Homiletic As Interdisciplinary
Homiletic and Performance/Psychology

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Creativity and Homiletics:
Save Preachers from Boredom

Concerning the "intellectual poverty" of our society, cognitive psychologist Jere W. Clark deplores, that our society has lost "open-ended, dynamic base of adaptability and synthesis," from "narrow, mechanical and static base of specialization and fragmentation" that caused "conformity, rigidity, over-specialization, and mediocrity."[1] He pinpoints "social inertia," which resists "innovation and changes in people's routines."

> Innovations by their very nature involve change. Not only are there changes in people's routines and jobs, but also changes in the status quo. Hence, there is typically resistance to major innovations, no matter how essential they may be. For that reason, social inertia will have to be included as one of the facts of life in up-dating our educational system.[2]

Clark's viewpoint, articulated above, can similarly be applied to preaching ministry, a skill that seems to be losing its authentic and imaginative flair, by simply conforming to others' models and contents. Even more seriously, many of our preacher friends are being rebuked for plagiarism of sermon from laity. Creativity may be able to resolve this mounting problem for preachers. It is critical that every preacher have his/her own unique and authentic voice and expression, distinctively different from other preachers, like brilliant expressionists, such as Mozart, Tchaikovsky, Tolstoy, Hemingway, Picasso and Van Gogh, who all have their own unique style and modus operandi. Mechanical imitation (or copying) kills the free spirit of expressers. Originating as a response to the considerable need for creativity among preachers, this paper seeks to explore creativity: what it is, the conditions needed to inspire it, and the practical methods with which preachers can exercise creativity in the sermon preparation process.

This chapter provides the groundwork for future discussion and development between homiletics and the creativity theory, helping preachers to be more creative, authentic, and expressive. In this paper, I aim to introduce the methods of current homileticians who have been utilizing creativity theory in their homiletic projects. Rather than argumentative, this paper is expository, and through exploration and experimentation, will provide a basic understanding of the interdisciplinary work between homiletics and the creativity theory of cognitive psychology. Throughout this paper, I attempt to facilitate a conversation between homileticians and creative theorists using footnotes. First, readers can study the deployment of homileticians, though not many in the field, who are profoundly influenced by the creative theory in its application to the homiletics. Then, included in the footnotes of every page, I tried to elucidate a more objective explanation of creativity theories, which appear to have influenced creative-homiletic theorists.

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[1] Jere W. Clark, "On Facing the Crisis of Intellectual Poverty," *The Journal of Creative Behavior* 3:4 (1969), p. 260.
[2] Ibid, 269.

This was demanding work and this paper will satisfy as it starts and envisions main academic discussion and future development.

Homileticians, whose homiletics has certain direct and indirect implications in relation to the creativity theory of psychology and religion, are Eugene Lowry, Fred Craddock and the women preachers in *Birthing the Sermon.*[3] The two main questions investigated in this project are: What is the condition for creativity to flow? How should preachers use the conscious and unconscious for creative preaching? Admittedly, my initial assumption was that there may not have been much development for preaching and homiletics using creativity theories, but the more I examined both creative theories and homiletics, the more fascinated I became. To my surprise, I found that prominent New Homileticians have already utilized the creative theory in their homiletic projects with notable implications and applications, and that their utilization of creative theories was fully grown. However, it seems that the application and utilization of creativity theories by homileticians are not yet fully systematic, that is, preachers still do not receive systematic homiletic lessons from seminary and continuing education in preaching. Accordingly, I altered my initial direction, focusing instead on comparing the two disciplines to show the extent by which homiletics may have been influenced, though not yet fully systematically, by creative theories.

Each chapter examines the concept of creativity, the conditions necessary for creativity, and how preachers could (and should) use the conscious and the unconscious for their creative preaching ministries. In section I, the conditions for creativity are proposed by Lowry, as moving from rationality to relaxation, and self-negation for openness. Regarding the use of consciousness, Lowry cites dialectics, conversation/listening, and imagination as techniques that require consciousness. He also suggests dreaming, free-writing, incubation, and the Spirit, as ways to access the unconscious. In section II, Craddock's condition for creativity is silence. Uniquely, Craddock deals with specific aspects regarding the creativity of preaching: creativity in sermonic form, delivery, play and free-writing using the unconscious, and using the conscious and the unconscious together. Section III explores the ideas of women preachers. Interestingly, a new subject appears, *Lectio Divina,* which the two male homileticians have not introduced. Also discussed is free-writing, body movement and creativity of the unconscious, Spirit, a condition for creativity that advises, "Do not worry about critiques and evaluation of other people," form and creativity, and harmony of using the conscious and the unconscious.

In the footnotes, I attempt to provide further academic study of creativity from psychology, philosophy, religion and literature, within the limit of accessibility. This may not be complete for now, but with this structure, I intend to facilitate a dialogue between the two disciplines. Although not expository and explanatory, rather fragmentary and partial, it may lead readers to a further understanding of how homileticians adopted or adapted from creative theories, and how homiletics needs a systematic project in order to develop fuller and more complete interdisciplinary benefits in the future. Thus, this paper is an attempt to be the groundwork for future contributions.

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[3] Jana Childers, edit. *Birthing the Sermon: Women Preachers on the Creative Process* (St. Louis: Chalice Press, 2001).

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I. Lowry and Creativity[4]

This chapter will investigate Lowry's understanding of creativity and its application to preaching.

A. The Condition of Creativity for Preaching[5]

[4] Jana Childers, *Performing the Word: Preaching as Theatre* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1998), p.100. She shows a definition of creativity and the issue of whether creativity is *ex nihilo* or not. "Certainly the work that preachers do is creative work. Although they do not create *ex nihilo*, there is nonetheless "something new" involved. Preachers are concerned, as are actors, with the truthful interpretation of the texts. This interpretative process is, as has been said, a generative and incarnational activity. Something new is born out of the coming together of text and interpreter, something in which the integrity of each is still preserved."

See also, D.N. Perkins, "The Possibility of Invention," in *The nature of creativity: contemporary psychological perspectives*, edit. by Robert J. Sternberg (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), p.363. Perkins, like Childers, also analyzes the issue of *ex nihilo* in the creativity process. "Perhaps the simplest response to the *ex nihilo* puzzle is to say that invention is not really *ex nihilo*. Human invention never produces something entirely out of nothing. Always inventor brings to the occasion a host of concepts, facts, structures, and so on, that fuel the process of invention. So there is no puzzle to explain. Invention is better seen as an act of combination rather than an act of *ex nihilo* creation."

[5] See, Giselle B. Esquivel, "Teacher Behaviors that Foster Creativity" *Educational Psychology Review* 7:2 (1995), p.187. For Esquivel, creativity is acquired throughout lifelong processes, not only for geniuses, as not only genius preachers enjoy this ability of creativity. This is very humanistic and Platonic. "However, the major premise for advocating educational efforts in creativity is the assumption that all individuals have the potential to be creative, that children are naturally creative, and that creativity may be a lifelong process (Maslow, May, Rogers, Torrance, Treffinger). This humanistic-developmental perspective appears to form the philosophical basis for creative learning and creative teaching and has had significant educational implication."

Cf., also, Harold K. Hughes, "The Enhancement of Creativity," *Journal of Creative Behavior* 3:2 (1969), pp. 74-76. Hughes effectively explicates the characteristics of creative people: 1) good memory; 2) adaptability; 3) self-discipline; 4) introversion (emotionally cool, aloof, dominant and introspective, often as children, they chose to be alone although companionship was available); 5) divergent thinking ability (imaginative, unorthodox thinking, nothing is spared from his curiosity); 6) reaction to disorder (high tolerance for ambiguity and little discomfort for boredom); 7) use of time (Creative scientists find ways to reduce society's demands on them so that they have time to think. For example, men choose mates who, by competent management of home and children, relieve them of many living chores. During these "think" periods, they may appear to be loafing.); 8) need for supportive climate (their sensitivity to approval and disapproval).

Childers also analyzes traits of creative people. "Other traits common among the particular creative individuals who enjoy such a state include curiosity, openness to new experience, willingness to take risks and a tendency to think in images"(Childers, *Performing the Word*, p.102).

On the condition of creativity, I introduce two major views (Alamsha and Rogers) as follows. Creativity is mystery; so, when dealing with its definition, scholars prefer dealing from its condition of when and how it can be facilitated to people to be creative.

See, William H. Alamsha, "The Conditions for Creativity," *The Journal of Creative Behavior* 1:3 (1967). "The conditions relevant to creativity, in general, may be identified as (1) motivation (2) self-limitation (3) receptivity (or what Carl Rogers calls 'openness'); and (4) competence" (p.306). Especially, on openness for creativity, he states, "Whatever our term for it, this condition involves the life-blood of creativeness: being open or receptive to new ideas, new aesthetic forms, new feelings and attitudes. Indeed, receptivity may be likened to pouring wine from a bottle: before the wine can be poured, it is necessary first to remove the cork from the bottle and, secondly, to be prepared for the pouring by having an empty glass which will contain the wine" (p. 310).

Also see, the famous essay by Carl R. Rogers, "Towards a Theory of Creativity," edited by P.E. Vernon, in *Creativity: Selected Readings* (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1970). He penetrates the inner and external conditions of creativity.

