unpublished PhD Diss., Drew University, Madison, NJ, 2015).

⁴³⁸Wacker, *Heaven Below*, 5, 256.

form of literature and denotes *Acts* in particular as being a strong example of the mennipea. Thus *Acts of the Apostles* serves as a textual point of connection between the carnival ritual and early Pentecostalism. Second, the discussion features Bakhtin elaborating Carnival again, this time in menippean literature as opposed to the earth-bound Carnival festival-ritual as he imagines it in *Rabelais and His World* (1984 [1968]). These ruminations provide material which, when read alongside the construction of the Pentecostal altar, illustrate its carnivalistic ethos and aims in a three-tiered cosmology which is congruent with mennipea, but which cosmology is largely left out of the account of Carnival as an earth-bound festival. Menippea are a key source of the carnivalized literature, and they integrate otherworlds in a manner that exceeds the frame of the Carnival festival. This integration of otherworlds is a particularly good stream of thought to pair with Azusa Street's Pentecostals since they were demonstrably concerned with heaven and hell. Since mennipea are still properly carnivalesque and presented as such, Bakhtin's discussion of the mennipea accommodates readings of Pentecostal occupation of heaven and hell while keeping the frame of the life of carnival.⁴³⁹

I have presented carnival categories as fitting analogues for the festival culture of Azusa Street Mission. In the next discussion, the mennipean universe

⁴³⁹ Bakhtin, *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics*, 114–19.

that Bakhtin connects to carnival through literary influences I now connect to the Pentecostal carnival at the Pentecostal altar.

Our discussion of mennipian three-tiered cosmology allows us to take a closer look at the Pentecostal altar in an historical account of the Pentecostal author written by American novelist James Baldwin.⁴⁴⁰ Baldwin's account of his experience, as written through John Grimes at a Pentecostal is ambivalent. Though it initially provided him the spiritual victory he felt he needed, three years later Baldwin felt disappointed instead about what Pentecostalism represented in his life and in the Harlem community he loved from a distance. Baldwin's account of American Pentecostalism is interesting in its entirety, but the aspect that concerns us here is simply how the Pentecostal altar is *purported to work* by his own narrative account. The *axis mundi* work of the Pentecostal altar has received little written treatment of its dynamics by participants and the availability of this account, by an author of incredible literary power and stature, provides a unique vantage point from which to consider the altar's logistics, in this case of cosmological and spiritual *reversal*. I include this account because it corroborates these themes and because it powerfully narrates the *most common* trope of the altar's logistics, which Larry McQueen specifies are primarily

⁴⁴⁰ In *Go Tell It On the Mountain*, John Grimes is often read as a double for Baldwin himself as the novel is acknowledged to be at minimum semi-autobiographical. See Catherine Waitinas, "Gay and Godly: coming to Jesus in James Baldwin's *Go Tell It on the Mountain*." *James Dickey Review* 29, no. 1 (2012). See also Joseph A. Brown, "I, John, Saw the Holy Number: Apocalyptic Visions in "Go Tell It on the Mountain" and "Native Son." *Religion & Literature* 27, no. 1 (1995): 53-74. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40058237>.

directional: up-down-up. These topographical reversals are easily read as carnivalistic. But I begin with a discussion on the Menippean cosmology.

Menippean Cosmology and the Carnival

Azusa Street Mission Revival looked and felt carnivalistic, but the work of its altar is also carnivalistic in ways not obvious to casual observers. Pentecostals enacted a three-tiered cosmology at the altar in a manner that parallels the menippean structure of the universe that Bakhtin presents as carnivalized to perfection in Dostoyevsky's works. Engaging Bakhtin's account of carnivalism in a three-tiered universe creates a pathway by which to understand the carnivalistic (reversal) work of the Pentecostal altar.

More essential is the carnivalistic element of the three planes of the menippea: Olympus, the nether world, and earth. The representation of Olympus is clearly carnivalistic: free familiarization, scandals and eccentricities, crowning and decrownings are characteristic for the Olympus of the menippea. Olympus is, as it were, transformed into a carnival square. Olympian scenes are sometimes presented as carnivalistic debasings and bringings down-to-earth...Representations of the nether world often applied the carnivalistic logic of a "world upside down": an emperor in the netherworld becomes a slave, a slave an emperor, and so forth ...⁴⁴¹

Take the story of Lazarus in Luke 16:19–31, in which a rich man ends up in hell, begging for water, while a poor man ends up in heaven. This is a representation

⁴⁴¹ Bakhtin, *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics*, 133.

of heaven as a carnivalized cosmos that Bakhtin notes is influenced by mennipean literature.

Though Bakhtin does not fully develop this idea in his treatment of Dostoyevsky, in *Problems of Dostoyevsky's Poetics* Bakhtin does indicate that both the Gospels and *Acts of the Apostles*, two major influences in the development of early Pentecostalism were themselves discernibly Menippean texts.

Christian narrative literature was also subjected to direct carnivalization. It is enough to recall the scene of crowning and decrowning the “King of the Jews” in the canonical Gospels. But carnivalization is even more powerfully present in apocryphal Christian literature.

The basic narrative genres of ancient Christian literature—“Gospels,” “Acts of the Apostles,” “Apocalypse” and “lives of Saints and Martyrs”—are linked with an ancient aretalogy which in the first centuries A.D. developed within the orbit of the menippea...

... in the menippea, enormous organizing significance is allotted to the testing of an idea and its carrier, testing by means of temptations and martyrdom (especially, of course, in the hagiographic genre). As in the menippea, rulers, rich men, thieves, beggars, hetarae come together on equal terms on a single, fundamentally dialogized plane. Here, as in the menippea, considerable importance is given to dream vision, insanity, obsessions of all sorts...⁴⁴²

Bakhtin’s treatment of the mennipean influence on Dostoyevsky argues that this influence is largely inherited through Dostoyevsky’s reading of the New

⁴⁴² Ibid., 135

Testament. Thus, Christ's descent from heaven to the earth involves the switch in planes that can be considered a carnivalistic lowering, which is then continued into the tomb and then into hell. Additionally, Christ's ascension sees him attaining even higher status over human beings, and occurs in tandem with his actual ascension through the clouds, after a biological death. These mennipean movements lend a carnivalesque quality to the gospels.

The "areatology" to which Bakhtin refers can for our purposes be understood as hagiography and within the Christian tradition of hagiography certain elements of carnival can be discerned. Within hagiographic accounts, martyrdoms emerge as a trope of cultural meditation on death, and these have also been studied for their carnivalistic influences. Carnivalistic elements can be found in literary accounts of martyrdom, which feature saints laughing at their moment of death, crucified upside down or (as in the carnival rituals that involve animals) evading death by lions who instead lick their feet. The co-mingling of saints with animals expresses the same kind of comingling that does the idea of heaven below. Patricia Cox Miller suggests that when ancient writers compare saints to both animals and angels, this works "to suggest that flesh is itself the site of ascetic transformability and thus of transcendence: the saint 'existed with the animals in the world like water in water, in an intimacy so profound that the animal and angel were one.'"⁴⁴³ Virginia Burrus (2011) describes Jerome's *Life of*

⁴⁴³ See Virginia Burrus, "Wyschogrod's hand: Saints, Animality, and the Labor of Love," in *Philosophy Today* 55, no. 4: 11 (2011): 412–421.

Paul as one of the most richly animalistic of the ancient hagiographies. In it, a ninety-year-old ascetic named Antony travels through a desert, and along the way encounters a hippocentaur (a man-horse mix), a dwarf “whose nostrils were joined together, with horns growing out of his forehead, and with the legs and feet of a goat,” and a she-wolf. In one scene, a weary Antony has no tools with which to bury Paul, newly dead. Then, “[f]rom out of the deep desert came running two lions with their manes streaming back from their shoulders.... Then they began to scratch at the dirt with their feet,” we are told, digging Paul's grave without shovels or hands.⁴⁴⁴ Animals play roles in carnivalized scenes in Mennipea literatures, including Christian hagiographies, that challenge the contemporary imagination for sacred aesthetics.

Bakhtin's invocation of areatology points up the many ways that the gospels, Acts of the Apostles, and areatology were ready sources of Dostoyevky's own exposure to menippea and carnivalization.⁴⁴⁵ Early Pentecostals shared many of these same sources, of course, and shared a sensibility that the days of the New Testament were on their way back into history.⁴⁴⁶ They might well be our only modern day reference point for sacred mystical animality in American Protestantism.⁴⁴⁷

⁴⁴⁴ Burrus, “Wyschogrod's hand,” 417–19.

⁴⁴⁵ Bakhtin, *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics*, 135.

⁴⁴⁶ Blumhofer, *Restoring the Faith*, 13.

⁴⁴⁷ Christy Cobb discusses four mennipean qualities in *Acts of the Apostles*. For our purposes, her treatment of Acts' comedic elements, social utopian aspects, and slum naturalism are particularly germane. Cobb treats the jail cell as Acts' crude setting, and denotes Acts 14:8–

The main aspects of *menippea* for our discussion are its invocation, even animation, and carnivalization of multiple worlds; these irruptions in human time-space perform (among many other things) similar work to hybrid human-animal bodies. They positively, cheerfully indicate the limits of the mundane, hierarchical, and often oppressive world.⁴⁴⁸ Like the worlds of the *menippea*, Carnival too, is a “two world condition.”⁴⁴⁹ Thus carnival time is “life outside of its rut;” sometimes this extraordinariness can acquire utopian themes. Still, carnival is not in itself a utopia. Instead it can be a site for the invocation of utopian themes, their circulation, their traditioning, and yes, their felt *revival*. In carnivalistic Pentecostalism, we can see the following themes converge: utopian feelings, extraordinary time, suspension of norms and the mundane, of which social hierarchies were deemed to be a critical part, and the occupation of earth by heaven.

A pertinent extension of these ideas is found in another trait of the *menippea*. According to Bakhtin, the *menippea* is characterised through ‘the use of the fantastic’ and of comic elements of a carnival nature, combined with ‘crude

20 as a scene that is comedic in nature. Christy Cobb, “Slave-Girls Speaking Truth,” 73–77.

⁴⁴⁸ In his stunning work on the “splitness” of present-day Pentecostalism and of the splitness of the Pentecostal God, cultural theorist and social ethicist Nimi Wariboko similarly describes the world of Pentecostals as bifurcated. André Droogers defines Pentecostalism as a play religion on the basis of its having two systems for interpreting experience. Cite André Droogers. *Play and Power in Religion* (Berlin, Boston: De Gruyter, 2011), Chapter 8. See also Nimi Wariboko, *The Split God: Pentecostalism and Critical Theory* (New York: SUNY Press, 2018).

⁴⁴⁹ Bakhtin, *Rabelais and His World*, 6.

slum naturalism'⁴⁵⁰ in order to provoke and test philosophical ideas, or 'ultimate questions' that are put to the test by *syncrisis* – or 'juxtaposition' of perspectives from unusual points of view.⁴⁵¹ We have noted that Azusa too featured the comic elements of carnival culture, and this is a dusty little church that had been partially destroyed by fire. A "dilapidated forty by sixty foot white-washed building," Espinosa muses that its cobwebs, dirt floor, sawdust, and rough-hewn pews rendered it similar to the camp meeting spaces of the frontier. The structure was often enough described as "barn-like."⁴⁵²

Bakhtin's naming of the gospels and Acts as carnivalistic and menippean allows for theoretical nuancing of a well-known characteristic of early Pentecostalism: its restorationism. Edith Blumhofer has characterized the early Pentecostal social imagination as restorationist, by which she means that they endeavored to "leap back to Pentecost."⁴⁵³ In mining source material for their return to apostolic times, early Pentecostal restorationists returned to texts which Bakhtin identifies as bearing a menippean structure and, without doubt, endeavored to live them out. Broad analogues to menippean carnival flow from the Azusa Street Revival myth. The aforementioned comeuppance narratives in which a doctor or a priest ends up on the floor, weeping like a child, makes the Pentecostal altar into a version of Bakhtin's *dialogized plane*, in which "hetarae

⁴⁵⁰ See footnote 16 for a short discussion of Acts' jails as a site of crude naturalism by Cobb.

⁴⁵¹ Bakhtin, *Rabelais and His World*, 114–18.

⁴⁵² Espinosa, *William J. Seymour and the Origins of Pentecostalism*, 57.

⁴⁵³ Blumhofer, *Restoring the Faith*, 13.

come together” and are tested by being brought into relation, and in which “opposites come together, look at one another, are reflected in one another, know and understand one another.”⁴⁵⁴ The attention paid to these conversions, their repetition and desirability by a Pentecostal audience could be called a *menippean* gaze. In their diverse socioeconomic and racial composition, these types of Pentecostal audiences credibly become a *carnival collective*. The purported ritualized outcome, of course, is the prescribed carnivalization: the high are brought low and are, as Wacker noted, only *then* renewed in power from their deathly sterility. The higher the position in the social order that a penitent occupied, the more carnivalizing his or her response to the altar could be, and in so doing the altar becomes a substitute for a carnival *public square*.

Analogous action in Dostoyevsky’s *The Idiot* helps further crystallize early Pentecostalism’s carnival function. The novel’s action begins in a third-class railway car which “like the deck of a ship in the ancient *mennipea*, is a substitute for the *public square* where people from various positions find themselves in familiar contact with one another. Thus, there is the coming together of *the beggar prince* and the *merchant millionaire*.”⁴⁵⁵ Once joined, these characters find themselves speaking “with carnivalistic frankness”—carnival truth-- *across social barriers*. In light of this discussion, early Pentecostal discourse about the well-to-do being brought low can be considered their template for *carnivalizing*

⁴⁵⁴ Bakhtin, *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics*, 176.

⁴⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 174.

conversions. The frankness that destroys social barriers is expressed in Pentecostalism as a conversion to the Lord and, critically, away from pride and lofty positions. Such a testimony could be considered carnivalized, in that it would imply that such Pentecostal truth-telling was a *leveling* form of honesty.

Wacker presents the account of one Dr. Charles Price, a Congregational minister in Lodi, California as “representing the genre” of Pentecostal comeuppance narratives well. Price, one of the best-known interwar Pentecostal preachers, “liked to tell it about himself” and printed his conversion narrative several times, including in his own tellingly, fittingly named periodical *Golden Grain*. Wacker writes,

The narrative portrays the pre-pentecostal Price as a “sure enough, blown-in-the-bottle modern social gospel preacher, drawing a nice salary, having a good time and not caring particularly how long school kept.” Predictably, Price belonged to the Rotary Club, the Modern Woodmen lodge, and other high-society clubs.

But after attending an Aimee McPherson meeting, Price

quickly realized that he was “just a common everyday, six-cylinder sinner with the cutout wide open and heading straight for hell.” After experiencing genuine salvation and Holy Spirit baptism, Price discovered a miraculously revitalized ministry—burnished, not incidentally, by even greater prominence. Having abandoned the “social gospel” and the “popularity crowd” for keeps, he now embraced a “simple and humble” ministry that took him into the “largest auditoriums in the United States.”

Wacker admonishes that

[t]he accuracy of the biographical details in this narrative are less important than the formal ingredients...the uselessness of

respectable social connections, the unexpected wisdom of a plain woman preacher, the superiority of the simple and humble over the learned and complex...⁴⁵⁶

Wacker's account of the template is wholly correct, but his account of Pentecostals' taste in soap opera could be more thorough. Pentecostal discourse about the humbling of the high and mighty is taking place at the same point in time that Creech identifies as a surge in and a recirculation of Revolutionary era-Jeffersonian discourse. In such discourse, the Holy Spirit is in league with Revolution-era politics and tastes; note that success in the quotation above is not a Ph.D. or an M.D. but pulpit-time in the largest auditoriums in the US. The person and work of the Holy Spirit is structured as the same kind of confrontation as is happening in the wider culture between agrarian populists and a rising elite class. Class politics are informing the construction of the person of the Holy Spirit at the time in American history when the Holy Spirit rose to become a more active figure in the theological imagination overall. And it just so happened that the Holy Spirit had decidedly anti-federalist energies.

In this narrative template, and in the altar space of Pentecostalism, the call for conversion in revivalist Pentecostalism was always a call to be brought low to its floor—and this floor was unequivocally marked as a threshold. This *threshold* could be called Menippean in its cosmological range, quality of crisis, and

⁴⁵⁶ Wacker, *Heaven Below*, 194.

consequences. In Bakhtin's treatment, "the menippean drama is the universal genre of ultimate questions. Its action takes place not only in the here and now but throughout the world and for all eternity: on earth, in the netherworld, and in heaven."⁴⁵⁷ Just like those in prior Christian medieval mystery plays, Dostoevsky places his story's participants "on the threshold (of life and death, falsehood and truth, sanity and insanity)."⁴⁵⁸ In Bakhtin's appraisal of Dostoyevsky, he describes that the Menippean threshold is "not biological time"; indeed, "those events that Dostoyevsky portrayed on the threshold or on the public square, with their profound inner meaning...could not have been explored in ordinary biological and historical time."⁴⁵⁹

In the next section, we draw closer to identify how the altar functioned like a threshold of reversal.

The Pentecostal Altar as a Threshold and Threshing Floor: Individual Spiritual and Cosmological Reversal

Threshing themes persist to this day in Pentecostal theology but in a very reduced way. For instance, Wolfgang Vondey describes the altar as a threshold, but without any explicit or substantial connections made between this threshold,

⁴⁵⁷ Bakhtin, *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics*, 146.

⁴⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 147.

⁴⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 176.

the liminality and play he invokes, and a prior agricultural rite.⁴⁶⁰ There simply exists the wording of threshold without any invocation of the logistics of threshing *exactly*. Instead, in Vondey's scheme, there is play. In Vondey's work there is not a significant connection made between the threshold and the death-resurrection agrarian logic that is crystal clear for example in John 12, in which Jesus is contemplating his death. In a section fittingly dubbed by the King James' edition of the Bible, "The Fruitful Grain of Wheat," Jesus reasons: "Unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies it remains alone; but if it dies it produces much grain."⁴⁶¹ If missing in the present parlances of Pentecostal threshold, the theme of dying to and, accordingly, being raised up, are demonstrably joined in historic Pentecostalism.

The frame of the threshing floor is most consistently wedded to the notion of being "slain" in the Spirit within historical black Pentecostal traditions.⁴⁶²

Womanist theologian Diana L. Hayes writes that, within slave religious

⁴⁶⁰ NKJV John 12:24

⁴⁶¹ Carolyn Walker Bynum advises, "The seed is the oldest Christian metaphor for the resurrection of the body. It is the dominant metaphor in that text which, more than any other, has determined discussion of the resurrection, I Corinthians 15...At no period has Christian has Christian treatment of the Resurrection entirely abandoned the Pauline metaphor of the seed. But the seed metaphor is not the major image in Patristic and medieval discussions of theology... Most recent studies have understood 1 Corinthians 15 as referring to restoration and redemption of the person as a psychosomatic unity." See Caroline Walker Bynum, *Resurrection of the Body*, 2–8.

⁴⁶² Peter Althouse "Slain in the Spirit." *The Encyclopaedia of Christian Civilisation*. George Thomas Kurian, ed. (Hoboken, NJ: Blackwell Publishing, 2011); P. H. Alexander, "Slain in the Spirit." *The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*. Revised. Edited by Stanley M. Burgess and Eduard M. van Der Mass (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002).

traditions, to be “slain in the spirit” implied being “struck dead by the hand of God and revived as a new being.”⁴⁶³ Grant Wacker describes being “slain in the Spirit” as becoming a holy emblem. “In those situations, Christ’s physical death and resurrection was re-embodied—not just re-enacted but literally re-embodied night after night.”⁴⁶⁴ Wacker is right about the death and resurrection themes, but the agrarian discourse has gone missing; there is no fallen grain, no threshing or threshing floor in Wacker’s coverage of this practice.

James Baldwin gives the heretofore disparate themes of the grain, the threshing floor, and believer’s death and resurrection full menippean scale and movement in the depiction of the Pentecostal altar in James Baldwin’s *Go Tell it on the Mountain* (1953). In this classic text, James Baldwin’s early experiences in Black Pentecostal churches, and specifically his own personal, darkly emancipatory experience at the Pentecostal altar, have been explicitly framed by Baldwin as experiences *on the threshing floor* in keeping with early Pentecostal parlance and, of course, the agrarian motifs of the Old and New Testament. The polyvalent meanings that protagonist John Grimes, as Baldwin’s doppelgänger, experiences at this altar exceed the remit of this chapter, but for our purposes it is critically important to note that Baldwin superimposes the altar-as-threshing floor with both descent-and-rise movement and topography.

⁴⁶³ Diana L. Hayes, “Slain in the Spirit: Black Americans and the Holy Spirit.” *Journal of the International Theological Center* 20 (Fall-Spring 1992): 97-115.

⁴⁶⁴ Wacker, *Heaven Below*, 108.

Indeed, Baldwin's description synchronizes a panoply of harvest-carnavalesque and menippean themes in a manner that lyrically authorizes reading Pentecostal altar as a threshold space. In Baldwin's account, the altar is explicitly a threshing floor in this work, described as producing death and rebirth, and more importantly as a *descent* into otherworld of chaos and anguish, followed by a *going through*, and as a *rising up* into joy and into renovated status. These movements, which describe a spiritual crisis in their logistics of descent, going through, and rising up—echo the carnivalistic topographies of reversal we have already identified, but they animate them differently into a menippean cosmology.

The menippean aspects of Baldwin's account are numerous. First, John Grimes (again, as doppelgänger to Baldwin) keenly approximates a menippean protagonist, of whom Bakhtin notes: "characteristic first of all is the image of the narrator and the tone of his story. The narrator—a "certain person"—is on the threshold of insanity (*delirium tremens*). But that aside, he is already a person not like everyone else; that is, he is one who has deviated from the general norm, who has fallen out of life's usual rut, who is despised by everyone and who himself despises everyone." In a menippean universe, in which occupation in or by otherworlds is key, a person already disengaged from "normal life," that is, one already deviating from the norm, is nicely set up to become a menippean protagonist. Second, the threshing floor experience in *GTTM* serves to foment a

collective menippean *anacrisis*: a full revealing of the truth of the two characters most in question, the father Gabriel and the protagonist, John. As in the carnival collectives of early Pentecostalism, the pentecostal altar in *GTTM* brings Grimes' disparate social relations into the threshold along with him, but in an otherworld. Grimes too, finds social and spiritual salvation in a Pentecostal menippean mystery play; he is cast on the threshing ground and accordingly renewed (that is, of bearing fruit).⁴⁶⁵ However, while Baldwin/Grimes indeed rises into heights of joy and salvation as a result of his "death" on the threshing floor, in this work Baldwin's dead *do not speak*—unlike the corp of corpses in Bakhtin's long survey. Bakhtin makes a particular point of highlighting the "dialogues of the dead" in carnivalized literatures.⁴⁶⁶ Baldwin's dead do not "ring their voices out." Through their distanced and silent behavior, Grimes' relations in the afterlife instead register the manifold forms of filial fracture which forcefully occupy Baldwin's/Grimes' psychiscape as *irreparable* breaches. While this is a failure, in a sense (since carnival truth would entail voices ringing out in a manner that liberates and levels social hierarchies), fascinating for our purposes is Baldwin's lament that the carnival collective in his menippean cosmological drama *do not speak*, meaning he clearly expects social revelation and enfranchisement in his experience at the altar. This silence positively indicates the social breaches that Turner's liminality postulates as sometimes being the historical case.

