

PRIMAL PATTERNS:
RITUAL DYNAMICS, RITUAL RESONANCE, POLYRHYTHMIC STRATEGIES
AND THE FORMATION OF CHRISTIAN DISCIPLES

A dissertation by

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CHAPTER III: KINESTHETIC CONTRIBUTIONS: THE ANALYSIS OF ENERGY DYNAMICS AND THEIR EFFECTS

The dynamics of each action have corresponding inner moods... The speed will vary from the fastest to the slowest; likewise, the strength will vary from very strong to weak while direction can be direct or indirect... Though expression is personal, it is possible, through analysis, to become aware of the links between motion and emotion.

- The Principles of Rudolf von Laban²⁹²

How do we go about grasping something so intangible and ineffable as a “movement of the spirit?” What are the kinesthetic attributes of a ritual moment that inspires a rush of fiery passion, a calming settledness, a release, or joyful elation? Active engagement with ritual strategies creates physiological responses that, as we have seen, are also emotional and cognitive responses, thus formative ones. As energy dynamics are produced by the force and timing of energetic movement patterns—whether that movement is of bodies as they move through space, of sound waves as they act upon bodies through music or speech, or through the visual stimuli of color and architecture—we are affected. By studying dynamic patterns of energy, we can gain a more holistic understanding of some of the affective and noetic aspects of disciple-formation in Christian ritual.

In order to become more adept at noticing the multiplicity of expression as it is manifested through various dynamic energies, it is helpful to acquire vocabularies and techniques for getting at the kinesthetic dimensions of ritual. In this chapter I will sample some attempts to analyze aspects of energy dynamics and their effects on bodies. While several ritual scholars have written in general terms about how pace, tempo and timing

²⁹² John Hodgson, *Mastering Movement: The Life and Work of Rudolf Laban* (New York: Routledge, 2001), 138.

affect the “quality” of ritual, and some have incorporated techniques through which to get at gesture, posture, and attitude, one of the least articulated kinesthetic modes in liturgical studies is the role of energy dynamics in ritual. And yet, dynamics are one of the most important considerations with regard to formation since they are explicitly related to emotion and therefore cognition and memory.

A discussion of the analysis of the dynamics of sound, movement, speech acts and visual expressions will begin with scholars who are overtly concerned with these components as they relate to ritual. Many of these scholars draw on other disciplines in order to make their analyses. But more interdisciplinary work is needed as we create a kinesthetically-based framework to understand the formation of persons in ritual. And so each category will be supplemented with a sampling of work in other fields of inquiry that contribute to understanding the formative affect of energy dynamics on bodies. These supplemental disciplines are those that concern themselves with the flow of energy and have developed theories to help practitioners of those forms analyze their craft.

The Dynamics of Sound

As liturgical studies turns its attention to the effect of the “non-verbal,” new categories for study arise. Some scholars have begun to examine aspects of ritual such as rhythm, force and timing (essential factors in a kinesthetic hermeneutic) as integral to understanding the meanings and effects of liturgy. The most obvious point of examination with regard to dynamics for many scholars is that of the *aural* character of liturgy—the effects of sound. Bruce T. Morrill brings physiological aspects of producing, receiving and sharing sound to the forefront of his argument for ritual music. Morrill

begins, not from abstract or theological criteria, but the “irreducibly bodily nature of Christian liturgy,”²⁹³ and therefore, music’s essential effect on bodies, minds and spirits.

People’s natural bodies... respond to the rhythm, harmony, and tempo of a particular musical composition, as well as to the qualities of *vibration*, *volume* and *tone* produced by a specific instrument.²⁹⁴

Vibration (particularly the kind produced by music) within bodies is fundamental, says Morrill, to the transformative nature of ritual. The “pattern and quality” of those vibrations impacts mood, forms dispositions and fosters habits and memories “that shape the outlook and ethical action of persons.”²⁹⁵ Song “charges” the body.²⁹⁶ It heightens awareness and receptivity as well as helps the assembly orient itself. Self-awareness, awareness of others, as well as a sense of the holy are heightened through the vibrations of sound by connecting us to “vertical” and “horizontal” dimensions. According to Morrill, the overtones of sound draw people’s consciousness “divinely ‘upward’”²⁹⁷ and a congregation singing together produces “some degree of synchrony among their bodies as their heartbeats and breath process the entraining rhythm, pulse, and pace of the

²⁹³ Bruce Morrill, “Liturgical Music: Bodies Proclaiming and Responding to the Word of God,” *Worship* 74, no. 1 (Jan 2000), 20. This article also appears in Morrill, ed. *Bodies of Worship*, 157-172.

²⁹⁴ Morrill, “Liturgical Music,” 21. Italics mine.

²⁹⁵ Morrill, “Liturgical Music,” 26.

²⁹⁶ Morrill describes Alfred A. Tomatis’ research in neurophysiology which claims that through the “medulla (or brainstem) the auditory nerve connects the ear with all of the body’s muscles, with the vagus nerve connecting the inner ear with all the major organs. The ear’s vestibular function thereby influences ocular, labial, and other facial muscles, affecting such activities as seeing and eating... The ear functions, to speak metaphorically, as the gateway of stimulation or “charge” to the brain.” Morrill, “Liturgical Music,” 27-28.

²⁹⁷ Morrill, “Liturgical Music,” 33. Physiologically, the standing “vertical” position, according to Morrill, is the posture for singing. This is based on Tomatis’ conclusions regarding “verticality” and the ear. “It is impossible to arrive at good language without verticality, or to stimulate the brain to full consciousness” as cited in Morrill, “Liturgical Music,” 28. This part of Morrill’s argument needs further nuance in terms of its implications for differently-abled persons. It is also not clear if he means *all* singing or if he is assuming particular styles.

music.”²⁹⁸ The quality of the community’s sharing the word of God, and its sense of the living God in their midst, depends in large part on the kinds of “vibrations” present in ritual music.²⁹⁹

In other words, the “sense of the living God,” and the meanings we attach to that sense, has a kinesthetic quality derived from rhythm, pulse and pace. Energy dynamics involve diverse frequencies of vibrations which, in turn, “charge” the body in a diversity of ways. Don Saliers calls music a “part of the *gestalt*” of a community’s prayer.³⁰⁰ The community is formed by the acoustical shape and musical characteristics of their prayer forms. The use of dynamic accent in speech, the use of silence (or not), the contemplative spaces or the filling of all acoustical spaces, and the “rhythm, pitch, intensity, tone, and other characteristics normally associated with music” all make up the “sounds of worship.”³⁰¹ This “aural character” is “powerfully formative of our embodied theology” as the sound of a community’s worship carries emotional power and memory.³⁰² Formation occurs as individual bodies respond to that character—whether with resonance or with resistance. Our perspective is shaped “both by the material that is perceived as well as our own physiology of perception.”³⁰³

²⁹⁸ Morrill, “Liturgical Music,” 32-33.

²⁹⁹ Morrill, “Liturgical Music,” 36.

³⁰⁰ Saliers, *Worship as Theology*, 161.

³⁰¹ Saliers, *Worship as Theology*, 161.

³⁰² Saliers, *Worship as Theology*, 162.

³⁰³ Edward Foley, “Toward a Sound Theology,” *Studia Liturgica* 23 (1993), 124. Foley’s article describes “sound events” as “dynamic” events. This use of the term “dynamic” means “active” (as opposed to “static”) rather than a description of a range of energy patterns. However, his point that sound, because of its dynamic character, reflects the “dialogic impulse of God in the Judeo-Christian tradition” and God’s “historical intervention” and continuing engagement with humankind, is well-suited to the argument here. That is, that sound, in its diverse expressions of energy (“dynamics” as I use it), reflects the multifaceted ways in which God interacts, creating diverse images of God which form us as disciples.

The connection of the tone and quality of song to “the quality of the person and how he [sic] relates to himself and the universe” is contained in the unique expression of the *performance* of song rather than in the verbal, “consisting of the arrangement of words,” claims DovBer Pinson.³⁰⁴ The *kabbalah* of music is its “inner rhythm”—the quality that makes particular music distinctive. In his exploration into Jewish music of the *Chassidim*, he delves into its style and rhythm to uncover the secrets of the traditions and beliefs of the people who sing it. “Every human emotion has its song. *Chassidim* have mastered the art of music in every human situation. Every occasion has its song and every song has its moment.”³⁰⁵ Pinson’s analysis of various sung prayers in the Jewish tradition links feelings with the “feel” of the song created by diverse rhythms, tones, and symmetrical, metered or free-flowing sound waves. When song is incorporated as preparation for prayer or study—or as prayer or study itself (as in singing the study of Torah), the human soul is “reminded” of heavenly music and is “lifted” to that realm.³⁰⁶ “When a person sings a song, he [sic] awakens the essence of his soul.”³⁰⁷

³⁰⁴ DovBer Pinson, *Inner Rhythms: The Kabbalah of Music* (Northvale: Jason Aronson, Inc., 2000), x.

³⁰⁵ Pinson, *Inner Rhythms*, 6.

³⁰⁶ Pinson, *Inner Rhythms*, 123-125. Pinson describes two philosophic perspectives within the Chassidic movement in terms of strategies of prayer. For the *Chagas Chassidim*, God is served through the emotions. Their prayer forms tend to be characterized by “excitement and vigor.” Letting feelings “flow” and participating in the “ecstasy” of God are the desired means and ends. However, the “intellectual branch” of *Chassidim*, the “Chabad,” pray with the intent to let every emotion be “filtered” through the intellect. “Contrary to the *Chagas* master, who suggested igniting one’s soul through ‘external bodily’ movement, the Chabad masters say that the movement of the melody itself generates warmth.” The rhythms of the “Chabad” prayers are slower and the “emotions remain in the heart without any external expression.” For the *Chassidim* in this example, the dynamics of song and the resulting bodily expressions express a theology of prayer as well. The Primal Patterns construct suggests that there is, indeed, external expression even in the case of the “Chabad” prayers. They are simply of a different sort or strategy. Pinson, *Inner Rhythms*, 94-95.

³⁰⁷ Pinson, *Inner Rhythms*, 165.

Ritual scholar Mary McGann incorporates the disciplines of liturgical theology, ritual studies and ethnomusicology to bring musical attributes and techniques to the forefront of “how liturgies mean.” She lends vocabulary to the strategies and effects of the musical-liturgical event of an African-American Roman Catholic community. “Energy,” “dynamics” and “rhythm” come into play as serious categories of observation in the process of understanding the noetic and affective role of ritual, and in particular music making, in the lives and meaning-making of its participants.

How a song is sung, a prayer prayed, or a homily delivered and the effect these have on others in the assembly are as important as the content of song, prayer, or preaching, because particular qualities of style demonstrate and find means of deep response to the presence of the Spirit. Further, the whole range of sensory experience which is part of this worship, “at once audio, visual, olfactory, and tactile... facilitates the dilation of the human spirit in order that one may feel God’s Spirit, and thereby know God... Feeling the Spirit during worship is a profoundly theological moment.”³⁰⁸

While music is influential in the “experiential, affective dimensions of worship,” it is by no means to be relegated simply to those categories of influence. Rather, music, perhaps *because* of its noetic and affective dimensions, is “integral to and constitutive of the act of worship and of the theology of liturgy.” This theology is experienced by the assembly as pneumatological, ecclesiological, and sacramental. “Music may be a primary way in which a liturgical assembly assumes its role as agent of the liturgical action...”³⁰⁹ For this reason, music, and all its various strategies, must be more “systematically incorporated in our theological interpretations of Christian liturgy.”³¹⁰

³⁰⁸ Mary McGann, “Interpreting the Ritual Role of Music in Christian Liturgical Practice.” (Ph.D. Diss., Graduate Theological Union, 1996), 232. The quote is from Robert Michael Franklin, “Defiant Spirituality: Worship and Formation in the Black Churches,” in *Proceedings of the North American Academy of Liturgy*, 1992, 16.

³⁰⁹ McGann, “Interpreting the Ritual Role of Music,” 241.

³¹⁰ McGann, “Interpreting the Ritual Role of Music,” 242.