The three inner conditions of constructive creativity:

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1. Getting away from Rationality toward Relaxation

Lowry sees the blockage for creativity of preaching as "the means-end rationality of thinking,"[6] instead he advises preachers to "wallow in the text," setting aside the

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A. Openness to experience: extensionality
"It means lack of rigidity and permeability of boundaries in concepts, beliefs, perceptions, and hypotheses. It means a tolerance for ambiguity where ambiguity exists. It means the ability to receive much conflicting information without forcing closure upon the situation. It means what the general semanticist calls the 'extensional orientation'" (p. 143). This is "the opposite of psychological defensiveness"(p. 143).

B. An internal locus of evaluation
"Perhaps the most fundamental condition of creativity is that the source or locus of evaluative judgment is internal. The value of his product is, for the creative person, established not by the praise or criticism of others, but by himself. Have I created something satisfying to me? Does it express a part of me—my feeling or my thought, my pain or my ecstasy? These are the only questions which really matter to the creative person, or to any person when he is being creative"(p. 144).

C. The ability to toy with elements and concepts: "An ability to play spontaneously with ideas, colors, shapes, relationships—to juggle elements into impossible juxtapositions, to shape wild hypotheses, to make the given problematic, to express the ridiculous, to translate from one form to another, to transform into improbable equivalents. It is from this spontaneous toying and exploration that there arises the hunch, the creative seeing of life in a new and significant way" (p. 144).

Two external conditions fostering constructive creativity:
"My experience in psychotherapy leads me to believe that by setting up conditions of psychological safety and freedom, we maximize the likelihood of an emergence of constructive creativity" (p. 146).

X: Psychological safety: 1) accepting the individual as of unconditional worth; 2) Providing a climate in which external evaluation is absent; and 3) understanding empathically. "When we cease to form judgment of the other individual from our own locus of evaluation, we are fostering creativity. For the individual to find himself in an atmosphere where he is not being evaluated, not being measured by some external standard, is enormously freeing. Evaluation is always a threat, always creates a need for defensiveness, and always means that some portion of experience must be denied to awareness"(p. 147).

Y: Psychological freedom: "When a teacher, parent, therapist or other facilitating person permits the individual a complete freedom of symbolic expression, creativity is fostered. This permissiveness gives the individual complete freedom to think, to feel, to be, whatever is most inward within himself. It fosters the openness, and the playful and spontaneous juggling of percepts, concepts and meanings, which is a part of creativity" (p. 148).

[5] As one should understand the conditions in which creativity arises, one should also apperceive creative blockages, which are the same quest in the opposite direction. Regarding blockages toward creativity, I summarize Alamsha's three blockages as follows (William H. Alamsha, "Blockage to Creativity," *The Journal of Creative Behavior* 6:2 (1972)).

(1) Socioeconomic blockages: "The reason seems plain: to choose a vocation primarily with an eye to social approval or monetary rewards may result in doing what is alien to one's own temperament and talents. Thus the work chosen will fail to stimulate that 'passion,' which Pavlov believed to be essential for creativity" (p. 106).
(2) Psychological blockages: "Creativity requires inner quietude. The lack of it may be due to various internal noises which effectively drown out or inhibit creative thought—such mental pollutants as worry, anxiety, endless internal dialogues with real or imagined foes, and the like. One of the conditions for creativity is receptivity; and we can't be receptive to new imaginings, new ideas, if we are disturbed by the voices of anxiety or fear. We become receptive if we can be freed of these disturbances. The individual must find his own way to such freedom, yet the key to it involves a universal truth: concentration and hence receptivity, comes with what Huxley calls attention to the 'here and now'" (p. 108).
(3) Characterological blockages: laziness, self-conceit, fantasy, attachment/detachment, commitment (pp.110-112).

[6] Eugene L. Lowry, *The Sermon: Dancing the Edge of Mystery* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1997), p. 91.

overly conscious approach[7] to the text in the sermon preparation process. Lowry cries out, "Again, do your best to forget that Sunday is coming."[8] This explicates a condition of creativity: Relaxation. When we relax, without thinking of a particular direct goal or purpose, allowing ourselves the freedom of tranquilization, creative thoughts and inspiration emerge. Yet, when we are under pressure and strain to induce something compulsively, the creativity from unconsciousness is frozen.

2. Self-Negation[9] for Openness in the Sermon Preparation Process

As preachers, we unexceptionally bear our own prejudices and bigoted preoccupations, which is another blockage for creativity in preaching. Even in the process of interpretation of the text, preachers feel stifled by their pre-understanding of it. For this problem, Lowry penetrates that preachers need to negate themselves to recreate new interpretation:

> One principle for this preliminary thinking about the biblical text is to wander around—somewhat innocently and aimlessly. And why? ...We need to operate with an ideology of suspicion—aimed directly at ourselves. We know too much, you know.[10]

In this regard, religion has significant potential for creativity because of its unique dogma of self-denial, whether it be Christianity or Eastern religion, such as Zen Buddhism. Self-denial, in other words, comes forth by doubting ourselves and questioning our presupposition, rather than believing it as absolute, and instead, as uncertain and ongoing. In order to become creative, we must be ready to accept new things, and for that, we need to be lost and negate our self-doubt.[11] As Peter Elbow claims, we need to use the belief and doubt games together, to invent something

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[7] Abraham H. Maslow, *Toward a Psychology of Being* (Princeton: D. Van Nostrand Company, Inc, 1968), p. 139. Maslow opposes an overly rational approach. "Self-actualizing people—they can be, when the total objective situation calls for it, comfortably disorderly, sloppy, anarchic, chaotic, vague, doubtful, uncertain, indefinite, approximate, inexact or inaccurate."

[8] Lowry, p. 92.

[9] John J. Legate, "Zen and Creativity," *The Journal of Creative Behavior* 15:1 (1981), p.34. Interestingly, Legate introduces the comparison between Zen Buddhism and creativity, especially on self-negation.

"This simplicity occurs through what the Zen Masters call the *Great Death*, meaning the death of the ego. It is only then that one becomes appropriately creative in all one's acts since there are then no ego interests or fears to serve. Appropriate spontaneity flows freely then when "my" ego constructs are no longer present. This spontaneity is a direct outpouring from the creative source the unconscious, through to the act—unhindered."

Cf., Alla Bozarth-Campbell, *The Word's Body: An Interpretational Aesthetic of Interpretation* (Alabama: The University of Alabama Press, 1947). She is also referring of self-negation in the mystics in relation to creativity.

"The reintergration of the conscious and unconscious parts of the psyche appears as an illumination. It is the state of discovering one's true self through apparent loss of self, described by the Christian mystics in their loss of self in God and their joy in the discovery of subsequent new life."(p.100)

"The Christian mystics insisted that there is a point at which one must abandon discursive meditation for a superior, supra-conceptual moment of contemplation. The inner realities cannot be finally contained by discursive knowledge but can be known only through unknowing—the *nada, nada, nada* of St. John of the Cross. This is the apophatic way of ascent in which the unconscious is allowed to ascend to conscious regions."(p.101)

[10] Lowry, 92.

[11] Bozarth-Campbell, "When the creative process is at work, human life is molded by the unconscious in contrast to the predominant, active will…For creativity to occur it is necessary that the conscious ego assents to taking a passive position at some point in the process."(p.95)

new.[12] Similarly, Lowry warns us not to adhere to our preexisting notions, but rather encourages preachers to be receptive to something new, which may become different than that which belonged to us before: "We have a bias—always called 'commitment' by those who have it—and the bias works."[13]

3. Avoiding Precision and Judgment

To be creative, preachers need to be bold and courageous. Occasionally, the desire to be precise and the fear of being wrong, dampen the birth of creativity. Both inner and outer critics are, in the inventive and creative process, harmful. There is no exception with preachers; Lowry analyzes preachers' finely honed theological-biblical principles that work with precision, such that preachers should know the truth and will not allow a single heretical thought—not even for a moment. For this reason, for preachers, things are to be solid and safe, and as a result, they lack creativity.[14] Using critiques in the early invention stage is harmful. As Elbow elucidates, preachers or writers should let go of the critical spirit of reason in the first invention and discovery stage, while using the doubt and critique of reason in the later stage, to edit and cut what was already discovered.[15]

B. How to Use the Conscious

1. Dialectics:

Dialectical thinking is revealed in this remark: From thesis to antithesis get at synthesis! Openness to uncertainty, difficulty and confusion all are necessary to encounter new, creative invention. This uses consciousness for creativity, using dialectics. In postmodern thinking of embracing the open-ended process, conflict is necessary. Lowry goes on to say:

> Strange things may happen if you look for trouble—the weird, the strange, the out of place. Actually, it is like the child who continually irritates us by asking, "Why? Why?" and won't be satisfied with any answer given. It is this mind-set that we will do well to recapture. As strange as it seems, I believe that this mind-set can be cultivated.[16]

This is crucial for creative theorists who inquire about when our creativity is at its peak. They see childhood as the most exuberant time in terms of creativity, because children's minds are free to ask questions and present problems, and seek answers and resolution by raising thoughts otherwise seemingly silly. This is why creativity is related to problem-solving. Like Alla Bozarth-Campbell, Lowry analyzes the problem of modernity, and what causes the "mentality of

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[12] Peter Elbow, "The Doubting Game and the Believing Game—An Analysis of the Intellectual Enterprise," *Writing Without Teachers* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), pp. 147-191.
[13] Lowry, pp. 92-93. "Wallow, wander around inside story lines and images and arguments. Be loose; get a feel for it. And the good pastor will not wander around in the texts alone, but with companions of congregation, culture, and liturgy as well."
[14] Lowry, p. 99.
[15] Elbow, pp. 147-191.
[16] Lowry, p. 95.

modernity to go awry."[17] As Lowry states that viewing "the upside-down world is different helps them see things lost by routine perspective,"[18] we need to think dialectically, differently, and conversely, in order to be creative. We need to relentlessly ask questions. Questioning has traditionally been a successful means of consciously inventing something new. Dialectic allows for endless possibilities through the use unconsciousness. Questioning, doubting, and seeking new answers is, in fact, the simultaneous employment of consciousness and unconsciousness.