⁴⁶⁵ Bakhtin, *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics*, 147.

⁴⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 143.

The breach of Baldwin's narrative is not confined to the ritual plane of the earth. Instead, the connectedness of heaven, earth, and hell at the threshing floor point up its *axis mundi* characteristics⁴⁶⁷: a locus where cosmic regions intersect, often thought to be the center of the world.⁴⁶⁸ Baldwin's is a personalized, individualized liminality that is occupying, even with some disbelief and cynicism, the Pentecostal threshing floor that, although it aimed to integrate Grimes across intractable familial division, instead served to reconcile the man to his place in the divine order—somewhat here *at odds* with the social order that dominates the mundane plane. Accordingly, Grimes is catapulted into otherworlds to attend to ancestral conflict. Baldwin's character individually navigates a threshing space that is still social in that it intimately concerns Grimes' true place in the social order, but this order is complex in that the divine order and the social order come apart, separate, and experience carnivalization.⁴⁶⁹ He is not actually his father's legitimate son, a realization that

⁴⁶⁷ Daniel Albrecht has identified the altar acts as an *axis mundi* in American Pentecostalism. Wolfgang Vondey agrees: "The altar space reveals something important in Pentecostal liturgy and spirituality: meeting with God is the primary purpose of the entire ritual. The altar space functions symbolically as an *axis mundi* in Pentecostal spirituality...that most clearly symbolizes and helps to focus divine-human convergence" (2018:99).

⁴⁶⁸ "*Axis Mundi*, the "hub" or "axis" of the universe, is a technical term used in the study of the history of religions...Vivid images of the axis of the universe vary widely since they depend on the particular worldview entertained by a specific culture. Foremost among the images designated by the term *axis mundi* is the cosmic mountain, a sacred place deemed to be the highest point of the universe and perhaps identified with the center of the world and the place where creation first began" (Eliade 1959: 37–53).

⁴⁶⁹ Scruggs sees a city based theme of reversals: "Baldwin, finally, is not content to reduce New York to the dimensions of the treacherous city of Pilgrim's Progress. Although garish Fifth Avenue is one symbol of New York in the novel, Baldwin reminds us that this earthly city also contains the New York Public Library, the Museum of Natural History, and the

results in an uncrowning of a very harsh and unloving “father.” The logic of discrowning is quite explicit in this account, by literary theorist Charles Scruggs:

Throughout the middle section of the novel, Gabriel is associated with the "mountain" of the novel's title, but this symbol reverberates with irony, for it also suggests the nature of Gabriel's pride and self-deception. Because of his transcendental experience on a hilltop, Gabriel has placed himself above others; he judges them without ever looking into the recesses of his own heart. Thus Gabriel's "mountain" provides him with the illusion of both his spiritual superiority over his fellow man and his control over his riotous ego, "the defenseless city of his mind." In the novel's middle section, there are two dramatic illustrations of Gabriel's misperception that he has risen above the earthly city.⁴⁷⁰

John's rejection by Gabriel does not inhibit and even makes more fully possible his becoming a son of God instead (as opposed to being—as his biological father insists— the devil's son), nor does it fail to produce a sense of joyful resurrection. In fact, Baldwin's harsh father had been an impediment to his incorporation into the divine order via salvation in large part because his preacher father seemed to stand in penultimate authority to the Divine Father. According to Baldwin, to bow before God as father had seemingly meant to bow before the preacherly

Metropolitan Museum of Art. Viewed from this angle, the earthly city casts an ironic light upon the themes of the Negro spiritual. The watchman on the Augustinian "city wall" has myopic vision; he can see the icons of the earthly city but not their meaning. Thus the tension in *Go Tell It on the Mountain* arises from the clash between two conceptions of the earthly city: New York versus Harlem and New York versus itself. Charles Scruggs. "The Tale of Two Cities in James Baldwin's *Go Tell It on the Mountain*," in *Critical Insights: James Baldwin* (Salem Press, 2010) < 151-52.

⁴⁷⁰Scruggs, "The Tale of Two Cities in James Baldwin's *Go Tell It on the Mountain*," 156-7.

throne of the earthly father he detested and who, he correctly discerned, deeply detested him.

But the Pentecostal altar was no such doubled throne atop a hierarchy, but instead a threshing floor. *Down* to the floor, the grave and chaos, *through* grief and meeting with relations, through learning the truth of who is *not*, *up* to heights of joy of being a child of God: the Pentecostal altar is a *menippean carnival* in Baldwin's experience. Often described as *bildungsroman*, a coming of age story, as well as a transition in status into manhood, readers of GTTM need to see that John Grimes' threshing-floor experience does not make him a proper man in his father's eyes, perhaps not a proper man by some standards. No matter: the work of the threshing floor served instead to uncrown his father in his eyes and to liberate Baldwin from the need to please him.

In Bakhtin's rendering of Dostoyevsky's *The Idiot*, he reads the lowering and elevating movements of the carnival into the dramatic logistics of the novel, in a manner that matches the logistic of Baldwin's carnivalizing altar experiences into hell and then into heaven.

Then a crowd appears, a multitude of people on the stairway and down below as well, and in relation to this crowd passing below, Raskolnikov is located at the top of the stair. Before us is the image of communal ridicule on the public square decrowning a carnival king-pretender. The public square is a symbol of the communal performance, and at the end of the novel, Raskolnikov, before going to give himself up at the police station, comes out on the square and bows low to the earth before the whole people [...] Here is the same

carnival logic of self-appointed *elevation*, the communal act of comic *decrowning on the public square*, and a falling *downward*.⁴⁷¹

Beyond Baldwin's full account of his own Pentecostal mystery play, these carnivalizing logistics across a carnival topography permeate Pentecostal testimonies of the Azusa era. In his clarifying work on Pentecostal eschatology, Larry McQueen advises that language used "*consistently* within the periodical [of the Azusa Street Mission] denotes spiritual experience *in terms of direction*: sanctification required 'going down' into spiritual humility, forsaking all claims of self-identity; Spirit-baptism resulted from 'coming through' into a new spiritual identity, thus becoming a member of the bride of Christ; and future hope anticipated 'rising up' into spiritual fulfillment to meet the Lord in the air to go to the marriage supper."⁴⁷² Those who made it through these rites were then given a "seal" that made one part of the Bride of Christ, a clear sign of a change into a *collective* status.

The Carnivalizing movement of the altar as a threshold rite of reversal made possible manifold forms of reversals. As we have seen, early Pentecostals experienced Azusa Street Mission Revival as a lowering of heaven itself, complete with mist and visions. In this time-space, the mundane order of the world was suspended, nullified, and inverted; in an important sense it grew trivialized. The early Pentecostals additionally understood the Pentecostal altar as a space for

⁴⁷¹ Bakhtin, *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics*, 169.

⁴⁷² McQueen, "Early Pentecostal Eschatology," 146; emphasis mine.

power reversals, or political reversals, in which those who are high are brought low through confrontation with the Holy Spirit. The proud, the elite, the professional: *they* ended up wallowing on the floor of the Pentecostal altar. This floor was no regular floor, but a threshing floor, and one which was the site of individual and cosmological reversals, an axis mundi capable of catapulting the soul within a three-tier cosmology, and in which those tiers are themselves also sites of profound reversal.

Conclusion

This chapter has presented carnivalistic qualities of the Azusa Street Revival in terms of its social composition, its leveling logics of conversion, and in the altar's capacity to draw down heaven. It identified the altar's ability to accommodate transversals into hell and heaven by virtue of its being an *axis mundi* threshold. It presented reception of Azusa as carnivalistic to outsiders and insiders alike. The chapter proposed Bakhtin as a rich interlocutor for assessing Azusa Street Mission as carnivalized space and carnivalizing in its ritual work. Bakhtin's thinking about the Carnival as a festival and the Carnival in literature, via the *mennipea* in Acts, allows us to assess Azusa Street Mission as phenomenologically carnivalistic, and as literarily carnivalized in its sensibilities through Acts of the Apostles and, to a lesser degree, the gospels. Though the logic of reversal permeates early accounts of the Pentecostal altar, via a prominent trope of up-down directionality and death-rebirth themes that accompany the

grain-threshing motif, the logic of seasonal reversals has been quieted in this part of the discussion. Only within the references to Pentecost and harvest are there obvious themes of seasonality at play.

In the following final chapter, I treat the major collective symbol of early Pentecostal rhetoric: the *Bride* of Christ. It has gone largely unnoticed, and uncommented on, that the theme of the *harvest* and that of the *Bride* are agrarian parallels. Harvest rites and marriage rites are two forms of rites of seasonal transition. The autumnal transition into the wet season, characterized by the early rains and the latter rains, is also the season for marriage rites. Thus, the latter rain and bridal motifs represent, in agrarian thought-practice, a shift into the season of female dominance, beginning with autumn. The world upside down, as Bourdieu posits in his account of seasonal reversals, is a feminine world of winter, a season of female supremacy.

Chapter 5: The Rise of The Lamb's Queen

Without wishing to make it appear more sensible and less extraordinary than it often is, it is advisable for the historian to appreciate the logic, and even the realism which moves them, for revolutionary moments are difficult to understand otherwise. It is their peculiarity that those who cannot see what all the bother is about are disabled from saying anything of great value about them, whereas those who do cannot often speak in terms intelligible to the rest.

Eric Hobsbawm⁴⁷³

Introduction

This final chapter moves towards a meditation on the most Pentecostal of all charisms: “speaking in tongues.” Tongues, in early Pentecostal thought, function as the seal of the Bride of Christ who eventually becomes the Lamb’s Queen. In the previous chapter, I endeavored to demonstrate the ritual similarity

⁴⁷³Eric Hobsbawm, *Primitive Rebels*, 60. Hobsbawm identifies peasant millenarianism as a form of primitive social rebellion and names (then-new-to-him) Italian pentecostalism as a form of peasant rebellion. Though Robert Mapes Anderson indeed introduces the idea that Pentecostalism began as a “millenarian movement,” Anderson’s perfunctory discussion engages no theorists of peasant millenarianism and leads heads on to the assertion that “conservative elements eventually triumphed over revolutionary and progressive ones. The most remarkable manifestation of Pentecostal progressivism was its interracial, multi-ethnic composition...but Pentecostalism succumbed to segregation.” Robert Mapes Anderson, *Vision of the Disinherited*, 196. My account differs from Anderson’s in that it more deeply substantiates how early Pentecostals used agrarian rituoopraxis to construct the new rites of the Holy Spirit, and places heavy emphasis on this ritual work. Harvey Cox is keen on this theme. Cox compares Azusa Street Mission believers therein to Joachim of Fiore, who taught that in “the new age, the church would no longer need a hierarchy...priests, bishops--even popes--would become superfluous. All clans and nations would be joined into a single, harmonious body.” Cox, *Fire from Heaven*, 115.

of Azusa Street Mission's revival practices to Bakhtin's carnival, and this chapter similarly begins with Pentecostal practice, this time speaking in tongues, as a phenomenon. As a form of ritual speech, speaking in tongues has always been conspicuous. Early pentecostals comprehended their new charismatic giftings to be the sign of their baptism of the Holy Spirit, but they largely expected and often assumed that the tongues into which they broke under the power of the Holy Spirit were foreign tongues, the recognizable languages of foreign countries, and they trusted that this facility was a way of empowering them to reach lost peoples in their native languages. When proto-pentecostals crossed the threshold of speech into unknown languages, however, they most often spoke in glossolalic tongues.

Speaking in an unknown tongue, or "glossolalia," has little historical precedence behind it and very slight biblical justification. The disciples baptized in the Spirit in Acts 2 are recorded to have spoken in known foreign languages; thus others could understand them. The reference points that emerge for glossolalia come from 1 Corinthians 13— the tongues of angels—i.e. to heavenly languages, indecipherable but from a higher plane of existence than earthly language, part of an empowerment by which the Spirit can help believers to pray in efficacious ways that they cannot "know" in their rational minds. So the gift of unknown tongues readily integrates themes of mystery and superiority into the experience. Though the practice has always been derided by outsiders, to insiders

it has ever been a charism for the truly spiritual, the ones pure enough and faithful enough to receive the Spirit in a bold way. Thus, Pentecostalism created an upside-down charism economy in which the most ludicrous charism to some becomes for others a most valued gift.⁴⁷⁴ It is this logic of attained spiritual heights which reflects the matriarchal ordering for which I will argue in my conclusion. For early Pentecostals, the gifts of the Spirit were the ultimate in blessings, a superior charism and a charism for superior people of faith—the *higher lifers* of the Keswick persuasion.⁴⁷⁵ But the gendering of that hierarchy of gifts and the gifted themselves is not so obvious that it is easily apparent to the naked eye. Instead, like the rain-harvest plot, the gendering of the baptism in the Holy Spirit is chiefly discernible via a very popular metaphor in early Pentecostalism: the sealing of a Virgin-Bride in her own cosmic marriage-plot.

Where carnival is perceived as disorder in relationship to the social order, and where the order itself seems sacred; where the aesthetic *balance*⁴⁷⁶ that finds

⁴⁷⁴Michèle Lamont has observed that such divergence is outside of the construction of Bourdieu's field theory but in fact is observable in many American fields. See Lamont, *Looking back at Bourdieu*, 6-7.

⁴⁷⁵ Blumhofer, *Restoring the Faith*.

⁴⁷⁶ This preference for balance takes on its more complementarian (and latently gendered logic) in Taylor's *A Secular Age*, where he evinces Turner's influence: "the notion of complementarity or necessary alternation between elements of opposed, or at least unequal, value supposes that society is set in a cosmos in which such complementarities reign, governed by a time which is not a homogeneous container, indifferent to its content, but is multiform and kairotic. This is the kind of world in which Carnival, an interlude in which established order is reversed, and the "world turned upside down," could make sense. *This order itself is in a complementary relation to something beyond order, and this alternation recognizes the beyond, and gives it its due. Victor Turner tried to articulate this relation in terms of "structure" and "anti-structure."* But successive waves of modern reform, in the name of religion or "civility", have striven through organization and discipline to create a

iteration in Turner, Bakhtin, and Taylor is not valued but instead perpetual and sincere hierarchical order, then, as Bakhtin posits, Carnival grows resistant. Then, in Bakhtin's treatment, carnivalists become more acerbic, more spirited and aggressive in their critiques of power. As they often wear masks, they can hazard to say more about and to elites, and their critiques begin to hold more of the rancor of daily living. Says Scott, "Carnival, in its ritual structure and anonymity, gives a privileged place to normally suppressed speech and aggression. It was, in many societies, virtually the only time during the year when the lower classes were permitted to assemble in unprecedented numbers behind masks and make threatening gestures toward those who ruled in daily life."⁴⁷⁷ Bakhtin posits that one way that carnivalists mitigate oppressive forces of state and church is to desacralize both verbally—conveniently so from behind masks and other disguises. I have presented the satirization of Calvinist hymns as one such example of carnivalesque humorous aggression.

But in the United States during the turn of the twentieth century, for various cultural and sociological reasons that will be introduced, radical evangelicals took the additional step of sacralizing the carnival. Where Bakhtin's

human order in which the good need make only tactical and contingent concessions to the bad or the less good. The disciplines of "civility" (for which we significantly now use the processword 'civilization') have crucially contributed to the erasure of complementarity. In so doing, they have taken us from a world in which higher times made everyday sense, to one in which the monopoly of secular time over public space is unchallenged." See Taylor, *A Secular Age*, 45-54; 87; 123, 129, 135.

⁴⁷⁷ Scott, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance*, 181.

carnivalists desacralized or desecrated church and state, early Pentecostals desecrated church and state and welcomed the Holy Spirit as a harbinger of leveling and reversal forces, which at the same time brought blessings “down to the material bodily substratum,” to use Bakhtin’s words. To a significant degree, that project meant adopting feminine aspects into the person of the Holy Spirit. Space here will not permit a full discussion of all the cultural sources of feminizing the Holy Spirit, but three aspects for our purposes will serve to illuminate how early Pentecostals were able to see this gendering project through to the maternalization of the Holy Spirit. These three aspects are the biblical feminine symbol of the “Bride” that served early Pentecostals as collective representation of the Holy Spirit, the seasonality of the Bride’s eschatological plotline, and the feminine ritual speech of the Holy Spirit, or *speaking in tongues*.

I introduce evidence to show that, through their rhetorical parlaying of seasonal reversal early Pentecostals enacted a female seasonality of power as the signature temporality of the Holy Spirit. When paired with the collective representations of *Bride*, and a Kristevan reading of glossolalic dialogue as maternalizing discourse, the rise of the Holy Spirit to a place of prominence in American Pentecostalism can be read as a gendering project with profound political consequences.

Bride: Key collective representation of the Holy Spirit in early Pentecostalism

Historian of American religion Leah Payne's *Gender and Pentecostal Revivalism* (2015) notes the popularity of bridal imagery in early Pentecostalism. The bride of Christ, explains Payne, was one of the most important and most circulated motifs from the 1890s to the 1920s, and was particularly popular among Pentecostals. "Pentecostals regularly spoke about themselves as the bride of Revelation 21:2, 21:9 and 22:17. Popular preaching passages included the parable of the ten virgins in Matthew 25:1–13 and Jesus' discussion of fasting while the bridegroom was present in Mark 2:18–22."⁴⁷⁸ "Every man or woman that receives the Holy Ghost," wrote William Seymour, "is the bride of Christ."⁴⁷⁹ Gaston B. Caswell's 1907 periodical was thus named *The Bridegroom's Messenger* and G.F. Taylor's particularly influential 1907 book was titled *The Spirit and the Bride*.

Payne in her surprising account of the rise to prominence of 1930s evangelist Aimee Semple McPherson⁴⁸⁰ and, eventually, into the leadership of her own denomination (the Foursquare Church), posits that McPherson acquired her power from co-opting the Bridal motif and infusing it with the glamour of

⁴⁷⁸ Leah Payne, *Gender and Pentecostal Revivalism* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2015), 57–58.

⁴⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁸⁰ See also Edith Blumhofer's *Aimee Semple McPherson: Everybody's Sister* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2003) and Matthew Avery Sutton's *Aimee Semple McPherson and the Resurrection of Christian America* (Boston: Harvard University Press, 2007).

1930s Hollywood. In her sermons, McPherson performed the persona of a “companionate Bride” in a white bridal gown and cast Jesus into the role of a desirable groom.

McPherson’s ministry, located in the heart of the burgeoning film industry, appropriated cinematic plots. Thus her self-presentation of an adventurous young woman who survived the tragic death of her true love, endured poverty and loneliness, and went on to find happiness in an eternal divine romance told a familiar story. While viewers watched the “grand romance” of Mary Pickford and Douglas Fairbanks on the silver screen, they read about Jesus and his companionate wife in the pages of *The Bridal Call*.⁴⁸¹

Payne argues McPherson’s canny appropriation and personification of bridal motifs garnered her an indirect authority, allowing her to side step “unending argument over whether scriptures prohibited or endorsed a female ministry.”⁴⁸² But McPherson also deserves credit for rehabilitating the marriage plot of early Pentecostalism when it failed to materialize as originally expected, because the earliest marriage plot in Pentecostalism centered on a theology of rapture into the air. In the original bridal plotline, the rapture of the Bride of Christ preserved her from devastation set to befall the earth, *The Great Tribulation*.

Immediately after the bride is gone, The Great Tribulation will set in, during which many of the “left ones” will go up by companies to

⁴⁸¹ Payne, *Gender and Pentecostal Revivalism*, 56.

⁴⁸² Ibid., 62. See Erica Ramirez, “Pentecostal Women on Top: Reading Esther and Ruth with Sister Aimee and Maria Woodworth Etter: Reflections on Leah Payne’s *Gender and Pentecostal Revivalism: Making a Female Ministry in the Early Twentieth Century* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2015)” in *Canadian Journal of Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity*, Vol 7, No 1 (2016): 73–97.

join the band in the air.⁴⁸³ Just before the close of these awful days we hear a company called to the Marriage Supper of the Lamb (Rev. 19: 9). Then Jesus comes down from the Supper, lays hold on the devil, and binds him a thousand years, and casts him into the bottomless pit, and shuts him up, and sets a seal upon him. He then sets up His throne at Jerusalem, and reigns on earth a thousand years, during which time He and His saints are engaged in judging the nations then living on the earth.⁴⁸⁴

The Pentecostal Bride's cosmic marriage plot entailed cataclysmic struggles of epic proportions with the devil himself. As soon as Jesus has celebrated his marriage supper, he traverses earth into hell to deal with the devil personally. Here, a menippean universe is recognizable as the background to the Bride's marriage plot.

The eschatology of Pentecostals has always been conspicuous but difficult to understand. Recent discussion, for example, has questioned whether it can be understood as a peculiar kind of dispensationalism, and how to understand more broadly Pentecostals' relationship to fundamentalists in view of this thematic convergence or divergence.⁴⁸⁵ However, when considered according to the rubric of rites of seasonal reversals, the complicated eschatology of Pentecostals appears newly coherent, even syncretic. For one example,

If it is remembered that the climate of Palestine consisted of two seasons, the wet and the dry, and that the wet season was made up of the early rain and latter rain, it will help you to understand this [latter rain] covenant and the present workings of God's Spirit.⁴⁸⁶

⁴⁸³ Revelation 6:9; 7:9–17; 14: 13–16

⁴⁸⁴ Taylor, *The Spirit and the Bride*, 108.

⁴⁸⁵ McQueen, "Early Pentecostal Eschatology," 139–54.

⁴⁸⁶ Myland, *The Latter Rain*, 1.

