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Broadening the Community Boundaries Through the Text: Reverend M. in a New Congregation

What happens to the goal of creating a community identity through the sermon when a minister preaches not to his or her home church but to a different congregation? Are the rhetorical strategies that the minister uses with a “new” congregation similar to or different from the ones he or she uses with his or her own congregation? What constitutes shared knowledge when a minister is not preaching to his or her home church? I was given the opportunity to pursue these questions in 1993, 5 years after I had completed the original study with Reverend M. and the other two ministers.

Reverend M. ran a week-long revival at the Ohio church in which I was a member. After an exchange of letters and phone calls with Reverend M., I reestablished contact, set up tentative interview times, and started preparing myself to do fieldwork during this revival.¹ The opportunity to do this additional fieldwork is significant to this study because it allows me to illustrate that the sermon as a literacy event and the literacy traditions that are evident in the three churches highlighted in previous chapters, are not unique to those three churches. These literacy principles operate outside the ministers’ home churches. To avoid overlap between chapters 3 and 4, I devote most of chapter 4 to a discussion of features not discussed in chapter 3. But the “new” features that I highlight, namely uses of storytelling and intertextuality, can be found in the sermons of Reverends N. and P.

¹Reverend M. ran the revival for four consecutive years, at the church in Columbus. This revival, like most, is a 6-day event. The revival minister, a guest preacher from out of town, preaches two sermons on Sunday and one sermon each evening, Monday through Friday. In southern African-American churches, revival is also referred to as *homecoming* because many former members living out of town return home for the services.

SETTING THE SCENE

Although I had not seen Reverend M. in 5 years, this was not the first time he had been to Columbus to participate in a worship service with this congregation. He and many members of his congregation had attended the installation service of my minister (an event that took place before I joined this church) in Columbus. He was also the person who had recommended this minister, Reverend S., be hired at this Columbus church. She had been an assistant pastor at Reverend M.'s church and had interned there as a graduate student pastor. Additionally, the "Sisterhood," women's groups at both Reverend M.'s and Reverend S.'s churches, had visited with each other over the years. And one need not look far to see Reverend M. and his church's influence on Reverend S. and her church. Reverend M.'s church had even contributed financial gifts in the past to this church. Thus, Reverend M. was no stranger to this congregation. Therefore, there was much anticipation about his arrival to preach the revival, which included two Sunday morning sermons and one evening sermon each week night.

My anticipation led to nervousness on my part because my only contact with Reverend M. in the previous 5 years had been the letter and phone call that we exchanged the week before to reestablish contact and gain permission to gather additional data. I had also sent him a letter several years earlier with his copy of my dissertation. Therefore, when I arrived at the early service at 7:50 a.m. on a stormy, Sunday morning in a downpour, I did not quite know what to expect. My first thoughts were those of worry that Reverend M. would be preaching to a near-empty sanctuary because so few people were there, and service was to start in 10 minutes. When I entered the sanctuary, I looked around and saw Reverend M. at the back of the church near the fellowship hall door. After putting my things in a pew, I turned to the back to go speak to Reverend M. and reintroduce myself, but he had headed down the side aisle to the front of the church to the organ, a move that was to become a regular pattern over the next 5 days. He had just started to play when I arrived at the organ. He looked up at me with no glimmer of recognition until I said, "I'm Beverly." Then he smiled, said hello, and we reconfirmed our appointed time for an interview over lunch. Just a few minutes later, service began with a near empty sanctuary. However, by time for the 10:30 a.m. service, there was standing-room only.

I began my fieldwork by attending both services on Sunday, and continued with the Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday evening services; I also collected audiotapes of each sermon and videotapes of the last three sermons. Finally, in addition to conducting an open-ended interview with Reverend M., I also conducted open-ended interviews with members of my congregation. The data reported in this chapter come

from the five services and sermons at which I was present and from the accompanying audio- and videocassettes.

One of the important discoveries to emerge from this most recent fieldwork and analysis was how little Reverend M.'s sermons changed for this Columbus congregation. Even though he spoke to me about having to make adjustments when he preached to a new congregation, Reverend M. seemed to make few noticeable adjustments with this congregation in terms of the rhetorical strategies used in his sermons. Maybe there were so few changes because Reverend M. was familiar enough with this congregation that he could count on certain things. He could count on preaching to urban African Americans who, like members of his own congregation, worshiped within a traditional African-American style. He could count on preaching to a congregation whose service and daily operation were conducted very much like his own because he had mentored and trained the minister. Thus, there was already a community identity that Reverend M. and this congregation shared. There were already shared expectations from all participants. Consequently, the rhetorical strategies that I highlight in this chapter are remarkably similar to those of sermons to his own congregation. Two of these strategies—use of dialogue and shared knowledge—I discussed in the previous chapter; two I introduce here—use of stories and music as examples of intertextual relationships. However, although I introduce the latter strategies in this chapter that focuses on Reverend M., they were strategies that were used consistently by Dr. N. in his sermons also. Through the analysis in this chapter, community identity is cast in broader terms. Not only were Reverend M. and the congregation creating and maintaining communal bonds through the sermon, but Reverend M. was also placing himself and the congregation within an already established community. He was linking them with their history, strengthening their cultural bonds. The discussion in this chapter illustrates this process. Finally, in this chapter, I use more and longer sermon excerpts as examples in order to illustrate the complexities, multilayeredness, and extended examples of intertextuality evident in African-American sermons.

A NEW CHURCH

The Columbus church, like Reverend M.'s Chicago church, belongs to the United Church of Christ denomination. It is a 21-year-old church that, at one point prior to 1991, had less than 15 active members and no minister. Services were held in the party house of a low-income apartment complex where parishioners sat on metal folding chairs. This was the state of the Columbus church when Reverend S. arrived from

Reverend M.'s church to be minister. Since then, the congregation has moved into a new church, and the membership has increased to approximately 200, making it one of the fastest growing churches in the denomination. Reverend S., who calls Reverend M. her mentor and her pastor, patterns herself and her church after Reverend M. and his church. Therefore, here one finds many of the same auxiliary organizations, although on a much smaller scale, that one finds in Reverend M.'s church. One also finds similarities in the way that the worship services are conducted. This is the setting for Reverend M.'s running of the annual revival in 1993.

ENTERING A NEW CHURCH: THE DIALOGUE CONTINUES

Even though Reverend M. was preaching to a congregation different from his own, it became clear early in the fieldwork that he did not consider this congregation totally unfamiliar; nor did he feel the need to abandon many of the strategies that were evident in his home church sermons.

One of the patterns that leaped out at me as I sat in the pew during all the sermons and as I listened to tapes and reviewed fieldnotes was the high level of participation in the sermons by the congregation. Of course, this is a pattern that I had become so familiar with over the years because of its prominence in most African-American churches that I had begun to take it for granted. It is a pattern that almost any discussion of African-American preaching addresses. Just as in the three churches highlighted in the previous two chapters, in this church, the congregation and Reverend M. engaged in a call-and-response dialogue. At times during the revival sermons, the feedback from the congregation was so intense that it was impossible to separate speaker from audience. Again, this is not new to African-American churches. Yet it was fascinating to see that this type of collaborative response, this "talking back," was as effective between Reverend M. and this "new" congregation as it was between Reverend M. and his own congregation. Consider the following exchange from "It's Shoutin' Time":

When you shout before the battle is over (Preach!)
 It puts things in a proper perspective (Yeah!)
 It puts you in a posture of obedience (Yeah!)
 And it puts things in a proper perspective
 But finally
 When you shout before the battle is fought
 It puts the enemy in confusion (Yeah! That's right!)

The parenthetical expressions, responses from the congregation, do not appear on separate lines because there was little or no pause between the minister's statement and the congregation's response. Often, the congregation's response overlapped with the minister's statement. This type of feedback was typical in the sermons Reverend M. preached to this congregation as was applause, people standing, cheering, and so on. Practically every sermon Reverend M. preached ended with the majority of the congregation on their feet clapping and talking back to Reverend M.