Music making is integral to the “strategic quality of ritualization” in many ways, one of which is the manner in which its particular *style* impresses itself upon the participants—the way particular modes are “structuring aspects.”³¹¹ *Dynamic range, rhythm, range/modes of expressiveness, and engagement of body* in music making are some of the structuring aspects McGann names that fall into our concern with energy patterns. In the ritual context of the community in which she does her fieldwork, music that fills the space with sound and movement sustains “a mode of action which is alive, dynamic and interactive.”³¹² Attributes of acoustic articulation and performance style create a frame of music making strategies within which analysis can focus on “the complex interplay of these dimensions” and reveal the strategizing of the community—the particular way in which patterns of meaning are articulated.³¹³ In one excerpt, a soloist moves to the microphone and begins to improvise phrases over a steady melody, “each phrase adding texture and color.”

Her style is free and her voice soulful as she weaves a melodic and verbal counterpoint: *I love you, (We love you), I love you, (We love you), I love you... (We love you Lord today)*. People continue to come forward freely, extending hands partaking of bread and wine... The music becomes more textured. Like gentle waves, its repeated phrases wash over the assembly, gathering voices and hearts. Intensity grows, as the song travels through a series of modulations.³¹⁴

In McGann’s descriptions, energy is “built up,” “released,” and “resolved”³¹⁵ through various strategies of *timing, flow, and alternation in texture* (the feel, mood,

³¹¹ McGann, “Interpreting the Ritual Role of Music,” 60, 65. McGann utilizes Catherine Bell’s use of the terms “ritualization” and “structuring.”

³¹² McGann, “Interpreting the Ritual Role of Music,” 180.

³¹³ McGann, “Interpreting the Ritual Role of Music,” 67.

³¹⁴ McGann, “Interpreting the Ritual Role of Music,” 121.

³¹⁵ McGann, “Interpreting the Ritual Role of Music,” 183. See page 116 for another narrative example of this building and releasing strategy in song.

quality, or tone of the moment).³¹⁶ These strategies are actualized through musicians, preachers, presiders and—especially poignant for this African-American community—all of the participants as they improvise, interject, respond to and create fluctuations and punctuation of dynamics. This is the expression of “soul” as the “action of God touches the deepest part of a person, stirring and moving within, and opening him or her to a new level of communication with others.”³¹⁷

The Contribution of Music Theory

The “stirring and moving within” just described is connected at the most basic level to physiological processes such as heart rate and breathing that are affected by particular patterns of energy dynamics. One of the first well-known music theorists and analysts, Emile Jacques-Dalcroze, “saw rhythm as essentially physical, based on the action of heart, breath and gait.”³¹⁸ Rhythm, as it relates to the body, is not machine-like. It is subject to fluctuations as the body negotiates responses to stimuli.

A machine, however perfectly regulated, is devoid of rhythm—being controlled by time... The submission of our breathing to discipline and regularity of time would lead to the suppression of every instinctive emotion and the disorganization of vital rhythm.³¹⁹

Thus, Dalcroze expresses the essential connection between the variations in our basic physiological patterns and the vitality of our emotional lives. Rhythms, and the energy patterns produced by rhythms, affect our vitality and health. Janalea Hoffman, a music therapist, was inspired by a study which showed that outside rhythms have power

³¹⁶ McGann, “Interpreting the Ritual Role of Music,” 188-199.

³¹⁷ McGann, “Interpreting the Ritual Role of Music,” 135.

³¹⁸ Janet Goodridge, *Rhythm and Timing of Movement in Performance: Drama, Dance and Ceremony* (London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers, 1999), 115-116.

³¹⁹ Emile Jacques-Dalcroze, *Rhythm, Music and Education*, H.H. Rubinstein, trans. (London: Dalcroze Society, 1921), 184.

over our own heartbeats. She began to explore using music at very slow and steady rhythms to relax her clients. “The listener’s heart responds to the external stimulus of the slow, steady beat of the music and her/his heart rate begins to synchronize.”³²⁰ This phenomenon can have serious consequences for the human body and its effectiveness—its energy. Hoffman believes that the advent of machinery in the 20th century has had an affect on our own rhythms, producing unnatural rhythms with which we synchronize. Her clients begin to analyze the rhythms of their surroundings in order to become aware of how their environments contribute to their feelings of well-being or of heightened stress. Hoffman uses a “Music Diagnostic Self-Test”³²¹ to find out what kinds of music her clients are drawn to at various times of the day. From this she prescribes certain rhythms in music to help move them from states of anxiety and depression to healthier rhythms. For example, “power instruments” such as brass or organ can facilitate feelings of inner power. Flutes and strings may help free the imagination but a tendency to listen to these sounds repeatedly may indicate a need for grounding or a flight from reality. Percussion sounds can help bring up anger or can be used “for getting into an altered state if the beat is steady.”³²² What Hoffman seeks to do is to help persons become aware of their music listening habits and to see patterns that may affect their lives and emotions.³²³

³²⁰ Janalea Hoffman, *Rhythmic Medicine: Music With a Purpose* (Leawood: Jamillan Press, 1995), 2-3.

³²¹ Hoffman, *Rhythmic Medicine*, 116-125.

³²² Hoffman, *Rhythmic Medicine*, 124. Hoffman admits that those clients who have negative associations to particular instruments (such as organ sounds as they relate to religion) may in fact feel the opposite effect.

³²³ Hoffman, *Rhythmic Medicine*, 125. The Primal Patterns construct suggests that “preferences” may be a measure for the kinds of rhythms which give individuals energy or leave them feeling exhausted or depressed and that these may not be the same for all people. Ballistic rhythmic accents may in fact energize a person with a *Thrust* neuromuscular excitation “home,” while this same musical experience would drain someone with a *Hang* home pattern.

The fact that various rhythms impact us physiologically and psychologically is the basis for her therapeutic considerations.

Analysis of much more than rhythm is essential in understanding the dynamic effects of music because “every sound is a *bundle* of different qualities,” says music theorist Theo Van Leeuwen.³²⁴ For instance, music which emulates a “caress” may be realized

by a certain choice of *melodic* means (voice at high pitch level; narrow pitch range; slightly descending and undulating melody); but also and at the same time by certain *rhythmic* choices (for example a medium tempo); by a choice of ‘social *distance*’ (soft, hence close); and by certain choices of voice quality or instrumental *timbre* (slightly nasal, labialized) and so on.³²⁵

A change to any one of these would change the “sound act.”³²⁶ A sound “caress” would change to a “whining complaint” if the same melody were performed with a nasal, tense and loud quality. The meaning derived from various sound qualities is based, according to Van Leeuwen, on the physical effort involved in making those sounds. This is called “experiential meaning potential.” “[O]ur experience of what we physically have

³²⁴ Theo Van Leeuwen, *Speech, Music, Sound* (London: Macmillan Press, Ltd., 1999), 145.

³²⁵ Van Leeuwen, *Speech, Music, Sound*, 97-98. Italics mine.

³²⁶ Van Leeuwen stresses that musical melodies do not just “express” emotion, but rather they are “actions” of those emotions. “[M]elodies do not only ‘express tenderness,’ they also and at the same time *caress*, they do not only ‘express scorn,’ they also and at the same time *mock*, they do not only ‘express longing,’ they also and at the same time *plead*, to give just a few examples.” Van Leeuwen, *Speech, Music, Sound*, 94. This is an ongoing debate for music theorists concerning music and the emotions—whether music *is* emotional or whether it simply evokes particular emotion from the hearer. “Musical emotivists” postulate that, for instance, we say a piece of music is “sad” because it makes most persons sad when they listen to it. “Musical cognitivists,” on the other hand, would argue that “the sadness is an expressive property of the music which the listener recognizes in it.” Peter Kivy, *Music Alone: Philosophical Reflections on the Purely Musical Experience* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1990), 146. See also Suzanne K. Langer, *Philosophy in a New Key* and *Feeling and Form* (New York: Scribner, 1953).

to do to produce a particular sound creates a meaning potential for that sound.”³²⁷ We create tense sounds by tensing our musculature. When we get excited, our vocal tones tend to ascend and we increase our vocal effort. As we descend in pitch, we relax the effort and the effect is calming. The rate and use of our breath can denote intimacy or excitement. When we need to be heard—gain more power—we often get louder and higher in intensity. “Rising pitch can energize, rally listeners together for the sake of some joint activity or case. Falling pitch can relax and soothe listeners, make them turn inward and focus on their thoughts and feelings.”³²⁸ The dynamic range associated with musical components such as pitch, timbre, rhythm and melody has a “semiotic force” based on a range of “holding more energy in” or “letting more energy out,”³²⁹ which Van Leeuwen calls the emotive confinement or expansion.³³⁰ “Sound symbolism” is not fixed, warns Van Leeuwen, but it is formative.³³¹ Drawing on Lakoff and Johnson’s “philosophy of the flesh” cited in Chapter one, metaphor and meaning is constructed from patterns of bodily experience. What happens to us physiologically when we experience certain emotions is sometimes emulated physically as we perform certain actions (including “sound acts”) and emotions may well up in us as a result of those physical states being reproduced. The implications of sound symbolism for communication is a trend towards

immersion rather than detachment, towards the interactive and the participatory rather than towards solitary enjoyments, towards ever-changing dynamic experiences rather than towards the fixing of meanings as objects to be collected. Even though sound is at present still very much undervalued and underused in the new media, and often treated as little

³²⁷ Van Leeuwen, *Speech, Music, Sound*, 205.

³²⁸ Van Leeuwen, *Speech, Music, Sound*, 103-104, 140-141.

³²⁹ Van Leeuwen, *Speech, Music, Sound*, 106.

³³⁰ Emotive confinement or expansion is the semiotic potential of compressing (in the case of confining) or increasing (in the case of expansion) “durational variety, dynamic range, fluctuation range, and, above all, pitch range.” Van Leeuwen, *Speech, Music, Sound*, 205.

³³¹ Van Leeuwen, *Speech, Music, Sound*, 145.

more than a kind of optional extra, there is every chance that it will have a much increased role to play in the very near future.³³²

The Contribution of Sound in Film

Some of the most attuned practitioners of the mix of sound and content in storytelling and meaning-making are composers of musical scores for films. There is a strong correlation between film and ritual in the multisensory mix of images, narrative and sound utilized by both. Film has a way of telling stories which stir our emotions. Poignant moments in film create physiological responses in us as we see images, hear words and—sometimes only unconsciously recognized by us—hear music that underscores the story’s emotional impact. There are several ways that music contributes to a film, says Roy A. Prendergast in “The Aesthetics of Film Music.” Citing David Raksin and Aaron Copland respectively, he says that music helps “realize the meaning of a film” and makes potent “the film’s dramatic and emotional value.”³³³

The energy dynamics produced by film sound are perhaps the most important components in this discipline, rather than melody. The term “color” describes film music that creates an atmosphere and a mood. A particular instrumentation can evoke a place, or a “feel.” The effect, says Prendergast, is immediate, visceral and therefore, psychological and emotional. The ability of music to underscore or refine “the unseen implications of a situation” is subtle, making it one of the most valuable contributions to the film story. Music conveys feelings and thoughts “better than any other element of a

³³² Van Leeuwen, *Speech, Music, Sound*, 197.

³³³ Roy A. Prendergast: “The Aesthetics of Film Music,” in *A Neglected Art: A Critical Study of Music in Film* (New York: New York University Press, 1977), 213-245. Excerpted at <http://web.archive.org/web/19970516041845/http://citd.scar.utoronto.ca/VPAB93/course/reading/s/prenderg.html>. Accessed December 2004.

film.”³³⁴ Music adds a third dimension to images and words (as well as the choice to leave particular sequences silent³³⁵). It has a “catalytic ability to change the audience’s perception of images and words.” The opposite is also true. “There is a symbiotic catalytic exchange-relationship between the film and the music that accompanies it.”³³⁶

Musical components of sound in film that combine in countless ways to create various dramatic effects are identified by Robert L. Mott as: *pitch* (determined by frequency of vibration); *harmonics* (the complex motion frequency wave forms created as an object vibrates that determines the pleasantness of the resultant sound); *timbre* (the combination of frequency, harmonics and overtones that gives each sound its unique coloring and character); *loudness* (determined by the intensity of the sound stimulus); and *rhythm* (a recurring sound that alternates between strong and weak elements). “Sound envelope” (or phrasing) components include: *attack* (when the sound begins and reaches its peak later, whether quickly or slowly); *sustain* (when the sound remains steady and avoids sudden bursts of level changes); and *decay* (when the sound decays to silence with a decrease in amplitude of the vibrating force).³³⁷ Each combination of these elements carries with it imagistic associations tied to emotions, becoming the “sonic texture” of the film.³³⁸ Timbre is especially important in describing the texture or feel of a moment.