And another example:

After the latter rain there was a dry spell, during which the grain matured and mellowed, and then came the *harvest*, and then the *winter*. After this great outpouring of Pentecost, there will come another dry spell, in which severe trials will mellow the saints and mature them for the *harvest*, and then will set in the *wintery storms* of the Great Tribulation, to be ended only by the millennial *spring* morning, when Christ and his glorified saints shall 'return from the wedding to take charge of the world'.⁴⁸⁷

Early Pentecostal eschatology is both eco-cosmological and marital, where both the marriage rites and the harvest rites speak to transition—transitions in season and transition in social status. Early pentecostal eschatology is best understood and interpreted as an agrarian schema that points to a great tribulation as a wintery crisis that resolved into Spring-Marriage and thereby dually constructs a particular kind of relationship between seasons *and genders*. The cosmic marriage plot of early Pentecostalism registered crisis and confrontation between opposites, both a reversal into winter and a reversal into femininity, under the representation of the Bride, and then a union of opposites in a joint millennial rule. Bourdieu's seasonal diagram is a ready companion to this narrative. Here is Bourdieu's graph again:

⁴⁸⁷ Ibid., 96, *emphasis mine*. First quote is also to be found in Blumhofer, *Restoring the Faith*, 95.

Both the harvest rites (one smaller harvest happens in June and another bigger one happens right before the change to the wet season, autumn, and this was the harvest that was celebrated with festivals)⁴⁸⁸ and marriage rites mediate significant transitions at similar times in the agrarian year. Bourdieu notes that “Marriage rites and ploughing rites owe their numerous similarities to the fact that their objective intention is to sanction the union of contraries which is the condition of the resurrection of the grain and the reproduction of the group.⁴⁸⁹ The transition into the wet season is, Bourdieu notes, a reversal into a period of female dominance. Bourdieu’s *Outline of a Theory of Practice* discusses “Thresholds and Rites of Passage” directly in terms of *gendered* reversals.

⁴⁸⁸ There were two harvests during the Medieval farming year. The first was the hay harvest during June. However the main, and busiest, event of the farming calendar was the wheat harvest that took place at the end of the summer during August and September. Men, women, and children all worked together to make sure that the harvest was gathered in. If the harvest was not finished on time then the wheat would be destroyed by the cold and rain and the community would likely face critical food shortages.

⁴⁸⁹ Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory*, 124–29. The productive union of opposites is one way that some agrarian peoples have understood biological reproduction of the earth, both for humanity and for crops. A full account of Levi-Straussian structuralism is outside the scope of this dissertation, in part because a full account of the cosmology of early Pentecostalism cannot be undertaken here, is not at issue, and would likely be only somewhat operative. I am specifically arguing the influence of binaries as perceptible in the rhetoric. The frame of gendered opposites is at play and I engage the marriage plot as a union of opposites here because in Pentecostal rhetoric destruction corresponds directly to winter and rule corresponds to summer. Thus, I suggest Bakhtin and Bourdieu as better fits for early Pentecostal eschatology as calendrical rites or rites of transition or threshold than the account of liminality that Turner proposes. I am not suggesting that overall Turner lacks applicability to Pentecostalism, nor am I suggesting that Bourdieu’s account is better for all groups.

Again, this is how Bourdieu describes autumn as a reversal:

Autumn is the point where the course of the world turns around and everything is turned over to enter its opposite, the male into the female, the seed into the womb of the earth, men and beasts into the house, light (with the lamp) into darkness, until the return of Spring which will set back on its feet a world turned upside down, momentarily abandoned to the supremacy of the female principle, the womb, the woman, the house, the darkness of night....⁴⁹⁰

This is how Bourdieu described Spring as a reversal from Winter, with important information about winter:

Indeed more so than autumn, spring is an interminable transition, constantly suspended and threatened, between the wet and the dry... or better a struggle between two principles with unceasing reversals and changes in fortune. The role of mankind in this struggle, which resembles the battle fought out every morning between darkness and light, can only be that of anxious onlookers: hence the multitude of calendar terms almost all describing the state of the weather or crops. In this time of waiting, when *the fate of the seedlings depends on a female, ambiguous nature* and man cannot intervene without danger, the virtual cessation of activity reflects his limited control over the processes of germination and gestation. ⁴⁹¹

Rituals of transition or “threshold rites” helps to turn over this world: “The precise locus of the threshold, where the order of things turns upside down, “like a wheatcake in the pan,” is explicitly marked by the return of azall, the point of division between the wet and dry season, where the year tips over: the rhythm of

⁴⁹⁰ Ibid., 130.

⁴⁹¹ Ibid., 131, abridged; emphasis mine.

the working day changes and with it the group's whole existence."⁴⁹² Bourdieu states that this ritual life and logic, the way that the calendar is divided into points where it "tips over," is never actually written down or made explicit in prose in tribal agrarian life. It is the careful studious fieldwork of anthropologists like Bourdieu that yielded these schemas and diagrams. But Bourdieu's separation of the year, its gendering, and the logic of inversions is directly derived from his painstaking and extensive observations of Kabyle life. Inversions, in Bourdieu's work, are derived from observing rituals like flipping wheatcake in the pan, or turning pots over.⁴⁹³ In this light, the rhetorical clues left within Pentecostalism's eschatology comparatively offer an abundance of evidence. Early Pentecostals constructed a seasonal eschatology that contains within it politicized reversals. One way they registered these reversals is through appeal to an available feminine symbol: the Bride of Revelation. This reversal is, again, agrarian in logic:

The rites of ploughing owe their complexity to the fact that they must not only sanction the union of opposites but also facilitate that state of the union of contraries in which supremacy temporarily passes to the female principle: through immersion in female wetness; but the future of the grain (for the earth, like the ewe, may fail to bring forth--thamazgults, from zgel, to misfire) depends on female powers...⁴⁹⁴

⁴⁹² Ibid., 132.

⁴⁹³The logic of reversal is a dominant theme in Bourdieu's "The Berber House or the World Reversed." *Information* (International Social Science Council) 9, no. 2 (April 1970): 151-70. doi:10.1177/053901847000900213.

⁴⁹⁴ Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory*, 137.

Alongside agrarian synchronicities between, first, the individual biological life as a process of birth-childhood-maturity and old age, and second, seasonal progression, where old age leads into winter, there is also an overlap of gestation with the period of winter, and childhood enjoys overlap with spring.⁴⁹⁵ Looking at this graph, we can also find an agrarian ritual framework for marrying that corresponds to a season: at the time for transition from autumn to winter. Thus, the Pentecostal bride and harvest metaphors are *not* simply metaphorical flourishes, but instead present (together) a thick and more or less *in sync* agricultural schematic of cosmological timekeeping. In the following sections, I further contextualize early Pentecostals' discourse about the bride and bridal purity in their cultural sociological context before moving on to develop the Bride's narrative plot line.

Thematic Analysis of Pentecostal Bridal Discourse

Purity.

Early Pentecostal bridal discourse in part reflects innovation on well-known themes within early Pentecostals. As feminine symbol, the bride could readily be

⁴⁹⁵ "The cycle of the rites of passage is in fact subordinated to the agrarian calendar which, as we have seen, is itself nothing other than a succession of the rites of passage." Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory*, 153.

mobilized as an ascetic figure of purity, which would appeal to Holiness people.

Still, early Pentecostal bridal purity is nevertheless rendered surprisingly sexy:

Just as it is expected that a man should first make love to the maiden whom he loves, so the Son of God begins to court that saint *whose heart has been made pure*. I say not that the justified man does never feel the love of Christ pulling the love cords of his heart, but the real courtship and the proposals to marriage begin after the old man is dead. The Songs of Solomon is a love letter, in which is portrayed the mutual love of Christ and His bride after the engagement has been made. Just as the maiden is aware of the fact that she is engaged the moment she says yes to her beloved, so we know the moment when we fully decide to become the bride of Christ. Our God is a jealous God.⁴⁹⁶

My brother, the call of God to become the bride of His Son is the highest honor ever conferred upon us. Will you treat the invitation with indifference? or think that it is a small thing to be the bride of Christ? Do you consider it but a child's play to prepare yourself for that occasion? Mere profession or church membership will not prepare you for the marriage. Neither pardon nor cleansing will designate you as the bride. You must "be filled with all the fullness of God," which is nothing short of the full Baptism of Pentecost.⁴⁹⁷

Bridal discourse also (as can be seen from the quotations above) served to create a spiritual hierarchy (albeit perhaps a form of anti-hierarchy or inverse hierarchy, but that argument will come next). Note that the real courtship does not begin until after a heart has been made pure. And, in the first block: neither pardon nor cleansing will make one the Bride. Taylor makes clear: "all who have the Spirit are not baptized with the Spirit."⁴⁹⁸ Taylor's influential treatise repeatedly creates

⁴⁹⁶ Taylor, *The Spirit and the Bride*, 121.

⁴⁹⁷ Ibid., 122.

⁴⁹⁸ Taylor, *The Spirit and the Bride*, 22.

this division between believers who are baptized in the Holy Spirit and those who are not. There is no doubt about which group was, to early Pentecostals' minds, superior. Bridehood was for a certain more dedicated type of believer: one baptized in the Holy Spirit. Baptism in the Spirit meant "full enjoyment of being the Bride of Christ."⁴⁹⁹

If bridal purity bore ready resonance with the asceticism of holiness believers, and created a hierarchical value system, "purity" is still a thoroughly social construct and the wider cultural discourse of the period in which early American Pentecostalism took shape had plenty to offer to help shape early Pentecostal concepts of bridal purity in the context of marriage.

Love Marriage.

Marriage emerged as a ubiquitous plot-structuring device in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century fiction.⁵⁰⁰ The development of the marriage plot occurred within a corpus most often titled with heroines' names: Richardson's *Pamela*; or,

⁴⁹⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰⁰ "Significantly, MacFarlane (1987) credits the dissemination of poetry and novels about love, as well as the economic and social systems particular to capitalism, with the spread of affective marriage from England via America beginning in the seventeenth century. Thus, uniquely British values, including a distinctly Puritan ideology of companionate marriage and greater freedom and choice available to British women, were exported through literature. Some of the most compelling evidence for the power of the marriage plot has been identified in ethnographic accounts of "traditional" societies that are currently undergoing an ideological transition from arranged to affective marriages." Harrison, "Reading the Marriage Plot," 115.

Virtue Rewarded (1740), Frances Burney's *Evelina; or, The History of a Young Woman's Entrance into the World* (1778), Jane Austen's *Emma* (1815). These novels depict the growth and maturation of a woman as she moves toward marriage. "Even overtly political novels about class conflict... maintain emphasis on a woman's marriage all conclude soon after their heroine weds or is betrothed."⁵⁰¹ Thus before the companionate marriage (the same that Aimee Semple McPherson used to construct her peculiar form of female religious authority) took Hollywood by storm, it gained traction as a set of ideas in literature that spread its influence from England into America.

These literary works provided rich accounts of a new kind of marriage—the affective or love marriage. Their narratives stressed the impurity of money and connections in the social order as a motives for love and advocated for a new type of women's virtue instead: the patience to wait for marriage until a truly devoted and worthy suitor presents himself and the willingness to eschew arranged marriages devoid of affection. This new kind of marriage produced a new type of heroine, with new potential for feminine emotional and physical virtue.

For women, the idealization of marriage emerged alongside its twin ideology, the condemnation of sexuality outside of matrimony. The marriage plot served to contain sexuality, at least in theory, within heterosexual marriage, a phenomenon that led to the "narrowing of the ethical scale" in 18th-century Britain into primarily sexual terms, as seen in the etymological shift by which words such as

⁵⁰¹ Harrison, "Reading the Marriage Plot," 117.

virtue, propriety, decency, modesty, delicacy, and purity came to be understood in almost exclusively sexual terms.⁵⁰² Women were increasingly defined as nonsexual, nondesiring, and nonsinful, with the attendant belief that women who did exhibit sexual desire or behavior outside of marriage were “fallen” and, as such, irredeemable. This “decarnalization of the public feminine role”⁵⁰³ represented a profound shift from earlier (including Puritan) representations of women, which often depicted women as more concupiscent than men.⁵⁰⁴

Thus, the love marriage spun a new, immensely appealing context for *female* purity heart and body. Two intertwined kinds of social hierarchy are implicit in these works. First, a new gender hierarchy appears in which woman, and not man, represents a height of virtue. Second, this pure woman’s marriage represents a fulcrum of love, pure from mercenary or mundane motivations.

In [Jane] Austen’s *Pride and Prejudice*, her most famous novel, she revealed the legal and economic pressures that influence marital choice, especially for women, but she also diminished those pressures in constructing a happy marriage for her heroine based in mutual love, to a man who just happened to be the wealthiest of her acquaintance. Austen’s heroines, Elizabeth and Jane, are thus able to remain impervious to financial motivations and nonetheless benefit tangibly from socially advantageous matches.⁵⁰⁵

The love marriage was, first in England before it spread into America, a new cultural ideal that reflected a rise in status for women in the gender hierarchy⁵⁰⁶

⁵⁰² Ibid., 138. Ian Watt, *The rise of the novel: Studies in Defoe, Richardson and Fielding*. (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2001) 157.

⁵⁰³ Ibid., 163.

⁵⁰⁴ Harrison, “Reading the Marriage Plot,” 116.

⁵⁰⁵ Ibid., 119.

⁵⁰⁶ In addition to the the love marriage motif, Candy Gunther Brown has illustrated that the rise of revivalism within American Christianity was concomitant with a rise Christian

and created a new context for feminine virtue, reflected in the definition of love as something quite apart from, even in contradistinction to, social advantage, propriety or economic necessity. In short, this kind of love existed in liminality to the social order (here meaning with no internal reference to social advantage or propriety in terms of matchmaking) or even in carnivalistic relationship to it.

Note that Mr. Darcy, Austen's love interest of Elizabeth Bennett, marries

Elizabeth in a *mésalliance*, as she is not of noble birth (as he is) and has no

dowry (he is very wealthy).⁵⁰⁷ Historian Kristy Maddux observes that, in the late

nineteenth century, "the emotionalism that came from the revivals was

compounded by the sentimentalism common in that era's novels. This

sentimental Christianity, like the revivals, abandoned "correct doctrines of

domestic nurture, which valorized the role of the mother in the raising up of godly children into spiritual maturity. While Gunther Brown reveals that this maternal schema was often used to criticize revivalism's abrupt conversion model, it may be that they have more in common as discourses about gender than it first appears. For our purposes, both the love marriage and the cult of domesticity depend on a specific type of feminine virtue, one which modeled female moral dominance in the gender hierarchy. See Candy Gunther Brown, "The Gender Dimension in Horace Bushnell's and Elizabeth Prentiss's Critiques of Revivalism" in *Embodying the Spirit: New Perspectives on North American Revivalism*, ed. Michael J. McClymond (Baltimore, MD: JHU Press, 2004), 67–83.

⁵⁰⁷ In this estimation of the sanctity of love, Austen's construction is symmetrical with that of Bourdieu, who defines the purity of love as freedom from calculation for social advantage. "Pure love," Bourdieu notes, "the art for art's sake of love, is a relatively recent historical invention, as is art for art's sake, the pure love of art, with which it is bound up historically and structurally. It is probably found only rarely in its most fully realized form, and, as a limit that is hardly ever attained is extremely fragile because it is associated with excessive demands...and endlessly threatened by the returned of egoistic calculation...But it exists sufficiently, especially in women, to be instituted as a practical ideal worthy of being pursued for itself. The aura of mystery that surrounds it, especially in the literary tradition is easy to understand *from a strictly anthropological point of view*: based on the suspension of struggle for symbolic power...to the state of fusion and communion often evoked in metaphors close to mysticism." Bourdieu, *Masculine Domination*, 111-112.

divinity” in favor of ‘heartfelt personal relationships’—between the individual and Jesus and among humans themselves.”⁵⁰⁸ American scholar of religion Stephen Prothero notes that sentimental hymns of this period tended to present “a religion of love,” which advanced a spiritualized sentimentality.⁵⁰⁹

But this flight into sentimentality should not be understood as trivial. Prothero notes that “sentimental evangelicals ‘presented a form of Christianity that was relational rather than juridical, focusing on the intimate love of Jesus rather than the awesome power of his Father.’”⁵¹⁰ The growth of sentimental evangelical Christianity in the late nineteenth century, says Prothero, amounted to “the eclipse of the Trinity’s First Person by the Second.”⁵¹¹ The angry God of Jonathan Edwards was being confidently replaced by a sweet Savior. Popular nineteenth-century hymns commonly presented a familiar and accessible Jesus, and invited Christians to profess their affection for him as lover and friend.

The rise of the love marriage effectively deposed status-based marriages and-- like Edward’s God-- the often intemperate husbands that ruled in them. In an illuminating article titled “The Marriage Plot in Theory,” literary theorist Kathy Psomiades posits that the novelists that proved influential in promoting love marriages to cultural dominance were, themselves, taken up with the work of

⁵⁰⁸ Kristy Maddux, “The Feminized Gospel: Aimee Semple McPherson and the Gendered Performance of Christianity,” in *Women’s Studies in Communication* 35:1 (2012), 45.

⁵⁰⁹ Stephen Prothero, *American Jesus: How the son of God became a national icon* (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2003), 78.

⁵¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 76.

⁵¹¹ *Ibid.*, 59.

anthropologists on social structure and marriage patterns. Psomiades explains that, during the latter half of the 19th century, anthropology's interest in the various forms of sexual behavior, and in marriage itself as a primitive mode of social organization was "a way of taking old stories about the individual and the group, adding sex to them, and making them modern. If the social contract could not do the theoretical work it used to do, marriage—where sex and contract meet—might be able to do a new kind of theoretical work in helping intellectuals understand social organization." Emergent literary plots of this period which concerned promiscuous polyandry, a universal matriarchal phase, and primitive ignorance about paternity "were not," Psomiades argues, "strange Victorian fantasy projections as much as new theoretical constructs addressing old questions about property, affiliation, group definition and cohesion, tyranny and egalitarianism."⁵¹² Instead Psomiades sees novels of the period as mediating a new cache of reflection on social and political structures, insinuated into marriage plots in which the woman is now protagonist and heroine. Domestic novels of this period, Psomiades notes, are engaged with the Victorian theory of the sexual contract, and use marriage as a theoretical tool for thinking about political life.

Through books, journal articles, and reviews, these ideas became widely known and accepted from 1865 onward. Domestic fiction

⁵¹² Kathy Alexis Psomiades, "The Marriage Plot in Theory," *NOVEL: A Forum on Fiction* 43, no. 1 (2010): 44.

written during this period thus invokes marriage in a context in which theories exist about how marital and political structures necessarily say something about each other. The later Anthony Trollope, George Eliot, George Meredith, the New Woman Novelists of the 1890s, all draw upon the anthropological idea of marriage's relation to primitive social organization. In *He Knew He Was Right* (1868), *Daniel Deronda*, and *The Egoist* (1879), the liberal progress narrative's language of tyranny and consent characterizes the narrative of marital cruelty, making clear its role as an analogue for larger questions of legitimate rule.⁵¹³

The rise of the love match, like the rise of revivalist sentimentality, deposed unloved and unloving husbands as harbingers of political tyranny.

Thus, when Austen's influential *Pride and Prejudice* touts the purity of an anti-structural match (Darcy rejects the matches that are expected, even demanded, of him in preference for Elizabeth who is of inferior birth), and the virtue of a carnivalistic love, it does so in a context in which marriage has become a focal point for critiquing the social contract. Austen's carnivalistic match attains its force as an ideal even whilst absolutely needing the structural order (and the blasé and predictable matches that purportedly strengthen that order) to define its purity against and make it intelligible as a virtue. As noted, Austen's portrayal of carnivalistic love curiously ends in placing both Elizabeth and her sister Jane in higher positions in the social order.⁵¹⁴

⁵¹³ Ibid., 55.

⁵¹⁴ This kind of anti-structural, carnivalistic love has its corresponding narratives that refer to love for God in Christianity. In one of the most famous of all medieval biographies, St Francis

Similarly, as early Pentecostals narrated it, among throngs of believers they were the pure, the virgins, those who were eligible for marriage to Christ and, once baptized in the Holy Spirit, those who were “sealed” into bridehood.⁵¹⁵ Their construction of virtuous femininity corresponded well to a fresh cultural ideal that newly valorized women as delicate, modest, and virtuous. Though they might appear relatively lowly, it was they, and not the denominational hierarchs, that were for Christ his beloved bride.⁵¹⁶ The rapture was their point of marriage. In their circulation of the love poetry of the Song of Songs, early Pentecostals constructed an exalted love match for themselves that, not coincidentally, would *not* correspond to any structures of this-worldly social order. Instead this match would rescue them from a rising, oppressive order.

Anti-hierarchy

Pentecostal Bridal purity had another very important definition, for our purposes. The Bride is adamantly opposed, and stands apart from, the hierarchical structures of this world. She is credibly a form of liminality, but she is a liminality looking for a new structure entirely, one not yet present in the

of Assisi is, at first, a wealthy merchant’s son whom, upon conversion, adopts images of poverty, nudity, even weakness-- and his moment of conversion finds him renouncing his father, throwing away his money and “giving birth” to his first “child” (disciple). See Bynum, “Women’s Stories, Women’s Symbols,” 35.

⁵¹⁵ Taylor, *Spirit and the Bride*, 115-118.

⁵¹⁶ The theme of bridal purity is congruent with the theme of separating the wheat from the chaff on the threshing floor, as well.

world. In this passage, it is clear that the hierarchical church, universal, is an antagonist to the Bride⁵¹⁷ of the Pentecostal bridal plot.

But when the church became popular and was formed into a great hierarchy, the long drought began, interspersed with a local shower of gracious revival now and then through the middle ages. Under the reformations, the latter rain began to be foreshadowed. The holiness revivals which have been going on in our land for the last few years are the preliminary showers of this rain. They have been glorious and wonderful: so much so that many have taken them for the latter rain itself. But we know that these revivals, though gracious, have fallen far short of the apostolic revivals—the early rain.⁵¹⁸

⁵¹⁷ In a compelling reading of the gendering that is left implicit in Victor Turner's account of liminality, but which is nevertheless still detectable in his own accounts of liminality and which also rings true of her own field of study, the Medieval period, Carolyn Walker Bynum states, "It is the powerful who express imitation of Christ as (voluntary) poverty, (voluntary) nudity, and (voluntary) weakness...When [medieval] women recount their own lives, the themes are less climax, conversion, reintegration and triumph...according to Turner's model, they should reflect either inversion (for example, poverty) insofar as women are superior (for example, of aristocratic status) or elevation (for example, military prowess) [but]...do not quite do either. Rather they continue to enhance in image (for example, bride or sick person) what the woman's ordinary experience is, so that one either has to see the woman's religious stance as permanently liminal or never quite becoming so." Bynum's treatment points up relevant issues in Turner's non-accountable gender schemata, and Bynum's example of the bride similarly reads bridal status as liminal status (as I have done here). Difference can also be detected between the medieval figures that Bynum is referencing and early Pentecostals whom, still claiming bridehood and motherhood, did opt for military power, especially in the dominant figure of Maria Woodworth Etter, known as the martial "Mother in Israel." See Caroline Walker Bynum, "Women's Stories, Women's Symbols" 27-52.