One of the more interesting highlights of the dialogue or call-and-response collaboration occurred in a sermon within the sermon. In one evening sermon, for example, Reverend M. discussed how his mother used to talk back to preachers anywhere, he took on the roles of both his mamma and the preacher:

She be sittin' there sayin' "Well, well," "Don't you see?"

"Help yourself!" (laughter from congregation)

"Yes sir"

"Glory"

Preacher say "He's a Burden Bearer"

My mamma say "Yes he is"

Preacher say "He can make a way"

My mamma say "Yes he can"

Preacher say "The Lord will provide"

My mamma say "Yes he will"

This enactment of his mother involved in the dialogue with the preacher not only paralleled the behavior of many in the congregation to whom Reverend M. was preaching at that very moment, but it also established this behavior as a cultural pattern. Note Reverend M.'s preference for direct speech rather than reported or paraphrased speech. His description of his mother was from his memory as a child in Philadelphia. Now, he is standing in front of a congregation in Ohio almost 40 years later engaging them in the same practice, a practice that has become ingrained in the African-American church. Also of note is Reverend M.'s style shift into a form of VBE, a style shift that occurred throughout the sermons when he preached in his own church as well as in the revival sermons.² Note, for example, the habitual past tense "she be sittin' there sayin'" and the absence of -s on verb endings in third person singular, "my mamma say" and "the preacher say." Reverend M. shifts from SE to VBE when he feels that it fits the topic, when it will make his meaning clearer (for some) when he needs to "bring it to them

²See the discussion of code switching in chapter 3.

in a cup they can recognize,” or when he needs to “sound Black.” At times, the shift is purposeful and, at other times, it just happens. Whenever it happens, it is always rhetorical; that is, it is always meaningful for both Reverend M. and the audience. Finally, Reverend M. can and does move in and out of VBE and SE at will.

SHARED EXPECTATIONS AND SHARED KNOWLEDGE

Other patterns stood out as well because they were as dominant in Reverend M.’s revival sermons as with his own congregation. One of those patterns was Reverend M.’s reliance on shared knowledge, in this case knowledge of the Bible. As I discussed in the previous chapter, to engage in scriptural dialogue, Reverend M. relied on shared knowledge of Biblical Scriptures between him and his congregation. That same expectation of shared knowledge surfaced in Reverend M.’s revival sermons. Consider the following examples from three of the sermons:

It’s Shoutin Time:

Reverend M.: His word said what
Let the redeemed of the Lord what?
Congregation: Say it
Reverend M.: Say so

Living With the Five Senses:

Reverend M.: First in Isaiah
You remember Isaiah heard God describing the work
and the way of the Messiah
What did he hear Him say?
He shall feed his flock like a
Congregation: Shepherd
Reverend M.: Shepherd

When You Forget Who You Are:

Reverend M.: lot of ‘em preach a gospel that says
y’all have sinned and come short of the glory of God
But the Word says
Congregation: All have sinned

Each of these examples, like the ones in the previous chapter, indicates an expectation on Reverend M.’s part that the congregation will respond at the appropriate time with the appropriate response, which it did. The congregation showed no signs of surprise or

discomfort on the occasions when Reverend M. engaged them in this scriptural dialogue. It was expected behavior within the community institution based on shared knowledge.

Yet, as indicated in the previous chapter, shared knowledge is a complex issue. It refers to those moments in the text when the minister and congregation rely on common backgrounds and experiences, a shared knowledge base and situational contexts to help them make meaning within the text. A contributing factor to the complexity is the multiple memberships that both minister and congregation members hold and the multiple roles they play in various cultural groups, subcultures, and communities—some of those memberships and roles shared and some not. Shared knowledge operated virtually the same in the revival services as it did in Reverend M.'s home church. I was struck again by the range of knowledge that Reverend M. assumes on the part of a congregation, especially one that is somewhat unfamiliar. I was also struck again by Reverend M.'s use of the familiar—the shared—to introduce the unfamiliar.

First, as highlighted in the previous chapter's discussion of Reverend M.'s reliance on shared knowledge, even when visiting a sister church, Reverend M. relies on a broad knowledge base from which he makes references, from which he pulls examples. That knowledge base spans cultural and community boundaries, historical and contemporary time frames, secular and sacred traditions. The boundaries are so blurred and the base so large that I wondered whether anyone other than Reverend M. possibly understood all the allusions he made in the shared knowledge moments. Yet, as I think the following examples illustrate, it is because of the broad knowledge base, the crossing of so many boundaries, that so many people in the congregation did connect with Reverend M.'s sermons. Because of the volume and diversity of examples or references in these shared knowledge moments, Reverend M.'s sermons were far more inclusive and accessible rather than exclusive and inaccessible. One member stated that anytime she is unfamiliar with a reference from Reverend M. that the "unfamiliarity peaks my curiosity" and she tries to find out what she does not know.

Reverend M.'s sermon "What Makes You So Strong?"³ is filled with moments of shared knowledge that cross boundaries. Constructed around three basic questions—What makes you so strong, Black man?

³"What Makes You So Strong?" is both the title of the sermon and title of the published book of Reverend M.'s sermons. This book is a collection of 10 sermons Reverend M. preached from 1990 through 1992. Originally, the sermons were preached as part of a series of services honoring Martin Luther King, Jr. However, two of the sermons were preached in 1993 during the revival in the Columbus, Ohio church.

What makes you so strong, Black woman? What makes you so strong, Black people?—this sermon contains some of the most remarkable examples of reliance on shared knowledge in the 12 or more sermons I have collected from him over the years. Consider the following examples from Reverend M.'s "What Makes You So Strong?":

Example 1:

How is it that three hundred and seventy years of slavery, segregation, racism, Jim Crow laws and second class citizenship cannot wipe out the memory of Imhotep, Aesop, Akhenaton, and Tutmose II

What makes you so strong, Black Man?

How is it that after all this country has done to you, you can still produce a Paul Robeson, a Thurgood Marshall, a Malcolm X, Al-Hag Malik Al Shabazz, a Martin King, a Ron McNair?

Example 2:

You break out in a W.E.B. DuBois and a Booker T. Washington
You break out in a Louis Farrakhan and a Juwanza Kunjufu
You break out in a Judge Bruce Wright and a Gene Pinchum

You break out in a Luther Vandross, a Magic Johnson, a Michael Jordan,
and a Harold Washington

I don't care what field we pick

You produce a giant in that field

Example 3:

How is it that three hundred and seventy years of that
Does not kill the spirit of a Nzinga, Cleopatra, Nefertiti, Makeda, the
Queen of Sheba

Example 4:

How is it that after all this country has done to you

After all white women have done to you

After all white men have done to you

After all black men have done to you

After all your own men have done to you

You can produce a Angela Davis, a Toni Morrison, a Betty
Shabazz, a Winnie Mandela

What makes you so strong, black woman?

Example 5:

You keep turnin' out Zora Neale Hurstons and Mari Evans
 and Mary Se Condes and Anita Bakers and Gladys Knights
 and Winnie Mandelas
 The mothers of Zimbabwe
 The mothers of Soweto
 The mothers of Angola
 The mothers of Namibia
 The mothers of []
 The mothers of Columbus
 What makes you so strong black woman?