³³⁴ Prendergast, “The Aesthetics of Film Music.”

³³⁵ “Sounds can be emotionally effective even when they are reduced to near inaudibility. And the most eloquent ‘sound’ of all may be silence. In our age of dense soundtracks, the sudden absence of noise can have a stunning impact.” Elisabeth Weis, “The Art and Technique of Postproduction Sound,” *Sync tanks*. Vol. 21, Cineaste, 01-01-1995, pp 56 as cited at <http://www.filmsound.org/sync tanks/>. Accessed December 2004.

³³⁶ Prendergast, “The Aesthetics of Film Music.”

³³⁷ Robert L. Mott, *Nine Components of Sound* as cited at <http://www.filmsound.org/articles/ninecomponents/9components.htm>. Accessed December, 2004.

³³⁸ “Bordwell & Thompson’s Terminology” as cited at <http://www.filmsound.org/filmart/bordwell2.htm>. Edited excerpts from David Bordwell and Kristin Thompson. “Sound in

The impact on our bodies is a result of our resonance with the complex vibratory nature of the sound and our associations with that sensation. Film sound designers call this “the emotional sound equation.” The emotional associations may have “deep primordial roots,” such as low frequencies producing foreboding feelings of threat or higher frequencies combined with mid-range pitch, harmonics and rhythm producing pleasant sensations in the body.³³⁹

The music is deliberately written to enhance the mood of a scene and to underscore the action not as a foreground activity, but as a background one. The function of the music is to tell the audience how to feel, from moment to moment: soaring strings mean one thing, a single snare drum, another.³⁴⁰

While the wide diversity of ways that individuals use their brains “makes it quite impossible to predict how different individuals perceive for example the same movie scene or piece of music,”³⁴¹ direct and literal translation is not the point. For Philip Borphy, the sound of music in film is something else besides simply “music” because it “bleeds beyond itself.” It is more than its language and content—an aura of music is created by its presence. This is a complexity termed “sound-image-fusion.”³⁴² Music in film, as in ritual, becomes a fusion of the visual and verbal imagery that surrounds it and transports it to the realm of the symbolic.

Cinema,” in *Film Art: An Introduction* (Columbus: McGraw Hill Humanities Publishers, 2003). Accessed December, 2004.

³³⁹ Tomlinson Holman, *Sound for Film and TV*, excerpted and cited in http://www.filmsound.org/articles/roles_of_sound.htm. Accessed December 2004.

³⁴⁰ Tomlinson Holman, *Sound for Film and TV*.

³⁴¹ Klas Dykhoff, “About the Perception of Sound,” as cited at University College of Film, Radio, Television and Theatre, <http://www.draminst.se/start/inenglish/articles/ljudartikel/>. Accessed December 2004.

³⁴² Philip Borphy, ed., *Cinesonic2: Cinema & the Sound of Music* (Sidney: AFTRS Publications, 2000) as cited at <http://www.filmsound.org/bibliography/cien sonic2.htm>. Accessed December 2004.

The spectator's imagination is by far the best filmmaker if it's given a fair chance to work. The more precise a scene is, the more unlikely it is to affect the audience emotionally. By being explicit the filmmaker reduces the possibilities for interpretation... the only thing required is the right trigger to start the experiencing process, and that trigger could very well be a sound.³⁴³

These comments by film sound director Klas Dykhoff are reminiscent of symbol theorists who bemoan the demise of symbols in ritual through over-explanation by liturgists.³⁴⁴ The point here is the correlation between symbol and sound-as-symbol. The particular dynamics inherent in sound/music by way of various frequencies become part of this symbolic landscape, often times becoming that "trigger" for the experiential-interpretive process.

The Dynamics of Movement

For some ritual scholars, observing the movements of ritual participants is an obvious location for noticing aspects of the kinesthetic quality of ritual. Movements of bodies offer insights into the "spirit," or dynamic, of the ritual event and of its participants. For ritual scholar Ronald Grimes, the difference between liturgics and ritual studies is that ritual studies attends to "the actual comportment of the body in interaction" rather than beginning with text.³⁴⁵ The body "reads" like text in that its actions communicate meaning. Bodies are "channels of communication" and in the

³⁴³ Klas Dykhoff, "About the Perception of Sound."

³⁴⁴ For example, Don Saliers says that Protestant worship suffers at times from too many words which rob ritual participants from their own associations to the symbols, impoverishing ritual participation. Saliers, *Worship as Theology*, 144-145. See also David N. Power, *Unsearchable Riches: The Symbolic Nature of Liturgy* (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1984).

³⁴⁵ Grimes, *Beginnings*, 91. This distinction is gradually changing, in part due to the work of Ronald Grimes and the incorporation of ritual studies into the discipline of liturgical studies.

process of getting to the meaning of a rite, we must not only get at the gestures and postures utilized by ritual performers (which display “the identifications one makes and therefore is”³⁴⁶), but we must get to the “how” of our moving. Grimes says,

Not only to paradigmatic gestures lead to, or reinforce, particular values, liabilities and lifestyles, they generate corresponding thought and feeling patterns. My mind and spirit become sluggish or hyperventilated by what and how I breathe... The body often understands, even against our own desires and thoughts; and what the body learns is a resource for ritual creativity.³⁴⁷

In order to understand ritual, Grimes continues, we must be “grasped by its sense.”³⁴⁸ We must pursue “in a more radical way what Paul Ricoeur calls a “sympathetic re-enactment in imagination.””³⁴⁹ In other words, we must engage in the action itself. This entails becoming kinesthetically involved in what Grimes calls an “aikido-like going-with” stance as participant-observer in order to gain clues as to the attitudes embodied by the performers of ritual.³⁵⁰ “One of the most sadly neglected roots of scholarly method is bodily attitude.”³⁵¹ Bodily attitude is not incidental to enactment, but is the privileged way of knowing produced in ritual.³⁵² “Formative gesture” (he defines “gesture” in a broad sense here—that of movement and pose) is one of the essential elements in Grimes’ underlying definition of all ritualizing. These “formative pulsations” reshape “our bodies, and thus our minds...”³⁵³ Gesture is “virtually a synonym for attitude... the total bearing of a body expressing a valued style of living...

³⁴⁶ Grimes, *Beginnings*, 101.

³⁴⁷ Grimes, *Beginnings*, 102-103.

³⁴⁸ Grimes, *Beginnings*, 23.

³⁴⁹ Grimes, *Beginnings*, 102-103.

³⁵⁰ Grimes, *Beginnings*, 19.

³⁵¹ Grimes, *Beginnings*, 17.

³⁵² Grimes, *Beginnings*, 66.

³⁵³ Grimes, *Beginnings*, 68-69.

an evocative rhythm embodied in an enactment.³⁵⁴ In order to interpret attitude displayed in ritual, Grimes declares that we must learn to recognize *style*—the “how” of movement. While he does not lay out specific aspects of style related to the diversity of energy dynamics at work in ritual, he uses a metaphor for style—that of the “attitude of a ship... its tilt,” that reveals some of the attributes of dynamic interplay—“the *direction* and *force* of the wind, the *weight* of the boat, and the *size* of its sails.”³⁵⁵ In other words, style is a result of the combination of various aspects of movement and bodily attitude such as direction, force, weight and size. Grimes repeatedly calls for a more thorough use of drama games, movement analysis, and techniques from various therapies in order to train observers to see and understand the embodied nature and stylized variety of ritual.³⁵⁶

Ritual scholar Donna Lynne Seamone’s work of ritual description focuses on bodily action, experience and performance in order to get at the embodied meanings coming from “surface action” rather than falling into “liturgical referentiality” (what the “experts” say an action means). In other words, she is more interested in overt actions as the bearers of meaning than in meaning behind and before the acts.³⁵⁷ Seamone underscores the “doingness” of liturgy. It is a practice, an event, a “thing done.” The study of liturgy, then, cannot first rely on the abstract, but rather ought to begin with questions regarding the “doing”—the concrete and phenomenological.³⁵⁸ “Who is doing?”

³⁵⁴ Grimes, *Beginnings*, 67-68.

³⁵⁵ Grimes, *Beginnings*, 67.

³⁵⁶ See Grimes, *Beginnings*, xxii 8-9, 22-23, 103.

³⁵⁷ Donna Lynne Seamone, “This is My Story, This is My Song: Verna Maynard's life story and her ritual performance at the Kitchener Church of God” (Ph.D. diss., Graduate Theological Union, 2000), 180.

³⁵⁸ Seamone, “Re-membering the Body,” 32.

Where is the doing? When is the doing? How is the thing done?”³⁵⁹ Non-verbal dimensions of action are *body force*.

In the process of exploring *gesture* as a “basic category” of the bodily enactment of liturgy, Seamone found that it was the category of *movement* that really emerges as “basic.” While posture and gesture are orientation-in-space and “frozen moments,” it is movement that has “*quality, tone, character, and rhythm.*” Indeed, it is her set of questions regarding the “how” of a thing being done that concerns us here. The *body force* engaged in the getting-to and getting-out-of postures and gestures, the moving from here to there, the energetic embodiment of the “doing,” is integrally related to the *quality* of ritual action and is part of the answer to her theological inquiry, “what theology is tacit in the motions through which people go?”³⁶⁰

In attending to these bodily interactions through movement, her ritual descriptions take on a dynamic vocabulary which speak of energy patterns. In this excerpt, a youth choir has assembled in the sanctuary of the Kitchener Church of God, a Pentecostal congregation.

There is stillness, and then they sing—*Jesus is mine*. The song swells out over the assembly. People move in time in their seats. The rhythm is established in the singers; it makes its way outward and takes up residence in the hearers. Pulses pass through the air, lighting first in Sister Finley, then in Sisters Chambers and Hedley on the left side of the congregation. Then the pulses flicker over to the right side, licking down in Sister Duke and Brother Pilgrim. They rise to their feet, this current spiraling upward in them. They curl upward stretched like paper caught aflame.³⁶¹

The primary ritual instruments in this ritual are the bodies of the participants. And there is “both the expectation and the experience of divine presence in their own

³⁵⁹ Seamone, “Re-membering the Body,” 36-37.

³⁶⁰ Seamone, “Re-membering the Body,” 37, 42-43.

³⁶¹ Seamone, “Body as Ritual Actor,” 17.

bodies and in the larger body” as expressed through dynamic action.³⁶² Images of God, called “Spirit” in this Pentecostal setting, come bubbling up, lash out and grab, body forth in “quiet, cooing tones or gut-wrenching shouts.”³⁶³ Citing Ronald Delattre’s idea that motions articulate our humanity and the life of feeling, Seamone reflects on a moment of taking a parishioner’s hands in an improvised motion during communion. “There was feeling in this event, but the significance was borne as much in the tissues of our hands and in our mutual gaze as in what brought the tears. It was articulation and reordering: the feeling was in the motion.”³⁶⁴ Motion and emotion collide in symbolic and formative moments attached to images of what a phrase like “this is my body” means. That meaning resides in the action of bodies-in-relationship that bear particular qualities of enactment.

In her survey on the use of rhythm and timing in descriptions of performance events (including ritual), anthropologist, ritual scholar and movement expert Janet Goodridge speaks of the complexity of rhythm based in bodily physiology and expression.