⁵¹⁸ Taylor, *The Spirit and the Bride*, 90-91. This is a decidedly different account of the person of the Holy Spirit than that given by Sharon Betcher, taken from different sources with different social locations. Departing from Western Christianity's Platonic philosophy and "liberative movement" against the "bondage to decay" (Romans 8), Betcher has problematized the Holy Spirit as being "airborne, aspiring to forms of freedom that have been construed as freedom from the constraints of corporeality, freedom from death, transience, and ambiguity. Taking shape already in the Hebrew Scriptures, Spirit comes ever more through the centuries to resemble one of its four elemental coordinates: air. Through its association with prophetic inspiration and its affiliation with the prophetic writings, Spirit becomes the subservient breath of a purified logos. Such a trajectory, ever averse to getting grounded, culminates in the postmodern pre-eminence of language and text. While symbolically construed as the supernaturally transcendent scope of the power of the divine, Christianity's mystification, or "spiritualization," of Spirit has been under-girded by its own abhorrence of the material, organic, biotic aspects of being. Holy Spirit has been wielded as a

In this seasonal schema, the time of the institutional church appears as a summer reign that drew long--into a drought. Like Bakhtin's carnivalists, early Pentecostals used their cosmology to produce a disastrous horoscope: the end was near for the Great Hierarchy. The early and latter rains (with the Reformation absorbed into a naturalistic plot) portended rising action in which the Bride emerges as a protagonist.⁵¹⁹

In the following section, what will emerge is a second aspect of the bride symbol: that of her own plot line. Just as the heroines of the love marriage plot must endure a narrative that tests the purity of their motivations and proves their

theological legitimation of humanity's disregard of ecosystemic life." See Sharon Betcher, "Grounding the Spirit: an Ecofeminist Pneumatology" 315-336.

⁵¹⁹ Interestingly, a parallel movement happened in literature at the very end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth century. Psomiades notes that, "In the 1880s and 1890s, the period of Imperial Romance, late-century gothic, and the beginning of James Frazer's *The Golden Bough* (1890), both anthropology and the novel shift away from realism. In Frazer, sex is less a matter of incest, social structure, and marriage relations and more a matter of elemental religio-biological forces. Similarly, the plots of 1860s sensation fiction, in which women are trapped in archaic social structures, give way to the plots of 1890s gothic and New Woman fiction, in which women are trapped in archaic, elementally sexed bodies. In H. Rider Haggard's *She* (1887), Thomas Hardy's *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* (1891), Sarah Grand's *The Heavenly Twins* (1893), and George Du Maurier's *Trilby* (1894), to be female is to be temporally out of place, to move around in a modern world in an ancient goddess-like body, to possess a modern consciousness under which lurks ancient primitive instinct. Anthropology itself found an explanation for the popularity of extra-realist genres: the folklorist Andrew Lang claimed that extra-realist genres were pre-realist: closer to the beating heart of origin than the realism of civilization was and thus more alive, essential, and true." I am suggesting here that the Pentecostal imagination is, similarly, an imagination guided by perceived "religio-biological" forces, and therefore present as pre-realist, but (some what different from the interpretation of Andrew Lang) are post-realis (as opposed to pre-realist or extra-realist) in that they are predicated on the technological changes that give this imagination its particular shape (here Industrialization). Psomiades, "Marriage Plot," 55-56.

virtues, so the Pentecostal Bride of Christ has a plot to endure—complete with a carnival—in order to emerge victorious as The Lamb’s Queen.

Bridal Plot: Winter-Spring and the Seasonality of Power

For reasons not perfectly clear, what stands out in the collective reception of Pentecostal eschatology is the rapture. According to the Bride’s plot line, the rapture would preserve the Bride of Christ from manifold forms of devastation thought to be ready to befall the earth. In Pentecostal parlance, this period of devastation was an impending cataclysmic “winter.” The plot is well-explained in these passages (quotes earlier) from Taylor’s treatise on the Bride, in *The Spirit and the Bride* (1907), the most popular and most definitive account of the bridal motif of the early Pentecostal period.

After the latter rain there was a dry spell, during which the grain matured and mellowed, and then came the harvest, and then the winter. After this great outpouring of Pentecost, there will come another dry spell, in which severe trials will mellow the saints and mature them for the harvest, and then will set in the wintry storms of the Great Tribulation, to be ended only by the millennial spring morning, when Christ and his glorified saints shall ‘return from the wedding to take charge of the world.’⁵²⁰

Immediately after the bride is gone, The Great Tribulation will set in, during which many of the “left ones” will go up by companies to join the band in the air (Rev. 6: 9; 7: 9–17; 14: 1, 13–16). Just before the close of these awful days we hear a company called to the Marriage Supper of the Lamb (Rev. 19: 9). Then Jesus comes down from the Supper, lays hold on the devil, and binds him a thousand

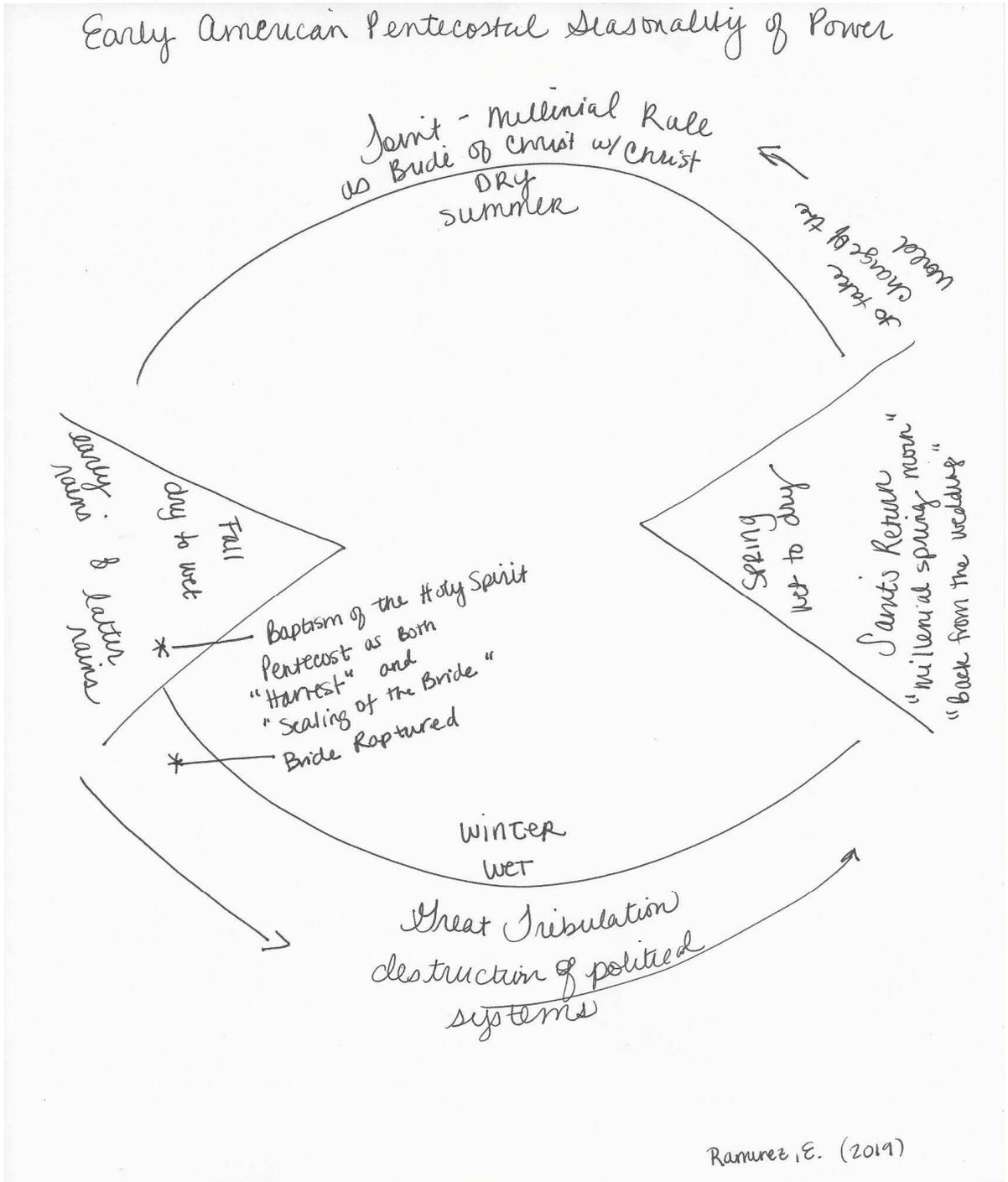
⁵²⁰ Taylor, *The Spirit and the Bride*, 96.

years, and casts him into the bottomless pit, and shuts him up, and sets a seal upon him. He then sets up His throne at Jerusalem, and reigns on earth a thousand years, during which time He and His saints are engaged in judging the nations then living on the earth.⁵²¹

Within this rhetoric, we see all the meteorological themes united as they are in agricultural life. Latter rains, a dry period for maturing grain, then the initial harvest of Pentecost, then the winter. Then the text creates a direct parallel between the Latter Rains and Pentecost. “Now another dry period, a mellowing and maturing one again, then the harvest again, then (again) the wintry storms of the Great Tribulation.” After winter, we have spring, new birth, and a return to the earth to reign of the saints who have already been married.

Important for our purposes is the alignment of the Pentecostal cosmological clock with that of the agrarian year, and the detectability of a Bakhtinian sense of political contrasts that is asserted in the *winter-spring* motif. The following chart demonstrates the alignment of this plot line with the

⁵²¹ Ibid., 84.



The alignment of this seasonality, the (harvest)-winter-spring plot, has been demonstrated to operate in agrarian peoples to function as a rhetorical index for registering profound change, and (especially felicitous for our purposes) has been documented to play a major role in a watershed anthropological finding. Anthropologist Jeff Sissons, whose work was previously discussed with respect to Sahlins' mythopraxis and who advocated for mythopraxis as being part of the habitus, has recently presented a stunning observation about an historical period of unprecedented religious destruction. In his path-breaking book, *The Polynesian Iconoclasm: Religious Revolution and the Seasonality of Power* (2014), Sissons discusses a period of "world historical significance" in which district chiefs in Tahiti and the surrounding islands desecrated their own temples—literally tore them down—and resurrected new ones to a new god, Jehova. In Sissons' account, the widespread desecration of the temples took place during "*Pleiades Above, the Season of Communitas*" or Winter, November through January. The *periodicity* of destruction, and the renewal that followed it, was so striking in its importance for tribal life that Sissons' titled the book, to reflect this finding: "the seasonality of power."

Tearing Down Temples During the Season of "Communitas"

The following passages are as brief as possible to allow for the best, quickest access to the relationship between mythopraxis, seasonal destructivity,

and religious evolution. In these passages, Sissons explains his findings that purport to show that widespread destruction in Polynesian life was conducted during the Winter season, during which it is believed that the fertility gods return to the tribes to regenerate or bring new life. The destruction that the Islanders undertook Sissons finds was in deep ritual accord with their lived understandings of Winter as a period of death and regeneration.

The Polynesian Iconoclasm was an explosive event of world-historical significance. It began on the island of Mo'orea, Tahiti's close neighbour, in the winter of 1815 when district priests and chiefs demonstrated their allegiance to a high chief, Pomare, and his new god, Jehova, by destroying their sacrificial altars and god-images. The following summer, district chiefs in Tahiti and most other Society Islands did likewise, desecrating all of their images and temples. Within ten years, Society Islanders would take their iconoclastic revolution to the Austral Islands, Hawai'i and the Southern Cook Islands. In each place iconoclastic performances, probably none of which were witnessed by European missionaries, would be staged. This was the Polynesian Iconoclasm, an event of anthropological moment, not simply because of the radical social changes that it initiated but, equally importantly, because of the manner in which things changed. Marshall Sahlins has famously argued that Captain Cook's arrival in Hawai'i in 1778–1779 was, for Hawaiians, a seasonal event of ritual significance, his arrival coinciding with the annual return of the fertility god, Lono. I will argue here that the Polynesian Iconoclasm, an event that occurred some forty years later and on a much larger scale than Cook's arrival, was of related seasonal and ritual significance for Polynesians. Like Cook's arrival, **almost all destructive episodes of the Polynesian Iconoclasm occurred during the November to January period.** Termed makahiki in Hawai'i and matari'i-i-nia in Tahiti, this was the season when gods and ancestors returned to bring about a renewal of life. If Cook was treated as such a god, Jehova was to be the real thing.

Tahiti and all of the societies that participated in Pomare's revolution were characterized by a seasonality of power in that they all had pre-existing traditions of seasonal social renewal during which the political order was annually dissolved and reconstituted. Hawaii's makahiki and the subsequent luakini temple rites through which hierarchy was re-asserted are the most anthropologically well-known of these via the work of Sahlins (1985) and Valeri (1985). *All of these contrasting rites of hierarchical dissolution and social reconstitution were seasonal events, the two forms of rite occurring some six months apart.*⁵²²

Sissons' treatment of the seasonality of power, both the power used to destroy and the power used to reconstruct, establishes that Islanders conceptualized Winter, the season of Pleiades Above, as the season for the most profound forms of destruction. The following chart represents the periodicity of Polynesian destruction as plotted on the agricultural seasonal cycles:

⁵²² Sissons, *The Polynesian Iconoclasm*, 1-2; emphasis mine.

Stinson's Seasonality of Power

The Season of Hierarchy
Pleiades Below
Summer

May - June

POLYNESIAN RECONSTRUCTION
OF NEW TEMPLES TO
JEHOVA

POLYNESIAN DESTRUCTION
OF RELIGIOUS
TEMPLES

Winter

Pleiades Above
the Season of "Communitas"

Nov - Jan

fertility gods + ancestors
"political order dissolved &
reconstituted"

source: Stinson, Jeffrey
The Polynesian Waka (2014)

Sissons gives us a brilliant example of the rites of passage as a site for religious revolution, in which the period of winter emerges as the period for the actual dissolution of the social order, not just its being put in flux for play! The physical tearing down of temples, Sissons shows, was understood and undertaken in accordance within the frame of a Wintery destructive *communitas*. Rhetorically, the Great Tribulation signifies the tearing down of temples and hierarchies, to which Taylor explicitly referred, keeping in mind that his is really the best exposition of a culturally diffused line of thought.

The periodicity of the rise of the Holy Spirit, in rhetorical terms, during the turn to Winter suggests that that Sissons' seasonality of power credibly represents the time signature of the Holy Spirit. While it has ever been clear that the bywords of baptism, revival, renewal in early Pentecostalism represent the work of the Holy Spirit, here we have the new option of connecting these metaphors to their agrarian seasonal provenance. And though, like with the Polynesian god Lono, the gendering of the Spirit as feminine is obscured, when considered together with the bridal season the feminine aspects of revival and renewal stand out present as being gestational. But before we reach the seasonal point of birth and renewal, Pentecostal periodicity first suggests a winter of female

destruction—a tearing down of the temple of the Great Church

Hierarchy,⁵²³

Winter: Early Pentecostalism's Discourse of Destruction.

In the following section, I revisit early Pentecostal discourse about The Great Tribulation as a Wintery Discourse of populist destruction.

Even the casual reader of Pentecostal history is likely to be aware of early Pentecostal belief in the rapture. The rapture is a term that denotes the idea that Christians will be “caught up into the air” to escape an intense period of destruction on earth in the form of meteorological crises, pandemics, and war. This destructive period is called the Great Tribulation. In early Pentecostals thought, at the end of the Great Tribulation Jesus Christ would return to earth for a joint millennial rule with the Bride. Thus, the idea that Christians would be raptured is often referred to as pre-millennialism.⁵²⁴ What is striking about this discourse is that its seasonal logic is symmetrical to Sissons’ polynesian tribes. In early Pentecostal thought, similar to that of the Polynesians’, winter is the time for the kingdoms of the world to be destroyed.

In a 1934 article entitled “The Solution to the World’s Problems,” the *Latter Rain Evangel* proclaimed that “These troubles, political, social, industrial,

⁵²³ The best category of this kind of *communitas*, in Turner’s thought is not play but “apocalyptic *communitas*.” See Turner, *The Ritual Process*, 153-155.

⁵²⁴ King, *Disfellowshipped*, 58–62. Wacker, *Heaven Below*, 253–55. Blumhofer, *Restoring the Faith*, 16,46,50.

religious, and otherwise can never be settled until the glorious Son of God comes back...The question is now, How shall we escape the Tribulation period?" As late as 1958 the general superintendent of the Assemblies of God, Ralph M. Riggs, echoed these sentiments when he said, "the human race has reached the end of the present age and is passing into a new era which will bring great tribulation to the non-Christians but a great triumph to the Christians."⁵²⁵ Robert Mapes Anderson notes that the Great Tribulation theme encouraged early Pentecostals to embrace social destruction. He notes, "The *Christian Evangel* expressed typical Pentecostal sentiments when it greeted the outbreak of the first world war with scarcely disguised jubilation: "War! War! War!!!: The Nations of Europe Battle and Unconsciously Prepare the Way for Return of the Lord Jesus to Establish His Kingdom Upon the Earth."⁵²⁶ Wacker poeticizes Pentecostal expectations, "a sense of *imminent catastrophe* seemed the most conspicuous result of latter rain thinking. A scarcely definable foreboding of cataclysmic changes sure to come seemed pervasive. In its eerie light, life's edges grew sharper... its colors grew darker."⁵²⁷

Said differently, winter was coming. Pentecostals spoke of early rains, latter rains, harvest, and the threshing floor. Then they continued this seasonal narrative to include a logical winter that follows "the autumnal rains" of the Holy

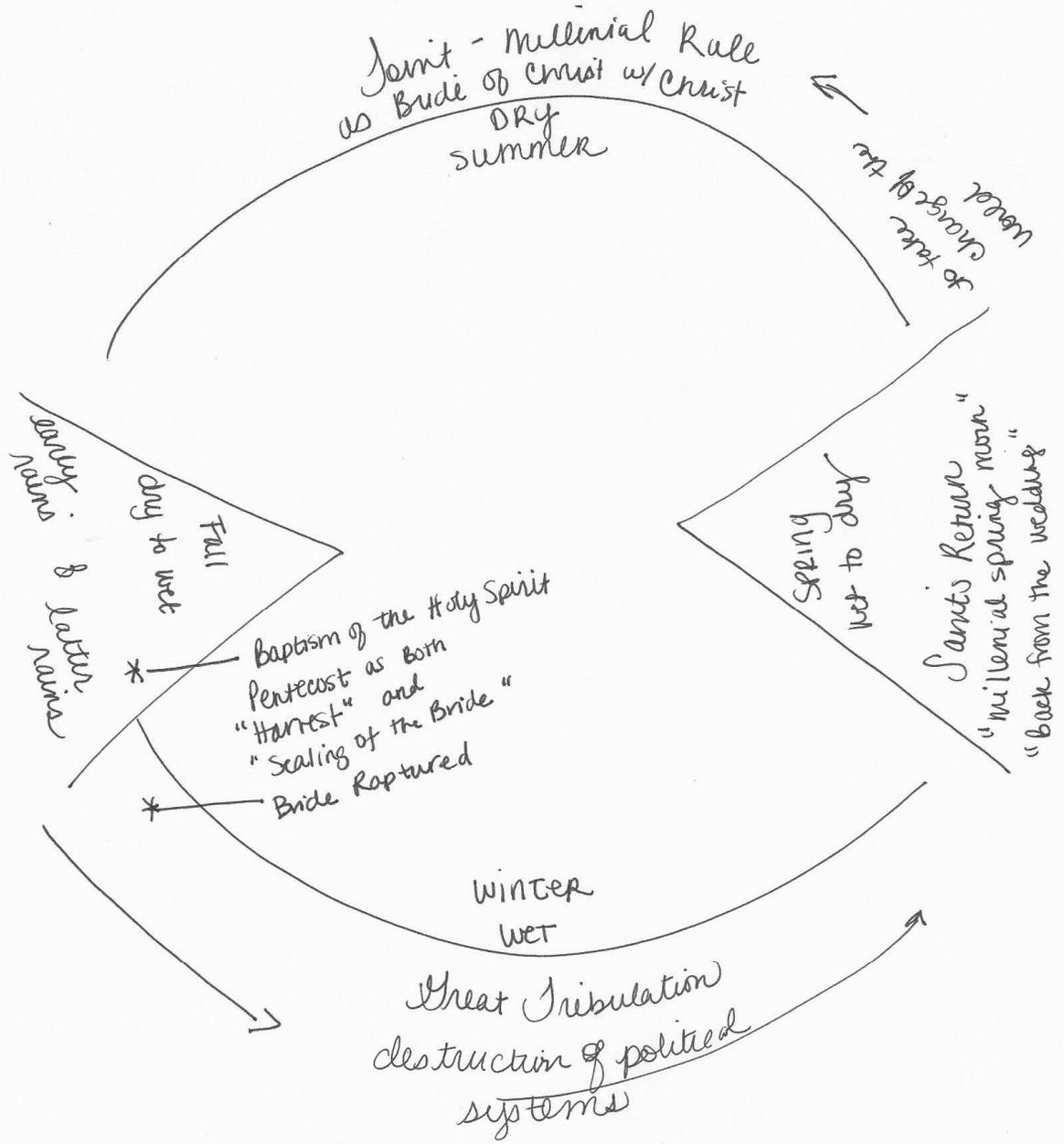
⁵²⁵ Anderson, *Vision of the Disinherited*, 201.

⁵²⁶ *Ibid.*, 202.

⁵²⁷ Wacker, *Heaven Below*, 256, emphasis mine.

Spirit. When early Pentecostals referred to Azusa Street as the Pentecost, they were at the same time plotting a progression of rising action which naturally led into the winter of Great Tribulation.