2. Conversation/Listening:

In addition to dialectics, Lowry suggests another conscious way of inventing: conversation. Conversation necessitates listening to others in order to be creative, ultimately using the conscious. Conversation and dialogue also can be used for advancing the creativity of preaching toward fresh ideas, which would be impossible for preachers to invent by themselves. This notion helps preachers overcome the idea that the preaching project is subjective and individual, instead of objective, communal, and social.

> It is particularly important for positioning oneself to be surprised to talk to people. Conversations early in the preparation stage are timely; later they tend to be pleas for confirmation. Lay lectionary study groups meetings, say, on Sunday evening and/or clergy groups on Monday morning provide the preacher with the possibility of a huge array of ideas different from one's own—which, unfortunately, may be why some are not interested in this option. Such groups whet the appetite for views not noticed.[19]

Listening to others, conversation, and dialogue is an additional avenue for invention, which cannot be accomplished in only one person's mind. This has implicit social value for the community. Postmodern ethos is listening to others rather than focusing on the solitary self.[20] Truth, therefore, is found through the interaction with other people. Levinas claims truth should be discovered from other people who reflect truth, which cannot be discovered by the self. Thus, togetherness is another way of discovering truth.

3. Imagination

Another practice of the conscious is imagination, or association. Lowry explains a practical method of how to use imagination for preaching invention, and yet, this imagination not only operates within the conscious, but also perhaps the unconscious mind. "Imaginative word-association exercise can be mind-expanding experience. Two kinds are worth noting. The first is to write a single word on a blank piece of paper—a word central to the text. Begin writing blank words—any words that come to mind. Connect them with others; reverse them; alter them;

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[17] Lowry, p. 95.
[18] Ibid., p. 96.
[19] Ibid., p. 97.
[20] Gordon A. MacLeod, "Does Creativity Lead to Happiness and More Enjoyment of Life?" *The Journal of Creative Behavior* 7:4 (1974), p.229. MacLeod also sees the importance of unselfish relational creativity. "One final word about personal relationships. Do you know any happy bigots? Generally they seem to be so wrapped up in their fears and prejudices that they find little joy in life. I have always been impressed by the almost complete absence of bigotry among exceptionally creative people."

modify them. Check for strange connections between words at the corners of the page."[21] This process employs the consciousness, while simultaneously drawing upon the unconsciousness, that is, using imagination with the reasoning mind. Wilson supports this dialectical use of imagination in the invention process.

> Part of my own excitement about these ideas is the support they receive from a variety of disciplines. For instance, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, the poet who built his entire philosophy around imagination in his *Biographia Literaria* (1817), called imagination the "reconciliation of opposites." Many of his critics thought he meant literal reconciliation of logical opposites, each of which was in effect neutralized or negated. Rather he meant a bringing together of separate identities to produce a new meaning.[22]

As Lowry quotes from Wilson, "the bringing together of two ideas that might not otherwise be connected and developing the creative energy they generate,"[23] in my opinion, it would be more correct to state that, "two opposite ideas, such as dialectical thesis and antithesis, need to be synthesized to create something new and balanced and unexpected." This combines our consciousness with dialectics, in accordance with Kierkegaard, who explicates our need to use dialectics, not the logic of Aristotle, to be creative and authentic in the rhetorical situation of communication.

C. Using the Unconscious[24] for Preaching

To use the unconscious means trusting the uncertain aspect of truth. Postmodern philosophy declares one of its crucial tenets is "uncertainty." Unlike Rationalism and Enlightenment, which focus only on certainty, our era pursues the quest for uncertainty beyond certainty. Likewise, for preachers to become creative, it is essential to boldly face uncertainty. Lowry urges:

> As strange as it may seem, the shortest, most effective route to Sunday often begins with what appears to be an unnecessary detour through the territory of difficulty, confusion, and uncertainty. Did not Pablo Picasso once remark somewhere that every act of creation is first of all an "act of destruction?" If we never fell off balance, we would never, ever take a step.[25]

When we begin to leave the safety zone of certainty and rationality and enter uncertainty and the irrational/*para*-rational/super-rational dimension, which is the area of the unconscious, we may fully utilize the mystery and power of the unconscious for the creativity of preaching. Lowry introduces several methods for tapping into the unconscious.

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[21] Lowry, p.97
[22] Paul Scott Wilson, *Imagination of the Heart: New Understandings in Preaching* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1988), p. 34.
[23] Wilson, p. 32, and see also Lowry, p. 98.
[24] Legate, "Zen and Creativity," p. 30. Legate quotes Carl Jung, concerning how powerful the unconscious is to create. "Whenever the creative force predominates, human life is ruled and moulded by the unconscious as against the active will…It is not Goethe who creates Faust, but Faust which creates Goethe (Ghiselin, 1952)."
[25] Lowry, p. 93.

1. Dream

Lowry even goes on to say that we need to use our dream state, the unconscious, to create something new.[26] It reminds us of Freud's article on daydreaming and creativity.[27] Lowry amazingly connects the sermon preparation process to sleeping time, when our minds will continue to work on the sermon without the rigid constraints of conscious commitments.[28] The sermon preparation stage should be free from 'rigid constraints of conscious commitments' because sermon needs to flow deeply and freely, without any shackles, into the unconscious.

2. Free-Writing

Like Peter Elbow, Lowry emphasizes the uninhibited potential of free-writing through the use of the unconscious for creative preaching, by saying, "Make sure you have pencil and paper handy, for you may be surprised at what comes out of the chaos of such free association."[29]

3. Incubation[30]

Lowry explicates a creative theory of Wallas concerning the "Incubation" stage of the creative process.[31] Similar to how a baby needs an incubation period to fully develop, the incubation

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[26] Ibid., p. 98. "So you read the text and wing it—in the dream. But sometimes it is a helpful daytime exercise, not a nightmare."

[27] S. Freud, "Creative Writers and Day-dreaming" in *Creativity: Selected Readings*, pp. 126-135.

[28] Lowry, p. 100.

[29] Ibid., p. 98.

[30] We can find several books and articles that mention the incubation stage in the creative process. Poincare is deemed, by other posterior psychologists, as an original thinker about creativity and its incubation process. See, Robert T. Brown, "Creativity: What are we to Measure?" in *Handbook of Creativity*, edit by John A. Glover, Royce R. Ronning, and Cecil R. Reynolds (New York: Plenum Press, 1989).

"Poincare then proposed an influential theory on the generation of creative ideas: the "appearance of sudden illumination is a manifest sign of long, unconscious prior work."(5) "Poincare futher suggested that initial intense prior conscious work on the problem is necessary to "unhook" relevant ideas from fixed positions so that they are free to join during the unconscious process." (Ibid) Incubation is the term used for unconscious generation of potential solutions. For Wallas (1926), incubation was more structured and guided than for Poincare, and preparation, which included the individual's previous education, was a general orientation toward problem solving as well as the consideration of the problem at hand"(Ibid).

[31] G. Wallas, *The Art of Thought, excerpts*, in Creativity: Selected Readings. Mostly, Wallas profoundly separates the four stages of the creative process, which became a foundation for later creative process study.

"Helmholtz here gives us three stages in the formation of a new thought. The first in time I shall call **Preparation**, the stage during which the problem was 'investigated…in all directions'; the second is the stage during which he was not consciously thinking about the problem, which I shall call **Incubation**; the third, consisting of the appearance of the 'happy idea' together with the psychological events which immediately preceded and accompanied that appearance, I shall call **Illumination**. And I shall add a fourth stage, of **Verification**, which Helmholtz does not here mention. In the daily stream of thought, these four different stages constantly overlap each other as we explore different problems"(pp. 91-92). "Yet, even when success in thought means the creation of something felt to be beautiful and true rather than the solution of a prescribed problem, the four stages of preparation, incubation, illumination and the verification of the final result can generally be distinguished from each other" (p. 92).