[W]e can see that in performance, or in a performance event, there are in process a number of influences and different features in the bodily use of time elements that create rhythm, or “a rhythm.” These include the visible, physiological patterns which we can observe with our eyes, the less discernible biophysical features, the performer’s inner rhythms, the influence of natural environmental rhythms, and other rhythms of the historical era and environment; cultural conditioning, social influences and personal characteristics as well as those of a performer’s or director’s adopted styles. The total pattern emerges as a correlation of parts, a complicated, many-layered mesh of relations between components. It emerges not only from each individual performer’s use of rhythm, but also

³⁶² Seamone, “Body as Ritual Actor,” 18.

³⁶³ Seamone, “Body as Ritual Actor,” 21.

³⁶⁴ Seamone, “Re-membering the Body,” 36.

from the rhythms of interaction and group activity. A complex web indeed.³⁶⁵

For Goodridge, peeling back these many layers of rhythm and timing is essential for understanding the essence and effects of the performance event. Rhythm, or “patterned energy,” is inherent in the “flow” of action marked by bodies as they change in *direction, stress, level of intensity, speed* and *duration* (including both action and stillness).³⁶⁶ Rhythm and time elements “are central in the shared experience of performance” and one of the bases of “identity, meaning and effectiveness.”³⁶⁷

Goodridge notes several contributions from the field of anthropology to the study of rhythm and timing. Victor Turner gave attention to “phases of actions and the transitions between them.”³⁶⁸ Herbert Cole wrote of ritual “intensity” that creates an “energy system” within ritual. This intensity develops through sensory stimulation, commitment of participants and the significance they attribute to the event.³⁶⁹ Judy van Zile, an anthropologist known for her work in Korea and Hawaii, uses the term “energy patterns” in reference to variations of “*rhythmic intricacy*.” Various “energy levels” can be observed even in pauses between rhythmic *phrases* and the changes in energy levels contribute to the phrasing of an event by providing *punctuation*.³⁷⁰ Peggy Harper’s work in various African contexts refers to the effect of *tempo*, “for instance, she notes the way

³⁶⁵ Goodridge, *Rhythm and Timing*, 39.

³⁶⁶ Goodridge, *Rhythm and Timing*, 42-43. “The word ‘rhythm’ is derived from the Greek ‘*rhuthos*’ cf. *rheo* to flow: Rhythm literally means ‘a particular way of flowing.’”

³⁶⁷ Goodridge, *Rhythm and Timing*, 86.

³⁶⁸ Victor Turner, *Theories of Contemporary Culture, Vol. I*, M. Benamou and C. Caramello, eds. (Madison: Coda Press, 1977) as cited in Goodridge, *Rhythm and Timing*, 101.

³⁶⁹ Herbert M. Cole, “The art of festival in Ghana,” *African Arts* 8, (1975) 3, 12-90 as cited in Goodridge, *Rhythm and Timing*, 101.

³⁷⁰ Judy van Zile, “Energy use: an important stylistic element.” *Dance Research Annual* 8 (1977), 85-96 as cited in Goodridge, *Rhythm and Timing*, 105. Van Zile cites the work of Valerie Hunt, one of the originators of the Primal Patterns construct, in her exploration of energy patterns.

in which rapid steps create excitement.”³⁷¹ And Judith Lynne Hanna describes a “projectional quality” of rhythm that creates a *texture* in the event made up of “a combination of elements, particularly by the relative *quickness* or *slowness* of energy released by the performer.”³⁷²

While these references by scholars to rhythm, timing and energy are helpful, Goodridge sees a lack of attention to the fullness of the implications of these aspects of performance. She develops a “synthesis of approaches” to help in her own work as a ritual observer and to help educate other observers of ritual. She seeks to distinguish factors of movement-rhythm as systematically as possible in search of the effects of dynamic energy patterns.³⁷³ Key issues for Goodridge include where, how and when rhythm is located. The *where* of rhythm deals with *body* and *space*. We need to look for rhythm in the human body (performer), between bodies (in interactions) and in the group orchestration of rhythm.³⁷⁴ “The ‘natural’ preferred physical rhythms of each [body type] are entirely different” and so attention to individual expression is needed.³⁷⁵ Changes of *direction*, *position*, *level*, *symmetry* and *asymmetry* of movement generates rhythm.³⁷⁶ Rhythm can be found in *unison* acts among subgroups or the whole group. Various *spatial pathways* utilized in the space (straight or curved lines of action, spirals, twists, circles) can create rhythm and “induce different moods.” The *range* of gesture or

³⁷¹ Peggy Harper, “The Role of Dance in the Gelede Ceremonies of the Village of Ijio.” *Odu* n.s. 1, 4 (1970), 67-94 as cited in Goodridge, *Rhythm and Timing*, 105-106.

³⁷² Judith Lynne Hanna, “Toward semantic analysis of movement behavior.” *Semiotica* 25 (1979), 1-2, 77-110 as cited in Goodridge, *Rhythm and Timing*, 107. Italics mine.

³⁷³ While Goodridge uses the construct of “rhythm” more often than “energy patterns,” at one point she says that “we may substitute the word ‘rhythm’ for ‘energy patterns.’ I assume here that the opposite is also true. Goodridge, *Rhythm and Timing*, 105.

³⁷⁴ Goodridge, *Rhythm and Timing*, 140-141.

³⁷⁵ Goodridge, *Rhythm and Timing*, 141.

³⁷⁶ Goodridge, *Rhythm and Timing*, 144.

movement (whether they are expansive, large gestures or subtle and intimate) and *direction of focus* (out, in, up, moving about) communicates rhythmic patterns that translate to attitude or significance.³⁷⁷

Development of action is based on “*how* energy is used and *when* features of rhythm and timing occur.”³⁷⁸ A change in dynamics, a fluctuation in energy, may be called an *accent*. Accents “attract and direct attention.” Goodridge explains:

Frequency of accents can be a strong mood indicators when combined with other movement elements that affect dynamics. For example, many accents occurring near each other—with a particular combination of other elements—can create or contribute to a mood of excitement...³⁷⁹

Accents can also come in the form of *pauses, stops, silences* and *stillness* which draw attention to that which precedes or follows them. These moments may be filled with tension or with calm. “The ratio of both accents and pauses to *time duration overall* is a further element to consider, and one which may certainly affect the mood in a performance.”³⁸⁰ Development of action also varies depending on *pace* and *tempo*. “Release and arrest of flow, its liberation and control and the varying degrees and condition between extremes” contribute to “dynamic intensity.”³⁸¹ Whether a ritual unfolds slowly or moves quickly in pace can be associated with particular attributes such as degree of solemnity. Performing actions more slowly or quickly than usual, or with

³⁷⁷ Goodridge, *Rhythm and Timing*, 146.

³⁷⁸ Goodridge, *Rhythm and Timing*, 148.

³⁷⁹ Goodridge, *Rhythm and Timing*, 151.

³⁸⁰ Goodridge, *Rhythm and Timing*, 151-152.

³⁸¹ Goodridge, *Rhythm and Timing*, 156-157.

extended use of repetition sets the action apart from the everyday and may signal a special or new state.³⁸²

We can easily see the advantages of a keen eye for movement qualities in the interpretive endeavor of describing ritual through Goodridge's work. Because Goodridge crosses the boundaries between ritual studies and movement analysis, her work flows easily into the next area of inquiry—that of the contribution of movement analysis.

The Contribution of Movement Analysis

The work of movement analysis spans several disciplines such as somatics, kinesiology, exercise physiology, movement therapy, dance education, among others. In the middle of the eighteenth century, systematic theories were being constructed in the realm of music composition so as to develop a rhetorical style, in effect asking the question, “How does music *affect* us?” This carried over into the analysis of movement and the study of what kind of movement brings about what kinds of effects. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, at a time when the scientific and theoretical approaches to knowledge were gaining momentum, there were several persons who began a kind of scientific approach and/or a phenomenological approach to looking at *movement* and its implications for various institutions (industry, education, psychology, etc).³⁸³ The purposes of movement analysis are as diverse as the applications of it to

³⁸² P. Byers, “From biological rhythm to cultural pattern: A study in minimal units” (Ph.D. diss., Columbia University, 1972), 42 as cited in Goodridge, *Rhythm and Timing*, 159, 163.

³⁸³ For an overview of this period and trajectory in the history of movement analysis, see Valerie Preston Dunlop, *Rudolf Laban: An Extraordinary Life* (London: Dance Books, 1998). For a history of the development of notation of movement in the West, see Ann Hutchinson Guest, *Dance Notation: The Process of Recording Movement on Paper* (New York: Dance Horizons, 1984), 42-116.

various disciplines.³⁸⁴ One of the purposes which concerns us here is the role of particular ways of moving (with an eye to patterns of energy dynamics which gives something a kinesthetic quality) to making meaning and understanding emotion—what “moves” us.

Pioneer dance artists/analysts of the twentieth century such as Martha Graham, Alwin Nikolais, Doris Humphrey, among others, sought to expand the range of dynamic energy used in modern dance. “They found that the dynamics of rhythm were inseparable from expressive dance... that emphasizing changes in rhythm added excitement and power to movement.”³⁸⁵ Doris Humphrey named “emotions” as one of the five main sources of rhythmical organization. She said, “...surges and ebbs of feeling with accents... not only supply strong rhythmical patterns but are a measure for judging emotional rhythms in others.”³⁸⁶ She understood muscular activity to have a wide range of energetic flow: “the whole scale is subject to endless variation in *tempo* and *tension*... slow-smooth with force; fast-smooth without tension; fast-sharp with tension (like pistol shots), moderate-sharp with little force (rather blunt), slow-smooth without tension (dreamy, sluggish or despairing) and so forth.”³⁸⁷ She understood “phrasing” as a “punctuation of energy” that is unmistakably a pattern, the most fundamental of shaping time-design.³⁸⁸

³⁸⁴ See Johnson, *Body, Breath and Gesture* for a collection of writings from a range of practitioners of “embodiment” and their particular foci—as diverse as breathing better, the management of pain, moving more freely and consciously, working with persons whose range of motion is limited, to the place of embodiment in humanistic psychology.

³⁸⁵ Helen Alkire, as cited in Goodridge, *Rhythm and Timing*, 117.

³⁸⁶ Goodridge, *Rhythm and Timing*, 118.

³⁸⁷ Doris Humphrey, *The Art of Making Dances* (New York: Grove Press, 1959), 97 as cited in Goodridge, 119. Italics mine.

³⁸⁸ Goodridge, *Rhythm and Timing*, 119.

Because dance (or dance-like behavior including ritual action) appears to excite neurotransmitters in the brain in a way which affects perception and emotion, the findings of movement analysts in this field are valuable contributors to understanding the kinesthetic connections in formation. In “Dance as a Rite of Transformation,” J. Kealiinohomoku echoes the findings of neurobiologists:

Neurotransmitters release peptides that affect performer’s emotions, precipitate a variety of physiological changes, and create innumerable side-effects through a complex of interactions. A feedback loop goes from perception to behavior to chemical responses to emotions, back to reinforced or transformed behavior and enhanced apperceptions.³⁸⁹

This connection between emotions and the movements that evoke, express and transform emotions and behavior was very much at the heart of Rudolf von Laban’s work.³⁹⁰ Laban is particularly important in this survey because he is one of the few theorists whose work included a particular vocabulary to describe the dynamics of energy—what he called “effort.” Anne Hutchinson Guest says,

Laban’s contribution in the area of dynamics, an aspect of movement neglected by most systems of movement notation, was his codification of ‘Effort,’ an analysis which has enriched all forms of movement study, in particular physiotherapy, anthropology, and personnel assessment.³⁹¹

The area of dynamics in the field of movement analysis is a study of *how* a movement is performed, of its quality, of the kind of ebb and flow of energy in the body. For Laban, the study of particular dynamics holds information about the “inner quality”

³⁸⁹ J. Kealiinohomoku, “Dance as a rite of transformation,” (ms. for *Tribute to Alan Meriam*), 1981, 1 as cited in Janet Goodridge, *Rhythm and Timing*, 30.