Early American Pentecostal Seasonality of Power



Early Pentecostals imagined the Great Tribulation to include judgment on the world in the form of natural cataclysm and war. This discourse can be interpreted within the frame that Bell identified for calendrical rites, which she says constitute working interpretations of the natural and social world.⁵²⁸ Pentecostal wintery discourse posited *not* the harmonizing energy that Turner envisions but instead cataclysm: a purposeful winter of destruction. Recall that Turner's treatment of the calendrical rites suggests that "even when rites of status reversal are improvised to address social ills, such as in the case of dealing with calamity, they retain their logic of integration with a temporal order and ritually move to reset this order."⁵²⁹ But early Pentecostals were not attempting to influence or control or harness nature. Instead, like Bakhtin's carnivalists, they were invoking and even provoking winter as a political season, one of political destruction—only with more intensity, with more seriousness. The newly imagined calendrical rites of the Holy Spirit were not designed simply to be a "pressure-valve" that releases the tension in America's social system at the time. This Winter, the Great Tribulation, would have its much more serious casualties, and Pentecostals imagined this was exactly what the winter needed to accomplish. Chief among these casualties would be all forms of government, which were to be replaced, of course, by the government of the Messiah. But

⁵²⁸ Bell, *Ritual: Perspectives and Dimensions*, 102–108.

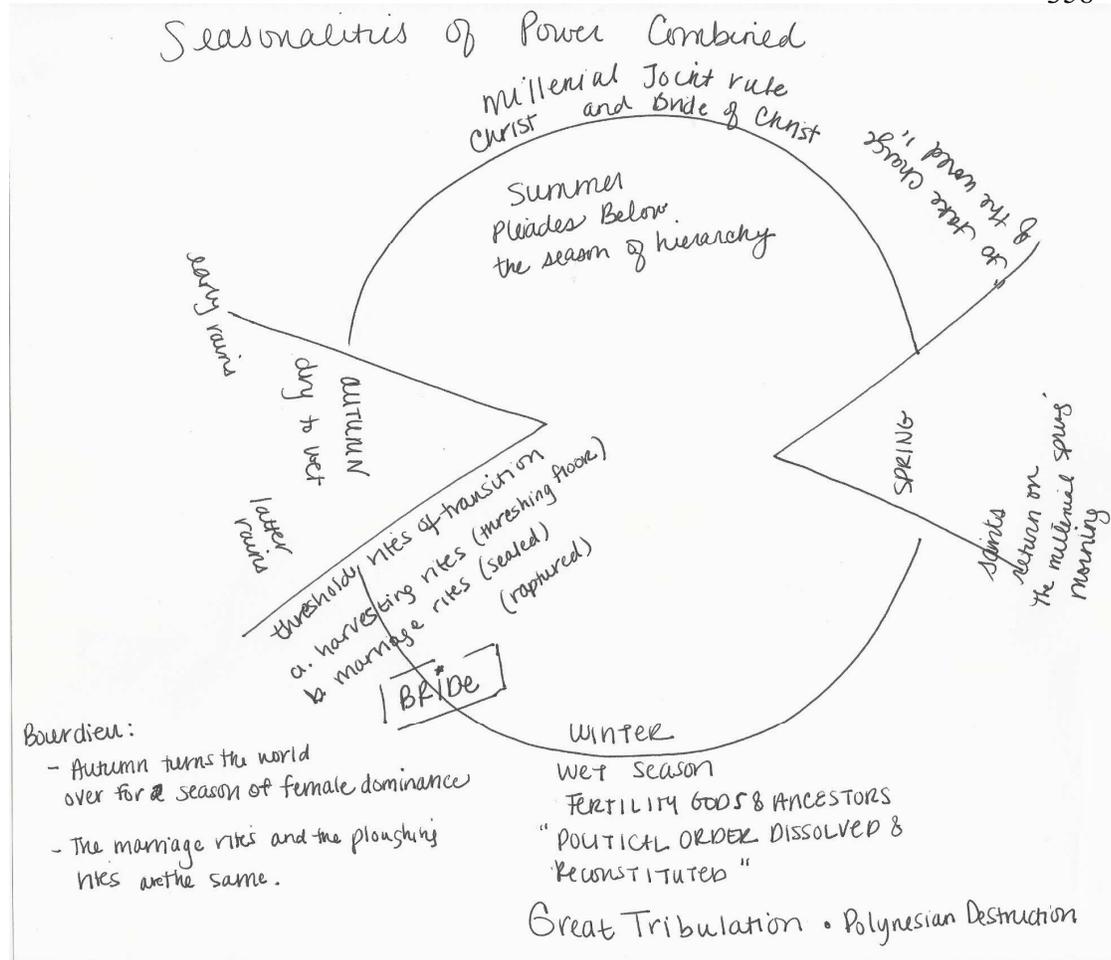
⁵²⁹ Turner, *The Ritual Process*, 177–178. Consider also the remedial energies assigned to "rituals of affliction." Turner, "Images of Anti-Temporality," in *On the Edge of the Bush: Anthropology as Experience* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1985), 239.

Church hierarchies were on their way out as well. If the Great Tribulation stood for any particular idea, it credibly stood for anti-hierarchy: Winter as anti-hierarchical force, turning-over force.

For their part, early Pentecostals were not planning to be around to “see” this winter. From the very earliest iterations of the Bridal theme in early Pentecostalism, the Baptism of the Holy Spirit was first and foremost a seal that designated the sealed as part of the Bride of Christ. That the sealing of the Bride during harvest signals a switch into the feminine gender is not an obvious part of Sissons’ discussion. Even less obvious is the manner in which wintery destruction, too, presents as female energy, but here Bourdieu is helpful:

In the quarrel between winter and man, winter is presented as a woman, and doubtless an old woman, the incarnation of the malevolent forces of death and destruction, disorder and division... this is a sort of origin myth, emphasizing the fact that winter, like woman, is dual natured: winter contains both the purely female woman, unadulterated, untamed, incarnated in the old woman, empty, dry, sterile woman, i.e. the female principle which old age reduces to its objective, purely negative truth; but there is also the tamed, domesticated woman, woman fulfilled, i.e. fertility... when fecundated by man.⁵³⁰

⁵³⁰ Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, 128.



The themes of the Great Tribulation readily read as one aspect of the Pentecostal feminine— not the bride fecundated by the divinity, but instead the *female* which remains an “empty, dry, sterile woman” in Bourdieu’s quotation above. On the other hand, given that this female is a tearing down force, anti-hierarchical in her movement, suggests an alternative reading: a bridal feminine symbol that is

carnivalistic oppositional force that is contrary to the masculine (summer, hierarchical) structures of the world and *toward* the masculine represented by Jesus' role in the Cosmic marriage. Such a bride would arguably be shaped in part by the anti-hierarchy of radical evangelicals and by extension the revolutionary age, the period in which anti-hierarchy became an American virtue.

On a different note, the rapture reads analogously to the motif of the Pure Brides of affectionate marriage. Just as these new paragons of virtue suffered decarnalization to produce them as non-sinful,⁵³¹ so too the transformation of believers into the Bride required a deterritorialization. The Bride of Christ is deterritorializing bride, into the air during the rapture. The winter that befalls the earth represents, in part, the *last* of the untamed powers of the Spirit, because the spring return discourse of Pentecostalism (as one might *not* expect) converges on a millennial springtime reign.⁵³²

⁵³¹ This (already included) quotation is here (again)cited for easy reference: Women were increasingly defined as nonsexual, nondesiring, and nonsinful, with the attendant belief that women who did exhibit sexual desire or behavior outside of marriage were "fallen" and, as such, irredeemable. This "decarnalization of the public feminine role" (Watt 2001[1957]:163) represented a profound shift from earlier (including Puritan) representations of women, which often depicted women as more concupiscent than men."

⁵³² The work of the Spirit and the Bride in this section are blurred in part because the overt femininity of the Bride makes the gendered aspects of the project clearer. It is also not certain to what degree and in what way the Spirit and the Bride relate or perhaps even identify. One common theme here, in Pentecostal circles, converges on vocalization, and perhaps ventriloquy. It is the Spirit who grants believers the ability to cry, "*Abba, Father,*" also the Spirit who baptizes with tongues. People who speak in tongues are touted to be "speaking in the Spirit." The final chapter, the climax of *The Spirit and the Bride* by Taylor (1907) startles the reader with the declarative statement, "The Spirit and the Bride say, Come!"-- again a co-vocalization. It is ever clear that the groom of the cosmic marriage is Jesus, so the indeterminacy of the Spirit is here read in the direction of the feminine: as indwelling in the Bride, as seasoned by the feminine winter-spring schema, and in a moment, in maternalizing speech via speaking in tongues.

Spring: Crowning the Lamb's Queen

After supper, Jesus and the bride and the guests ride down from heaven on white horses. Jesus lays hold on Satan and binds him in the pit. He then sets up his throne in Jerusalem and together with the saints He judges the world, rules and reigns a thousand years. After the millennium all things are made new, the New Jerusalem comes down and hangs over the earth. This city is the home of the Bride, *i.e.*, it is the palace, while the earth renewed will be her kingdom forever. "Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth" (Matt. 5: 5). "And hast made us unto our God kings and priests; and we shall reign on the earth" (Rev.5:10).⁵³³

After a wintry destruction, punctuated by Jesus' own destructive force, the cycle continues through spring and into a millennial reign. The narrative on the whole suggests that the hierarchies of the world are in their summer, but that the rains of the Holy Spirit portend a transition. These hierarchies would be destroyed through the Great Tribulation, finalized by Jesus himself. Then the married couple appears together: Christ, the Lamb and the Lamb's Queen. The indication of lamb-hood suggests a springtime logic to this new Kingdom on earth. The kingdom is fresh, like a lamb or a child. Together the Lamb and the Lamb's Queen assume a millennial reign during which together they will judge world. William Seymour preached that the redeemed who partake in the "first resurrection" (*i.e.*, the rapture) would reign with Jesus over "unglorified humanity" during the millenium.⁵³⁴ "Then the triumphant will reign with Christ

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⁵³⁴ King, *Disfellowshipped*, 60.

on earth as “His queen the Lamb’s wife” and rule this old world in the millenium and afterwards adjudicate with him on the Great White Throne.”⁵³⁵

Here *perhaps* appears the eternal Spring— after the millennium *all things are made new* and the new Jerusalem comes down to hang over the earth. The city is the Bride’s palace; though we are in Spring this is not the primordial Spring past unblemished by the foibles and tragedies of history. This is not a garden, it is a city and a government. Perhaps, then, here we might find the Lion lying down with Lamb, and find a child leading them (Isaiah 11, NSV). The time clock does register and perhaps rest on Spring and Summer, but first Pentecostal rites of passage indicated a winter of profound destruction.⁵³⁶

This winter is a ravenous anti-hierarchy, tearing down the kingdoms of this world to make way for a new reign. In its parlaying of Queenship and role in judging the nations, again, early Pentecostal created an apex of power—political power. We close this section with a brilliant snapshot of the journey of the bride toward Queendom.

After the bride has been called into her chamber for the purpose of making herself ready, together with whatever at-tendants may or may not go in with her at that time, after many others have gone up out of The Great Tribulation to enter into her chamber, after the bridal party has been joined by the virgins, and all have gone into the marriage, and the great and long anticipated matrimonial ceremony

⁵³⁵ Ibid.

⁵³⁶ Carolyn Merchant argues that organic theories, in their revolutionary forms, symbolized the utopia of medieval and early modern groups for an end to the established order and its replacement by an egalitarian community in which people return to a Golden Age of harmony with nature. In Gardiner, “Green Social Theory,” 769.

has taken place, the outer then is to enter into the banqueting hall. Con-trary to the Scriptures and all congruity many take the marriage and the marriage supper as one and the same. Marriage is the establishment of relationship and *status*; a marriage supper is the refreshment, the eating, and drinking, and general social joy on the part of those attending it. After the marriage, the bride and groom upon invitation step into the festival hall, the groom takes his place at the head of the table, at his right stands his newly-wedded bride. She is dressed in the gold of Ophir, and raiment of needle-work.⁵³⁷

Bride Talk: Glossolalia as Kristeva's Semiotic discourse

Would you learn some-thing of the marriage? Get your Pentecost, and listen to the Spirit talk. The Lord has enabled me to understand many things said by others under the power of the Spirit, that I have been unable to put into English. (See I Cor. 2: 13).⁵³⁸

Ritual Syntax as the Root of Linguistic Syntax: Structure in Language

The phenomena of early Pentecostalism, especially as defined at Azusa Street Mission Revival, present one glaring practice for scholarly rumination: speaking in tongues. In this section, I will be discussing glossolalia, the more prominent and far more conspicuous form of tongues-speaking within early Pentecostalism. Although xenolalia was reported in the pews of Azusa, it is glossolalia that became Pentecostalism's calling card. Here, I present glossolalia as an instance of Julia Kristeva's *semiotic* discourse. To understand how this

⁵³⁷ Taylor, *The Spirit and the Bride*, 124.

⁵³⁸ *Ibid.*, 133.

reading indicates that glossolalia is maternalizing-infantile speech, first a discussion is needed on how ritual is like language. In what follows, a short discussion establishes current ritual theory on the intertwined development of ritual and language in human evolution and the way ritual theorists still see ritual at work in language.⁵³⁹

Structure Ritualized in Language

Prominent American sociologist and ritual theorist Robert Bellah posits that the origins of all human language lie in ritual. Ritual, for Bellah, is humanity's fundamental social act. He envisions the earliest, simple societies as having been engaged primarily in mimetic forms of communication. Critically, Bellah posits that only after the emergence of tribes could cultures learn to organize themselves through narratives, and thus the use of symbols, if at first rudimentary ones. In more complex tribal societies, there would be the gradual differentiation of powers in what had previously been rather egalitarian societies of gatherers-hunters. For Bellah, it is the emergence of language among humans that made possible the birth of rituals and religion in these tribal societies. He

⁵³⁹ For the following discussion on structure in ritual and language, I have primarily drawn from Catherine Bell's discussion on "Linguistics" in *Ritual: Perspectives and Dimensions* (1997).

suggests that language brought with it the power to create symbols, a power directly related to religion.⁵⁴⁰

For Frits Staahl, ritual is rule-governed activity that can be understood only as such. Like Bellah, Staahl also posits that ritual predates human language, and that linguistic syntax itself is derived from ritual syntax. Repeated references to object or subjects in relationship to others helped solidify a definition of the object and then gave rise to a linguistic signifier for said object, it was thought.⁵⁴¹ But definitions do not only require repetition, as Bellah theorized; they also require the emergence of structure of power that can help determine and secure linguistic referents.

For Maurice Bloch, the ritual syntax in language means there exists political structure within language. Bloch points to the “poverty” of expression in ritual, “how what can be said is greatly restricted by the way it must be said in order to be recognized as authoritative and legitimate ritual.”⁵⁴² For Bloch, the formalized language so distinctive of ritual creates and maintains a type of religious and sociopolitical authority known as “traditional authority.” In traditional authority, especially as expressed in religious rituals, the power of an individual or an office is understood to come from sources beyond the control of

⁵⁴⁰ Robert N. Bellah, *Religion in Human Evolution: From the Paleolithic to the Axial Age* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 2011). See also Guy G. Stroumsa, “Robert Bellah on the origins of religion. A Critical Review,” *Revue de l’histoire des religions*, 4 (2012): 467–477.

⁵⁴¹ Bell, *Ritual: Perspectives and Dimensions*, 68-72.

⁵⁴² *Ibid.*, 70.

the community, as the power of the king who rules by divine right differs from the power of an elected official.”⁵⁴³ This kind of authority is expressed in the structure of both ritual and language.

Against this backdrop, in which ritual orders symbols and this ordering is instantiated and protected by a transcendent power, Carnival’s symbolic inversions and linguistic negations appear as a ritual opening to change, even possibly to revolution.⁵⁴⁴ Liminality’s flux and play, too, portend renovation, which is why Turner posits that liminality is both necessary and fruitful for the social order, as the symbolic order requires periodic change for vitality. It is in the best interests of the social order to allow for this periodic refreshing of sign systems. In a related vein, deconstruction as a discourse posits the inherent instability of signs and therefore sign systems and the structures that they represent. In linguistic deconstruction, as in Derrida’s *Of Grammatology*, one commonly finds an undermining of a stable social order in language by appeal to the common roots that even seemingly opposing concepts share.⁵⁴⁵ *Pharmakon*, Derrida offers as example, is the greek root of both poison and medicine, which

⁵⁴³ Ibid.

⁵⁴⁴ Scott (1990) forcefully argues that Carnival makes certain kinds of speech possible and puts his own spin on theme with his account of the power of the hidden transcript when spoken, which he presents as electrifying. Kristeva’s similar argument puts the power in poetic speech, thus her title, *Revolution in Poetic Language*.

⁵⁴⁵ For this discussion on Derrida as it relates to political stability of the signifier, I am indebted to Ekaputra Tupamahu for his keen insights. Derrida writes, “The pharmakon is neither the cure nor the poison.” See especially the “Translator’s Preface” to Jacques Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, trans, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (Baltimore, MD: JHU, 1997).

could appear to be opposites but which are shown to have a common root that cannot be meaningful differentiated.⁵⁴⁶ Given the commonalities that are inherent to linguistic signifiers, the transcendental signified is necessary in a logocentric-metaphysical tradition in order to ground and determine signification.⁵⁴⁷ It is needed to “place a reassuring end to the reference from sign to sign”— to stabilize discrete meaning.⁵⁴⁸ Extending his insights from language into political metaphor, Derrida owns that deconstruction, in so far as it prevents the unity of meaning or a cessation of sign-play under a governing system of signs, instead presents as “the death of the King.”⁵⁴⁹

The symbolic order that rituals present as definitive and authoritative entails actual social processes that imply the existence of a hierarch who is able to assert the symbolic structure of the ritual as true and binding. Though this hierarch may be, in the end, society itself (in the “god” function) the structure of ritual and the structure of language both, and in interrelated ways, ascribe meaning by virtue of power. In the following section, the linguistic philosophy of Julia Kristeva is introduced.⁵⁵⁰ In her analysis, the role of the social governor of

⁵⁴⁶ While poetry points to the polysemy inherent in words. See Bourdieu’s discussion of poetry in *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, 110–11, 120–23, 224, 236.

⁵⁴⁷ See Derrida’s discussion on how Heidegger still works with a “transcendental signified’ in mind when he interprets Nietzsche’s works in Derrida, 19–20.

⁵⁴⁸ Derrida, 49.

⁵⁴⁹ Derrida, “Différance,” 132.

⁵⁵⁰ Kristeva’s conception of the role of the Father in the Mother-infant dyad is in part drawn from Lacan’s theory of “The Name of the Father” in Jacques Lacan, *Ecrits: A Selection* (New York: Norton & Co, 2002), 218.

order in language and order in ritual is the played first by the Father.⁵⁵¹ But Kristeva points out that speaking begins without reference to the social order or agreed upon social meanings, without the syntax and grammar that make explicit the power of the social order in language. Kristeva's account points to a prior speaking, the speech of infants (echolalias) directed at their mothers. Kristeva locates in this prior speaking evidence of the human drive toward speaking, a "drive" to signification, but postulates that human desires for expression and communication are antecedent to, excessive of, and not fully satisfied or definable by within the strictures of language.

Thus Kristeva is credited for bringing the body into philosophy of linguistics. For Kristeva, the body's ever renewing desires for signification (and the inability of the symbolic order in language to fully accommodate the breadth and nuance of meaning that bodies aim to signify) are the body's biological basis of "heterogeneity to meaning"-- thus the body participates in the symbolic order through adopting "symbolic discourse" but within that discourse the drives to signification are found in "semiotic discourse" which is audible in the musicality

⁵⁵¹ The work of George Lakoff in *Moral Politics: How Liberals and Conservatives Think* has identified the conservative politics of the US electorate as being determined in reference to the natural order. The hierarch of this order is the Strict Father. Lynn Hunt's *The Family Romance of the French Revolution* has posited that revolutionary France was experienced through a family model of politics. Accordingly, the beheading of Louis Capet registered, Hunt argues, as patricide in the collective political conscious, triggering deep anxiety about the role of men, women, and children in the social order. See George Lakoff, *Moral Politics* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2002); see also Lynn Avery Hunt, *The Family Romance of the French Revolution* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1992).

of speech and everything that makes a statement vivid, particular to the speaker.

The echolalias of infancy represent, on one level, the semiotic discourse at its most obvious and unattached to the symbolic order both in language and in ritual. It is this speech that I argue best approximates the desire and context of glossolalia—speech set free from the structural order (hierarchies) of the world.

*Kristeva's Semiotic Discourse in Language:
Structure Revolutionized in both Carnival and Poetic Language*

Bulgarian-born philosopher, literary theorist, and psychoanalyst Julia Kristeva views all language as having two discourses constituting it: the symbolic and the semiotic. The symbolic element is what “sets up the structures by which symbols operate. The symbolic is the structure or grammar that governs the ways in which symbols can refer.”⁵⁵² What Kristeva names “the semiotic” is the organization and discharge of “drives” within symbolically organized language. Drives are instinctual energies that operate between biology and culture. A concept borrowed from Freud, drives “have their sources in organic issue and aim at psychological satisfaction. Drives are heterogenous; there are several different drives that can conflict with each other.”⁵⁵³ Finally, drives are “material.

⁵⁵² Kelly Oliver, *The Portable Kristeva*, xiv.

⁵⁵³ *Ibid.*, xvii.

. . but not solely biological since they both connect and differentiate the biological and symbolic;” drives connect *soma* and psyche.⁵⁵⁴

As previously indicated, before the Oedipal crisis, *the semiotic* is audible in the echolalias of infants, which acquire the separation between fragmented proto-word fragments before they acquire actual symbolic words.⁵⁵⁵ The semiotic is still discernible after the (Oedipal) acquisition of symbolic language in its tones, rhythms, pitch, staccato; drives form the musicality within language. Drives are what help to produce the particular musicality that informs regional accents and phrasings, so that Spanish in Spain might sound quite different than that of the Yucatán in Mexico. Drives in semiotic language are temporally and psychically tied to that period in an infant’s life when his/her continuity with the mother’s body is the mode of his or her interaction with the world. The semiotic is rooted in a pervasive engagement with the maternal body which does not admit of the outside world, neither admits the existence of the father as a discrete love object or representation of the social order and the law. The infant acquires symbolic language and a discrete subjectivity only in a concomitant processural repression of his or her original connection with the mother’s body. The acquisition of language is, Kristeva posits, intimately tied to the existence of the father who, in a foundation series of domestic rituals, helps to orient the child to a world of

⁵⁵⁴ Julia Kristeva, *Revolution in Poetic Language*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1984), 167.

⁵⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 42–45.

discrete objects in relation and individualized subjects. To be very clear, this is a ritualized process of ordering and naming. This process splits the infant from an original unity with the mother, and is the process by which the infant's subjectivity is secured.