Specifically, on incubation stages, I introduce several passages from Wallas:

stage of the conscious with the unconscious is crucial for the creativity process, after which, inspiration or revelation emerge in the illumination stage. Lowry teaches preachers to work on and off within a week's period, making the unconscious to simmer with the theme and thoughts. Lowry sees the unconscious as a potential reservoir from which creative new interpretation arises. "Of course, because while you were thinking about other matters for almost two days, your preconscious mind was not only hard at work, but playfully at work as well."[32] Lowry maintains:

> Why is it that we wake up in the middle of the night with our best insights? How can it be that all the good ideas happen in the shower where there is no yellow pad on which to write? The reason is that our conscious sermon preparation time involves obviously deliberate concentration. And like trying to remember a name, sometimes the more you work at it, the less you get.[33]

Cognitive Psychologist Rollo May seems to have influenced Lowry:[34]

"The incubation stage covers two different things, of which the first is the negative fact that during incubation we do not voluntarily or consciously think on a particular problem, and the second is the positive fact that a series of unconscious and involuntary (or foreconscious and forevoluntary) mental events may take place during that period" (p. 94).

"We can often get more result in the same time by beginning several problems in succession and voluntarily leaving them unfinished while we turn to others, than by finishing our work on each problem at one sitting" (p. 94).

For preaching ministry, as well as in daily devotional preparation, a day-by-day, step-by-step process is more productive and creative. God created the world in seven days, not in one. Why is that? Could God have created the world in only one day? Why daily and weekly? This is my question. Weekly and daily spirituality appears to be a secret for creativity for Christian ministry, including preaching.

Interestingly for preachers and homileticians, Wallas introduces a preacher who uses "incubation."

"A well-known academic psychologist, for instance, who was also a preacher, told me that he found by experience that his Sunday sermon was much better if he posed the problem on Monday, than if he did so later in the week, although he might give the same number of hours of conscious work to it in each case. It seems to be a tradition among practicing barrister to put off any consideration of each brief to the latest possible moment before they have to deal with it, and to forget the whole matter as rapidly as possible after dealing with it. This fact may help to explain a certain want of depth which has often been noticed in the typical lawyer-statesman, and which may be due to this conscious thought not being sufficiently extended and enriched by subconscious thought" (p. 94).

"Helmholtz and Pincare both speak of the appearance of a new idea as instantaneous and unexpected…. On the other hand, the final 'flash,' or 'click,' is the culmination of a successful train of association, which may have lasted for an appreciable time, and which has probably been preceded by a series of tentative and unsuccessful trains. The series of unsuccessful trains of association may last for periods varying from a few seconds to several hours. H. Poincare, who describes the tentative and unsuccessful trains as being, in his case, almost entirely unconscious, believed that they occupied a considerable proportion of the whole incubation stage"(p. 96).

In addition, Alla Bozarth-Campbell introduces a different name for the incubation and illumination stages proposed by Wallas. "The 'plateau period' is the period of unconscious activity, the *transcendent function* in action on a subliminal (and seemingly chaotic) level….Through the *transcendent function* the interpreter can experience the revelation of what was present but heretofore unknown, an active mystery now ready to be incarnated in an art form: performance" (p.97).

[32] Lowry, p. 98.

[33] Ibid., p. 99.

[34] See, Rollo May, *The Courage to Create* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company Inc, 1975). May defines the creative process as "the process of bringing something new into being" (p.39). "Creative process must be explored not as the product of sickness, but as representing the highest degree of emotional health, as the expression of the normal people in the act of actualizing themselves"(p.40).

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> But when you drop your conscious intentionality in order to do something else—a hospital call, a game of tennis, whatever—your preconscious mind is let loose, without such tight parameters of control. So while you sleep, you really are still working on that

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"Nietzsche, in his important book *The Birth of Tragedy*, cites the Dionysian principle of surging vitality and the Apollonian principles of form and rational order as the two dialectical principles that operate in creativity"(p.47). "Certainly Dionysian periods of abandon are valuable, particularly in our mechanized civilization where creativity and the arts are all but starved to death by the routine of punching clocks and attending endless committee meetings, and by the pressures to produce ever greater quantities of papers and books, pressures that have infested the academic world more lethally than the industrial world" (p. 47).

"Ecstasy is the accurate term for the intensity of consciousness that occurs in the creative act. But it is not to be thought of merely as a Bacchic 'letting go;' it involves the total person, with the subconscious and unconscious acting in unity with the conscious. It is not, thus, irrational; it is, rather, supra-rational. It brings intellectual, volitional, and emotional functions into play all together" (pp. 48-49).

Alla may have brought her concept from May. With "para-rational," is important to see that the conscious and the unconscious are not contradictory nor opposite; it is compensatory. "Nor is it avoided by isolating the creative experience as a purely subjective phenomenon" (p. 49). "There is no such thing as 'the unconscious;' it is, rather, unconscious dimensions (or aspects or sources) of experience. I define this unconscious as the potentialities for awareness or action which the individual cannot or will not actualize. These potentialities are the source of what can be called 'free creativity. The exploration of unconscious phenomena has a fascinating relationship to creativity'" (p.55).

"The unconscious, so to speak, broke through in opposition to the conscious belief to which I was clinging"(p. 58). "Carl Jung often made the point that there is a polarity, a kind of opposition, between unconscious experience and consciousness. He believed the relationship was compensatory: consciousness controls the wild, illogical vagaries of the unconscious, while the unconscious keeps consciousness from drying up in banal, empty, arid rationality"(pp. 58-9).

According to Picasso, "Every act of creation is first of all an act of destruction."(p.60)

"I am convinced that this is the usual accompaniment of the breakthrough of unconscious experience into consciousness" (p.61). "This is one aspect of what is called ecstasy—the uniting of unconscious experience with consciousness, a union that is not in *abstracto*, but a dynamic, immediate fusion" (p.61).

In my view, Alla Bozarth-Campbell may have been influenced by May, concerning the erotics of interpretation, uniting eros and logos relationally. "But the insight often cannot be born until the conscious tension, the conscious application, is relaxed" (p. 62).

May also introduces "the condition of creativity" by Poincare, several of which I introduced: "5) hard work on the topic prior to the breakthrough; 6) a rest, in which the 'unconscious work' has been given a chance to proceed on its own and after which the breakthrough may occur; 7) the necessity of alternating work and relaxation with the insight often coming at the moment of the break between the two, or at least within the break"(p. 66). Incubation, rest, relaxation, peace-- all constitutes religious vocabulary, illustrating the closely-knit relationship between religion and creativity. Religion always attempts to provide rest, relaxation, and emptiness, and therefore, prayer is an act of peace.

"Of course, when an individual is afraid of the irrational—that is, of the unconscious dimensions of experience—he tries to keep busiest, tries to keep most 'noise' going on about him. The avoidance of the anxiety of solitude by constant agitated diversion…" (p. 67). "Zen Buddhists keep saying—that at these moments is reflected and revealed a reality of the universe that does not depend merely on our own subjectivity, but is as though we only had our eyes closed and suddenly we open them and there it is, as simple as can be"(pp. 68-9).

"This is why many artists feel that something holy is going on when they paint, that there is something in the act of creating which is like a religious revelation"(p.69).

"We live in a world that has become mechanized to an amazingly high degree. Irrational unconscious phenomena always a threat to this mechanization….Mechanization requires uniformity, predictability, and orderliness; and irrational is already an inevitable threat to bourgeois order and uniformity" (p. 69).

"Western civilization since the Renaissance has centrally emphasized techniques and mechanics"(p. 70). "For if we are not open to the unconscious, irrational, and trans-rational aspects of creativity, then our science and technology have helped to block us off from what I shall call 'creativity of the spirit'"(pp. 70-71).

> sermon—only in a different mode. Is there any wonder that in that free-floating consciousness immediately prior to or after sleep the mind is fertile and ideas may rush?[35]

4. Spirit

To the secular, it may be an inspiration of creativity from the unconscious; but to the believer, it may be a revelation from the Spirit through the unconscious. As a Christian homiletician, Lowry connects the unconscious with the Spirit of God, like the relationship between mysticism and creativity. "Theologically, these steps are predicated on the belief that God's Spirit may be better able to break into the context of the preacher's expectant wonderment—even confusion—than into the position of known certainties."[36] Lowry believes that the Spirit works in the sermon preparation process when preachers are liberated from their own fixed and expectant conscious control, by obeying uncertain interruptions by the Spirit through unconsciousness. The Spirit is invisible and unpredictable, and abruptly works within and without from us. Thus, unquestionably, the Spirit is a source of creative power.

II. Craddock and Creativity

1. Conditions for Creativity—Silence

According to Craddock, silence, or peace of mind, is a condition for creativity. When we are silenced and quiet, then revelation works better to ignite our creativity. Craddock believes "our noisy opinions"[37] need to be silenced to receive God's revelation.[38] Revelation is, in other words, an inspiration of creativity. Craddock states preachers need to be silenced from their own preoccupation of thoughts to be susceptible to new revelations of God. He connects God's self-disclosure with revelation, which sounds colored by Christian vocabulary.

> It is so extremely important in preaching that we not be impatient or critical or condescending toward characters in the Gospels who did not see and hear what we see and hear.[39]

Silence is related to denial of self in terms of opinion and preoccupation.[40] When preachers silence themselves, they open their hearts and emotions to creativity, and are ready to listen to something new.