³⁹⁰ Laban was born in 1879 in Bratislava, (then) Hungary. He studied architecture and arts in Paris and then moved to Germany where he became well-known for his work in dance. He worked for the Nazis in pre-World War II Germany until he was banned by Hitler’s regime after they experienced the power of his work to unite and stir the emotions in a rehearsal of his movement choir made up of hundreds of people for the Berlin Olympics. Laban escaped and eventually established his work in England in 1938. The Laban Centre for Dance in London and the Notation Bureau in New York City carry on his work.

³⁹¹ Guest, *Dance Notation*, 87.

of the person engaged in the activity. He looked for “movement-personalities” of an individual. He developed a codified vocabulary and notation method to describe and record these observations. This was an improvement over “general unsystematic description and the use of idiosyncratic language.”³⁹² Laban complained that much descriptive work lacked depth in terms of the implications of energy dynamics. “In calling rhythms wild or soft, frightening or appeasing we do not give more than a very general idea of the mood they evoke.”³⁹³ Laban sought to give a more detailed account of movement in order to understand its effects. His codified language noted four major “motion factors:” *weight, time, space* and *flow*; as well as another system of language dealing with “effort.” This helped him achieve a description that allowed for not only quantitative analysis (How long? How quick? How heavy or light?), but more importantly for Laban, a *qualitative* sense (What is the performer’s “inner attitude?”).³⁹⁴ Laban held a cosmological view of movement. The body reveals “deeply rooted mystery” and not mere function.³⁹⁵ Movement is not simply something one *does*, but it is a window into what one *is*.

In describing the connection between Laban’s concepts and the phenomenology of Maurice Merleau-Ponty, Vera Maletic points to a shared concept: “The lived, phenomenal body, and the gesture are then a means by which we perceive the world and at the same time respond to it. The body carries the *intentionality* of consciousness which

³⁹² Goodridge, *Rhythm and Timing*, 129.

³⁹³ Rudolf Laban, *The Mastery of Movement*, 3rd edition (London: Macdonald & Evans, 1971, originally published 1950), 68.

³⁹⁴ Goodridge, *Rhythm and Timing*, 131.

³⁹⁵ Goodridge, *Rhythm and Timing*, 135-136.

underlies all movement.”³⁹⁶ For Merleau-Ponty, “the lived-body is the source of all action-perception-consciousness.” This getting “back to the things themselves” (phenomenologist Edmund Husserl) is at the heart of Laban’s investigations. “Laban’s concept of Effort arose primarily from his analysis of the quality of the lived or living movement.”³⁹⁷ Laban describes “Effort” as the sequence of inner attitudes and external drives which activate an action.

Movement has a quality which is produced by a degree of intensity. There are degrees of intensity in Laban’s classification of human efforts for each of three elements: *space* spans the poles of “indirect” or “direct;” *time*—“sustained” or sudden;” *weight*—“strong” or “light.” The combination of these elements creates eight “basic efforts” which are modified in the course of the continuous flux of human dynamics.³⁹⁸ This flux of intensity, or energy, is “as much internal as external so consideration of dynamic is concerned... with the inner drive with which a movement is invested.”³⁹⁹ In an interview in which she talks about her work with Rudolf Laban, Irmgard Bartenieff, a somatic practitioner who brought Laban’s work to the United States, speaks of the origins of the word “effort.”

The word comes actually from German where it means *Antrieb*. *Antrieb* is like the motivation of a motor: *trieb* is like “drive” and *An* is “on”—driving on, how your energy drives... People use [energy] in different combinations that are characteristic of them. And they also relate to outside space in different ways. Of course, [Laban’s] whole idea of the affinity of the two—the space and the effort is involved here... One must not forget that Laban was not just exploring movement per se, but the

³⁹⁶ Vera Maletic, *Body, Space, Expression: The Development of Rudolf Laban’s Movement and Dance Concepts* (Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, 1987), 191.

³⁹⁷ Maletic, *Body, Space, Expression*, 189-190.

³⁹⁸ Hodgson, *Mastering Movement*, 186.

³⁹⁹ Hodgson, *Mastering Movement*, 183.

expressive factors that were closely related to these energy and spatial factors.⁴⁰⁰

Laban's vast observations of movement over a career spanning five decades led him to believe, late in his career, that the propensity of an individual towards the "motion factors" of *time*, *weight*, *space* and *flow* were the predominant, but not only, character trait.⁴⁰¹ Certain combinations of these factors indicated a type of mood or "attitude." For instance, a propensity for *flow* and *time* aspects (whether a *bound* or *free flow* or a *sudden* or *sustained* sense of time) creates a "mobile, or adaptable attitude" whereas the propensity for the *space* and *weight* combination (a *direct* or *indirect* moving in space or a *strong* or *light* manifestation of weight dynamics) results in a more "stable, steadfast attitude" of being in the world.⁴⁰² These associations to "inner attitudes" became a part of his theories, especially after being exposed to the theories of Carl Gustav Jung in 1950 when he began to converse with one of Jung's students, Irene Champernowne. His seventy-seven page unpublished manuscript written with psychologist William Carpenter, coordinated the motion factors with Jung's four types (sensing, thinking, intuiting and feeling).⁴⁰³ Whether his intensely-codified system⁴⁰⁴ is too rigid in its equations or not, Laban opened up a vast exploration into the associations between

⁴⁰⁰ Ilana Rubinfeld, "Interview with Irmgard Bartenieff," in Don Hanlon Johnson, ed., *Bone, Breath and Gesture*, 229-230.

⁴⁰¹ Hodgson, *Mastering Movement*, 145.

⁴⁰² Maletic, *Body, Space, Expression*, 102.

⁴⁰³ Hodgson, *Mastering Movement*, 75, 158.

⁴⁰⁴ One aspect of his work not described here is Laban's system of notating movement on paper for the purposes of recording dances and analyzing movement. It may be that his drive to codify so specifically is based on the fact that all of his concepts became geometric drawings to indicate action on paper. While Laban's work is entirely sympathetic with the Primal Patterns construct, and indeed the patterns are made up of the elements of energy he describes, it is so complex a system of description with its 72 combinations of efforts to be cumbersome to learn and use. It is also directly related to movement and not as easily translated to other forms of expression such as speech and the visual.

movement behavior and attitude which continues to inform many disciplines. Most importantly for our investigation, it establishes a focus on the idea that when analyzing movement in order to understand its contents and effects, variations in the use of dynamics is highly important. Guest sums up Laban's theory: "The use of energy more than anything else lifts an ordinary action onto another plane."⁴⁰⁵

The Dynamics of Speech Acts

The expressive modes of music and movement are, undeniably, the most obvious modes in which the topic of "kinesthetics" is considered. However, dynamic energy patterns are produced in the performance of verbal modes as well. In other words, verbal acts create non-verbal effects. Besides the content of speech, there is also a "feel" or dynamic produced by the manner in which that speech is performed and the resulting energy patterns. Aspects of kinesthetics such as tone, timbre, tempo, rhythm, repetition and variation all come into play in speech acts. Indeed, whether or how we respond to the content of speech is highly dependent upon the performance modes of that speech.

"A commitment to energy" is one of the attitudes of actors that comprises the "heart or soul" of the theatre, says homiletician Jana Childers, and one which holds value for the role of those who perform the spoken word in worship.⁴⁰⁶ This "energy" can also be called "presence," "projection," or simply, "life."⁴⁰⁷ "When it is present, the people in

⁴⁰⁵ Guest, *Dance Notation*, 23.

⁴⁰⁶ Jana Childers, *Performing the Word: Preaching as Theatre* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1998), 111-112.

⁴⁰⁷ Childers, *Performing the Word*, 112. See also Charles L. Bartow, *Effective Speech Communication in Leading Worship* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1988), 25-26. Bartow speaks of the "interpretive dynamic" of speech in worship—"because speech in worship is not in any way mechanical... We need to 'live into' what we speak. We need to be grasped by the intellectual

the pew or the mezzanine seats may not think about it at all; but they are guaranteed to notice its absence.”⁴⁰⁸ Because words “derive from the body,” vital energy is demonstrated through bodily processes, from particular vocal intonation to the ways performers hold themselves, direct their eye contact, and move in the space.⁴⁰⁹ All of these aspects have to do with the performance of text—indeed the text becomes “known” in ritual through its performance.

Performance is one of the preacher’s most valuable exegetical tools... “Expression deepens impression” as Leland Roloff has said. And it is peculiarly true of Scripture texts, so many of which began life in oral form, that the preacher or interpreter/performer can not be said to know the text until he or she has given it his or her voice and body.⁴¹⁰

Giving the text a particular “voice” is of eminent importance in Childers’ analysis of communication in preaching. Childers notes that speech communication theorist Albert Mehrabian has shown that “55 percent of all meaning communicated in a face-to-face setting is communicated by the body, 38 percent by the tone of voice, and only 7 percent by the actual words spoken.”⁴¹¹ In both the bodily and vocal tonality (93 percent), the patterns of energy utilized by the speaker are a powerful part of that communication.

Preaching’s nonverbal aspects require a body that is ready to express the widest possible range of ideas and feelings, from the most subtly nuanced theological thought to the largest of human emotions. Preachers deal on a cosmic scale; their bodies must be up to the scope of the task.⁴¹²

and emotional content of the call or confession and to manifest at the same time, in words, vocal tone, posture, facial expression, and gesture what has grasped us.”

⁴⁰⁸ Childers, *Performing the Word*, 112.

⁴⁰⁹ Childers, *Performing the Word*, 112-116.

⁴¹⁰ Childers, *Performing the Word*, 49.

⁴¹¹ Albert Mehrabian, *Silent Messages: Implicit Communication of Emotions and Attitudes* (Belmont: Wadsworth Publishing, 1971), 43-44 as cited in Childers, *Performing the Word*, 57.

⁴¹² Childers, *Performing the Word*, 74.

But because the preacher's body is often hidden behind a pulpit and/or in a vestment and sheer distance between preacher and congregation may make subtle facial or bodily gestures obscured, Childers spends considerable time on components that affect voice tonality as crucial in the expression of meaning.⁴¹³ *Depth* of breathing can make a difference for the vocal quality produced. Deep diaphragmatic breathing lends more power, freedom and range to the voice.⁴¹⁴ *Pitch* depends upon where in the body resonance is happening. A "head" voice produces a light, clear vocal quality resulting from resonance in the upper chambers of the vocal mechanism whereas a "middle" voice has a "rounder, fuller sound." Additionally, a "chest" voice, produced in the lower chambers, adds "color" and depth to the vocal quality.⁴¹⁵ The quality and projection of sound is also affected by the placement of the lips, jaw and tongue, producing clear "forward" sounds or retracted ones.⁴¹⁶ Further, *articulation* and *enunciation*, which deal with consonants and vowels respectively, can aid or detract from dynamic patterns of speech.⁴¹⁷ Each of these components lends to the creation of *tones of voice* which convey emotion. There is an intimate connection between emotional experience and vocal production. For Childers, cultivating *flexibility* in vocal intonation creates a "physical instrument that is responsive to the finest of the preacher's emotions."⁴¹⁸

The effectiveness of the interpretation or "incarnation" of text in ritual is based, in part, upon the energy of its performance. Four basic materials of oral performance, called "vocalics," are combined in endless ways to produce various energetic effects.

⁴¹³ Childers, *Performing the Word*, 58.

⁴¹⁴ Childers, *Performing the Word*, 62-63.

⁴¹⁵ Childers, *Performing the Word*, 63-64.

⁴¹⁶ Childers, *Performing the Word*, 66.

⁴¹⁷ Childers, *Performing the Word*, 68-69.

⁴¹⁸ Childers, *Performing the Word*, 73.