Each of the names in the five examples carries no defining information except what the congregation members can glean from the linguistic contexts in which the examples occur. The congregation knows, for example, that the names in the first two examples are of strong Black men, and that the names in Examples 3, 4, and 5 are of strong Black women, and as Reverend M. states in his text, the people are from various fields. That much information is provided. However, the congregation is left to rely on that shared knowledge to fill in the fields. The names span hundreds, even thousands of years, continents, oceans, and professions. They are ancient African ancestors, queens, philosophers; they are civil rights leaders, anti-apartheid leaders, activists, entertainers from the early and latter parts of the 20th century; literary giants, past and present, icons of popular culture; they are educators and astronauts; they are today's popular athletes. Local, national, and international figures, past and present, fill up the lists in the examples. Most importantly, there are so many names on this list from so many different fields that everyone in the congregation is bound to recognize at least one person, most likely several people. His examples are so broadly based that they appeal to someone who is an admirer of rhythm and blues singer Luther Vandross or astronaut Ron McNair, African physician Imhotep or basketball star Michael Jordan.

Although it appears that Reverend M. has constructed examples that might intimidate some because of the broad knowledge base that they must have to know, the examples seemed to have the opposite effect on the Columbus congregation. Rather than focusing on who they did not know in the lists, they focused on who they did know. They also focused on how great Reverend M.'s knowledge is to be able to construct those lists. One member explained that Reverend M. "has decided to use all of his experiences and travels in his sermons but not in a condescending way." Another member said about Reverend M.'s use of examples that cross so many boundaries that "he is always

teaching." She saw the use of examples such as those just cited as teaching and preaching moments. It did not matter that she did not know all the references; she was happy to be introduced to her own heritage. My own response was like most of the congregation's. Even though I recognized most of the references, I didn't recognize all of them, but I knew from the context and from my own knowledge base of sports, literature, entertainment, history, and other aspects of African and African-American culture that these people were all examples of strong Black men and women, and that I, too, was being taught about my heritage.

Even though I did not include the audience response in the transcription of the examples, in my fieldnotes and the original transcriptions, I noted how much louder the "talking back" became in these parts of the sermon, particularly in the examples on Black women. Of course, the majority of the congregation were Black women. That is the case in most mainline Protestant African-American churches. Reverend M. recognizes the role of women and acknowledges it in his example, which hails mothers in Africa and mothers in Columbus as strong Black women. Although some women in the congregation may think they know very little about mothers in Africa, they do know about mothers in Columbus. Reverend M. connects to the congregation "where they are" and uses "a cup they can recognize to bring something new," a link between Columbus mothers and African mothers.

Examples 1 through 5 are important for other reasons than just the shared knowledge aspect. Reverend M., in a direct yet somewhat subtle way, is also sending the message "look at us Black folk; we've achieved great successes in all kinds of fields throughout the world, over time, under extraordinarily adverse conditions." Each name that he speaks provides this African-American congregation more information about its heritage and more reason to be proud of their heritage, to be "unashamedly Black." In that sense, he is very much teacher and preacher. Reverend M. also is using history to uplift very much in the way that has occurred throughout the tradition of African-American churches. These types of examples also show how close to the "prophetic" and "communal" poles on the Lincoln and Mamiya (1990) scale (see chap. 1 for a detailed discussion of the dialectic poles Lincoln and Mamiya set up) Reverend M. is. That is, he is concerned with liberation and all aspects of the lives of church members. Lincoln and Mamiya also suggested a dialectic pole between resistance and accommodation. Lincoln and Mamiya stated that "resistance means affirming one's own heritage, in this case African American heritage" (p. 15). Clearly, as noted in chapter 2, Reverend M. is on the resistance end of the dialectic. The previous examples indicate how faithful Reverend

M. is to uplifting his African-American people and focusing on the needs of his African-American congregation. Reverend M. preaches to Black folk about the Word and about Black folk. He is very attuned to his audience. Many of his comments in our interviews speak to how important it is that he stay in tune with his audience, that he “know where they are.”

I mentioned earlier that I was also struck again, as I was when discussing Reverend M.’s sermons to his own congregation, by Reverend M.’s use of the familiar—the shared—to teach the unfamiliar to this “new” congregation. This strategy highlights another level of complexity of shared knowledge. As pointed out in the previous chapter, shared knowledge is based on more than knowledge of information or a simple list of names. It is also knowledge of the African-American sermon as a genre and knowledge of expected behavior within the context of that genre. Reverend M. uses the sermon, a familiar context, to teach or share new information with congregations.

As expected, much of that information is about the Word of God—the Bible, but a large amount of that information is about African and African-American culture. Sometimes the lessons are explicit and sometimes implicit. That is, sometimes Reverend M. provides a full explanation, such as the one he gave of the what, when, where, and who of the Harlem Renaissance in one sermon. He does so again with his detailed narrative about preaching at the Black Theology Project on Martin Luther King in Cuba (an excerpt is provided later in this chapter), a narrative that provided the congregation with background knowledge on this event. Other times, he just lists names in the context of an example, as he did in the previous five examples of strong Black men and women; the beauty, in the use of the lists is that the information is both shared and new knowledge. Reverend M. is simultaneously introducing some in the congregation to new information like Imhotep and Nefertiti as strong Black people and relying on a sense of shared knowledge because he does not provide any details about these people.⁴

Sometimes, using the familiar to teach the unfamiliar is as simple as drawing an analogy between something the members know quite well and something less familiar. Consider the following two examples from “Living With the Five Senses,” the first one just a brief one-line analogy and the second one a long, detailed, elaborately woven analogy:

⁴Reverend M., in his published collection of sermons that includes “What Makes You So Strong?” provides endnotes for most of the African references in his text. These endnotes explain who each of the references are.

Example 1:

Gabriel, the master musician
the Wynton Marsalis of the heavenly sphere⁵

Example 2:

And [Tom] Skinner came and gave us the theology according to Michael
Jordan.

Michael Jordan is a great theologian.
He's got a theology we need to adopt.
What do you mean?

I mean this.

Every time Michael gets to the top of that post position

When they pass him the ball,

Three men are assigned to stop Michael [congregation: "That's right!"]

Soon as the ball touches his hand,

He knows he's got six hands coming to try to block him from shooting.

When you notice that happens,

Michael does not stop,

Call time out and go over to the sideline and say

"Coach Jackson,

Could you please do something about these three men they put on me?

Would you go over there and talk to the coach of the Portland Trailblazers

and explain to him that they need to take at least two of those men off of
me so that I can do my best?"

No No No No!

Michael doesn't do that.

Michael puts that tongue out [Reverend M. mimics Jordan]

Starts backin up,

Weaves and bobs and comes around,

Goes up under and then something says

"In your face!"

And that's the theology that African Americans and the African-American
church needs to adopt.

Whereas Example 1 draws an analogy between the earthly talents of jazz and classical trumpeter Wynton Marsalis and the heavenly talents of Gabriel, it is Example 2 to which the congregation reacted strongly. One does not have to be a basketball fan to understand the Michael Jordan

⁵Reverend M. explained in a 1994 revival sermon at the very same church in Columbus where he preached the 1993 revival sermons that he had done a recording with Jazz trumpeter Wynton Marsalis. Marsalis, who had never met Reverend M., requested that Reverend M. perform the preaching solo of a song on one of Marsalis' albums.

reference. So when Reverend M. began to explain his “in your face” theology by using Michael Jordan’s basketball skills as an example, he was providing them with a very familiar starting point to make meaning of his words. Also, because it was NBA playoff time when Reverend M. preached this sermon, Jordan and the Chicago Bulls were the topic of conversation in print and broadcast journalism on a daily basis. Would the Bulls threepeat? Does Jordan have a gambling problem? Will the Bulls fall to the Knicks? In this case, using the familiar to teach or preach about the unfamiliar was made easier because of Jordan’s role as a popular culture icon.

Often, for Reverend M., using the familiar—the shared—meant relying on local knowledge of the congregation to help people understand a point or to emphasize a point, as is illustrated in the following example from “It’s Shoutin’ Time”:

Now you know a lot of us,
 Now that we’ve gotten affluent
 And moved to the suburbs of Columbus,
 We don’t live on Mt. Vernon no more.
 We live out in Westerville in the suburbs.