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[35] Lowry quotes from Rollo May, *The Courage to Create*, (Lowry p.99).
[36] Ibid., p. 100.
[37] Fred B. Craddock, *Preaching* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1985), p.55. "The silence surrounding God's activity and purposes has been broken, not by our noisy opinions but by God's revelation."
[38] Childers, p.114. "Just as it is necessary to still the conscious mind in order for the artist to tap the resources of the unconscious, it is necessary for the performer—actor or preacher—to still the conscious mind of the audience in order to reach audience members at the unconscious level. The unconscious minds of audience members are 'stilled' by the elimination of physical distraction."
[39] Craddock, p. 58.
[40] Childers, p. 103, quote from Stanislavski, "For them concentration consists of paying strong and unwavering attention to the task or the objects at hand. The discipline of concentration is comprised of a number of skills, including the ability to still the conscious mind, to eliminate distraction, to focus, to be absorbed in a task, and to create sensory or emotional memory. All of these skills may be cultivated by exercise."

> These comments about revelation being heard as a whisper are in harmony with the nature of faith. The confidence and certainty that believers possess did not precede faith as though it were the reason for believing, as though they had said, "When we are absolutely sure, we will believe.[41]

Craddock sees Christian faith as the belief in uncertainty and the subsequent venturing toward it. To have faith is to believe uncertainty. Moving toward the future, which is uncertain and open-ended, is true faith. Accordingly, faith is related to creativity-- openness to exploration of new areas that were not seen before.

2. Sermonic Form and Creativity

Strikingly, Craddock deals with the creativity of sermonic form. Some creative theorists concerns' regard creative contents, while others consider creative (art) forms. As such, Craddock, unlike Lowry, pays attention to homiletic art form, which also should be creative. Craddock explicates creativity in terms of sermonic form. *What* to preach is a crucial area for which creativity matters, but *how* to preach is an equally important factor concerning creativity. Craddock states:

> This is certainly not said to advance an argument for formlessness. Whenever a single form has dominated preaching for a long time, a revolt by young preachers may seem to favor, or may in fact openly call for abolition of form. In the late 1960s, until the late 1970s, it was not uncommon to hear sermons which consisted of gatherings of material that defied all canons of form and movement, seeming more akin to the collage or multimedia blitz, or perhaps to the stream of consciousness.[42]

In terms of sermonic form, new and authentic creation and invention are needed. Craddock believes that there is no norm of sermonic form that can be identified as absolute "sermon."[43] If there is no absolute norm and law for the sermonic form, then there is a colossal need to create a sermonic form according to the rhetorical situation, such as text, time, audience, preacher, culture, purpose and so on.[44] Craddock penetrates:

> In preparing written materials, the church adopted with appropriate modifications available forms such as the epistle, the apocalypse, and perhaps even patterned the Gospel form after that of biographies of heroes. Likewise, Greek rhetoric was employed as a form for proclamation of the gospel…. It remains the case to this day that a sermon is defined more by content and purpose than by form.[45]

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[41] Craddock, p. 59.
[42] Craddock, pp. 170-1.
[43] Ibid., p.170.
[44] Das, Lama Surya, "Creativity and Spirituality" *Tikkun* 19:2 (2004), pp. 38-42. Imitating a given message and form is not helpful for creative content and form. "More natural freedom and creativity is revealed in this way, rather than through the imposition of some cookie-cutter model, some preconceived agenda."
[45] Craddock, p. 170.

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With regard to sermon form, preachers have lost creativity, much like biblical authors and preachers of the past. Nowadays, many modern preachers simply copy and imitate old forms, blatantly ignoring the creative process. Content and form are interrelated and form grows organically from content. Duly, when sermon content calls for creativity, novelty, and authenticity, then sermon form should also be creative, new, and authentic since it expresses contemporary thought.

> These examples call attention not only to the variety of forms used in the early church (there are many more in the New Testament not mentioned here) but also to ways in which forms function. Form is not simply a rack, a hanger, a line over which to drape one's presentation, but the form itself is active, contributing to what the speaker wishes to say and do, sometimes no less persuasive than the content itself.[46]

Craddock believes that "standard" sermon forms exist,[47] allowing the selection from multiple forms according to situation. Nevertheless, he also strongly encourages varying and changing sermonic forms according to situation.

> The preacher wishes, therefore, short of trading truth for novelty, to find and employ new forms for the familiar. It is only the person of rare gifts who can fit the message week after week on the same frame and not have the listeners assume "same old form" means "same old sermon." And even a preacher of such exceptional ability might improve with the kind of variety afforded by the possession and use of a dozen or so different sermon forms.[48]

Craddock indicates that not even one form of parable in the New Testament is the same; each parable is different and creatively situational and rhetorical. Each sermon is unique, a living organism that is distinctively different, as every living being is different and as there is no human who is the exactly same as another. Each creative art product is different once it is free from mechanical imitation. All art seeks to be a unique inner expression.

> After all, even Jesus' parables are not all in the same form. Some have a closing surprise of grace, as in the story of the vineyard workers, but others are straight and move predictably to the inescapable conclusion, as in the story of the foolish maidens. The change in form keeps the listener alert.[49]

Craddock notices that sermon forms are variable even if using the same form, which means that sermon form should be creative in each and every sermon, and he turns from selecting a form from a plural tool box to creating a new form which is a variable. "It remains now to speak of creating, rather than selecting, a form in the process of preparing the sermon."[50]
On the sermon preparation process, Craddock appreciates the importance of creating a sermon form that fits each rhetorical situation in content and form.

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[46] Craddock, p. 172.
[47] Ibid., p. 176.
[48] Ibid.
[49] Ibid., p. 186.
[50] Ibid., p. 182.

> What is important is that the preparation has followed the contours of this particular communicative task with this particular group of hearers on this particular text or theme. The form of such a sermon is therefore a part of the warp and woof of the message itself and was not laid as a grid over the message, alien to it and rising from another source. And as we will notice when considering delivery, that congeniality between form and content is an extraordinary advantage to the memory that otherwise might complain of having difficulty with outlines and manuscripts.[51]

This is also related to Alla Bozarth-Campell's performance theory. Creativity in sermon invention influences creative sermon form, and consequently, its delivery.[52] As Lowry mentions, when we read the text aloud, it starts to penetrate beyond consciousness into the unconscious, and our bodies listen deeply. Because our bodies are connected to the unconscious, using the body is using the unconscious. Using reason, conversely, is a conscious exercise.

> Furthermore, Craddock encourages "the courage to create" the sermon form:
> Finally, let the preacher who follows this process, as uncharted as it may seem, as new every time as it may be, devote full energies to it and devote none to any nagging fear that some old homiletics textbook has been violated or that some revered old homiletics professor is disquieted in the grave. Of first importance is that someone has found a way to preach the gospel, and in that all should rejoice.[53]

In terms of sermon form, the condition of creativity is also necessitated. The negative critiques as bad and good to sermon form are refused by Craddock. Rather, according to the Gospel and its rhetorical situation, sermon form is creatively shaped and grown from content organically. Like cognitive psychologists, Craddock also uses the word "flow" with creativity when he asks, "Will they follow the flow of this story?"[54]

3. Delivery and Creativity

Craddock introduces the discussion of creativity in the delivery process of sermon. He sees spontaneity and the spirit of the moment in the preaching process, in which some creative delivery may be applied. "In fact, some sermons do not require any careful and precise phrasing, but the air is too filled with variables for even the most gifted speaker to leave everything to spontaneity and the spirit of the moment."[55] Even for oral delivery, Craddock encourages "scribbling" of the sermon text for the ear, "Writing at this point is simply calling in eye and hand to serve the voice. The name for this writing is scribbling as one talks to oneself until certain of the way to say it."[56] Scribbling is free-writing, using the unconscious essence that flows from inner feeling, yet Craddock utilizes it for creativity of delivery.

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[51] Craddock, p. 189.
[52] Cf. Alla Bozarth-Campbell, *The Word's Body: An Incarnational Aesthetic of Interpretation*.
[53] Craddock, p.189.
[54] Ibid., p.190.
[55] Craddock, p. 193.
[56] Ibid.

4. Playing and Free-Writing in Using the Unconscious

As children who love playing are the most creative,[57] playing with an idea is Craddock's advice to inspire creativity.[58] When we are playing, we become relaxed; it is in this tranquil state that the unconscious is apt to explode creative inspiration, uninhibited by conscious constraints.[59] Free-writing allows unconscious flow. When we write freely without concentrating on a specific goal, rule, or evaluation, we can become creative facing the unconscious. This is also a condition for facilitating the unconscious. "Here, open all the faculties, permitting the idea to trigger thoughts, feelings, memories, former ideas, and so on. Be playful, jot down ideas, but forget about order or sequences."[60] To be creative, we need to forget order and sequence, and relax, freeing the inner feelings that flow from the unconscious. Free-writing and jot-downing are crucial elements for creative writing.

Slave to the mind! Sheer control of consciousness can block our creative work. Unlocking the unconsciousness by free-writing and jot-down allows innovative ideas to flow, sparking an inventive passion to write.

5. Using Both the Conscious and the Unconscious[61]

Few extraordinary geniuses such as Mozart,[62] can immediately tap into the unconscious and directly work from it to the conscious. Most other great artistic geniuses, such as Tchaikovsky,[63] confess that they work from the conscious to the unconscious, and vice versa.