“The ultimate purpose of the four building blocks is to interpret and express the life of the text.”⁴¹⁹ *Rate, pitch, volume* and the use of *pause* (which creates rhythm) are involved in “the art of orchestration” of the musicality in the performance of text. Childers cites some general examples: “a fast rate, rising pitch, high volume, no-pause combination can express a text’s acceleration or increasing intensity;” “a slow rate, low pitch, low volume, long/frequent pause combination can express [a] meditative quality;” “a slow rate, low pitch, high volume, short pause combination can communicate something of the text’s agony.” While application of these components “should not be applied in a mechanical or haphazard way,” attention to them can help render a faithful interpretation that conveys the dramatic and emotional quality of the content of the text.⁴²⁰ Pitfalls that render a text lifeless have to do with these same “building blocks.” “Monotone” is really usually “mono-rate”—stripping the voice of its natural uneven, and therefore, interesting, quality. This is exacerbated by the lack of pauses or predictable pauses. *Peaks, valleys* and *varied levels of intensity* are important in “expressing the sense and *animus* of a text.... Effective oral interpreters lean into a text’s intensity levels, going with the flow of life when it wants to build, and sliding back when it wants to rest.”⁴²¹

In his book about the preaching of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Richard Lischer analyzes the strategies of Dr. King’s oratory performance and lays out the components of what he calls the sermon “sound track.” This non-discursive sound track is not simply a matter of performance style, but rather its “meaning is as theologically rich as that of the theme track [dependent on the content of the words], but it is more readily available to

⁴¹⁹ Childers, *Performing the Word*, 80.

⁴²⁰ Childers, *Performing the Word*, 81.

⁴²¹ Childers, *Performing the Word*, 94.

experience than reason.”⁴²² *Rhythm* is the grounding factor in King’s style, based on *repetition*. *Alliteration* provides a repetition of the first sounds of several words in a line (“not.. by the color of their skin but by the content of their character”); *assonance* occurs when vowel sounds are repeated (“that mag-ni-ficent tril-ogy of dura-bil-ity”); *anaphora* and *epistrophe* organizes the repetition of word phrases at the beginning or ending of groups of words (in the case of *epistrophe*, “In the midst of howling, vicious, snarling police dogs, *I’m gonna still sing, We Shall Overcome*. In the midst of the chilly winds of adversity... *I’m gonna still say, We Shall Overcome...*”).⁴²³ These strategies produce thematic and rhythmic value—a particular dynamic. The particular “rhythmic value” present in these examples is heightened by *amplification* (volume and pitch) and *intensification* (stress) of the word phrases, producing a driving force. Variation on the rhythm occurs as patterns of stress are changed slightly, producing a vocal *syncopation*. A “run-on” at the end of a series of repetitions, called *enjambment*, “creates a sense of overflow of emotion” and is likely to be met with an emotional eruption from listeners.⁴²⁴ Indeed, “the key to any black preacher’s style is the responsiveness of the congregation”⁴²⁵ and the rhythm produced in the speech act is dependent upon this participation. Energy is given and received by both preacher and congregation in this context.

Besides rhythm, the “sound track” also is defined by vocal quality. *Pitch* and *timbre* lend power, nuance, climax and color to the words spoken. Lischer describes the gradual ascendancy of King’s pitch from a low growl to a shout at the upper ranges of his

⁴²² Richard Lischer, *The Preacher King: Martin Luther King Jr. and The Word that Moved America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 130.

⁴²³ Lischer, *Preacher King*, 128.

⁴²⁴ Lischer, *Preacher King*, 132.

⁴²⁵ Lischer, *Preacher King*, 135, 137.

baritone voice and the “relentless increase in the *rate* of his speech—all contribute to the melodiousness, the songlike quality, of his voice.”⁴²⁶ Timbre also takes into account degrees of *clarity*, whether husky, “bluesy,” or quivering with vibrato. All of these qualities imply varieties of depth denoting emotion.⁴²⁷ Together with rhythm, they are movements of speech that incite movements of the spirit—“energizing the [congregation] for action in the community or nation.”⁴²⁸

The Contribution of Drama and Speech Theory

Speech has rhythm: “People can be identified by ‘voice prints,’ which show not only characteristic frequencies and amplitudes but also distinct patterns of pacing and syllabic stress.”⁴²⁹ Theater director Paul Baker says, “Rhythm is a combination of tempos and tensions which come from physical, emotional and philosophical tracings, from attitudes towards life.”⁴³⁰ Drama, performance and speech theory, among other things, sets out to analyze the rhythms, tensions, timing and energy that are the components of expressed emotion. In theater, vocal techniques are intimately tied to expressions of the whole body. Ray Birdwhistell introduced the term “kinesics” in 1952 to describe “the science of body behavioral communication.”⁴³¹ Drawing on this idea of kinesics, D. Stern was quoted in the *Drama Review*, “human behavior is ordered and

⁴²⁶ Lischer, *Preacher King*, 133.

⁴²⁷ Lischer, *Preacher King*, 134-135.

⁴²⁸ Lischer, *Preacher King*, 141. While Lischer’s analysis focuses solely on King’s vocal dynamics, it is clear that variations in the components he lays out will be evident in whatever preaching dynamic one attempts to analyze although the energetic effects will be different.

⁴²⁹ Bordwell and Thompson, “Bordwell & Thompson’s Terminology.”

⁴³⁰ Paul Baker, *Integration of Abilities* (San Antonio: Trinity University Press, 1972), 102 as cited in Goodridge, *Rhythm and Timing*, 160.

⁴³¹ See Ray G. Birdwhistell, *Introduction to Kinesics: An Annotated System for Analysis of Body Motion and Gesture* (Louisville: University of Louisville Press, 1952) and *Kinesics and Context* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1970).

rhythmical, at many levels, and with respect to both speech and body motion and to personal and interactional behavior.”⁴³² Ordering of energy and rhythm into recognizable and meaningful patterns happens in order to communicate effectively. The components of time and rhythm in the performance of expression become concrete, pliable things as a way of “gathering energy”⁴³³ and “intensifying experience.”⁴³⁴ Character is distinguished, moods are generated and relationships conveyed through bodily components of varied tension, the dynamic use of energy and the performer’s use of space.⁴³⁵

Through many techniques, performance theorists and dramatic practitioners search for the combination of these components that will convey the desired emotional result. The Russian theater director Konstantin Stanislavski trained actors to experiment with movement rhythms in order to find connections to emotions related to grief, headaches, and ecstasy, for example.

Tempo-rhythm of movement cannot only intuitively, directly, immediately suggest appropriate feeling and arouse the sense of experiencing what one is doing but also it helps stir one’s creative faculty.⁴³⁶

Of course, Stanislavski’s most famous contribution to acting technique (built on by Lee Strasberg’s “Method Acting” in New York) was the reliving of emotional

⁴³² D. Stern, “On kinesic analysis,” [interview] *The Drama Review* 1973, 17, 3, 114-126 as cited in Goodridge, *Rhythm and Timing*, 34.

⁴³³ Richard Schechner, *Between Theatre and Anthropology* (Pittsburgh: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1985), 11.

⁴³⁴ Goodridge, *Rhythm and Timing*, 49-50. Goodridge sees “intensifying experience” and “bringing power” as a goal of any performance event.

⁴³⁵ “As Irmgard Bartenieff emphasized, we form judgments about characters and mood by association with the rhythm of the body tensions they reflect.” Goodridge, *Rhythm and Timing*, 51. See Irmgard Bartenieff and D. Lewis, *Body Movement: Coping with the Environment* (New York: Gordon & Breach, 1980).

⁴³⁶ Konstantin Stanislavski, *Building a Character*, trans. E.R. Hapgood (London: Reinhardt & Evans, 1950), 202 as cited in Goodridge, *Rhythm and Timing*, 112.

experience in order to reproduce those states on stage—drawing on “emotional memory” or “affective memory.”⁴³⁷ Paul Ekman combined information from Birdwhistell’s “kinesics” and Stanislavski’s “emotional memory” in a study that charted the autonomic nervous system’s response to two techniques of “creating emotion.” One group of actors used the Stanislavski method of reliving a past emotional experience for 30 seconds and the other group of actors were told mechanically which facial muscles to contract “constructing facial prototypes of [six “target emotions”—surprise, disgust, sadness, anger, fear, happiness] muscle by muscle.”⁴³⁸ The findings of the study showed that producing the emotional-prototypical patterns of facial muscle contraction resulted in larger changes in the autonomic nervous system than simply “thinking” about the desired emotion.⁴³⁹ In other words, the body holds emotional-muscle memory that may be more potent than the cognitive memory of emotional incidents. For performance theorist Richard Schechner, who compares Ekman’s composed facial expressions with other cultural facial expressions, this is important information in a growing body of evidence that suggests that some basic emotions are expressed across cultures in a “universal language” that is nonverbal and consists of “facial displays, vocal cries, body postures (freezes), and movements.” These are tied to nerve and brain processes that may also be universal and underlie “what anthropologists have called ritual.”⁴⁴⁰ What Birdwhistell calls “kinemes” (minute muscle movements that are culture-specific) are built “on top of and out of the ‘universal language of emotions.’” That is, the universal language is neither

⁴³⁷ Richard Schechner, *Performance Theory* (New York: Routledge, 1988), 263.

⁴³⁸ Paul Ekman, “Autonomic Nervous System Activity Distinguishes among Emotions,” *Science* 221 (September 16, 1983), 1210 as cited in Schechner, *Performance Theory*, 263.

⁴³⁹ Schechner, *Performance Theory*, 264.

⁴⁴⁰ Schechner cites the work of biogenetic structuralists d’Aquili, Laughlin, McManus and Lex.

static nor fixed but transformable...⁴⁴¹ “Dialects” of movement are developed by groups, says Schechner, through the variations of “basic codes.” “This is what ‘style’ is all about.”⁴⁴² As we will see, through the Primal Patterns construct, we can notice dominant “dialects” of energy patterns used by various communities (ritual strategies) that may contain within them particular emotions and dispositions commonly held between groups.

The work of Janet Goodridge on the use of rhythm analysis in the realm of the theater arts shows that in the early part of the last century, the subject of movement-rhythm related to speech was neglected for a focus mainly on text. But recent work (as in the work of Stanislavski and others mid-century) has drawn on the “use of elements such as tempo and pauses, and fluctuations in energy or in the tension-release continuum” as well as the body’s movements in space.⁴⁴³ These aspects are now seen as central to the art of communication because “people just don’t absorb much of what they hear,” says communications expert and Harvard Management Communication Letter editor Nick Morgan.⁴⁴⁴ But spoken presentations persist because their primary impact is an emotional one. Trust, motivation for action, sparking insight and change are some of the reasons why the spoken word is vitally important for groups, especially those whose purpose is to work together to bring something about. Unfortunately, most speakers, he says, don’t understand and utilize the most important aspect of effective communication—kinesthetics.⁴⁴⁵ Inspiring trust and action requires that an audience have a “kinesthetic

⁴⁴¹ Schechner, *Performance Theory*, 265.

⁴⁴² Schechner, *Performance Theory*, 265.

⁴⁴³ Goodridge, *Rhythm and Timing*, 124.

⁴⁴⁴ Nick Morgan, “The Kinesthetic Speaker: Putting Action into Words,” *Harvard Business Review* (April 2001), 113.

⁴⁴⁵ Morgan, “The Kinesthetic Speaker,” 113.

connection” with the speaker and that the message be communicated on a “visceral, personal and emotional” level. There is a “primal hunger” to experience the message on a physical level and this is created by kinesthetic speakers who create potent nonverbal messages and rich sensory experiences that include not only the varieties of aural inflection (*volume, speed and pause*) and visual stimuli (objects, Powerpoint, video clips— which themselves convey energy patterns), but also a sense of engagement on an energetic level that “matches” the kinesthetic experience of the audience, infusing the presentation “with a legitimate sense of authenticity.”⁴⁴⁶

Morgan cites the advent of television as a turning point in the kinesthetic expectations of audiences. Previously, the energetic power of a speaker came from “grand gesture, voice projection and other methods for addressing huge crowds.”⁴⁴⁷ However, the advent of television created an expectation of the kind of intimacy from a speaker that is created in a small frame with a close-up head shot. This is the way we began to understand “connection” with a speaker. And while public presentations have become more “conversation-like” and speech more informal in an attempt to recreate that kind of intimacy, a kinesthetic connection (spatial and emotional) is less attended to for the public, live setting.⁴⁴⁸

Crowds “tune out” with little kinesthetic stimulation. “The effect is to disconnect the speaker from the message, the message from the audience, and the audience from the presenter’s desired action—the main reason for the communication in the first place.”⁴⁴⁹

Kinesthetic stimulation occurs when the speaker’s actions are aligned with their words,

⁴⁴⁶ Morgan, “The Kinesthetic Speaker,” 114.