In this example, Reverend M. mentions two locations, Mt. Vernon, a street in the heart of the African-American community on the near eastside of Columbus, and Westerville, a northeast suburb of Columbus. Reverend M.’s use of local knowledge in this example gave the congregation a more concrete picture of those who have forgotten the struggles of the past, forgotten how those people in the past could not even drive through a Westerville, but would still “sing the praises of God anyhow” when they were in the midst of hard times.

As mentioned earlier, the context of the African-American sermon and worship style is itself part of the familiar or the shared. Sometimes, placing new information within the boundaries of a sermon makes the information more accessible to the congregation. For example, it is within the context of the sermon that Reverend M. teaches this Ohio congregation about the African origins of shouting and teaches them the Arabic word for shouting “sout.” It is within the context of the sermon that he explains to people how eskimos kill wolves with the wolves’ own blood, that the first Black woman to get a medical degree from Harvard did so in the early 1800s, that Esther’s original name was Hadassah, that there was an East African slave trade before there was a West African slave trade, and that Africans and African Americans have been reaching great heights since the beginning of time.

To emphasize the sermon as shared knowledge is important in this community because how one receives information is as important as what information one receives. As I pointed out in chapter 3, for most African-American preachers, the how and what—the form and content—are inseparable. That is not always the way form and content are addressed in the academy. Members of the congregation could encounter some of the very same information in their schools as they did in these sermons (although most likely not the same amount of information about their African and African-American culture). But they may not find the information presented in school as accessible as that which they receive through Reverend M.'s sermons. I address this aspect of literacy and learning in a later chapter, exploring the relation between learning styles and cultural norms.

The way that Reverend M. used shared knowledge in his home church hardly differed from the way he used it with this Columbus congregation. That there is not any real difference suggests several things. Most importantly, it suggests that Reverend M. assumes that communal bonds already exist between him and this Columbus congregation; he relies and builds on those bonds. This discussion suggests that the multiple community identities he seeks to establish with his own congregation are similar to the community identities that he seeks to establish and maintain with the Columbus congregation. Also important is that the boundaries—the expectations—extend beyond the individual churches to broader communities. Most likely, the boundaries are culturally situated. Reverend M. assumes a broader cultural context from which to establish and maintain community identities.

THE ROLE OF THE NARRATIVE: TELLING STORIES

In *Black Preaching*, Mitchell (1970) highlighted the importance of storytelling in African-American sermons, a point that is reiterated by several other scholars (Jones, 1976; Smitherman, 1977; Spillers, 1974). More importantly, it is a sentiment reiterated and put into practice by the ministers in this study. Although storytelling was an effective strategy for Reverend M. and Dr. N. in their own churches (Reverend P. used the story less frequently than the other two),⁶ I highlight Reverend M.'s use of the narrative in his sermons during the revival because it was so striking, and because the discussion also extends to the way he uses narrative in his sermons to his own congregation. The narrative, the storytelling tradition, dominated the sermons as the major identifiable strategy for illustrating a theme. Smitherman (1977) suggested that not only is

⁶I have discussed Dr. N.'s use of narrative in Moss (1994).

the storytelling tradition strong in Black American culture, . . . the relating of events becomes a black rhetorical strategy to explain a point, to persuade holders of opposing views to one's own point, and in general to "win friends and influence people." (p. 148)

Smitherman referred to this storytelling tradition as *narrative sequencing*.

In 1994, Reverend M. returned again to Columbus to run the revival for a second time at the same church where I gathered the data (just the year before) on which this chapter is based. It was during this 1994 visit that we discussed the role of stories in the sermon and in African-American culture. Reverend M. suggests that "Black folk relate to stories; they don't want that logical, syllogistic form. . . . It's [storytelling] part of our heritage. It goes back to the Griots." Reverend M. is echoed by Smitherman, who acknowledged the Griots as "revered persons," storytellers who maintain and pass down an accurate record of tribal history through stories. This discussion with Reverend M. took place just after one of his sermons on a week night. When I asked him about the role of stories in his sermons and their affect on the congregation, before he provided the answer just cited, he informed me that he was addressing the role of stories in the next night's sermon, "Lost and Found." It is this part of that sermon that is transcribed here:

So Jesus told them three parables.
Webster reminds us that a parable is a story,

A simple story told to illustrate a moral truth.
Something simple to teach something profound.

I was talking with Dr. Moss last night about that, this is the African way of pedagogy, the Black way of teaching
The Black way, the African way of teaching is not so much by syllogism and linear arguments, it is by telling a story
Stories like the Anansi stories in West Africa, Central America and Belize in the Caribbean,
The Brer Rabbit stories,
The stories from the painful experiences of chattel slavery.
The Lord Jesus told them three stories:

One about a lost sheep
One about a lost coin
And one about the lost sons

This particular sermon is based on the parable of the lost coin. Although there may have been a line or two added to the sermon based on our discussion the night before, as Reverend M. had indicated, he had

already prepared this sermon and had already included a discussion of parables or stories. Again, Reverend M.'s position is supported by Smitherman (1977) who stated that, "the rendering of sermons in the traditional Black church nearly always involves extended narration as a device to convey the theme. Rarely will Black preachers expound their message in the linear fashion of a lecture" (p. 150). An academic lecture where there is a thesis statement and three or so points that follow to support that statement is what comes readily to mind. Another important point to make here is that Reverend M., in that statement about the story being the African way of pedagogy, confirms that he sees himself as a teacher as well as a preacher. He might even suggest that the roles of preacher and teacher cannot be separated.

Given Reverend M.'s basic philosophy that stories or parables are part of the tradition of Black folk in the African diaspora and his belief that Black folk relate better to stories than linear arguments, it should be no surprise that Reverend M.'s sermons are full of parables. In this part of the discussion, I use parable and story interchangeably based on the definition that Reverend M. has provided in the aforementioned excerpt. These parables are often based on Biblical parables; sometimes, they are personal, many times, they are stories about someone else who Reverend M. knows, and sometimes, they are someone else's story as told to Reverend M. Whatever the source of the parable, they were the major strategy used to illustrate points in the revival sermons.

"When You Forget Who You Are" is a sermon based on the Biblical story of Esther. It even begins with the traditional narrative frame "once there was, . . ." a version of the "Once upon a time" traditional beginning of stories. Consider how Reverend M. introduces this story:

Once there was a girl named Hadassah
and Hadassah had a series of problems

Reverend M. explains that Hadassah was renamed Esther and then he illustrates her problems using narrative. Her main problem, of course, was that she "forgot who she was."

Although another sermon, "What Makes You So Strong?", is organized around a series of questions, the sermon also focuses on the story of Samson. Reverend M. retells the story of Samson and what makes him so strong. And even though the story of Samson is compelling, it is the story with which Reverend M. ends this sermon that I want to highlight. It is Reverend M.'s dramatic telling of the story that illustrates Smitherman's (1977) point that in the sermon, "the thematic motif is dramatized with gestures, movement, plot, real-life characterizations, and circumlocutory rhetorical flourishes" (p. 150).