After the Oedipal repression that is foundational to the infant's sense of individuality, Kristeva stipulates that regression to the semiotic alone is a psychosexual equivalent of incest and, as such, is damaging to the coherence of the subject while at the same time it reflects damage already sustained by the subject. The clearest experience of this post-Oedipal process, of the regression of the speaker to the maternal body within language, is in psychotic glossolalia in which words have ceased to signify—they have lost their connectedness to the ordered world. Kristeva asserts that connections exist between Carnival and the drive forces in the *semiotic*. What is astonishing, however, is that the phenomenology of Azusa Street, its carnivalism and its glossolalia, both predate and materially substantiate the ritual connection whose foundations Kristeva consciously linked theoretically to Bakhtin. I read Pentecostal glossolalia as made possible through ritual regression to the maternal body, a form of religious creativity within language, and I posit that Pentecostal glossolalia emanates not from a world that a psychotic speaker can no longer perceive as ordered, but instead from a world itself carnivalized (or disordered) *that also semiotizes language*. In such a schematic, a carnivalized world that mobilizes symbolic

negation, inversion, and non-exclusionary contradictions invokes, not the nothingness of a Nietzschean schema but a return to the maternal-infant ecology:⁵⁵⁶ fluid, phenomenological, unstable, and with no secure referents.⁵⁵⁷

The Drives within Semiotic Discourse in Poetry and Carnivalists' use of Jeers and Oaths in Carnival

Kristeva advocated the strength of Bakhtin's work quite early on in her own career and was among the first to introduce Bakhtin to Western audiences. In 1966 Kristeva's "Word, Dialogue, and Novel," displayed her intense interest in Bakhtin's Carnival, and especially in its linguistics. Kristeva's linguistic theory of the semiotic owes much to Bakhtin. "Word, Dialogue, and Novel" is a presentation and development of Bakhtin's central ideas, and one of the earliest

⁵⁵⁶ Kristeva's theory of the semiotic as a force of revolution seems to emphasize the negative aspect of the zero point (vis-à-vis psychosis) that Bakhtin very consciously articulates as a ritual renewal, a rebirth. Consider the following as illustrative of her perspective: "Within the Carnival, the subject is reduced to nothingness . . . the cynicism of this Carnavalesque scene, which destroys a god in order to impose its own dialogical laws, calls to mind Nietzsche's Dionysianism . . . brings to light this structure's underlying unconscious: sexuality and death. Kristeva's viewpoint might be diametrically opposed to Bakhtin's own Russian spiritualist Christianity, in which a Resurrection comes after the "destruction of God." See Moi, *The Kristeva Reader*, 49., and (Emerson 1990).

⁵⁵⁷ Kristeva's negative reading is not properly Bakhtinian but is not solitary. The Nietzschean capacity of carnival was a thoroughly enjoined topic of discussion among French intellectuals like Sartre, de Beauvoir, and Bataille. See Amy Hollywood's discussion in *Sensible Ecstasy* discussion for a good entrée in this genre of French mysticism, which stressed Carnival's destruction. For an opposing account of the Carnival which posits its capacity to hold prior communal connection that read towards maternal references see Edouard Glissant's discussion of the collective consciousness that Carnival holds in a colonized Martinique. Therein land is both maternal and raped through colonial domination and, at this point in his career, Glissant recapitulates a melancholic carnival, full of motherland and culture. See Dash, "Introduction" in *Caribbean Discourse*, xli-xliii. See also Amy Hollywood, *Sensible Ecstasy*, 25-35.

introductions of Bakhtin to Western audiences. In it, Kristeva reads literary carnivalism in a manner reminiscent of her reading of the drives. Compare her explanation of Bakhtin's literary carnivalesque as "a space where texts meet, contradict and relativize each other through extensive use of repetition, illogical constructs and non-exclusive opposition,"⁵⁵⁸ to her own description of the somatic drives: "drives are always already ambiguous, simultaneously assimilating and destructive...disunited or contradictory structures...waves of attack against stases."⁵⁵⁹ In this passage, the two scholars' ideas are interwoven:

History and morality are written and read within the infrastructure of texts. The poetic word, polyvalent and multi-determined, adheres to a logic exceeding that of codified discourse and fully comes into being only in the margins of recognized culture. Bakhtin was the first to study this logic, and he looked for its roots in Carnival. Carnavalesque discourse *breaks through the laws of language* censored by grammar and semantics and, at the same time, is a social and political protest.⁵⁶⁰

Here, Kristeva is positing that Carnival, as a ritual, allowed for a linguistic disruption of signs that other types of rituals (such as were discussed in the opening to this section) fix as secure.

These statements echo in her work on the semiotic, where the aims of Freudian drives exceed the fixed, authorized logic of semantics and static

⁵⁵⁸ Toril Moi, *The Kristeva Reader: Julia Kristeva* (London: Blackwell, 1986), 34.

⁵⁵⁹ Julia Kristeva, *Revolution in Poetic Language*, 27-28.

⁵⁶⁰ Moi, *The Kristeva Reader*, 36.

definition. Bakhtin's "folk people" linguistically damage the pretensions of the powerful within language via their desacralizations and curses,⁵⁶¹ and especially with the return to the bodily principles, where (for an example from our own culture) "we all put our pants on one leg at a time." Like Bakhtin's peasants, Kristeva's concept of drives posits their biological desire for signification, but it also theorizes that drives to signification cannot be comprehensively satisfied by a fixed or finished meaning, especially as fixed or finished meanings are ever established in static conformity to power. The further away a speaking subject is from centers of power and their values, the more likely the speaking subject would be to have drives that desire linguistic signification, or in Kristeva's conceptual universe, to make recourse to the poetic word. Thus carnivalists and poets are each figures that use words in unauthorized ways and in so doing challenge the social order.

Social positions notwithstanding, there is always a remainder of meaning and new meaning sought for drives, and this remainder can become a negation by drives, the differentiation from what has been stated definitively, again as Law, God, or Definition. Thus, in living language, there is oscillation from "the symbolic discourse in language"— grammar, syntax, defined words as governed

⁵⁶¹ The invocations of curses within sacred phrases is both a ritual negation of an established meaning and, importantly for our connection to poetry, a linguistic troubling of two poles of meaning (the conflation of opposite meanings) such as Derrida demonstrated with *pharmakon*. Jacques Derrida, "Plato's Pharmacy," in: *Dissemination*, translated by Barbara Johnson (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1981) 63–171.

by rules in a context of the social power to secure these rules—back to the semiotic discourse in language (which is comprised of drive energies but audible in tone, musicality, the cadence in speaking) in order to challenge and improve meaning by poetic metonymy, or metaphor, nonsense, or inversion. This slippage between partially satisfying meaning back to negation is perpetual, and in Kristeva's work, highly political. "There is no equivalence, but rather, identity between challenging official linguistic codes and challenging official law."⁵⁶² The speaking subject is a subject in the process of making judgments about how to deploy the symbolic discourse of language in a manner that accommodates the desires for signification that the subject is actively bringing into language. This process of arranging the drives within symbolic language actually produces the subject as a subject, so that Kristeva also calls the languaging process one in which the "subject" is on trial. The act of speaking is the act of positioning oneself in reference to the world as ordered through ritualized politics.

Poetry, for Kristeva, is the highest form of semiotic protest, for its active destabilization of words, but also for its determined manipulation of syntax. Poetry uses words to evoke their meanings only then to riff, to differentiate, add, or detract from that meaning, or to place that word in an unusual relationship to another word, in poetic disorder, to produce in its stead a meaning specific to the poem. Thus the word has been evoked in its stable meaning, only to produce a

⁵⁶² Moi, *The Kristeva Reader*, 36.

second, slipped, eroded, contorted, or violated meaning in addition to the first. Because the meaning of words is governed (again as expressed in the discussion above) not just by grammar books, but instead by a metaphysical transcendental signifier (represented by God or the King, God's representative on earth, Law or Society),⁵⁶³ the poetic invocations of words acts analogously to Bakhtin's carnivalists, whose jeers and oaths turn sacred phrases into curses, the very opposite of their sanctioned meaning.

Glossolalia: Semiotic Speeching Aimed at the Maternal Body

In her locations of the observable powers of the semiotic, Kristeva's indicated the semiotic is operative in whirling dervishes; psychotic glossolalia; echolalias, "mere glossolalia" and poetry. And yet, why should this be the case? Why should mystical glossolalia be dismissed, as it often is by Kristeva, as "mere glossolalia?"

As mentioned before, Kristeva's work prohibits a psycholinguistic return to the maternal body as "incest," a reading that Judith Butler has pointedly

⁵⁶³ The idea that Society itself could act as the transcendental signifier requiring stable meaning in language is, in the end, a basic Durkheimian notion: that society itself is God. Acts of nomination, from the most trivial acts of bureaucracy, like the issuing of an identity card, or a sickness or disablement certificate, of the most solemn consecrations of nobility, lead in a kind of infinite regression to the realization of God on earth, the State, which guarantees in the last resort, the infinite series of acts of authority certifying by delegation the validity of the certificates of legitimate existence . . . And sociology thus leads to a kind of theology of the last instance... Durkheim was, it can be seen, not so naïve when he said..that 'society is God.' Bourdieu, *Pascalian Meditations*, Trans. Richard Nice (Stanford, CA: Standford University Press, 2000), 245.

denounced, as she also treats lesbianism as the physical return to the female body, and thus a form of cultural incest, psychosis, and unintelligibility.⁵⁶⁴ Whereas Butler posits that Kristeva's argument is based in a fear of losing her heterosexual privilege, I suggest instead that Kristeva's prohibition of a return to the maternal body, for the infant self, is chiefly based in her psychoanalytic practice with psychotics and therefore as a scientific study and finding is circumscribed only to the sample group. Kristeva's experience with psychotics has resulted in her theorizing that psychotic glossolalics have experienced a break down between their drives and the objective world and subsequently experience a fragmentation of language that leads to self-destructive glossolalias. These glossolalias erupt the consciousness of the speaker and represent, for Kristeva, a melancholic refusal to be dispossessed of the body of the mother. Instead, they represent an attempt to introject the mother into the psychiscape of the glossolalic, undermining the speaker's coherent subjectivity and cutting him or her off from the world. Their being cut off from the world means, politically, that the drives are not effecting revolution in poetic language, but instead perhaps escaping language. Escape from the linearity of language is something that happens in ritual spectacle, too, but for reasons not clear, spectacles are good. Perhaps because they are enacted in the actual world.

⁵⁶⁴ See Judith Butler's discussion on Julia Kristeva in *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (New York: Routledge, 1990), 4–7.

But this group of psychotic glossolalists cannot definitely rule out the possibility of healthy retrievals of the maternal body from its Oedipal repression. Keeping in mind that Kristeva's own experience of maternity informed her construction of birthing as a healthy contact with, or retrieval of, the maternal body, one wonders whether she has had any actual experience with Pentecostal glossolalia or glossolalists. Pentecostal worship might present what Kristeva calls "an opening to the semiotic," which she notes religion used to offer but posits that it no longer does so. Early Pentecostal worship clearly created a carnivalized altar space and included spectacles.

There are discernable echoes of the psychic mother-infant continuity in Kristeva's description of Carnival, which for Kristeva features one opening to the semiotic:

Carnavalesque structure is like the residue of a cosmogony that ignored substance, causality, or identity outside its link to the whole, which *exists only in or through relationship*. The carnivalesque cosmogony has persisted in the form of an anti-theological (but not anti-mystical) and deeply popular movement . . . Out of the dialogue that is established the structural dyads of Carnival appear: high and low, birth and agony, food and excrement . . . it is proffered as the only space in which language escapes linearity. . ."⁵⁶⁵

The "cosmogony that ignores causality or identity outside a like to the whole, which exists only in relationship" readily reads as a ritual parallel of the mother-

⁵⁶⁵ Moi, *The Kristeva Reader*, 48–49.

infant relationship, in which the baby has no real cognizance of him or herself outside of relation to the maternal body.⁵⁶⁶ But Bakhtin's Carnival is more dependent on the maternal body than Kristeva reveals,⁵⁶⁷ and even postulates a pregnant body in its philosophical anthropological account of Carnival's sources. Although the open and grotesque body, the body that defecates, vomits, drinks, and feasts, is integral to a festive overturning of classical aesthetical values, which suggests a self-contained body that does not leak or defecate, the laughter of Carnival is not all derisive and not predicated on the universality of illness,

⁵⁶⁶ Kristeva's compelling philosophical rumination on the maternal body has left her vulnerable to critique of gender essentialism. For a particularly compelling rumination on the force of maternity on subjectivity and theories of subjectivity see Julia Kristeva and Arthur Goldhammer. "Stabat Mater." *Poetics Today* 6, no. 1/2 (1985): 133–152. doi:10.2307/1772126.

⁵⁶⁷At times scholars combine Dionysian frenzy and Carnival activity, as does Bakhtin. But some scholars including Bataille have additionally taken to Nietzschean roots of the Carnival, and in this capacity, carnival appears (in these scholars' works) more destructive in import than it does when treated by Bakhtin (which is yet more destructive in force than Turner's). For an example of the Nietzsche and Bakhtin used in ready combination, see Elaine Padilla's *Divine Enjoyment*, 187 ff. Bataille purported carnival to be an erasure of history, which philosophers duly problematized. Amy Hollywood demonstrates that, over the course of a decade, Simone de Beauvoir's account of wartime "fiestas" softened and no longer suggested that Carnival allowed its participants out of time. The idea of a destructive erasure of time can read as a sharper account than Turner's return of Spring in the feast, though the return of a time outside of time is still suspect as de Beauvoir's progressive treatments demonstrate. Still Sartre found Bataille's account in bad faith as he first posited himself an atheist and then produced a dark mysticism that evades history. See Amy Hollywood, *Sensible Ecstasy*, 25-35. Kristeva's own account of carnival, I have suggested, presents as more negating, less renewing, than Bakhtin's which endeavors to do both well. Gardiner objects: "To reduce carnival to a libidinal economy of the body obscures the fact that carnival is also a collective, socio-historical phenomenon, and that the radically egalitarian and free *communitas* that it projects represents a positive project of utopian transformation. To describe carnival and its related tropes as pure "Dionysian frenzy," as "abjection" or "jouissance" — in other words, to portray Bakhtin unproblematically as a figure analogous to Bataille or Foucault — is to deny the redemptive promise of carnival and to celebrate "transgression" for its own sake." Michael Gardiner, "Ecology and Carnival: Traces of a 'Green Social Theory,'" 788.

defecation, or death. It is not only a laughter that observes the winter's end of all powers. Bakhtin's un-self-conscious and convivial Carnival perspective is instead equally funded by an understanding of the open body, the open *female* body, as emphatically generative.⁵⁶⁸

Bakhtin's Carnival folk are emboldened by the perennial generativity of female bodies, in which there is a popular overcoming of death itself. Bakhtin explains, "Festive folk laughter presents an element of victory, not only over supernatural awe, over the sacred, over death; it also means the defeat of kings, of all that represses and restricts"⁵⁶⁹ But this cyclical festivity is based primarily in the female body, for "there can be nothing terrifying in a mother's body, with the nipples that are made to suckle and the genital organ and the warm blood. The earthly element of terror is the womb, the bodily grave, but it flowers with new life."⁵⁷⁰ Emerson muses, "Bakhtin's folk, *narod*, were invested with a Romantic, 'metaphysical vital value,' so that "the Rabelais book is a hymn to the clan-based body" that combines elements of a "collective preconscious."⁵⁷¹ When Bakhtin describes the universalism of Carnival consciousness, he is clear that the

⁵⁶⁸ "While Victor Turner does not, like Jacques Derrida or Julia Kristeva, speak explicitly about the 'deconstructive role of the feminine' in Western culture, all of his anthropology is about indeterminacy, liminality, communitas, anti-structure and process... they metaphors in which they are described are unmistakably feminine." Barbara Babcock, "Woman/Women in the 'Discourse of Man': Edie Turner and Victor Turner's Language of the Feminine" in *Victor Turner and Contemporary Cultural Performance*, ed. Graham St John (New York: Berghan Books, 2008), 298.

⁵⁶⁹ Bakhtin *Rabelais and His World*, 92.

⁵⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 91-92.

⁵⁷¹ Emerson, *The First Hundred Years of Mikhail Bakhtin*, 205.

Carnival consciousness is not an individual consciousness, but a merging into a group consciousness based in festive effervescence. This experience is “a spiritual loophole” that generates psychological renewal. In both Kristeva’s description of carnival’s cosmogony and Bakhtin’s citation of the flowering, mothering female body who guarantees the perenniality of the people, carnival makes recourse to a Maternal body in ritual.⁵⁷²

Back to glossolalia as a possibility in ritual: though Kristeva only posits the semiotic as disruptive in poetry, and though she only fully embraces Carnivalists’ jeers and oaths as carnival language, at Azusa Street Mission Revival we have symbolic destabilizations of social hierarchy, inversions of the social order, spectacle— which Kristeva posits is speech when it escapes linearity—so we have carnival, and we have glossolalia, I posit, as sacred semiotic discourse freed from structure though ritual deconstruction of the social order.⁵⁷³ As such, within Kristeva’s own frame, glossolalia reflect a return to the maternal body, to the

⁵⁷² One wonders whether this flowering maternal body would be best represented by the emergence of Spring, (when birth happens on the agricultural cycle) so that her temporal corollary is Victor Turner’s clown. Bourdieu’s account of transition into spring pits men on the side of women who are warring against the destructive feminine force and labouring to bring forward women’s reconstructive capacities, so that woman herself is split between winter and spring. A pregnant woman is fecundated into springtime. Kristeva’s carnival “destroys a god” to return to the infantile cosmogony, which is a decidedly different take on carnival’s energies and thrust. Kristeva’s emphasis on the destruction that carnival’s symbolic world portends for the political would, I think qualify it as a wintery reading of ritualizations of the feminine season. Thus for her glossolalia is only destructive, psychotic.

⁵⁷³ Pentecostal theologian Frank Macchia has best and most extensively discussed Pentecostal glossolalia as anti-structural speech. See Frank Macchia “Discerning the Truth of Tongues Speech: a Response to Amos Yong,” *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 6, 12: 67–71. <https://doi.org/10.1177/096673699800601204>. See also “Baptized in the Spirit: A Global Pentecostal Theology (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2006), 247–56.

state of infant-maternal relations that do not admit of an exterior world, or even a Father, but instead circulate the oceanic feelings that Freud identifies.⁵⁷⁴ In this, the last of the three examples of the femininity at work in the rise of the Holy Spirit to prominence within American Pentecostalism, I forward a Kristevan and Bakhtinian reading of collective, public glossolalia as the baptism of the Holy Spirit enacted a return to and materialization of a maternal body, divinized. As such glossolalia mirrored the destruction to the social order that the winter-spring discourse prescribed.

World-Upside-Down, Woman on Top

In her fascinating study of carnivals as “festivals of misrule,” author Natalie Zemon Davis extensively illustrates the potential of woman, as a symbol, to register social conflict. When assigned to a place below her husband in the social order, but also believed to be inherently disorderly, women has readily become a power symbol of the carnival, and vice versa. As previously mentioned, Bourdieu notes the word for woman-on-top sexual congress, is the same word for world-upside-down in Sanskrit.⁵⁷⁵ Davis observes,

Claims and counterclaims about the sexual temperament of women raise questions not merely about the actual character of male and

⁵⁷⁴ Freud discusses the feeling in *Future of an Illusion* (1927) and *Civilization and Its Discontents* (1929), wherein it is described as a “fragmentary vestige” of a kind of consciousness possessed by an infant who has not yet differentiated himself or herself from other people and things.

⁵⁷⁵ Bourdieu, *Masculine Domination*, 18.

female behavior...but also about the varied uses of sexual symbolism. At the end of the Middle Ages and in early modern Europe, the relation of the wife--of the potentially disorderly woman--to her husband was especially useful for expressing the relations of all subordinates to their superiors. The nature of political rule and the newer problem of sovereignty were still very much at issue. In the little world of the family, the larger matters of political and social order could find ready symbolization.⁵⁷⁶

In a series of associations reminiscent of Bakhtin's carnival categories and Pierre Bourdieu's agricultural diagram, Davis describes the female sex as then thought to be "the disorderly one par excellence in early modern Europe. The disorderliness was founded in physiology. As every physician knew in the sixteenth century, the female was composed of cold and wet humors (the male was hot and dry) and coldness and wetness meant a changeable, deceptive, and tricky temperament."⁵⁷⁷ The social order placed women in a category that would later also be occupied by black persons, as people possessed of *animal spirits*. "Long before Europeans were asserting flatly that the 'inferiority' of black African was innate, they were attributing female 'inferiority' to nature."⁵⁷⁸ Woman, Davis suggests, readily embodies all manners of disorder as part of her social location and symbol differentiation from what is properly male.

In Davis's study, she finds that the female's position in the social order was often enough used to symbolize not only hierarchical subordination but also

⁵⁷⁶ Natalie Zemon Davis, *Society and Culture in Early Modern France: Eight Essays*, (Stanford University Press, 1975), 129.

⁵⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 130.

⁵⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

violence and chaos that threatens the social order. And though she notes that a vast majority of anthropologists would disagree with her, she argues that

In hierarchical and conflictual societies, the *topos* of the woman-on-top was one the most circulated, a reflection of the world-turned-upside-down writ small, writ intimate. Play with the unruly woman is partly a chance for temporary release from the traditional and stable hierarchy; but it's also part of the conflict over efforts to change the basic distribution of power within a society. The woman-on-top might even facilitate innovation in historical theory and political behavior.⁵⁷⁹

In her assertion, she actually novelly puts Bakhtin and Turner together,⁵⁸⁰ the *earlier* Turner argument about liminality changing people within an order --the one that Bobby Alexander highlights, to suggest that world-upside-down/woman-on-top festivities are not pressure-valves, but that they instead have equivalent power that Catherine Bell notes do political rites: they are actual experiences of egalitarian utopianism, but Davis herein means the people on the lower end of the social order. They get to experience egalitarian relations in rituals of reversal and, Davis motions, this experience can be motivating and

⁵⁷⁹ Ibid., 131.