⁴⁴⁷ Morgan, “The Kinesthetic Speaker,” 115.

⁴⁴⁸ Morgan, “The Kinesthetic Speaker,” 115.

⁴⁴⁹ Morgan, “The Kinesthetic Speaker,” 116.

creating the appropriate energy and accent to communicate particular content and modes of speech.⁴⁵⁰ Basic *body language* can connect if there exists an openness to the listeners through open palms, reaching towards, or eliminating any barriers such as nervous mannerisms. *Posture* communicates kinesthetic energy such as leaning forward to convey, “I want to reach you.” But most importantly, the actual *distance between* speaker and people must vary depending on the mode of speech. Citing the difference between public, social, personal and intimate space, Morgan says that literally closing the gap between public space (more than 12 feet between people in Western culture) and personal space (four feet to 18 inches), will “match” the kinesthetics of a personal part of a presentation such as an anecdote or plea for action.⁴⁵¹ Moving out into social space or public space is more effective when laying out the overarching topic.

Choreographed movements throughout a presentation, like changes in the volume of a speaker’s voice or the variation in a series of slides, provide the stimulation that helps keep an audience engaged. They also punctuate the presentation by signaling changes in content and by highlighting the most important points, giving the audience the helpful signposts so often lacking when words are spoken rather than written.⁴⁵²

Providing a physical ebb and flow respects the listener’s need for a varied kinesthetic experience. Additionally, engaging listeners in activity—whether the chance to move, hold an object, speak to one another for a time, or perform a task—creates

⁴⁵⁰ “[W]hen there is a disconnect between the speaker’s verbal message, no matter how clearly conveyed, and his or her kinesthetic message, the audience always takes away the primal, more powerful kinesthetic communication.” Morgan, “The Kinesthetic Speaker,” 117. This is important in light of the fact that the performance aspects of preaching rarely get as much focus in seminary curriculum as content and form. This gap for liturgists is even greater. This is one of the greatest obstacles to meaningful communication in ritual, in my estimation.

⁴⁵¹ Morgan, “The Kinesthetic Speaker,” 116.

⁴⁵² Morgan, “The Kinesthetic Speaker,” 117. Italics mine.

interaction with content that speaks on a kinesthetic level.⁴⁵³ As we will see, the Primal Patterns construct provides a framework for understanding the incorporation and effects of a variety of dynamic energy patterns in the performance of speech acts as well as the relationship between speaker and listeners.

The Dynamics of Space

Color, light, architecture and spatial relationship communicate energy dynamics. Simply walking into a space involves a visceral response to the “feel” of a room. A mood is immediately set by the environment in which ritual takes place and we respond bodily. Jyoti Sahi discovered a connection between space and the body’s instincts:

Recently working on the whole concept of sacred space, I realized that our feeling for space comes not from the intellectual but from a primordial instinct which is apprehended through the body. Only by being sensitive to the body can we become conscious of the sacred in space—in as much as we have become alienated from our own bodies, we have lost the sense of the holy in space.⁴⁵⁴

We perceive and react to light waves, movement of architectural lines, the “heat” or “cool” of color, and the arrangement of seating which forecasts the kind of relationships and movements which will take place in a ritual space. Presentational technologies create visual movement as images on screens change at various rates. In this way, visual space also contains rhythm, tone, and quality—kinesthetics. Spaces, says

⁴⁵³ This may be done by an entire listening group or by “proxies”—individuals who “serve as representatives for the others.” The whole group feels as if they are engaged through that person. Morgan, “The Kinesthetic Speaker,” 117. This corresponds to the “as if” function of the brain described in Chapter two which creates an experience of motion even if the body is only watching that motion.

⁴⁵⁴ Jyoti Sahi, “The Body in Search of Interiority,” in Chauvet and Lumbala, *Liturgy and the Body*, 93-94.

liturgical theologian Rainer Volp, are “texts” with many levels of meaning. We have the ability to “read” space through the response of our bodies to the space.

Even blind people can read spaces, and not merely by touch: they feel and sense, for example, whether spaces are lofty or low, whether they stifle sound or let it resound, whether they are close or airy, oppressive or open. Faced with space, no one is illiterate. Each of us is a body, and, as a body, responds to the body of that space. This is more than a vague sensitivity. It is a reading of space, a reading by means of which we define situations and thereby, in some sense, our very selves.⁴⁵⁵

In this section, we will look at various aspects of space that contribute to the kinesthetic quality of worship.

Architecture

Besides an *interpretive dynamic* of speech in worship, Charles L. Bartow also calls attention to what he calls the *situational dynamic*.

We do not speak in a vacuum. We speak in a specific place, large or small, of ornate or simple appointment. In a tiny, rural sanctuary such as the one I myself led worship in for a number of years, to say ‘Our help is in the name of the Sovereign God who made heaven and earth,’ is one thing. To say the same words in Riverside Church in New York City or Grace Cathedral in San Francisco is something else entirely.⁴⁵⁶

The space itself has a dynamic that shapes the way in which speech, action, and music are performed, received and interpreted. Indeed, to try to produce energy patterns through music, movement or speech that do not match those of the space can be difficult. Liturgical theologian James White explains:

Church architecture not only reflects the ways Christians worship but architecture also shapes worship or not uncommonly, misshapes it... In the first place, the building helps define the meaning of worship for those gathered inside it. Try to preach against triumphalism in a baroque

⁴⁵⁵ Rainer Volp, “Space as Text: The Problem of Hermeneutics in Church Architecture,” in *Studia Liturgica* 24 (1994), 171.

⁴⁵⁶ Bartow, *Effective Speech Communication*, 26.

church! Try to teach the priesthood of all believers with a deep gothic chancel never occupied by any but ordained clergy!⁴⁵⁷

Liturgical space carries messages encased in structures made up of *lines*, *pathways*, *boundaries*, *height* and *depth*—each of these components carrying particular dynamics based on the kind of kinesthetics created by the movements of eyes and bodies in gazing on or navigating the space. This is one of the powerful languages of worship and integral to theological images produced in worship. “We have an attitude toward worship space which is relatively unexamined,” says Eliza Linley.

The pity of it is that if we are ignorant, we have no idea how much we are formed by the space in which we worship. Church buildings are as emblematic of our theologies as the liturgy they are intended to embody.⁴⁵⁸

Attributes of the space can work for or against the inclusion of various modes of kinesthetic forms. “We may want good congregational song, but do the acoustics swallow up each sound so that all seem mute? Or do we have to give up any hope of movement by the congregation because everyone is neatly filed away in pews?”⁴⁵⁹

Besides function, the “look and feel” of a worship space is of concern to architects who plan liturgical space. In the description of some of the newest architecture to date, we can glean some of the assumptions about the mood that particular materials and configurations project. *Scale* is one of the “building blocks” in designing religious space says Fr. Richard S. Vosko, a liturgical consultant on architectural projects.⁴⁶⁰ In much of church architecture, historically as well as recently, *height* and *light* conveys

⁴⁵⁷ James F. White, *Introduction to Christian Worship*, rev. ed. (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1990), 89.

⁴⁵⁸ Eliza Linley, “Holy People, Holy Space: Housing the Church in a Time of Change” (Thesis, Graduate Theological Union, 1990), 1, 50.

⁴⁵⁹ White, *Introduction*, 90.

⁴⁶⁰ Fr. Richard S. Vosko, “Introduction,” in Michael J. Crosbie, *Architecture for the Gods* (New York: Watson-Guptill Publications, 2000), 8.

“spiritual uplift.” At one liturgical space, “as one processes from the ground-level entrance to the sanctuary, space grows in height as well as importance.”⁴⁶¹ Diffused light in these lofty spaces “evokes the ethereal qualities of mediation.” Large structures with lots of glass are described as radiating an “openness towards the world outside.”⁴⁶² And yet, many communities are reversing that trend in a desire to focus on the community rather than the lofty heights associated with a strictly “sky-oriented” deity. A sense of intimacy is being reclaimed as part of the early Christian legacy.⁴⁶³ In some spaces, “solid walls provide a sense of protection and thus solitude” and grotto or cave-like environments give a strong sense of interiority.⁴⁶⁴ In these cases *depth*, *texture*, and *darkness* provide an entirely different physiological response.

“The use of color, light, scale and art, as well as the incorporation of pathways, portals and centers can contribute to the religious experience.”⁴⁶⁵ Pathways for movement and seating arrangement dramatically affect the kinesthetic experience of worshipers. The often-used configuration of straight rows of chairs or pews can convey a *firm* ordering of space while other configurations such as diagonal aisles or labyrinth-like pathways into a worship space engage worshipers in a *fluid* sense of space.⁴⁶⁶ Circular, antiphonal (congregants facing one another) or three-sided arrangements of seating wrapped around a focal point such as the table or altar create “a sense of *intimacy*... a sense of unity... a sense of connection between all congregants.”⁴⁶⁷ Central plazas

⁴⁶¹ Crosbie, *Architecture for the Gods*, 64.

⁴⁶² Crosbie, *Architecture for the Gods*, 76.

⁴⁶³ White, *Introduction*, 107.

⁴⁶⁴ Crosbie, *Architecture for the Gods*, 56, 144.

⁴⁶⁵ Vosko, “Introduction,” in Crosbie, *Architecture for the Gods*, 9.

⁴⁶⁶ Crosbie, *Architecture for the Gods*, 26, 76.

⁴⁶⁷ Crosbie, *Architecture for the Gods*, 98, 128.

“embrace” participants.⁴⁶⁸ The rhythm of a space is affected by what Janet Goodridge calls the “performance-frame” of a space that “conditions the expectation and perception of the audience, marking off time and place—like the enclosing of a picture by a frame.”⁴⁶⁹ Different *levels* and *barriers* of a space, especially that between ritual leaders and participants, affect the flow of energy in ritual action.⁴⁷⁰ Jean-Michel Sordet speaks of the dynamics of “proxemic signs” in liturgy whereby the *distance* between persons, the *zones* of occupation and the *orientation* established between persons affects the sign value of a liturgical act. According to Sordet,

the message conveyed by space must be well linked with other forms of speech and *vice versa*... The word of God is actualized not only in the *verbum audibile* of the preaching of the Gospel, or in the *verbum visibile* of the Eucharistic symbols, but also in the spatial arrangements employed.⁴⁷¹

The reaction of people to “sacred space” was at the heart of a recent conference sponsored by the Architects Institute of America and its affiliate, the Academy of Neuroscience for Architecture.⁴⁷² “Why is it that the arches and open spaces of a cathedral inspire faith, yet so do the comfort and familiarity of a small country chapel?”⁴⁷³ The ways in which we make judgments about the aesthetics of a space are not clearly understood by neuroscience at this point.⁴⁷⁴ “For most people, it is just a

⁴⁶⁸ Crosbie, *Architecture for the Gods*, 96.

⁴⁶⁹ Goodridge, *Rhythm and Timing*, 165.

⁴⁷⁰ Goodridge, *Rhythm and Timing*, 166.

⁴⁷¹ Jean-Michel Sordet, “Proxemic Signs in the Eucharist,” in *Studia Liturgica* 24 (1994), 167.

⁴⁷² April, 2004 in Columbus, Indiana.

⁴⁷³ Ken Kusmer, “Architects parse out what makes holy spaces holy,” in *Science & Theology News* (September, 2004), 34.