Specifically, Reverend M. tells a story about an event that he witnessed. In the story, the main character is using a simple example to illustrate something profound, and Reverend M.'s retelling of the story with sound effects is an example of telling a simple story to illustrate something profound. Consider this parable excerpted from "What Makes You So Strong?":

When I was a student at divinity school,
 the third year I was there I had a great great experience that will live forever
 in my memory.
 They have at the University of Chicago Divinity School every year what they
 call Baptist Day.
 Why?
 Because the University of Chicago is a Baptist School,

And Rockefeller
 Y'all know John Rockefeller?
 that Rockefeller money?
 They were Baptist and they put a lot of money in the University of Chicago.
 So in their nod toward God day,
 They had this Baptist Day thing once a year.
 And they invite all the Baptist preachers from the city to come up and
 fellowship on the campus of the divinity school.
 And they'd let them hear lecturers in the morning and afternoon.
 And you bring a sack lunch.
 They provide you with that red punch that you find in churches all over the
 world.
 Sack lunch means you bring your own lunch in a brown bag.
 And my third year in school we had a masterpiece of a lecture.
 This was 1972.
 One of the professors there lectured on this whole mythology
 of Jesus and the resurrection.
 He pointed out that there was a Jesus.
 There was a historical Jesus.
 He was a good man,
 But he did not get up from the dead
 For two hours and fifteen minutes he lectured like that.
 At the end of his lecture he said "Are there any questions?"
 And it was so quiet in that room you hear a rat urinating on cotton at a
 hundred yards.
 He got a room full of preachers,
 Baptist preachers, most of 'em Black.
 And one of the brethren stood up in the back

Lookin' sorta like Reverend Troy Sr.

White hair, dark-skinned brother.

He stood up and reached into his little sack lunch, his brown paper bag,

And he pulled out an apple

And he said,

"Yea, yea I gotta question Doc

I ah (makes crunch sound to imitate eating apple) I never been to none of

dem places you were (Crunch) lecturin' bout today (Crunch) Macedon

(Crunch) the garden tomb

And I don't know none of dem fellas (Crunch) that you were quotin'

I read one or two (Crunch)

But I don't know 'em personally like you know em (Crunch)

But I do have a question

And my question is

Was the apple I just ate was it bitter or was it sweet?"

The professor said

"I could not possibly answer your question

I did not taste the apple"

He said

"Well that's what I wanna tell you about my Jesus

You ain't tasted Him either

Ohhh taste and see that the Lord is good

I tried Him for myself

I tasted Him myself and He's sweet

I know this ain't nothin' I read bout

This is somethin' I live everyday

Don't tell me He ain't risen

I just talked to Him this mornin'"

Oh yea He's sweet

Say yeah [congregation responds: Yeah]

Although a transcription cannot capture the physical gestures, facial expressions, and tonal rhythms that contribute to meaning making for most African Americans who are a part of this speech event, Reverend M.'s excerpt does include some of the dramatic elements of which Smitherman spoke: gestures, movement, plot, real-life characterizations, and circumlocutory rhetorical flourishes. Also important to note is that it is not clear whether the final seven lines are part of the Baptist preacher's story or Reverend M.'s or both, because Reverend M. moves seamlessly from the story to "opening the doors of the church" and inviting people to "walk the aisle." This story-within-the-story is typical of the way that Reverend M. uses narrative.

In "It's Shoutin' Time," Reverend M. structures the sermon around three stories. He opens the sermon with a story that explains the origin of the sermon title, namely a narrative about his mother's history of shouting. He continues with this narrative throughout the sermon, sometimes stepping away from it to make another point but always returning to it. He adds a second biblical parable—the story of the soldiers shouting in the Book of Joshua, chapter six. Reverend M. interweaves the stories about his mother and the soldiers to make a powerful statement about people shouting at the most unpredictable times. However, it is the final narrative that I highlight here because it encompasses the way Reverend M. uses story in his own church and in this guest church. Consider the following story that ends "It's Shoutin' Time":

Arlene _____, Dexter _____ was tellin me,
 they was tellin my story all over the country,⁷
 I don't care, tell it!
 My daddy say after you say it one time publicly
 it's public property. (laughing)
 But it's my story. (That's right!)
 So since this is my story
 let me tell you how I know
 when you praise Him ahead of time,
 it gets victory for you (Yeah!)
 In 1984,
 one of the highest preaching moments in my life will live forever with me,
 came as I was preaching as a member of the Black Theology Project.
 I sat on the board.
 I have sat on the board for over a decade of the Black Theology Project,
 and we have been invited five times now.
 We've been down to Cuba,
 the [] Council of Churches,
 Raoul Suarez,
 the Baptist Student Movement hosts every year since 1968,
 a theological *hornada* on the life, work and ministry of
 Martin Luther King
 Every year they have papers presented by theologians and pastors from
 North America, Central America, and South America
 And the way the [] works,
 you have a paper in the morning presented by one country
 and then responded to by the other two countries.

⁷I have used spacing (indentation) and punctuation to signal Reverend M.'s pauses and to assist the reader in reading this long excerpt.

It reverses in the afternoon
a paper presented by the other country responded to by the other two
countries.

And at night we have some cultural activity
to look at the African presence in Cuba.

The Africans

by the way

in Cuba

have a museum in Guanabacoa that puts most of our African-American
museums to shame.

They know exactly what tribes are on the islands

Where they are settled

What artifacts they brought

What music they brought

what foods they brought

And most of us don't wanna be Africans (Say It!)

But the Cubans know what they're doing.

They got it together

And in 84' on Tuesday they asked me

"Pastor _____

would you please preach the dedication service for the Martin Luther King
Jr. Center

that we are opening here in Havana?"

I was highly honored and highly flattered

There were some great preachers in that group.

Wyatt T. Walker was one of them.

And Wyatt was one of Martin King's right-hand associates.

yet they asked me to preach.

I was so flattered.

I was humbled.

I was just excited.

I didn't know what to do.

I was just all bubbled

except for the fact that my translator
who was the same age of my oldest daughter.

My translator kept bugging me.

She said

"Pastor _____

I need your manuscript."

You see when you deliver papers.

we send our papers in a month, six weeks ahead of time so that the
translators can familiarize themselves with them in any idiom.

And while you reading your paper with them little earphones

on,
 they do simultaneous translation.
 And you just dial any channel you want to.
 You can hear it in Portuguese.
 You can hear it in French.
 You can hear it in Spanish or in English.
 But when you preach,
 ain't no lil simultaneous translation goin on.
 You gotta say two or three sentences or a paragraph
 then stop and let your translator say those two or three sentences.
 So she wanted the manuscript so she could familiarize herself with it.
 They asked me on Tuesday,
 she asked me for my manuscript on Tuesday
 I ain't have no manuscript.
 She asked me on Wednesday
 I still didn't have no manuscript.
 And what was interesting is that every evening as we go on
 our cultural affairs,
 I would sit beside her because I was talking to her about Jesus.
 She was not a [].
 And what I was tellin y'all brothers last night about a personal relationship.
 she never heard about a personal relationship with the Lord
 Jesus Christ.
 She knew about Nietchze.
 She knew about [].
 She knew about Lenin.
 She knew about Marx.
 She was studying for the Communist Party,
 but she had not yet been accepted into the Communist Party. She did not
 know anything at all about the church except
 for the Catholic Church
 where you have to be rich to get your baby baptized in Cuba.
 And she knew about Martin King and the Baptist Church.
 She never heard of no United Church of Christ;
 no Congregational, Christian, African Methodist,
 African Methodist Episcopal, Zionist,
 never heard none of that!
 More importantly,
 she had never heard about Jesus!
 So every day,
 and she's the same age as my oldest daughter,
 I'm sittin beside her on the bus talkin to her about Jesus. Tellin her the story
 about Jesus.