⁵⁸⁰ Davis positions her interpretation against the notion of carnival as play, though it is not clear how well her notion of play corresponds to Turner, Droogers, Wariboko, etc. "It is an exaggeration to view the carnival and Misrule as merely a "safety valve," as merely a primitive, prepolitical form of recreation. Victor Turner and Mikhail Bakhtin are closer to the truth in seeing it as present in all cultures. (Eric Hobsbawm in his *Primitive Rebels* has evaluated the transformational capacities of millenarian movements in a similar way)." Davis, *Society and Culture in Early Modern France*, 122-23.

informative for making change. As such, carnival is formational of its participants and, perhaps, transformational of society.⁵⁸¹

In her footnotes to this discussion, Davis cites a well-known anthropologist named Eric Wolf.⁵⁸² In particular, Davis notes that Wolf considers male/female an expression of the relationships between the public and domestic (which distinction will be taken up shortly in discussion of Spanish Priscillianism).⁵⁸³ Wolf's work adds breadth to this immediate discussion, however, via his influential article on the veneration of Mary as a sacred symbol for Mexican revolutionaries that accords very well with Davis's account of woman-on-top festivity and her ideas about the social power therein. In "The Virgin of Guadalupe: A Mexican National Symbol" (1958) Wolf demonstrates that Our Lady of Guadalupe acquired meaning from pre-Columbian religious sources,

⁵⁸¹130–33). This view of carnival is in keeping with the manner in which Bakhtin posits that Carnival can act as an episteme. "Free familiar contacts were deeply and formed an essential element of the carnival spirit. People were reborn, so to speak, for new, purely human relations. These truly human relations were not only a fruit of imagination or abstract thought; they were experienced. The utopian ideal and the realistic merged in this carnival experience..." Bakhtin, *Rabelais*, 10.

⁵⁸² Wolf, "The Virgin of Guadalupe," 128.

⁵⁸³ See Virginia Burrus' excellent account of the struggle of the Catholic Church to hierarchalize and transform early Christianity into a public-facing institution. Burrus account of the fate of Spanish ascetic Priscillian argues that the subordination of women was part of an urbanizing, hierarchicalizing concentration of power on the part of clergy who mobilized public authority and problematized private authority. In significant ways, I posit, that Azusa Street Revival's carnivalism overturned this hierarchy, with its committedly anti-institutional commitments and affective forms of worship, egalitarian structure, and so forth. Space does not here permit me to make a further argument, which is that both the campmeeting and the busharbor were, as well, determinedly "private" and anti-institutional forms of worship practices, so that the force of these contrarian liminal traditions enacted an overturning of the power that Burrus presents as consolidated in the third and fourth centuries. See Virginia Burrus, *Gender, Authority and the Priscillianist Controversy* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1995). See appendix for this reading of the bush arbor and campmeeting.

notably from the maternal attributes and functions of the Aztec mother of the gods. Wolf then demonstrates that during the Mexican revolutionary period, Mary also acquired themes of revolutionary equality, some of them borrowed from the thinkers of the French Enlightenment and Revolution. The revolutionary images were joined to the maternal symbols in a system of significance attributed to the Guadalupe—which contained therefore a robust repertoire of indigenous representation of the earth, fertility, lactation, motherhood, and the homeland.⁵⁸⁴ Of this symbolic gendering of the revolution, Wolf proclaims:

In this ultimate extension of the symbol, the promise of life held out by the supernatural mother has become the promise of an independent Mexico, liberated from the irrational authority of the Spanish father-oppressors and restored to the Chosen Nation whose election had been manifest in the apparition of the Virgin on Tepeyac. The land of the supernatural mother is finally possessed by her rightful heirs. The symbolic circuit is closed. *Mother; food, hope, health, life; supernatural salvation and salvation from oppression; Chosen People and national independence — find expression in a single master symbol.*⁵⁸⁵

This conglomeration of forces and symbols onto the Guadalupe during the age of Revolutions resonates with the rise of the Holy Spirit in early American

⁵⁸⁴ Again, Turner is less interested in gendering liminality than he might be: “Van Gennep pointed to the many symbols of birth, death, and rebirth found in the liminal stage in many societies and religion. But for me the essence of liminality is to be found in its release from normal constraints [...] in other words, there is an aspect of play in liminality.” Turner, “Process, System, Symbol” 160.

⁵⁸⁵ Wolf, “The Virgin of Guadalupe,” 38.

Pentecostalism. The seasonal destruction and fertility, the setting of the union of the Bride to her Cosmic Groom, Pentecostalism's pervasive use of the themes of revival and renewal, the wetness of baptism as described as the key work of the Holy Spirit: herein we see the rise of a feminine Spirit-Bride. In her discourse, she has also acquired the anti-hierarchy of the revolutionary age, she brings down the lofty with her carnivalistic force, only to bring up the wheat (separated from the chaff) through to a triumphal Spring.⁵⁸⁶ Like Wolf's account of revolutionary Guadalupe, the Holy Spirit via the Bride has also acquired ideas about revolutionary equality.

In *The Faces of the Goddess* (1997), Lotte Motz posits that Mother Goddesses maybe better thought as figures of the revolutionary age than of any prior, primordial age. Motz cautions, in her cross-cultural study of female goddesses, precisely that the Mother Goddesses are too often shorn of their destructive capacities, rendered she laments, *theologically*, rather than anthropologically. Motz exemplifies this criticism with the, for our purposes à propos, example of Innan, with whom the Holy Spirit shares some destructive capabilities set within a marriage plot designed to lead to royal power:

⁵⁸⁶ Motz implicates specifically the French Revolution for helping to create: "The "eternally feminine" (*das ewig Weibliche*), surely an abstraction in line with "the brotherhood of man," the "sanctity of life," and the "sacredness of motherhood," all based on human qualities or relations. Such constructions and ideals came to the fore when people turned from the gods of their revealed religions." See Motz, *The Faces of the Goddess*, London: Oxford University Press, 1997.

Afterward Inanna obtains the Tablets of Destiny and is ready to assume the rule over her land, but she has not yet gained full womanhood. The poems of Dumuzi's love and courtship of Inanna show her in the flowering of her passion; in the poems of her wedding with a king she bestows the lordship of the country on a chosen being. In her longing for a deeper wisdom she descends to the underworld, "the great below" where she must suffer a temporary death to return to the living in the manner of a shaman. While Wolkstein has shaped the image of a vibrant and appealing creature, she has not done justice to her diversity. She has arranged the events in an invented sequence and thus pointed to a development of which there is no indication. Inanna (and she cannot be separated from the Akkadian Ishtar) is not shown in the violence of her anger and vindictiveness. Inanna sets the "wild bull of heaven" on Gilgamesh after he has spurned her love. She invariably destroys those who have held her in their arms... Moreover, Inanna is the power of the rainstorm, and she caused a deadly drought to defeat the ruler of Aratta. She is the force of war, as related in a song of self-praise:

When I stand in the midst of the battle,
I am the heart of the battle,
the arm of the warriors,
when I begin moving at the end of the battle,
I am an evilly rising flood⁵⁸⁷

Motz uses Innana as an example to point to (among other issues) the flattening of the feminine symbol into *only* maternal functions, and this as a specifically revolutionary- age symbolic renovation on the theme of femininity. In her discussion of Inanna of Sumer, Motz offers, one sees a fuller and more ambivalent depiction of the female goddess trope, and her example points up

⁵⁸⁷ Ibid., 183-4.

detectable themes of destruction and water as a force of destruction. When angry, Innana uses her powers over rain --again, congruent with the wet season-- to cause a deadly drought of the ruler Arratta. It is this ambivalence and malevolence that, as Motz argues, must be taken into account in accounts of the persons and work of goddesses, too often rendered stiflingly maternal, and it is equally true of the development of the Pentecostal Bride. A reconciling liminality does not fully describe the function of the Bride in Pentecostal rhetoric.

Instead, like the Guadalupe, the Cosmic Bride is concerned about land. If this Bride does deterritorialize, she has the power to reterritorialize as she emerges into Queenship. This power is in part vouchsafed in her acquisition of tongues-speech. There is a detectable symbolic continuity between the maternal and the homeland, as Wolf has shown in the rise of Guadalupe, Matriarch of the Revolution. Mary is mobilized in part to contest oppressor occupation of Mexican lands.⁵⁸⁸ Here we find congruence within the rise of the Holy Spirit at the advent of Industrialization, and the situation of people exiled from their farm towns,

⁵⁸⁸ Motz pointed notes that although “[t]he devotees of the Goddess cult assert that the themes of violence in myth and the wars and bloodshed of human society were introduced by fierce and warlike invaders; these tribes and nations also brought a patriarchal order into the agricultural, matriarchal societies of the Middle East where the Goddess ruled supreme... These believe that the Goddess originated in one basic archetypal form, in one overwhelming experience that left its imprint on the human soul. I have argued that goddesses grew from a variety of contexts and desires, unfolding their nature in a variety of ways. Not the infants' longing for their mothers' breasts shaped the contours of the divine, but the needs of adult men and women faced with the cruel exigencies of archaic life, exultant in their triumphs and burdened with the everpresent knowledge and spectacle of death. To trace the power of goddesses to their biological functions is to diminish the stature and flatten the form in the images of divine and human women” (183).

their lands. Glossolalia here credibly represents the introjection of this loss— into the psyche per Kristeva, into the Spirit per Pentecostals. The force of this introjection erupts in the semiotic, freed from the symbolic. As global Industrialization changed how humans lived with (and apart from) the land, so (roughly) did the spread of glossolalia enact a fresh force in Christianity.

If this introjection is understood, with Kristeva, as the refusal to be dispossessed of the maternal body, there is good reason to see its potential to be extended to maternal lands. But there they might not need to remain: where Kristeva finds the drives redirected from the maternal body into poetry, Wendell Berry finds instead *land* and community in poetry. Berry writes, “Probably no good poet, and certainly no good liturgist, creates *ex nihilo*. The poetic art is communal and filial. It can only exist as a common ground between the poet and other poets and other people, living and dead...Poetry is a work of the imagination that reflects concrete experience, including the experience of place.”⁵⁸⁹ If Bride deterritorialized speaks in glossolalic tongues, perhaps the Queen, *reterritorialized*, would be able to speak in Berrian poetry.

Conclusion

This chapter has endeavored to continue the argument that early Pentecostals constructed their Baptism of the Holy Spirit with the rites of

⁵⁸⁹ Davis, *Scripture, Culture, Agriculture*, 44–45.

seasonal reversal via rituo Praxis. Within this chapter, the Great Tribulation has been presented as a discourse about winter rooted in the experience of calendrical rites of seasonal transition. Through recourse to Bourdieu's agrarian schematic of the cosmos, we observed that harvest rites and marriage rites are, in Bourdieu's fieldwork, both co-temporal and similar in their ritual structure. Per Bourdieu the harvest, also autumn, presents as a tipping point into the season of female dominance.

The rise of the Bride symbol during this seasonal shift, I have termed the time-signature of the Holy Spirit. Via the illuminating work of Jeff Sissons, winter is a *communitas* that harbors destructive force. Herein we find something Bakhtinian: a *communitas* that is nevertheless destructive to temples and hierarchs, even gods. This anti-structural *communitas* I argued is replicated in the symbol of the Bride. The political reversal that this rite of seasonal reversal mediated made early Pentecostals not only feminine, a Bride, but also a Springtime Monarch and Judge, the *Lamb's Queen*. Here, too, is a *communitas*-- a populist one at that-- that is nevertheless destructive of the structures of the world. The love between the Cosmic Bride and Jesus proves, in the end, to be a rite of passage, but the entity that suffers the lowering of status is the hierarchs of the world and the unredeemed, who fall from their lofty positions into the void of history, forgotten. They do fall, but the Bride rises into Queenship.

Conclusion: Rituopraxis, Gender, and Authority

In this dissertation, I argue that were influenced by a cultural practice of harvest rites in their creation of rites of the Baptism of the Holy Spirit. This influence has been chiefly intuited through their rhetoric in which an obvious seasonal logic is at play. The rites themselves are posited to have influenced early Pentecostal perception of rising action in the world, as well as providing a narrative structure for communicating this rising action. As Grant Wacker noted, a curious outcome to the latter rain revivals was a group anticipation of disaster. These rites shaped not only Pentecostals' perception of rising action but also the content of that action, so that in anticipating "winter" early Pentecostals were tuned into the bad events and not the good in national and international events. In this hermeneutical function, the rites of seasonal reversal appear to have worked within the early Pentecostal habitus as a mode of interpretation for political events.

The rites of seasonal reversal are also herein posited to have had a significant capacity for registering social conflict. As an agrarian schema of time keeping (the rites of transition and seasonal changes themselves), rites of reversal were innovated to dovetail with the baptism of the Holy Spirit as *latter rains* that would mature the harvest. That this indicated a reversal into wetness and

involved themes of wintry destruction and rebirth (renewal, revival) made it *possible* to plot social angst and conflict within a rhetoric about seasonal clash and reversals.

When coupled with (historically acquired, maintained, and then reactivated) discourse about political anti-hierarchy, the reversal into wet season appears to set in motion a rhetorical economy of overtly politicized oppositionalities: summer and hierarchy, winter and anti-hierarchy, and masculinity and femininity (via the bride). Thus, rites of seasonal reversal appear to offer rhetorical capacity for positing conflicting social forces and positioning these forces within an ecology and cosmology also caught up in this conflict. The desire for one's foes to suffer a wintry end appears to be the work of a decidedly agrarian imagination. The setting of the early onset of wide-spread industrialization makes this particular imaginary laden with agrarian angst and antagonism, and equally important agrarian values for comeuppance via nature's powers.

The winter season better describes the liminality constructed by early Pentecostals. Pentecostal anti-hierarchy could be typified as similar to the kinds of *communitas* detailed in Jeff Sissons' work: the "communitas of winter," which in his own work proved vastly destructive. Wintry *communitas* differs substantially from the *communitas* that Victor Turner elaborates, which appeals to Spring and timelessness. Early Pentecostals' wintry, destructive *communitas*

was aimed at—not only the dead denominational church but indeed, the world of hierarchies itself—the rites aimed (by ritual force) to end one world and hasten the birth another.

Early Pentecostals were more substantially agrarian, via the habitus, than has previously been realized. I argue they are also less otherworldly than has been suggested: though the tales they spun were cosmic, they were very much rooted in a this-worldly method of seasonal timekeeping. The rites of reversal provide a level of integrity to early Pentecostal rhetoric and practices that has heretofore been unknown. The Bride theme, the great tribulation, and the anti-hierarchy of Azusa Street Mission are, under the rubric of Sisson's seasonality of power, all quite properly part of the rituals of Winter, or *Pleiades Above* in the parlance of various island settings. The rites of baptism in the Spirit appear largely a form of *rituopraxis*, improvisation upon earlier ritual practices guided by the habitus.⁵⁹⁰ The altar, as a threshing floor, is credibly able to unite many disparate eschatological themes of early Pentecostalism into a schematic of political reversals, on an individual, collective, and ultimately on a cosmic scale.

Gender and Reversals

In our developing discussion about the femininity of the Holy Spirit, no development of the masculinity of summer and hierarchy was afforded. I am

⁵⁹⁰ Sissons, *Polynesian Iconoclasm*, 136.

struck by the co-reign of the Cosmic Couple as a Lamb and the Lamb's Queen as an indication of a spring-time logic and, because Spring is a season that itself mediates transition from the wet season to the dry season; perhaps a springtime reign symbolizes the end of seasonal antagonisms and by correspondence antagonism between humanity and God. In her later comparatively later treatment of the Spring marriage, Aimee Semple McPherson plotted the seasonality of cosmic marriage in a manner that suggests a perpetual Spring: "the perfect man and the perfect woman—Christ and His bride—walk beneath the ever-verdant trees, whose leaves shall not fade, and whose fruit shall not decay."⁵⁹¹ Apart from the binary couple's legislations, masculinity herein appears somewhat hard to define except by inference and binary opposition to the wet, cold and feminine season. The drought of the Great Hierarchical period certainly indicates too much of the dry season, but to what degree this can be thought of as properly masculine, is by comparison less clear. The femininity of the bridal season reads straightforward; the masculinity of structure to the Bride's anti-structure is less explicit. It would have to be inferred. When we do see a masculine image, he is the triumphant Christ figure. But what about the hierarchies to be torn down in winter, are these oppositionally masculine to the bride's anti-hierarchical femininity?

⁵⁹¹ Wacker, *Heaven Below*, 168.

This question deserves full attention because early Pentecostal women enjoyed access to Pentecostal spiritual authority; several are famous for their illustrious preaching careers, including Sister Aimee Semple McPherson and Mother Maria Woodworth Etter. Yet, Leah Payne explains, in the case of Sister, no explicit discourse of her proto-feminist right to the pulpit actually exists. Payne demonstrates that, instead, McPherson appealed to her vocational calling by Jesus as an alibi for usurping a traditionally male role, that of preacher. That early Pentecostal women preachers had to appeal to non-traditional sources of authority in narratives that exempted them from wrongdoing suggests precisely that Church hierarchies of the period were facilely, and readily, recognized to be properly male ones. It seems that a historical move into symbolic femininity, and away from identification with church hierarchical structures, proved to be one that women could powerfully embody. On the question of sources of authority, however, the gendered, politicized narrative of the Bride about to be raptured is a quite complicated source, made more complicated when the plot failed to materialize as expected.

Public v. Private Sources of Authority

Turner has suggested that *communitas*, even protracted *communitas*, is ultimately in dialectic with structure in a manner that lends credence to the idea that the eventual reassumption of hierarchy within early Pentecostalism was,

ultimately, predictable.⁵⁹² An account of the tension that arises from these competing schematics of church organization calls for attention to the historical context that gives shape to this context. As previously argued, the *communitas* of early Pentecostalism was paired, to lasting effect, with the anti-hierarchy of the American revolutionary era and narrated as a dissolution of a centralization of power that began in the Reformation. By clear inference here, the hierarchy of the Catholic Church is a historical fact that the Spirit of God is actively deposing, with the Pentecost being the fullest anti-thesis to the regrettable consolidation of power in that Great Hierarchy.

The move away from this history, this hierarchy, in early Pentecostalism resurfaced a competition between sources of spiritual authority that has some of its clearest analogues in early Christianity. This is demonstrated in historian of late antiquity Virginia Burrus' *The Making of a Heretic: Gender, Authority and the Priscillianist Controversy* (1995), in which she argues that women's historical subordination in the Catholic church was part of a greater project to define the early Christian church as a public-facing institution and one sourced by public forms of authority, *i.e.* holding a recognized office with institutional credentials. Private forms of authority—those sourced from house group meetings, ascetic practices, and charismatic or charismatic experiences—by counterexample, were problematized as competitive with the public forms of authority. Burrus'

⁵⁹² Barba, "California's Cross," 31–37.

monograph treats the rising conflict between one ascetic, spirit-oriented, house-based and mixed gender early Christian group led by a charismatic Spanish leader named Priscillian, and the Spanish Catholic sees that sought to bring the Priscillianists under their jurisdiction. The development of the label “heretic” proved to be a powerful tool for implicating Priscillian as a dangerously seductive man, one who had consort with many women in the privacy of house based meetings. These meetings the Catholic hierarchy problematized as potentially the site of illicit sex between the group’s members. In this struggle, Burrus presents the subordination of women as key part of defining the validity of public office and public Christian institution as the definitive, only source of Christian authority; this subordination also entailed the domination of the private sphere by the public, as was increasingly the case in the culture at large. The history of women’s subordination in the Catholic hierarchy was thus also the routing of rural, mixed-gendered, house-centered, Spirit-led groups who did not consider the bishopric, for example, to be the sole or most compelling source of real spiritual authority. This contest over the valuation of different kinds of Christianity and Christian authority sets the Turnerian *communitas*-structure schematic properly within the context of broader forces of national history and ecclesial struggle. That Priscillian was sentenced to death in order to, ultimately, consolidate church authority into its hierarchy casts the loss of women’s authority in early Christianity into painfully sharp relief. The curtailment of women, and

the death of Priscillian, also amounted to a demotion for the Holy Spirit as a key source of authority and agency in early Spanish Christianity.⁵⁹³

Along with the age of revolutions came new opportunities, or perhaps they might be better thought as restored opportunities, for both Christian women and the Holy Spirit. The disestablishment of the church, in America, contributed to the rise of a new concept called “domestic nurture.”⁵⁹⁴ Historian of American religion Candy Gunther Brown credits Horace Bushnell, a Connecticut congregationalist pastor for propagating this new concept of domestic nurture via his 1847 book, *Christian Nurture*.⁵⁹⁵ In this controversial but ultimately also very influential book, Bushnell argues that responsibility for a child’s religious

⁵⁹³ A similar story unfolded for early charismatic leader Montanus. See Christine Trevett’s *Montanism: Gender, Authority, and the New Prophecy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

⁵⁹⁴In *The Sexual Contract* (1988), Carol Pateman claimed that the social contract (given philosophical treatment by John Locke, Thomas Hobbes, and Jean Jacques Rousseau), featured men giving up certain rights for the benefit of equality before the law. Pateman problematized that this explicit legal contract is underwritten by a tacit sexual contract, which gives men sexual access to women in exchange for these surrendered rights. Liberal society is, per Pateman, thus divided into a private sphere in which men dominate women within the family and a public sphere, in which neutered liberal subjects undertake contractual relations. Women’s access to such universal subjectivity is, however, compromised, inasmuch as their unequal role in the home precludes the autonomy on which the liberal subject is predicated. Pateman points to the historical prominence of patriarchy in the public area, and its subsequent restriction to the private sphere. Hunt (1992) makes a similar observation of the aftermath of the French Revolution, in which women were pushed back into the private sphere, too. In her review of Joan Landes’ *Women and the Public Sphere in the Age of the French Revolution*, Dietz writes that Landes, “invites us to explore a complex pattern of relations of power, as a previously non-domesticated gender under the Old Regime in France came to be represented, under the revolutionary one, as domestically virtuous and properly placed outside the absolutist public sphere. See Dietz “Women and the Public Sphere in the Age of the French Revolution by Joan B. Landes” in *Political Theory* 17, no. 4 (1989): 692-96. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/191409>.

⁵⁹⁵Horace Bushnell, *Christian Nurture* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1916).

training falls most directly on his or her parents and between the two of them, mostly on the mother. For fifty years, writes Bushnell, this text exerted enormous influence on Protestant theology and practice. Brown explains that the concept placed enormous burden on Christian parents to pursue and model personal holiness. “Bushnell did not believe that original sin so corrupted human nature that justification must precede every attainment in sanctification. [In a devotedly Christian home] the Holy Spirit could infuse grace even before a child understood this supernatural process.”⁵⁹⁶

Interestingly, Bushnell proposed an “organic connection” between the characters of Christian parents and their children, thus “holiness or sinfulness naturally traveled between generations.”⁵⁹⁷ Brown notes that Bushnell’s domestic theology appealed to evangelical women who felt spiritually and socially empowered by the decentering of religious growth from clerical to maternal supervision, from church to domestic fireside, and from a crisis oriented toward an organic model of sacred time.⁵⁹⁸ Brown reasons that, although the concept of domestic nurture did not critique clerical authority, texts that advocated Christian nurture most frequently explained the love of God for humans after the model of a mother for her children, and the fathers and clergy in this text affirmed mothers’ central spiritual role in the life of their children. In this period

⁵⁹⁶ Brown, *The Gender Dimension*, 68-69.