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[57] Freud, p. 127. "The creative writer does the same as the child at play. He creates a world of fantasy which he takes very seriously—that is, which he invests with large amounts of emotion—while separating it sharply from reality. Language has presented this relationship between children's play and poetic creation." Almost all psychologists agree that the most exuberant peak in creativity is in early childhood.

[58] Fred B. Craddock, *As One Without Authority* (St. Louis: Chalice Press, 2001), p. 127.

[59] Maslow, *Toward a Psychology of Being*, pp. 139-140. "So also in my subjects were many other dichotomies resolved into unities, cognition vs. conation (heart vs. head, wish vs. fact) became cognition 'structured with' conation as instinct and reason came to the same conclusions. Duty became pleasure, and pleasure merged with duty. The distinction between work and play became shadowy. How could selfish hedonism be opposed to altruism, when altruism became selfishly pleasurable?"

[60] Craddock, *Authority*, p. 127.

[61] Cf., William J.J. Gordon and Tony Poze, "Conscious/Subconscious Interaction in a Creative Act," *The Journal of Creative Behavior* 15:1 (1981).

[62] Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, "A Letter (1789)" in *Creativity: Selected Readings*. From Mozart's letter, it is evident that there are some geniuses who can be inspired in the first sitting, almost perfectly, without any necessary conscious editing or adding to it.

"When I am, as it were, completely myself, entirely alone, and of good cheer—say, traveling in a carriage, or walking after a good meal, or during the night when I cannot sleep; it is on such occasions that my ideas flow best and most abundantly. Whence and how they come, I know not; nor can I force them" (p.55). "All this inventing, this producing, takes place in a pleasing lively dream, still the actual hearing of the tout ensemble is after all the best"(p.55). "I have said before, already finished; and it rarely differs on paper from what it was in my imagination" (p.56).

[63] Peter Ilich Tchaikovsky, "Letters (1878), in *Creativity*. Unlike Mozart, great musician Tchaikovsky used the unconscious creative inner feeling with later conscious work.

"Generally speaking, the germ of a future composition comes suddenly and unexpectedly. If the soil is ready—that is to say, if the disposition for work is there—it takes root with extraordinary force and rapidity, shoots up through the earth, puts forth branches, leaves and, finally blossoms. I cannot define the creative process in any

We cannot wait until our unconscious begins to work by itself; when we work consciously, such as study exegesis, study people, read books, articles, and newspapers, our unconscious also starts to work. When our unconscious starts to work, our conscious can be inspirationally influenced by it. Craddock refers to a psychologist's theory:

> And it can be a healthy exercise to act first and feel later. The old James-Lange theory in psychology insisted that feeling follows the act. Interest in a book follows study. How often we don't really want to, but we do, then we are glad we did.[64]

This is reason why we should us the conscious and the unconscious relationally, erotics of interpretation as Alla Bozarth-Campbell states. "Waiting for the heart to prompt us would bring the world to a grinding halt."[65]

III. Women Preachers and Creativity

1. *Lectio Divina* and Using the Unconscious

Most women preachers in *Birthing the Sermon* used *Lectio Divina,* or a very similar meditative method, as a way of listening from the unconscious.[66] This is a stunning discovery. *Lectio Divina* is a method that has historically been practiced in the monastery for meditating

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other way than by this simile"(p.57). "Sometimes they break the thread of inspiration for a considerable time, so that I have to seek it again—often in vain. In such cases cool headwork and technical knowledge have to come to my aid. Even in the works of the greatest master we find such moments, when the organic sequence fails and a skillful join has to be made, so that the parts appear as a completely welded whole. But it cannot be avoided. If that condition of mind and soul, which we call inspiration, lasted long without intermission, no artist could survive it…. It is already a great thing if the main ideas and general outline of a work come without any racking of brains, as the result of that supernatural and inexplicable force we call inspiration"(p.58).

"Do not believe those who try to persuade you that composition is only a cold exercise of the intellect. The only music capable of moving and touching us is that which flows from the depths of a composer's soul when he is stirred by inspiration. There is no doubt that even the greatest musical geniuses have sometimes worked without inspiration. This guest does not always respond to the first invitation. We must always work, and a self-respecting artist must not fold his hands on the pretext that he is not in the mood. If we wait for the mood, without endeavoring to meet it half-way, we easily become indolent and apathetic. We must be patient, and believe that inspiration will come to those who can master their disinclination" (p.58).

"I cannot complain of poverty of imagination or lack of inventive power; but on the other hand, I have always suffered from my want of skill in the management of form. Only after strenuous labor, have I at last succeeded in making the form of my compositions correspond, more or less, with their contents" (p.59).

"I can affirm with joy that I make continual progress on the way of self-development, and am passionately desirous of attaining the highest degree of perfection of which my talents are capable. Therefore I expressed myself badly when I told you yesterday that I transcend my works direct from the first sketches. The process is something more than copying; it is actually a critical examination, leading to correction, occasional additions and frequent curtailments" (p.60).

[64] Craddock, *Authority*, p. 128.

[65] Ibid., "Waiting for the heart to prompt us would bring the world to a grinding halt."

[66] Childers, *Performing*, Childers mentions of *Lectio Divina* in her homiletic textbook, which is very unique. "*Lectio divina*, currently enjoying a resurgence of popular interest, has a long track record of helping Christian preachers open themselves to the voice of the text. When practiced in concert with exegetical efforts and the application of various critical tools, it can lead a preacher to new discoveries—even in texts that have become quite familiar" (p. 97).

with the Bible, especially in the Benedictine order.[67] Most women preachers preferred to use this method and applied it to their preaching preparation process, amazingly accessing the unconsciousness.[68] Blaisdell confesses her secret in making her sermon:

> On Monday I read the scripture, meditate, and journal. I use a form for meditation known as *Lectio Divina*. At this point, I am reading the scripture for my own soul. I am reading less for edification than for what my grandmother would have called sanctification. What is going on inside me? What does this sacred text have to say to me about that? How is the Spirit lifting me beyond myself in this text?[69]

From this confession, we can see several different methods of using the unconscious are intermixed. Using our body (voice: read out loud) is related to using the unconscious; meditation and listening is self-denial, by listening and opening up to something new, be that interpretation or message; journal writing, perhaps free-writing, exposes the unconscious to our specific theme.

2. Free-writing

When one does free-writing,[70] the unconscious flows through the conscious resulting in expression.[71] Blaisdell did more than free-writing for the text, and said, "I try to write in prayer every morning three pages of whatever junk is in my head."[72] Aside from the preaching text, she was doing her own free-writing (journal) every morning. Later, she collected all her written thoughts to writes her sermon, as well as free-writing of preaching text. She was also free-writing without any direct text for writing sermon. To write the first draft of a sermon, she

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[67] *Lectio Divina*, "a very ancient art, practiced at one time by all Christians, is the technique known as *lectio divina* - a slow, contemplative praying of the Scriptures which enables the Bible, the Word of God, to become a means of union with God. This ancient practice has been kept alive in the Christian monastic tradition, and is one of the precious treasures of Benedictine monastics and oblates. Together with the Liturgy and daily manual labor, time set aside in a special way for *lectio divina* enables us to discover in our daily life an underlying spiritual rhythm. Within this rhythm we discover an increasing ability to offer more of ourselves and our relationships to the Father, and to accept the embrace that God is continuously extending to us in the person of his Son Jesus Christ." Quoted and summarized from http://www.valyermo.com/ld-art.html: 1) *Lectio*: Reading/Listening; 2) *Meditatio*: Meditation; 3) *Oratio*: Prayer; 4) *Comtemplatio*: Comtemplation.

[68] Childers also explains the unconsciousness. "The ability to deepen concentration is closely connected to the ability to reap the rich resources of the unconscious mind. Gaining access to the preacher's unconscious is the key step in reaching the hearer" (p. 103). "To reach the depths of the hearer, it is essential that the preacher be able to gain access to her or his own"(Ibid).

[69] Barbara Shires Blaisdell, in Childers, edit., *Birthing the Sermon*, p.3.

[70] Childers also stresses free-writing. "Writing off the page: The only rules in the 'writing off the page' exercise are that you keep your hand moving across the page and you do it for a prescribed time…. It is perfectly fine to write 'I don't know what to write' over and over until something else comes"(Childers, p.110). "Begin writing, just following the image. Let feelings emerge. Allow the mental scene to unfold as it will" (Ibid).

[71] Lama Surya, "Creativity and Spirituality", pp.38-42. "Art, like love, truly flows when it's allowed to flow unimpeded. Art flows when it's not even tinged by the color of our own prescriptive lens."