Talkin to her about a personal relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ,
 about how He died for her,
 He died for me.
 And every time I would finish talkin
 she say, "Have you finished your manuscript yet?"
 [chuckles from the congregation]
 And I said, "No."
 Thursday I said, "Baby listen, I can't give it to you till
 God gives it to me."
 She said, "I don't understand."
 I said "this preachin business is not just me talkin bout what I want to talk
 about,
 I gotta talk about what the Lord wants me to talk about.
 And the Lord has not given it to me yet."
 She looked at me real funny.
 I start talkin again about the personal relationship with the Lord and talkin to
 the Lord in prayer.
 Finally, I gave it to her on Saturday.
 When I gave it to her I said, "Now let me warn you,
 sometimes I deviate from what's on that piece of paper."
 [laughter from congregation]
 She said, "Pourquoi?" Why? Why?
 I said "because I'm tryin to serve the bread from heaven.
 It is the bread of heaven this gospel that we preach.
 And sometimes the Lord will give me something fresh out the oven,
 it's too hot,
 it'll burn the paper up." [clapping from congregation]
 And if He gives it to me right out the oven
 I'm gonna give it right when I get it."
 I said "don't worry
 I'll warn you and it won't be anything difficult,
 nothing you can't translate,
 nothing you can't say."
 Sure nuf,
 on Sunday night,
 I got down to the end of the message,
 and I was trying to demonstrate and illustrate that on April 4, 1968 when
 that shot rang out in Memphis and King fell on that balcony of the
 Lorraine Hotel dead,
 it looked like it was all over.
 It looked like the movement of Africans for freedom,
 one hundred years after they'd gotten out of slavery
 it was all over.

And as I was saying that it was all over,
 there was no hope,
 the Lord gave me something right out the oven.
 I turned to her and I smiled and I said, "Goethe"
 And she looked at the paper and looked at me.
 And I shook my head
 and so she put the paper down and just stared at me.
 [laughter from congregation]
 We had talked about Goethe that week.
 Johann von Goethe is a guy wrote dis thing, "Faust."
 Yall know,
 Remember the story of "Faust" who had sold his soul to the devil? (yeah!)
 Well that story about Faust selling his soul to the devil has been done in
 plays.
 It has been done in operas.
 It has also been done in art.
 And right now hanging in the London Gallery
 there's this beautiful art painting of the picture between
 Faust and Mephistopheles,
 that dual that they had is depicted this way.
 There's a chess board that shows Faust on one side of the chess board and
 Mephistopheles on the other side.
 She translated that.
 Faust only has a king, a queen, one pawn and a bishop left.
 Mephistopheles, satan, has got his men left.
 Faust is sweatin and lookin all upset.
 Mephistopheles is leering and grinning cause he knows he's got him.
 And the name of the painting is "Checkmate."
 It's all over.
 And she translated that.
 Well,
 each day tourists go through the London Gallery
 and each day tour guides take a group through explaining what each
 painting costs,
 what the acquisition costs were
 How much Lloyd's of London has insured it for.
 And then they move painting by painting, gallery by gallery.
 And one day nobody noticed that when they got to this painting called
 "checkmate,"
 that as the group moved on
 one man stayed behind.
 He just kept walkin back and forth staring at the painting. The group moved
 to the next painting.

He didn't move.
 he just stared at the painting.
 They moved two paintings down.
 He didn't move,
 he just kept staring,
 walking back and forth looking at that painting.
 They moved into the next gallery.
 He just stayed at that painting.
 They moved into the next gallery.
 He stayed right there in front of that painting.
 They were two galleries down when they heard his voice come
 booming down the hall. . . .
 "It's a lie! It's a lie!
 The king has another move!" (All right!)
 Nobody knew when the group went through that this man was the
 international chess champion.
 See,
 to the ordinary eye
 it did look like checkmate.
 But to the master's eye,
 He could see a move that the ordinary eye could not see.
 And on April the fourth nineteen sixty-eight
 it looked like checkmate.
 But to the Master's eye,
 He could say "it's a lie!
 The king has another move!" [clapping from congregation]
 Then I said "early one Friday afternoon
 when the sun went out about 12:01,
 start lookin like checkmate up on Calvary!
 When they bowed his head and died around three.
 They just knew it was checkmate! (Yeah!)
 All night Friday night it looked like checkmate! (Yeah!)
 All day Saturday it looked like checkmate! (Yeah!)
 All night Saturday night it looked like checkmate! (Yeah!)
 But early on Sunday morning!
 Early on Sunday morning! (Yeah!)
 God said, "It's a lie! It's a lie!
 The King has another move!" (Yeah!)
 Only you know what happened?
 You know what happened?
 People up on their feet just like you are.⁸

⁸This statement indicates that the Ohio congregation has been moved so by the sermon that they have risen to their feet.

Only they weren't lookin at me.
 Wutn't nobody lookin at me.
 They were all lookin at her.
 You know why they were lookin at her?
 I understood Spanish.
 She had stopped translating what I was saying. (Whoohah!)
 She had accepted the Lord Jesus Christ! (Yes!)
 She was shoutin over there, "Thank you Jesus! Thank you Lord! Thank you
 Lord!"

I include this story in its entirety because it shows the complexity of the story as a speech event, an event that is written down in a text that Reverend M. has in front of him. One of the most obvious elements of this story is the layered embeddings of narrative, the telling of the story about the London Gallery painting based on Faust placed within the conversion story of the translator, which is in turn embedded within the story about Reverend M. going to Cuba and being asked to preach. While some would argue that this is one big narrative with several themes or points, I suggest that this excerpt contains several related stories with several related themes under one narrative frame. Because the related stories occur seemingly in one event (actually there are several events—the bus ride, the sermon, the translator's conversion, and so on), one might overlook or ignore how skillfully Reverend M. weaves these stories and themes into one story and one theme. One might even overlook how Reverend M. takes a complex rhetorical act and makes it seem like a simple parable.

The Cuba story is also in keeping with Smitherman's (1977) earlier statements about narrative sequencing, dramatic motifs, plot, real-life characterizations, and so on. Most importantly, this story about Reverend M. in Cuba, about this translator, about this painting in the London Gallery, and about "the King having another move," was a story that appealed to the congregation. My fieldnotes and transcripts indicate their high degree of participation. Throughout this story, they laughed at funny comments, and they clapped. In the latter part of the story, several responses punctuated the story: "Yeah," "yes," "alright." And finally, at the climax, almost every person present was on his or her feet clapping and "talking back." When I talked to members of the congregation about this particular story, they described it as "exciting," "unbelievable, . . . the way he'd take a preached word, put it in a story, make it live and something that you could apply immediately." Another commented that "I love a good story."

One can also see that in this story Reverend M. relies on a familiar context to introduce new information. While he is telling this

conversion story, a familiar type of narrative within the sermon, he also introduces information about the Black Theology Project, about the London gallery and tidbits about Cuban culture, and about the story of Goethe's *Faust*. He reminds the congregation of the date and place that Martin Luther King was assassinated.

There are several other things going on in this story that should be noted. First, Reverend M., at the beginning of the story, addresses the issue of ownership of text, an important issue in the academy where plagiarism can ruin one's career and has economic consequences. As the excerpt indicates, Reverend M. believes that once he publicly preaches a sermon or tells a story within a sermon, that sermon or story is available to be used by others, and "it ain't yours no more" (Reverend M.). Although I address this issue of ownership of text in more detail in the following chapter, I point out how prevalent Reverend M.'s position is on owning sermons among African-American preachers. Even though a particular sermon may be associated with a particular preacher like "What Makes You So Strong?" and "When You Forget Who You Are" are with Reverend M. (especially now that they have been published), it would not be unusual to hear parts of those sermons or different versions of them in other preachers' sermons. This will be particularly interesting in light of Reverend M.'s published volume of sermons. Now that they are copyrighted, will they be looked at as fair game? Reverend M. notes, with humor, that other preachers have already retold his story across the country.

Rosenberg (1970), in his study of a Black preacher, discussed this minister's "Dry Bones" sermon. The minister and Rosenberg acknowledged the plethora of "Dry Bones" sermons that have been preached in African-American churches. Many African-American ministers joke about there being so many versions of the "Dry Bones" preached by so many different preachers that it does not belong to anyone. Thus, Reverend M.'s statement about ownership of text is important to consider in light of the academy and the copyright laws, and in light of the congregation's participation in the text. How would one copyright the dialogue that occurs?