⁵⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 69.

⁵⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 67.

of American church history, the 1850s-1900s, the Christian home begins to regain a level of spiritual importance which had been previously diminished in relation to the public, hierarchical institutional church (as described by Burrus), and with the home, the role of the mothers therein was also elevated in importance for children, in some cases, over the father and clergy, in others, decentering clergy and eclipsing father altogether.

The home, in the accounts of proponents of Christian nurture, was an organic time-space in which spiritual plants could grow. Proponents of Christian domestic nurture imagined this to be wholly different from the crises oriented time-space of revival. Bushnell critiqued revivalists for a “falsely limited idea of sacred time and space,”⁵⁹⁹ but it actually appears that early American Pentecostalism also forwarded a biological analogy for the salvation process-- just one that differed from “domestic nurture” in its account of nature.⁶⁰⁰ Proponents

⁵⁹⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰⁰This critique of revivalism is ambivalent given earlier critique of revivalism, forwarded by religious competitors, that revivalism and revivalists (male and female alike) were themselves too feminine, and that revivalism was a feminizing version, and a feminized version, Christianity. Maddux notes that, “[w]hen Christian leaders attempted to reassert the masculinity of their religion in the opening decades of the twentieth century, they were responding to a perceived “feminization” that had roots at least as deep as disestablishment...As this marketplace forced religious leaders to compete for adherents, they innovated popular rhetorical styles, many of which would later be cited for their effeminacy” (45). This critique (exactly the opposite posited by Prentiss) points up an important difference between revivalists that emerges in Prentiss’ handbook on Christian Nurture. Christian nurturists like Prentiss both elevated the home and the mother in their discourse, while they also critiqued overly angry preachers and fathers, both. Gunther Brown specifies that, “fiction afforded Prentiss a vehicle to critique indirectly her father’s austere revivalism through the character of Katy’s father-in-law, who “can only see a great and good and terrible God who cannot look upon iniquity and does not see His risen Son who has paid the debt we owe” (79). What makes revivalism problematic to Christian nurturists, in Prentiss’ treatment is the figure of the God as an angry, divine judge. But the effacement of

of Christian Nurture, like Elizabeth Prentiss, could conceptualize an organic growth in salvation to be a measured “stepping heavenward” like the title of Prentiss’ very popular book on Christian nurture, or as “gradual change, growth and development” as Reformed Theologian John Nevin actively imagined it.⁶⁰¹ Nevin specified this would not include anxious benches or spasms. But a different, more Bakhtinian perception of nature, inclusive of spasms and crises, undergirds Pentecostal revivalism and, as I have argued, a degree of maternalization is also at work in its sacred-time space too. Speaking in tongues, it can also be noted, started in a Topeka, Kansas kitchen-- a home-based source of authority. Christian nurture and Pentecostal revivalism *both* incorporate models of natural growth and are sourced from private forms of authority.

But the private space of the home that is capable of domestic nurture was subjugated to the public space of the church in a couple of ways. First, the fund of women’s empowerment therein is for mothers over their biological children, who are already under the power of their parents. Churchmen authorized this power of the mother, and as Brown notes, Christian nurture authors only tentatively modeled subversion of clerical authority—all the while affirming this same authority. In terms of the arrangement between public and private spheres, it is

this judge is also at work in the marriage plot of the bible, in which a womanly figure intervenes in the schema to transform God primarily into Jesus, the loving groom.

⁶⁰¹ Elizabeth Prentiss, *Stepping Heavenward* (New York: A.D.F. Randolph, 1869).

possible to read domestic nurture as a partnership between the public and private spheres. If as Gunther Brown states, Christian nurture transformed the time-space of the domestic arena into sacred time-space, it is unclear how this time-space relates to the time-space of the denominational church. Would a woman with nurturing authority be welcomed in her church's altar to serve communion? Would, for counterexample, a Reverend who comes over for dinner be a hallowed, welcomed guest? Would he be given a place of honor and asked to pray for dinner? The answers to these questions could reveal the relationship between the private sphere constructed by Christian domestic nurture and the denominational church, and by extension that between the Christian mother and the clergy person.

Early Pentecostals' liked to see the churchman, and any revered person, "end up on the floor," humbled, which represents a novel construction of the private and the public. The relationship between the early Pentecostal time-space of the sacred and the denominational sacred was flatly declared to be one of extreme difference, and early Pentecostals readily claimed that theirs was the greater experience of the sacred. The Azusa Street Mission Revival was sourced from private, ascetic, ecstatic sources of spiritual authority in a mixed-gendered group that regularly problematized public Christian denominations for being mausoleums. When posited as continuation and an intensification of the trajectory back to private sources of Christian authority, Azusa Street Mission

appears a pinnacle of reprivatization of the sacred and sacred authority, in part, because of what it makes possible at the altar: audience with God uncontrolled or unmediated by clerics holding *official* priestly office and a superlative gift of the Spirit. In early Pentecostal groups, merely holding official credentials from a traditional hierarchical church added to the unlikelihood of one's having any real spiritual power. Unlike the proponents of Christian nurture, Azusa Street Mission's religious virtuosi and ascetics discounted public sources of authority like licensing—whether one was a cleric or a doctor. By contrast, a praying mother of the Church would readily be suspected to hold actual spiritual power. If put toe to toe, that Pentecostal mother might, like my own fiesty mother, remind a clergyman of the boundaries of his authority—especially if that clergyman was a representative of the most hierarchical, established, and patriarchal church, the Catholic church.

The necessary and emergent sociohistorical context of this re-privatization and re-feminization of sources of Christian authority struck preeminent American historian of religion Martin E Marty more forcefully than other readers. Responding to an edited volume on American revivalism, Marty muses of revivalists' sociopolitical location: *Behind [Americans] were dead kings, ...behind them were hierarchies, assigned pews, set ways...*—in front of

them only new ways of being Christian.⁶⁰² Perhaps these ways felt new, but private sources of Christian authority are actually as old as Christianity itself. Still, alongside the death of kingship in the American mindset, assuredly a watershed, was a co-eval death of the perceived power of established church authority. This realization mattered to early Pentecostals, too, (supposedly uninterested though they have been touted to be in matters of church history). Author of *The Spirit and the Bride*, George F. Taylor refers to the period of the institutional church and its becoming a great hierarchy, as the beginning of drought (a long summer reign like that of Charles V) and posits the Reformation as the first sprinkles of the wet transitional season!⁶⁰³ Here clearly is a political imagination read through seasonal changes: the age of the hierarchies was the long summer and Luther's Reformation contra the Catholic church is the beginning of the Pentecostal transition, the early rain.

The age of Revolutions and the disestablishment of "dead, creedal" religion is in the background of the Pentecostal seasonal drama as well. The recreation of private sources of spiritual authority that, again, rhetorically nullified public forms of authority as lesser and/or null, has within its implicit anti-structure the precondition of the dissolution of the marriage of church and state. The *axis mundi* of early Pentecostalism competitively claimed to displace

⁶⁰² Martin E. Marty, "Afterword," in *Embodying the Spirit: New Perspectives on North American Revivalism*, ed. Michael J. McClymond (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004), 273-80.

⁶⁰³ Taylor, *Spirit and the Bride*, 90-92.

creeds and denominations, and it could do so because those forms of hierarchical authority had already been, as Ann Douglas laments, severed from their traditional sources of power: money from taxes, official public office, and state protection from dissenting religious groups. The Pentecostal *axis mundi*-- at which a person is on his or her own before God without mediator and able to receive empowerment without mediator--provides a renovated form of the ascetic empowerment that Burrus' Catholic actors attacked with labels of heresy and, in the end, *a death sentence* for the charismatic leader Priscillian himself, who was at times openly dismissive of hierarchy and clergy goods of salvation. By contrast, the Pentecostal altar appears uncontrolled by denominations; *open* and fluid, with an indeterminate liturgical script, in interracial, mixed gendered groupings, and no real threat from the law.

I have argued that the altar script therein-- a threshing floor that is mediating a change in seasons and bringing the lofty down to the altar's floor-- is implicitly a rite of seasonal reversal into a decidedly feminine season. The appearance of agrarian logic in a deprivatized altar is itself, stunning. Appraising the value of this decidedly agrarian-millenarian rite in, again, a situation of rising social conflict around classes and professions is a daunting task, but it can begin with the frank acknowledgement that the space that this new rite materialized was a space defined against hierarchical structures, explicitly against Church structures. It is quite clear the Great Tribulation did not "go off" according to the

horoscope of the Bride, but weather prophets have often been mistaken. No matter: what early Pentecostals endeavored to materialize by their ritual magic and divination is not immaterial to understanding the movement. The baptism of the Holy Spirit puts an agrarian *rituopraxis* to work in an altar space really free of clerical control. As melded together with the anti-hierarchy and the egalitarianism of the revolution, this *rituopraxis* cleared the altar space for unmediated encounter with God supported by a symbolic repertoire that ascribed an earthy femininity to the Holy Spirit, creating new (if complicated) avenues to authority for many kinds of people, including people of color, immigrants, women.

World Upside Down and Women

That both Christian nurture and, as I argue, Pentecostal revivalism symbolically figure the move away from the institutional church as one that shifts the locus of Christianity into the home and into feminine sources of authority is a point of continuity that deserves a long look. It is likewise remarkable to observe that the roles of women in Burrus' Priscillianist group (as well as the similar Montanists covered by Christine Trevett) are similar in range to the roles that early Pentecostal women leaders were able to play much later, but again in the context of what Burrus names "private authority."⁶⁰⁴ The famous early

⁶⁰⁴ Burrus, "Introduction," in *The Making of a Heretic*, 1-25.

Pentecostal women revivalists, who had access to authority before denominations started ordaining women, distinctly embodied preacherly personas as brides and mothers. Aimee Semple McPherson's bride persona had a forceful counterpart in Maria Woodworth Etter's "Mother in Israel" preacherly persona. Given this distinctly maternal signification, it seems most likely that the work of early Pentecostal revivalism extended the privatization and feminization of Christian authority that had been noted already in Christian nurture.⁶⁰⁵

Alongside Christian mother revivalists and christian mothers at the head of their homes, we can compare this feminine symbolization to yet another version of the Christian mother: the harbinger of the Mexican Revolution, Guadalupe. The end of chapter five compared the symmetry between a glut of representations attached to the Guadalupe during the Mexican revolution and a similar cache of representations attached to the Bride in early Pentecostalism. These groupings into femininity allow a new insight into Turnerian liminality, which was dealt with extensively in chapter 2. As Lundis and Lundahl, and others, have noted: Turner's development of liminality was held in conscious juxtaposition from the then-influential work of James Frazer, who dismissively posited the rites of passage as *merely* a form of fertility rite.⁶⁰⁶ Turner counter-argued that the work that the rites do is best thought of a suprasexual, only

⁶⁰⁵ Turner, "Images of Anti-Temporality" 237.

⁶⁰⁶ Lundis and Lundahl, *Peasants and Religion*, 660-662; JS LaFontaine, *Initiation: Ritual drama and Secret Knowledge Across the World* (Harmondsworth, England: Penguin, 1985) 26.

loosely related to sexed bodies, so that it is best to think liminality away from binary oppositions including (and perhaps most importantly to Turner) sexed oppositions. But as Bourdieu notes, the agrarian year is itself structured like the biological rites of passage of human lives: so that winter is thought in term of the end of life and spring is actively correlated to gestation, for example. In this doubled logic of the human life and the agrarian year, winter and spring are able to yield a complicated schematic of destructive and then regenerative force that can readily speak to revolutionary change.

Fertility symbols grew influential in the Mexican Revolution. Within its destructive fires and coups arose themes that posited salvation from both oppression and supernatural salvation in symbolic league with maternal references. Wolf notes,

...the promise of life held out by the supernatural mother has become the promise of an independent Mexico, liberated from the irrational authority of the Spanish father-oppressors and restored to the Chosen Nation whose election had been manifest in the apparition of the Virgin on Tepeyac. The land of the supernatural mother is finally possessed by her rightful heirs. The symbolic circuit is closed. Mother; food, hope, health, life; supernatural salvation and salvation from oppression; Chosen People and national independence — find expression in a single master symbol.⁶⁰⁷

The symbolic repertoire of the Guadalupe in the revolution placed emphasis on “fertility, lactation, and motherhood.” It seems that precisely to think *toward*

⁶⁰⁷ Wolf, "The Virgin of Guadalupe," 38-39.

fertility rites--not away from them-- might have been the clue that could make Turner's *communitas* or liminality make sense of the revolutionary potential of anti-structure. This could be because the symbols of winter, for example, do the suprasexual work of indicating the death of one world and the rising of spring can indicate the symbolic birthing of a new world. A divine mother can play (and has played) an important role in mediating the journey of the winter-spring drama, into the birth of a new world which has replaced the old one.

When taking account of the revolutionary potential of *communitas*, one must keep in mind the potential of maternal figures to authorize destructive force, as seen in the Polynesian *Pleiades Above* cycle or via the Mexican revolutionaries.⁶⁰⁸ Symmetrically, early Pentecostal themes of revival and renewal need to be thought together with the Great Tribulation, so that the "communitas" of early Pentecostalism appears in line with that of Sissons' schema: destruction in winter and then rebuilding. This nuance helps to answer the charges against *communitas* for being in possible collusion with the social order indicating that, due to its potential for destruction, it simply does not have to be. The bringing down force that, I argued, is discernible as the lay

⁶⁰⁸ Juxtapose the themes of destruction herein tied with liminality against Turner's discussion of the clown and *anti-time*. "You may say that the clown's role hardly exemplifies the anti-temporality of the liminal domain, since it involves detailed commentary on the conduct and more of contemporary personages. Nevertheless this commentary is really what Geertz would call a "meta-commentary" since it takes place within a frame which, as we shall see, is basically religious and composed of cosmological symbols... The illusions of time are judged by eternal truth, the cosmic as comic." Turner, "Images of Anti-Temporality," 239.

pneumatology of the Holy Spirit, her time signature and her work at the altar, too, can be well-thought with the reversals of the book of Esther, in which Haman hangs on the gallows-- his reversal of fortune into a miserable death and that of the Jews into salvation and power is celebrated in a Jewish carnival- that of Purim. This collectivity, this *communitas*, does not endeavor to set *everything and everyone* free for *play with God*; enemies instead suffer negative carnivalistic force. So it was in early Pentecostalism.

Feminine and Private Sources of Authority

Perhaps it is only the dogged masculinity of structures of power, whether governmental or ecclesial, or even in the home, that create the conditions for a feminine index of sea-change. Which is to say, when Mexican revolutionaries imagined their cause supported by the Virgin, and connected food, health, home and family to revanchist furor for regaining their land, perhaps the feminization of these values and claims represented first the degree to which the revolutionaries understood the powers of the world to be somehow masculine. We need look no further for the cause of the imaginative masculinization of power than, of course, the time-honored tendency of men to hold power more often, more concretely, and often to the exclusion of women. Turner's desire to keep liminality fluid notwithstanding, the binaries of history do not have to be considered essential or Levi-Straussian, as in the mind, for the binary between

men and women with respect to holding power to be historically apparent: men hold power and women, for too long, have not. This binary I take to be performative, historically contingent, but also evident. A liminality which insists on remaining ever fluid around gender, following Turner, is in willful denial of the pervasive masculinity of structure, especially in situations of empire.

I have argued that the rhetoric of anti-hierarchy that valorized Azusa Street Mission as anti-hierarchical was a hold-over (warmed-up) from the revolutionary period. As that rhetoric helped to define the person and work of the American Holy Spirit, and this Holy Spirit took on feminine symbols, it is possible to posit that there arose as well a binariness to the Spirit. If she is suddenly feminine, or Pentecostals are feminine, does not this gendering reinforce the gender binary? Does it not also play into the first question: do periods of anti-hierarchy ultimately serve to reinforce hierarchy? These are good questions and they legitimately exceed the historical period of this dissertation. But it is important to note that every advance of the development of this erstwhile female figure, the anti-hierarchy of the baptism of the Holy Spirit, and the plot line of the Bride were achieved without the consent of denominational hierarchs, and without conciliatory ideation for hierarchy or denominations. Meaning, this liminality defined itself in contradistinction to hierarchical denominationalism and as above it entirely.

Because the rapture did not happen, early Pentecostals had to reimagine their relationship to the present world and its systems of order, including their hierarchical structures more often commandeered by men. Over time, as Pentecostals have built “fellowships” (the term itself signals a hold over of angst about proper denominations), they have also developed credentialing systems built on institutional centers of higher education. Now American Pentecostals draw from hybrid sources of authority—some reminiscent of those defined as public by Burrus, and others clearly sourced still from private asceticism and by the Holy Spirit. Some Pentecostal denominations do not ordain women at all, but those that do often keep tabs on how many women apply for ordination and lament that this number has ticked downward for many decades. One of the points of tension that does not get examined, however, is the difference between offering women access to public sources of authority and being a movement organized around private sources of authority, then recognizing women’s access to these private, often affective sources. A preference for access to private spiritual authority and the wish for that to be valid and recognized may be, as previously mentioned, commensurate with a preference for affective, companionate marriage, one whose bonds are formed more distinctly in the realm of conversation and emotion than marriages which bore more of the logic of economic exchange and official institution. In the affective marriage, the marriage license can be thought to recognize a bond that has already been forged,

instead of creating that very bond by the power of the state. Similarly, women may not be pursuing Pentecostal credentials when and where they feel them to be mostly a public, official source of authority without substantial reference to the private sources of authority that once held more power in American Pentecostalism.

By contrast, the number of women who have attended a women's only bible study lead by Evangelical teacher Beth Moore, who has no clerical education and speaks to the concerns of the domestic sphere, number at least twenty two million.⁶⁰⁹ Though an article in *Christianity Today* recently tried to problematize the oversized influence of "mommy blogger" Christian writers on the faithful, and tried to argue precisely that these women needed denominational oversight-- "accountability"—precisely no one stopped reading their missives. The call to subject bloggers whom have developed "private" sources of Christian authority, as mothers in the home, to the public sphere and hierarchy went unheeded. But it was not unexpected, as women like Jen Hatmaker and Glennon Doyle boast more followers than people like NT Wright or John Piper, sell out concert venues, and post impressive book sales.⁶¹⁰

⁶⁰⁹ Emma Green, "[The Tiny Blonde Bible Teacher Taking on the Evangelical Political Machine](#)," *The Atlantic*, October 2018.

⁶¹⁰ Tish Harrison Warren, "Who's in Charge of the Christian Blogosphere," *Christianity Today*, April 27, 2017.

Trump and Private, Feminine Sources of Authority

Baptist Beth Moore recently attempted to use her hugely successful, but still privately sourced, form of biblical authority to encourage Christians to vote for someone other than Donald Trump, but this move into public issues received very mixed reviews.⁶¹¹ Interestingly, however, a Pentecostal woman with no real public claims to authority has effectively re-arranged for a marriage between the church and state, that is, a marriage between charismatic Christians and Donald Trump. Paula Michelle White, widely considered a heretic and leader of her own televangelism empire, with no denominational oversight, emerged into the public spotlight as the “pastor” of Donald Trump early in his candidacy.⁶¹² Since that day, to this one, White has acted as a surrogate for Trump, an emissary between him and the Christians who voted for his pro-life potential. Youtube videos emerged of White anointing Trump, seated in the center of a group praying for his campaign. Soon prophecies circulated that supported an idea that White most forcefully voiced: Donald Trump had been chosen by God to be the President of the United States.

Paula White’s early support for a candidate without real credentials helped to win political office for Trump and political force for White, who acted as Trump’s emissary to the charismatic voters that make up one-fourth of the

⁶¹¹ Katelyn Beaty, “Why evangelical women leaders don’t talk about politics,” *Religion & Politics*, December 19, 2017.

⁶¹² See Julia Duin, “[She lead Trump to Christ: The rise of the televangelist who advises the White House.](#)” *The Washington Post*, November 14, 2017.

electorate.⁶¹³ When one notes the use of private sources of authority—prayers, visions, prophecy—to authorize a maverick candidate with no discernible publicly-sourced qualifications for office, the mind reels. Here, too, is the domination of public, state hierarchy by private spheres, at least—that is the intention. The willingness to authorize and anoint now-President Trump for the presidency was, in part, a willingness to do what the establishment steadfastly refused to do. Is this the triumph of anti-establishmentarianism, of anti-elitism? Should Paula White’s taut blonde aesthetic and Trump’s tough-guy routine be considered carnivalistic in relationship to the studious elegance of Barack Obama? Is Trump’s unlikely ascendancy to the Presidency a carnivalistic dethroning of the Obama as a beloved ruler with an Ivy league, elite pedigree? Is Trump’s plain-speak, his derogation of Hillary Clinton as Crooked Hillary, a time-honored and recognizable form of populist negation of elites? Is Trump’s swamp rhetoric a form of anti-hierarchy that resonates with the time-honed anti-hierarchy of Pentecostals? This was exactly David Brooks’ point in his column referencing Pierre Bourdieu-- that Trump was a common man’s negation of elite capital and inequality.⁶¹⁴ Perhaps in Paula White’s cosigning of Trump’s presidency, the carnivalism of American Pentecostalism is put to considerably different use than the anti-hierarchy of the Azusa period.

⁶¹³ <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2007/11/27/spiritual-renewalists-in-america/>

⁶¹⁴ See David Brooks, “[How we are ruining America.](#)” *The New York Times*, July 11, 2017. See also commentary by Peter Levine: <https://peterlevine.ws/?p=18722>

The rise of a feminine Holy Spirit cannot herein be defined only by the Azusa Street Revival period and cannot, at the same time, be defined by the present use of private, female authority to cosign an otherwise ill-qualified president. Instead, it is my hope that, given this early history, present interrogations into the kinds of authority used in Pentecostalism and the projects this authority is used to promote can be interrogated along these lines, with an eye for the work that private authority is allowed to perform, for what it aims to perform, for its relationship to public forms of authority, for the roles assigned to women and men therein, and for the myths and narratives with which Pentecostalism's carnivalistic symbols interact. Forms of hierarchy and anti-hierarchy are likely put to differing uses in myriad pentecostalisms, but the work and value of Pentecostal political carnivalism could prove an illuminating point of entry for understanding its effects in many settings.

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