⁴⁷⁴ John P. Eberhard, “Vision and the Brain,” cited at “Architecture and the Mind,” <http://www.architecture-mind.com/semirseki.html>. Accessed December 2004.

feeling.”⁴⁷⁵ Here, again, we see that images of what is “sacred” or “holy” are expressed in sentiments evoked by the “feel” of a space. What is clear is that “the built environment affects us in real, predictable, physiological ways.”⁴⁷⁶ Even though perception and taste varies between individuals based on emotional memory regarding spaces and interpretation of what denotes “the sacred,” neuroscientist Jim Olds says that there are some reactions to space that are similar. “Human brains react to what they are perceiving visually... in remarkably similar ways.”⁴⁷⁷

Visual Arts

The term “visual arts” is broadly defined as I use it here. Visual stimuli in ritual space pertains to the use of color, two and three-dimensional art, vestments, and imagery produced by electronic presentational means. While there are many aspects of these topics beyond the purview of this study, there are some important considerations with regard to kinesthetic dimensions and the various ways a space produces particular “energy.” “Every aesthetic object imposes upon us, in appropriate rhythm... a unique and singular formula for the flow of energy,” says R. Bayer. That rhythm is “an

⁴⁷⁵ Chelsea Wald, “Spaces of Worship,” in *Science and Spirit Magazine* as cited at <http://www.science-spirit.org/articles/newsoverview.cfm>. Accessed December 2004.

⁴⁷⁶ Wald, “Spaces of Worship.”

⁴⁷⁷ Wald, “Spaces of Worship.” It would be interesting to apply Van Leewen’s theory of “experiential meaning potential” applied to the physical requirements for making sound discussed above, to the physiological responses produced by viewing particular aspects of space. For instance, the feeling/meaning of “openness” in a large, high-ceiling space may be associated with the opening of the retina to take in more light and the act of lifting one’s head and neck and the opening of the chest and shoulders. The physiological responses to these actions carry emotional meaning.

emotional force.”⁴⁷⁸ According to liturgical artist Nancy Chinn, engaging with art in the context of the worshipping community has a

vibrancy... that comes from being in community... We experience desire as an energy as we seek to understand, to change, to grow. We feel the throb of the life-force at work as we view art—and relationships—with this degree of expectancy and curiosity. This is a spiritual act at its core.⁴⁷⁹

For Chinn, there are seven elements of design, each producing energetic and symbolic variances. The experience of *light* and *dark* is “one of the most significant visual experiences we have.” The use of illumination and shadow, bright and deep colors and the contrasts between, or going from one to the other, can create places of “mystery” and create a changing dynamic of energy.⁴⁸⁰ *Transparency* and *opacity* can hint at hidden realities or create that hiddenness. Sheer fabric suspended above that moves with air currents and the movements of the people beneath it creates fluidity.⁴⁸¹ *Pattern*, which produces visual rhythm, creates order out of discreet elements—“an experience of power over chaos. It brings peace and a sense of completion.”⁴⁸² *Texture* shows that “life is varied and variegated.”⁴⁸³ Shiny is not always “holy” (as most mass-produced paraments would seem to convey) but rough or dull textures can speak of a sacred complexity and diversity of life. *Scale* of art must take its clue from the scale of the architecture in order to adequately convey impact and expression.⁴⁸⁴ Art also contains the element of *movement*, whether that is the literal movement of a piece of fabric, the

⁴⁷⁸ R. Bayer, “The essence of rhythm,” in Suzanne K. Langer, ed., *Reflections on Art* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1961), 201.

⁴⁷⁹ Nancy Chinn, *Spaces for Spirit: Adorning the Church* (Chicago: Liturgy Training Publications, 1998), 12.

⁴⁸⁰ Chinn, *Spaces for Spirit*, 18.

⁴⁸¹ Chinn, *Spaces for Spirit*, 20-21.

⁴⁸² Chinn, *Spaces for Spirit*, 24.

⁴⁸³ Chinn, *Spaces for Spirit*, 26.

⁴⁸⁴ Chinn, *Spaces for Spirit*, 28.

addition or subtraction of pieces of the art during a ritual or over the course of several ritual events, or simply the movement implied “in the gesture of the lines. This prevents visual art from being static.”⁴⁸⁵

Finally, “our spirits respond to *color* combinations and harmonies with mood.”⁴⁸⁶ The experience of color is, at its basic physic level, associated with interpreting light waves of varying wavelengths.⁴⁸⁷ The fact that we see the world in color means that we come to associate meaning and emotion with experiences of color. Therefore, entrance into a ritual space and experience of that space’s color scheme will immediately conjure up a mood, or sense, that literally “colors” our perception of what will happen there. Although psychological perception of color is a subjective experience dependent upon personal preference and cultural understandings (including, for some persons, the use of color associated with the liturgical year), “due to the biological bases of our color vision, there is a high degree of universality in the use of color terms across cultures and languages.”⁴⁸⁸ We have physiological responses to particular wavelengths that affect the rhythms of our bodies such as heart rate, blood pressure, respiration and eyeblink frequency. In this sense, the presence of “warm” or “cool” color schemes (the most universal effects of color) can either speed up our biological rhythms (in the case of “warm” colors such as magenta, red, orange, yellow and yellow-green) or slow those frequencies down (as in the case of “cool” colors such as violet, blue, light blue, cyan and sea green).⁴⁸⁹ Besides the placement of color in the ritual space, intimacy or distance can

⁴⁸⁵ Chinn, *Spaces for Spirit*, 30-31.

⁴⁸⁶ Chinn, *Spaces for Spirit*, 22.

⁴⁸⁷ About, Inc., “The Psychology of Color,” as cited at <http://psychology.about.com/library/weekly/aa031501a.htm>. Accessed December 2004.

⁴⁸⁸ About, Inc., “The Psychology of Color.”

⁴⁸⁹ About, Inc., “The Psychology of Color.”

also be created by the color itself. “Warm colors tend to ‘move toward you’ while cool colors tend to ‘move away from you,’”⁴⁹⁰ creating an atmosphere that feels “cold” or “warm” in terms of proximity. Indeed, there is a kinesthetic dimension to the dynamics of color.

Color comes into play with the vestments worn by ritual leaders. But even more important to the energetic effects of ritual as displayed by ritual leaders is the cut, fabric and style of vestments. While there are certain theological implications of vestments such as the role and identity of leaders versus participants,⁴⁹¹ there is also variance of kinesthetic effect produced by the difference between a tailored *alb*, a highly decorated *chasuble*, a preaching robe, or a free-flowing tunic, for example.⁴⁹² The flow and range of movement can be constricted or aided by the garments of participants. Extensions from the body also have a kinesthetic effect, such the carrying of banners, billowing cloth processed down an aisle or objects carried from place to place. These become part of the patterns of rhythm and energy produced in the space.

A final word in this section on the dynamics of space has to do with the visual effects produced by electronic presentational media. The images produced by film, video or presentation software projected in a worship space have dynamic patterns of energy.

[M]ovements in the images themselves have a rhythm as well, distinguished by the same principles of beat, speed, and accent. In

⁴⁹⁰ Maura Yost, <http://www.creativebehavior.com/index.php?PID=42>. Accessed December 2004. For more on theories of color see Betty Edwards, *Color by Betty Edwards: Mastering the Art of Mixing Colors*, (New York: Penguin Group, 2004).

⁴⁹¹ See Procter-Smith, *In Her Own Rite*, 81-84 for a critique of “dominance” as embodied in physical gesture, relationship in space and use of authoritative clothing.

⁴⁹² See Herbert Norris, *Church Vestments: Their Origin and Development* (Mineola: Dover Publications, 2002); David Philippart, ed. *Clothed in Glory: Vesting the Church* (Chicago: Liturgy Training Publications, 1997); and Barbara Dee Baumgarten, *Vestments for All Seasons* (Harrisburg: Morehouse Publishers, 2002) for discussions of liturgical vestments.

addition, the editing has rhythm. Short shots help create a rapid tempo, whereas shots held longer tend to slow down the rhythm.⁴⁹³

The use of these presentational technologies can, like any other dynamic element, add to the energy patterns established by the ritual, alter them, or negatively detract from them. This is one of the hardest lessons for churches that are new to the use of technology as a visual medium. Rather than simply dealing with images perceived to be static, they must deal with those images as *movement*. “Image and light are now percussive in their use,” says Tex Sample.⁴⁹⁴ The transitions between images may foster a meditative energy if a slow fade or cross-fade to the next image is utilized. If attention is not paid to the dynamic energy of a ritual moment, the jarring movement of an electronic image with no transition—a “cut”—can work against a meditative moment, for example. Here dynamic aspects such as *speed*, *tempo*, and *timing* work for the eye in the same way these aspects work in music or speech.

The Need for Kinesthetically-based Analytical Tools for Ritual

Ritual theorists and practitioners have begun to notice the nonverbal aspects of their subject, and liturgical traditions across Christianity are beginning to understand more about the power of what they *do* in ritual as formative. But, as Janet Goodridge’s extensive survey of anthropology reveals, “anthropologists have often suggested that use of movement in general is stylistically recognizable... although they have usually not referred to many elements of rhythm in this context.”⁴⁹⁵ Indeed, the focus has been on “specific body positions and actions... metric patterning, duration, tempo, accents,

⁴⁹³ Bordwell and Thompson, “Bordwell & Thompson’s Terminology.”

⁴⁹⁴ Tex Sample, *The Spectacle of Worship in a Wired World: Electronic Culture and the Gathered People of God* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1998), 63.

⁴⁹⁵ Goodridge, *Rhythm and Timing*, 102.

pauses, tracks,” but only “to a limited extent in most cases—dynamics.” It is simply a very small number of theorists, including ritual theorists in liturgical studies, who have noticed “paths of energy, synchronicity and ‘ritual intensity’”—what Goodridge calls the “captivating features of rhythm.”⁴⁹⁶

Interestingly, the most rigorous and multi-faceted exploration of the range of dynamics in ritual come from scholars whose fieldwork takes place within communities whose expression utilizes more obvious fluctuations of dynamic patterns than many mainline Euro-American derived expressions of worship. Mary McGann, Donna Lynne Seamone and Richard Lischer featured in this chapter all write about dynamics out of their work with African-American and/or Pentecostal traditions. Often the word “dynamic,” as an adjective, is used to describe these liturgical traditions. Indeed. But we are concerned with “dynamics” in its noun form—as a tangible reality that interacts with us and shapes us. Other, perhaps more subtle, liturgical expressions do not *lack* dynamic energy patterns. As we will see, *all* worship expresses patterns of energy. The fact that a ritual may have a dominantly “placed” or “meditative” quality does not mean that it is not descriptively “dynamic.” It simply utilizes a kind of kinesthetic strategy different from that of a more interactive or lively sort.

The problem arises when fluctuations of dynamics stay within a very narrow range, or when that range is “status quo” for many of the theorists themselves. In this case, the category of “energy dynamics” itself may not come to the forefront of observation and interpretation. And without a framework to notice energy patterns, it is difficult to name their reality. As we have seen in this chapter, kinesthetic attributes

⁴⁹⁶ Goodridge, *Rhythm and Timing*, 109. One of the three theorists that she cites as an “unusual example” of attention to energy dynamics is Valerie Hunt, one of the originators of the Primal Patterns construct. The two others referred to Hunt’s work in their own.

apply across several disciplines. Our search has uncovered a dizzying array of things to look out for: vibration, pulse, pitch, timbre, color, texture, pace, effort, accent, direction, level, duration, flow, stress, intensity, articulation, and so on. Because of the multisensory nature of ritual, it is important to take our cues from these varieties of disciplines and their research. However, we need a framework to look at the kinesthetic dimensions of ritual that can analyze across these disciplines—whose vocabulary can include aspects of the various frameworks referenced here.

The common denominator in the kinesthetic attributes coming from music, movement, speech acts and space is the human body. Bodies are the location of the production of ritual strategies and are formed in their response to those strategies. Therefore, I propose that a hermeneutical framework through which to analyze the energy patterns of ritual must be based on the physiological energy patterns produced by bodies. The Primal Patterns construct is one such framework. The Primal Patterns construct will suggest that *any* expression of energy is, indeed, based on the kinesthetic nature of bodies that entails a wide range of possibilities. Each variety of dynamics is important for the effects it produces. As such, this variety is important as persons are formed as disciples and empowered to act with the full range of energy needed to do the work of the Body of Christ in the world.