[72] Karen Stokes, in *Birthing the Sermon*, p. 136. "At each stage of sermon writing, from the initial brainstorming to the final version, I ask three things: Do I mean it? Do I believe it? And is it faithful to the gospel?"

simply sits in front of her computer and begins free-writing, having confidence all previous works are in her memory, again using her unconscious through free-writing:

> Facing the blank computer screen every Thursday morning is an act of faith. I come to it filled with anxiety, and yet I sit down and begin to write in an attempt to live as if I trust my belief that God will indeed inspire a good word. Almost always words fall across the screen that I didn't know I knew, or believed, or understood, felicitous words for which I cannot take credit.[73]

Then we might say that Blasidell is free-writing in a total of three ways: free-writing for the text, free-writing every morning without text, and free-writing without materials for sermon. Preacher, Loving, adds another kind of free-writing, as she shares:

> Another resource that I'm never without is a small journal to jot down quotes, billboard ads, snatches of conversations I've overheard, lines from plays, metaphors that bubble up, moments in an ordinary day that seem to shimmer briefly with transcendence.[74]

Loving free-writes about everyday life experiences in a small journal that she brings wherever she goes. Another female preacher, Stokes, introduces yet another kind of brainstorming, which is similar to free-writing. She even brainstorms for the preaching text with other types of free-writing:

> Choosing the scripture and theme for each week is just the first part of the brainstorming process. Over time I have realized the importance of brainstorming in my sermon-writing enterprise. It is where I spend the largest percentage of my sermon prep time, hands down. I try not to narrow my options any sooner than I must, in order to leave time and space for the creative workings of the Spirit. It has taken me many years to be comfortable with this openness.[75]

Stokes emphasizes "random" instead of "order," which may insinuate the revolutionary turn in the science of quantum physics that emphasizes "random," "changing," "unpredictable" scientific understanding, which is similar to the Chinese I-Ching philosophy, "Changeology." She states, "By now the direction, or central point, of the sermon has begun to become clear as the random notes and thoughts coalesce in some subconscious way, drawing me closer to that cord of truth."[76]

3. Incubation

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[73] Blasidell, p. 4.
[74] Linda Carolyn Loving, in *Birthing the Sermon*, p. 106.
[75] Stokes, p. 138. See also, "As I read the passage I will be preaching from, I jot lots of notes at random: questions that the scripture raises for me, particular words or lines that resonate, stories or illustrations that come to mind, just about anything that drifts through my consciousness as I let the scripture soak in. This process takes some time, and I usually end up with three to five pages of random ideas. Then I go back and read what I have written, and usually some basic organizing idea begins to come into focus out of the diffuse cloud of questions and associations."
[76] Ibid, p. 140.

Graham Wallas taught that in order to be creative, artists need to incubate their work separately, in days and hours, not finishing in one sitting, rather developing it through several sessions.[77] While doing this, our idea is incubated in the deep ocean of the unconscious, where it is fully growing until it bears a fruit of new inspiration or revelation from the unconscious. Blasidell works each Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday (first draft), giving an "incubation" stage every day, and then takes Friday off. Saturday she begins work again. Incubation is like "simmering" our idea over the week's period until it fully grows and melts within the unconscious, swelling like bread using ferment. Graves, another female preacher, also incubates her ideas, "I have come to appreciate the unconsciousness simmering that goes on as I carry the word that has been planted in me the day before. Something is growing invisibly in the inactivity of that Sabbath space."[78]

To allow for a longer incubation period, it might be advantageous for preachers to begin Sunday evening, although I do not think it is good to start to prepare a sermon several weeks in advance, as most preachers work every week, and I believe preaching is a weekly ministry, as God creates His creation within a week. Female preacher Lundblad also agrees that it is important to start early in her incubation, saying, "Early in the week, Sunday evening or Monday morning, I read the scripture text, or rather, texts. As a Lutheran pastor, I'm guided by the lectionary. So I read three lessons plus the psalm. I don't do anything except listen and pray."[79]

4. Body and the Unconscious

Many woman preachers confessed to finding a highly creative connection to the unconscious when they use their bodies, voices and movements.[80] Unlike our minds, our bodies are more closely related to our unconsciousness. If our minds are the medium for the conscious, our bodies are the medium for our unconscious. Blasidell explains, "I also find that my writing improves when my body is active."[81] Similarly, Childers declares how important using our bodies is for connecting to the unconscious:

> I depend on my muscles to do a big part of my thinking. Giving my voice and body to the text—reading the biblical text out loud, pacing while reading, and projecting myself into the biblical author's shoes—often tells me as much about a text as the commentators do. Out-loud performance—of the biblical text and of the sermon manuscript as it develops—is the most valuable tool I have.[82]

5. Spirit and the Unconscious

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[77] Wallas, *The Art of Thought* excerpts, in *Creativity*, pp.91-97, on incubation.
[78] Mary G. Graves, in *Birthing the Sermon*, p. 86.
[79] Barbara K. Lundblad, p. 121.
[80] Childers also emphasizes the body movement that is related to the unconsciousness and creativity. "Many artists say they find the rhythmic movement of such an exercise and repetitive movement in general helpful in reaching a deeper state of concentration…Cooking, driving, and showering all involve repetitive, regular movement. All of them may facilitate deeper concentration and prime the pump to that great reservoir of creativity, the unconscious" (Childers, p. 105).
[81] Blaisdell, p. 5.
[82] Childers, *Birthing the Sermon*, p. 39.

Creativity/Spirituality

As mysticism and creativity are related, Childers knows the Holy Spirit and the unconscious are interrelated as well. For Childers, it is possible to "train the unconsciousness to kick in,"[83] but it is expressed as her memorable experience of "a ten o'clock appointment with the Holy Spirit every Tuesday morning."[84] In my view, "Spirit" is Christian vocabulary used to explain deep inspiration and revelation from God, or the unconscious.[85] The pagans disagree, however, and believe it is from the neutral unconsciousness that we experience inspiration and motivation. For me, as a Christian thinker and homiletician, I interpret it like this: as God allows sun and rain to the good or bad,[86] Creator God created the unconscious so that humans can find creativity and meet the holy and inspiration.[87] In other words, when Christians experience the unconscious as the holy, they confess it as Holy Spirit, yet when pagans experience it, they might reason it to be a psychological experience for creativity.[88] [89] This is my hypothetical understanding.

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[83] Ibid., p. 38.
[84] Ibid.
[85] Childers, Performing, p. 101. Childers sees the humanistic and Platonistic imago dei inside human beings as God-spark, which is a part of creativity. "From Juergen Moltman to Mary Daly, there is no shortage of theologians and writers on spirituality who see in the *imago dei*, the suggestion that the human capacity for creativity is God-given and reflects God's imprint on our natures. In theological terms, creativity may be understood as a spiritual experience that has its ultimate source in the 'God-spark' in us."
[86]. Matthew 5:45.
[87] Paul Henry Carr, "Engaging Paul Tillich's Thinking on Religion and Science: Science and Religion: Original Unity and the Courage to Create," *Zygon* 36:2 (2001) pp. 257-258. Carr stunningly suggests that God above God is a source for creativity.

"Galileo's scientific creativity confirmed new ideas, which conflicted with geocentric cosmology. He had the 'courage to create'—the title of a book by Tillich's student and friend, Rollo May (1975). May defines creativity as 'bringing something new into being as well as an expression of our being. Courage is not the absence of despair but the capacity to move ahead in spite of despair' (1975, 12). The source of the 'courage to create' expressed in Tillich's *Courage to Be (*1952) was the 'God above God.' By this, Tillich meant the God who transcends theism and the concrete symbols of organized religion. The theistic objectification of a God who is a being must be transcended by the 'God above God,' the ground of all that has being and the source of all existence. Making God into a being would make God finite" (p. 258). If God were a being, an invincible tyrant, then, being all knowing and powerful, God could threaten our freedom and personhood. "The 'God above God' is present all mystical longing, yet mysticism must be transcended in order to reach him…. The 'Courage to Be' is rooted in the God who appears when God has disappeared in the anxiety of doubt" (Tillich 1952, 190). In completely accepting the possibility that God does not exist, one discovers that there is still something there, the 'God above God.'" "Religion is a source of the courage to create, which is essential for progress in scientific knowledge. Reconciliation and reunion characterize the new reality, the New Being, the new state of things, on which Christianity is based" (p.258).

I think that religion itself is the source of creativity, but now religion seems to go back to a conservative fixed system. The creator of God is the source for creating human beings, by the creative power of the Spirit, as shown in the creative incarnation of Christ.
Lama Surya, "Creativity and Spirituality," pp.38-42. Surya explains the depth of the unconscious in the Easter religion. "Let's not be afraid of our emotions; let's not try to suppress, smooth out the waves in the ocean of our psyche. That's childish. And it's futile, too. In fact, the more we can dredge up from the bottomless ocean of our unconscious, the better we get to know ourselves. In Tibetan Buddhism, this is called 'dredging the depth of *samsara* and liberating the lower realms.' So let's go with the flow and discover that even when we seem to fall overboard, we never drown. Let's fearlessly enjoy the waves."
[89] Patrick Luyten and Jozef Corveleyn, "Mysticism, Creativity, and Psychoanalysis: Still Crazy After All These Years?" *The International Journal for the Psychology of Religion* 13:2 (2003). Controversy between mysticism and creativity regarding consciousness and unconsciousness is well explicated in this article.