Thus, an important question arises from the previous discussion regarding the relationship between Reverend M.'s use of stories and establishing a community identity. How does the story contribute to this community identity that is built within and through the sermon, if at all? Clearly, Reverend M. is concerned with those things that African Americans as a community or cultural group (as Reverend M.'s discussion of African pedagogy implies) identify with—the story or parable being one of those things. Thus, he relies on his knowledge of the expectations that African Americans have as a community about

religious discourse or discourse in general. Because he meets community expectations, he strengthens community ties and consequently community identity. Not to meet community expectations could place a strain on those bonds. It isn't the use of stories or parables alone that builds community identity, but the story along with the other textual and nontextual strategies that have been and will be discussed that create the community identity through the text.

INTERWEAVING SONG AND SERMON: INTERTEXTUALITY IN THE CHURCH

The central role of music and song in the African-American worship service is well known. As I noted in chapter 1, the African-American sermon itself has a rhythmical, musical quality. Turner (1988) stated that, "the spectrum of musical expression ranges from the sonorous delivery, which has a pleasant melodiousness, meter, and cadence to the full-blown chant or song" (p. 21). Several analyses have been done of the African-American chanted sermon, that songlike preaching style made popular by southern African-American preachers (for further discussion see G. Davis, 1985; Rosenberg, 1970), and the "musicality" of African-American sermons (Spencer, 1990). Spencer (1990) noted the connection between the use of melody and rhythm as an African tradition and an African-American preaching tradition:

in Black preaching and West African folksinging, both fluctuate in pitch due to the voice being used as a practical tool of the expression rather than an instrument of *bel canto*. And both use repetitive cadential formulas melodically, rhythmically, and textually. (p. 228)

Spencer suggested that, "it was the rhythmic use of language that enabled black preachers such as Martin Luther King, Jr., to communicate the power beyond the literal word" (p. 231). Indeed, the rhythmic quality of King's sermons contributed greatly to his status as one of this world's greatest orators. The ministers in this study, although not chanters, made use of the rhythmic and melodic quality described earlier in their sermons. Reverend M., however, not only has this rhythmic quality to his sermons, he also uses songs within his sermons.

Possibly due to his musical background—he is an accomplished musician and singer and his doctoral dissertation focuses on the African-American music tradition in the African-American church—Reverend M.'s sermons represent an interweaving of the written word, the spoken, and the song. This interweaving of the three elements listed here represent what Bloome and Bailey (1992) referred to as intertextuality. As cited in the introduction of this volume

“intertextuality is a key concept in understanding relations between texts (including conversational and written texts), between and among events, between events and cultural ideology” (Bloome & Bailey, 1992, p. 198). African-American worship services abound with intertextual relationships. In many ways, my own analysis is centered on relations between texts, events, and cultural ideology, none of which can be separated from participants. As is evident so far, texts cannot really be separated from events, and cultural ideology dictates how the texts and events are constructed, received, and used.

As indicated in chapter 2, during the worship services in the three churches, oral and written texts are interrelated; speech events are interrelated, and texts and events grow out of a cultural tradition known as an African-American worship tradition. The sermon itself acts as a vehicle—an event—through which intertextuality works. As was evident in the previous chapter, for example, it is through the sermon that biblical texts are woven into the daily lives—“daily texts”—of the participants, namely the ministers and congregations. Those lives can be represented through personal testimony or narrative (as has been illustrated in this chapter). It is through the sermon that Reverend M. weaves together his written text, scriptural texts, biblical and personal stories, along with nonbiblical written texts and songs.⁹

I focus, in this discussion, on the intertextual relations between musical texts and Reverend M.’s sermons.¹⁰ There are three ways in which this intertextuality surfaces in the sermons: (a) the song that ends the sermon is an extension of the sermon, (b) song lyrics are spoken often within the sermon, and (c) verses of songs are sung within the sermon as illustration of key points.

Reverend M. explained that when he prepares sermons for his own congregation, he always picks the song the choir sings at the end of the sermon because he considers those songs to be part of the sermon. They extend the message. Even when Reverend M. was running the revival in the Ohio church and working with a relatively unfamiliar choir and musician, he quite often steered the choir to sing a particular song at the end of the sermon. Consider the following examples, which were cited earlier as part of the narrative discussion, from the end of the sermons “It’s Shoutin’ Time” and “What Makes You So Strong?”:

⁹As I pointed out earlier, a concept related to intertextuality is *hypermedia*. Hypermedia models itself on the interaction of texts from different media—in this case, spoken, written, and musical.

¹⁰Although I am using Reverend M.’s sermons to demonstrate how he uses this feature of interweaving song in the sermon as an example of intertextuality, Reverend M. is not the only minister who uses this feature. The same feature was used in Dr. N.’s sermons within Dr. N.’s own style.

"It's Shoutin' Time":

She had accepted the Lord Jesus Christ [congregation response: Yes!]
 She was shoutin' over there, "Thank You Jesus" "Thank You Lord" "Thank
 You Lord"

The enemy was confused

God got the victory

Satan had lost a soul that he thought he had

I just wanna thank you Lord [line from song "Thank You Lord"]

[clapping from congregation]

Come on let's stand on our feet together

Praise God

[Thank You Lord

Thank You Lord

Thank You Lord

I just want to thank You Lord . . .

The bold-faced lines indicate the moment when Reverend M. and the congregation began to sing the song. This is also the moment at which the doors of the church were opened (also known as the call to discipleship when people are invited to join the church by walking down the aisle). Even though the bold-faced type indicates the beginning of the song, the song is a continuation of the latter part of the narrative and sermon. It was the translator's shouting of "thank you Lord" that created a space for this song in the sermon. And it is Reverend M., who thanks God for getting "another victory," who maintains the theme expressed in both the end of the narrative and the song.

Consider the following excerpt from "What Makes You So Strong?":

I tasted Him myself and He's sweet

I know this ain't nothin' I read bout

This is something I live everyday

Don't tell me He ain't risen

I just talked to Him this mornin'

Oh yeah, He's sweet

Reverend M.: Say Yeah

Congregation: Yeah

Reverend M.: Say Yeah

Congregation: Yeah

Reverend M.: Let's stand together on our feet He's sweet I know

He's sweet I know

Personal relationship, He

He's sweet I know oh

Clouds may rise

Clouds may rise

Strong winds may blow

And strong winds may blow

But I'll tell the world

But I'll tell the world

Wherever I go

Wherever I go

[Reverend M. and congregation in unison]: **He's sweet I know**

The excerpt from "What Makes You So Strong?" operates very much like the previous excerpt from "It's Shoutin' Time." "He's Sweet I Know" does not signal a break from the sermon but an extension of the theme at the end of the narrative. It is within the narrative that the "He's sweet" theme is introduced. The song just becomes part of the sermon. The song also enabled the minister and congregation to move in a seamless fashion from one part of the service to the other. Of course, the striking difference between the two excerpts is that in the latter one, Reverend M. recites the lines from the song and the congregation then sings it (the bold-faced type). This is not an unusual practice in African-American churches. This congregation was used to this practice with their own minister. The practice has its origins in southern rural African-American churches in which hymns were "lined" and/or "raised" (see Heath's *Ways With Words* for a discussion of "raising a hymn" or Spencer's *Protest & Praise* for a detailed discussion of hymns). That is, a leader in the hymn choir would recite a line from the hymn and the congregation would sing it in long meter style (a slow sung version replicating the "talk" of the leader) without music. The leader and congregation would go through the entire song in this fashion until the song was completed. I grew up in a small, rural, southern African-American church that continues to "line hymns." Therefore, the contemporary version of this practice, displayed by Reverend M., was not something new. And because so many urban African-American churches have a large number of members from small southern towns, they found this practice to be "just part of our tradition." In fact, this practice is a literacy tradition within many African-American church communities, a tradition that is called on by Reverend M. in this Ohio church.