6. Condition of Creativity: Do Not Worry!

To be a creative writer for sermon, preachers must be bold and courageous.[90] Precision, correctness and evaluation all harm the creative freethinking of preachers. Clader penetrates this problem, "I try just to write. I try not to worry about form or style as I blurt out the ideas that have been steeping all week."[91] The most serious blockage to creativity is an interior and exterior scanning voice of evaluation, good or bad. Even before writing sermon, preachers feel fear and anxiety, thinking that their sermon and preaching may not be welcomed or please the audience, or worse, that it may be criticized.[92] Barbara Taylor pinpoints this problem:

> It is not "good" voices or "bad" voices that I am listening for, but voices that come from somewhere near the heart and that do not seem afraid to be heard. Or if they are afraid, then they are still willing to be heard, and that courage makes them worth listening to.[93]

Unless preachers overcome this blockage to creativity, they cannot become creative preachers. As Peter Elbow insists that most writers need to separate the process of generating ideas from the process of shaping and editing,[94] preachers should appreciate the two major stages in their preparation of preaching: invention stage and editing stage. Accordingly, they should not worry about the editing stage while in the invention stage, within which they should feel free to invent and create as much content as possible to preach.

"One of the most exciting and thought provoking aspects of Raab's article is her hypothesis that religious experiences and creativity share common psychological process. In short, she tries to demonstrate that both types of experiences involve a fusion between self and non-self, a state characterized by the loss of self-consciousness and joy" (pp.101-2). "However, sublimation seems to be an important process involved in both creativity as well as in mystical experiences (e.g., renouncing worldly pleasures)" (p.103). "In extreme forms, this temporary disappearance of the split between ego and superego is linked with a state of hypomania or even mania. Thus, perhaps some religious experiences (and creative experiences as well) involved not a liberation from what Raab calls the 'tyranny of the conscious mind,' but from the pressure of the superego" (Ibid). "Thus, it seems that affective intensity does not determine whether an experience is interpreted as religious or not. Second, they found that only participants who were religious were likely to interpret these situations as religious experience. Furthermore, participants who believed in a personal God saw in these experiences the manifestation of a personal God, whereas participants who only believed in an impersonal transcendent power saw in these experiences the manifestation of such a mysterious power" (p.105). "To the contrary: What empirical research suggests is that the qualities of the person determine whether the same experience is felt as mystical (better: religious), or whether just as blissful or special" (Ibid).

[90] Freud, *Creativity,* p. 134. "How the writer accomplishes this is his innermost secret; the essential *ars poetica* lies in the technique of overcoming the feeling of repulsion in us which is undoubtedly connected with the barriers that rise between each single ego and the others."

[91] Linda L. Clader, *Birthing the Sermon*, p. 60.

[92] Lama Surya, "Creativity and Spirituality." He encourages expression accomplished free from worry or fear of mistakes.
"When I first to teach Dharma, the Dalai Lama—a mentor to me, an inspiration—had some words of advice. Don't be afraid to make mistakes, he said, otherwise you'll never do anything.... Sometimes, even before I write a poem, I edit it in my mind. I rule out fertile, preconscious material, great swaths of it, before it ever meets paper. The original poem doesn't appear. But what about trying to simply write? Keep the hand moving. One can always edit later. If we're not careful, the internal editor can become too much like an inner tyrant; it can prevent us from finding our own voice…. One can feel more open, freer, without that inner critical voice."

[93] Barbara Brown Taylor, *Birthing the Sermon*, p. 160.

[94] Margaret Moers Wenig, *Birthing the Sermon*, p. 188.

7. Listening to Others

As postmodern ethos indicates, the postmodern truth claim comes from others, not only from self and from the individual. Individual and subjective search for creativity and new voices may generate blockage without listening to others, other marginal voice, and other community, local voice. Therefore, Lundblad leaves her "scribbled notes behind and [tries] to listen to voices in the congregation."[95] She gathers up, "her own responses (free-form writing, naïve questions, odd details, and perhaps a few intuitive insights) along with voices from the community, real or imagined. She'll go back to the scripture text guided by the voices from the community."[96]

8. Form and Creativity

Like Craddock's case, Stokes also utilizes creativity applied to "form" as well as "content."[97] "So now the fun starts. At this point I begin to give serious consideration to form as well as content."[98] When she writes a sermon, she gives careful consideration to "how the message will best be communicated,"[99] and she says, "Eugene Lowry's rhetorical strategies for 'centering' a sermon—using image, story, or argument—are very helpful to me at this stage of the creative process."[100] Creativity is to be applied to form and content together. While Stokes seems to select from a toolbox of sermonic form, which has three types (image, argument, or story), she looks to be creative with each type, perhaps called, "creative selecting" or "selective creating" of a sermonic form.

> Thus, whether the rhetorical center is image, argument, or story, my goal is that each sermon will have a narrative flow and that the listeners will be engaged on the intuitive, cognitive, and emotive levels. The only distinction is that when I write an image-centered sermon, my primary focus is on the intuitive experience of the listener, whereas an argument focuses primarily on the cognitive and a story on the emotive.[101]

9. Harmony of the Conscious and the Unconscious

As Alla Bozarth-Campbell stated,[102] we should utilize the conscious and the unconscious together as the "erotics of interpretation."[103] Stokes also shares how she balances both together,

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[95] Lundblad, p. 123.
[96] Ibid., p. 124.
[97] Stokes, p. 140.
[98] Ibid., p.141.
[99] Ibid.
[100] Ibid.
[101] Ibid., p.142.
[102] Alla Bozarth-Campbell, in Chapter 3, Unconscious/Conscious, emphasizes the erotic, relational balance between the conscious and the unconscious.

"What is needed, says Jung, is a creative balance, a way of access between conscious and unconscious, not the annihilation of either"(p. 96). "One of the main objectives of the art taught by Stanislavski in order to enhance and enliven the conscious art of acting: Our conscious technique was directed on the one side towards putting our subconscious to work and on the other to learning how not to interfere with it once it was in action. Stanislavski

"all things considered," "When a sermon goes well, when all the creativity, prayer, openness, and study coalesce into a moment of deep and authentic communication, when the good news of the gospel is preached and heard, I am usually far too relieved to slip into the sin of pride."[104] Some preachers who were influenced by rationalistic homiletics use only their consciousness, but when using conscious and unconscious faculties of whole human beings, preaching would be more fully-grown and mature.[105]

Conclusion: Toward an Authentic, Creative Preaching!

This chapter began as a foundation to discover a better systematic development between creativity and homiletic theory, to help preachers achieve authenticity and creativity in their weekly creating processes. Preachers should be creative artists so that every sermon and preaching is new in each situation. This is enormously demanding, burdensome work for busy pastor-preachers. Having asked several questions from the start of this paper, I may be able to conclude that homiletics and creativity theories are already closely related, and fully incorporated into some of the New Homiletics. Yet it seems that it is not fully systematically developed until it becomes mandatory to teach preachers the close relation. We discovered there are similarities among creative-homileticians: an effort to use the unconscious in harmony with the conscious, free-writing, the use of the body, contact with the Spirit, *Lectio Divina*, dialectics, conversation, imagination, allowing an incubation stage, and so on. We also realize the ideal conditions for creativity include silence, relaxation, self-negation, avoiding precision and judgment, embracing uncertainty, playing with the text, etc. However, we found that there is some dissimilarity. Craddock and a few women preachers' emphasize creativity of sermonic form and delivery, while other preachers overlook these topics. Moreover, there exists a difference in emphasis on using the conscious, which may become a modernistic rational approach, unlike the postmodern para-rational one, and the harmony of both. Preachers may extract crucial information from this topic, which prevents them from becoming bored, routine, mechanical, unimaginative and unauthentic.

Creative theory is not an option for preachers and homileticians; it is crucial that both to be developed more fully and systematically. Therefore, we may be able to pray to God, "Open my eyes O Lord!" Alla Bozarth-Campbell declares:

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considered acting to be the organic blending of physiological and psychological processes in a creative act: Real art is a union of the deep substance of inner experience and the vivid outer expression of it" (p.100).

[103] Alla Bozarth-Campbell also introduces, from Jung, the idea of balance. "Jung writes of the balance described above as a creative balance or dialogue between the conscious and unconscious portions of the psyche" (p. 95).

[104] Stokes, p. 143.

[105] Legate, "Zen and Creativity," also penetrates balance and interaction between the conscious and the unconscious.

"He (Suzuki) states further that this state of mind involves a unity of the conscious and the unconscious: To be consciously unconscious or to be unconsciously conscious is the secret of *nirvana* out of which issues the *myoyu* (that which cannot be thought about) of creativity (Suzuki, 1959)" (p. 30). "This is the meaning of Suzuki's statement that one becomes 'unconsciously conscious.' There is no conscious will manipulating the creative act. The unconscious, which is Suzuki's translation (1959) of wu wei, simply flows right through the conscious mind unhindered by any conscious will censoring or analyzing what one is doing. One is then 'doing without doing'" (p. 31).

> The creative writer's Idea is juxtaposed with God the creator as creative Source, the Energy or Activity is placed with God the Savior as Creative Expression, and the Creative Power is aligned with the Holy Spirit, proceeding from the Idea and Energy together and flowing back to the writer to make her or him, as it were, the audience of her or his own work.[106]

Thus, we can agree that "the Christian metaphors of the creativity of God can also apply to the creativity of the human artist."[107]

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[106] Alla Bozarth-Campbell, p. 12.
[107] Ibid.

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