Also, part of "our" tradition is quoting song lyrics or titles to help illustrate a point in the sermon, just the way some people quote lines from literary texts. Reverend M. makes use of this practice constantly in his sermons, as is evident in the previous examples when he cites a line from the songs that end the sermon. Most often, when Reverend M. quotes lines from songs in his sermons to his own

congregation, they occur at or near the end of the sermon. However, in the revival sermons, they occurred in various places in the text. This use of song lyrics and titles serves to increase the musicality of sermons. Spencer (1990) stated that,

quotations from these sources [songs] evoke a musical disposition in the listener, not only due to the poetic form of these genres, but because familiarity with the lyric prompts recollection of the music. . . . To be sure, the congregation, as an integral component of the preaching event and of making or breaking the "song," is a conduit of the "surplus" and has direct bearing on contemporaneous sermonic form. (p. 241)

Surplus refers to that element expressed through music that "extends beyond literal words" (p. 226). Spencer's discussion of the consequences of the congregation's familiarity with the lyric and song for the sermon marks a strong relation between this familiarity and the congregation's role in the preaching event—the sermon. Again, reliance on shared knowledge forges to the front. What also forges to the front is the relation between song and sermon. Consider the following examples that illustrate how Reverend M. uses quotations from songs within his sermons:

"Living With the Five Senses":

Listen

Listen to our ancestors

They praise him

They sang **"You can't make me doubt him I know too much about him"**

Listen to your grandparents

They were just sayin' **"If anybody ask you who I am you tell them I'm a child of God."**

They had overwhelming obstacles facing them like we got facing us

They sang **"Hallelujah anyhow"**

"When You Forget Who You Are"

You forget all those old songs we used to sing. (Yeah!)

Songs that carried us through the darkest night,

Songs that sustained us when we didn't have half of what we have today,

Songs like **"I will trust in the Lord,"**

Songs like we sang Sunday **"I love the Lord He heard my cry."**

We done forgot all dem common meter long meter short meter hymns.

We don't like

In fact some of us gonna join a church where they don't song those old timey songs because we want our children to have a better Babylonian education and not sing them

I find these two examples particularly interesting because not only does Reverend M. rely on the quotation of the lyric or the title to evoke a certain sensory and spiritual response, he links these musical texts with their roles in the history of African Americans. He addresses how these songs represented the strong faith that African Americans relied on to get them through the rough times. Looked at in this light, these songs are placed within a cultural context; they become part of what shapes cultural expectations of how these songs were constructed and used in the past and how they are used now. For Reverend M., they become markers of one's cultural identity and markers of one's attachment to their cultural heritage—songs that remind the African-American congregation where they come from, who they are, and, as Reverend M. says, “whose they are.”

This intertextual relationship is even more evident and literal when Reverend M., in the sermon, sings. Here, I am not referring to the chanted style of preaching in which the delivery of the sermon moves into a songlike cadence. Of course, that practice is also exemplary of the intertextual relations between music and the sermon. However, in this discussion, I refer to Reverend M. singing verses of actual songs in the sermon. Although this practice occurred regularly with Reverend M., it was in one sermon, “Living with the Five Senses,” that the revival congregation was exposed to and participated in this practice several times. Consider the following example in which Reverend M. sings lines from two songs:

You get fired up for singing groups (Alright!)

All you old folks my age and older

One sister told me this morning

She said “All them songs you was singin

they're from my era

I know every last one of em

You right on my street”

And Walter

my age you just you just let them let them hear the first line of

Won't you stayyyyy

Stay in my corner [congregation members clap, some stand and clap,
some sing along, and most laugh]

All them old folks say “oh yeah that's my jam”

. . . . And you young people

Stop laughing at us old folks
 Stop laughing you young people
 Stop laughin at us
 Cause y'all get fired up over Boyz II Men

**Although we've come
 To the end of the road
 Still I can't let you go
 It's unnatural
 You belong to me
 I belong to you**

God knows if you can get fired up over a singing group
 I can get fired up over my savior

Both songs, "Stay in My Corner" and "We've Come to the End of the Road," were major rhythm and blues hits, the first one in the early 1970s and the latter one in 1993. That Reverend M. broke into song rather than reciting the verses as he did in excerpts cited earlier excited the crowd. People laughed, clapped, waved their hands, stood on their feet, sang along, or all of the above. Of course, both of these songs are secular songs that appeal to different age groups in the congregation. They are examples of how Reverend M. uses shared knowledge, of how he puts the message "in a cup they can recognize." In this case, the cup is a secular song. It is worth noting that Reverend M. is familiar with and feels free to use secular songs, thus, blurring the boundaries between secular and sacred.

Later in this same sermon, Reverend M. sings again. In discussing how the congregation's ancestors praised God through song, he states,

They didn't have fancy praise teams
 But they would just stop in the middle
 Out in the middle of the woods somewhere
 In the middle of a church service with no accompaniment whatsoever
 And just start up the church house saying

**I love the Lord He Heard my cry
 I love the Lord He Heard my cry** [sung in a slow long meter fashion]

When Reverend M. began to sing, the congregation sang the second line with him. In another instance in "It's Shoutin' Time," the congregation took over the song and thus the text:

But my mother and father used to sing this song around our house
 Some of you know it

You grow up grew up hearing your parents or grandparents sing it
 Now that you got some "edjamication"
 You don't sing it no more
 But you used to hear your parents sing it
I thank you Jesus ([congregation: All right? Yeah])
I thank you Jesus [congregation begins to sing]
I thank you Jesus I thank you Lord
Ohhh You brought me
Yes you brought me
From a mighty a mighty long way
A mighty long way
I thank you Jesus
Thank you Jesus
I thank you Jesus
Thank you Jesus
I thank you Jesus I thank you Lord
Ohh You brought me
Yes you brought me
From a mighty long way

Reverend M. sang the first two lines of the song, and the congregation continued to sing until they completed the entire verse. Reverend M. had no choice but to wait until the congregation finished the verse and allowed him back into the text. In this example, the congregation is integral in "making the song" as suggested earlier by Spencer (1990). This song also happened to be one that was sung often in this particular church. Thus, this congregation could prove that by knowing and singing the song, they had not let their "edjamication" cloud their collective memory.

Reverend M. accomplishes several things when he sings. First, he keeps the songs fresh in the minds of the congregation. As he stated earlier, these songs, especially the hymns and the old-fashioned way that they were sung are part of African-American history and culture. They are more than just words; they are instruments of survival, instruments of faith. Second, he provides another avenue from which congregants can enter the text and become part of the dialogue. Third, whether he is singing secular or sacred music (and the boundaries between the two sometimes blur) but particularly secular, he signals to the congregation that he listens to their music; he is in touch with the younger and older members of the congregation—he can identify. Fourth, and possibly most importantly, he introduces a multilayered text where music and spoken and written texts interact and, thus, community is enacted through the shared experience.

SUMMARY

This chapter is important because it signals that many of the strategies used by the ministers to create a community identity through the sermon do stretch across time and space and are not unique to one specific church community. Although this chapter features Reverend M. with a congregation other than his home congregation, he was not singled out because he was so different from the other two ministers in the strategies he used in his sermons. In fact, his sermons are representative of sermons preached by African-American preachers in mainstream, predominantly African-American churches. Clearly, his sermons to the Ohio congregation held many of the same features that were highlighted in the previous chapter, such as using shared knowledge. Even the features introduced in this chapter, storytelling and intertextuality, which were not addressed previously are not unique to Reverend M. These features are evident in varying degrees in the other ministers' sermons. The data presented in this chapter reinforces the African-American sermon as a complex, multilayered text. The data continue to show a picture of a text that is shaped by the cultural and community expectations of how oral, written, and musical texts become one and of how African and African-American traditions merge to shape the text.