"With this book Emma O'Donnell establishes herself as a valued partner in the conversation that is comparative theology. The work is valuable not only for her comprehensive treatment of the scholarship on time and liturgy in Judaism and Christianity and her adroit handling of methodological issues but also for the real people that she brings into the mix. The experience of time is a most important issue in liturgical studies, and O'Donnell's work is an important contribution to our understanding of how they relate to one another."

—John F. Baldovin, SJ
Boston College School of Theology and Ministry

"O'Donnell's path-breaking volume successfully presents a compelling and nuanced explanation of liturgical time as it is experienced both similarly and also differently by Catholic and Jewish worshipers. Mobilizing a rich and interdisciplinary range of theoretical perspectives, she deftly weaves together insights from the liturgical theologies of these two traditions, ritual studies, comparative theology, and more. Applying these to her own field work, she broadens and deepens our understanding of the purpose of the anamnetic memories of past and future constructed by regular participation in liturgical life. Readers of all religions will find themselves not only enlightened but also motivated to reflect on their own prayer practices."

—Ruth Langer, Rabbi, PhD
Associate Director, Center for Christian-Jewish Learning
Boston College

"This book—both scholarly and highly personal—analyzes how the practice of liturgy redefines and enriches the experience of time in its spiritual dimensions. Emma O'Donnell performs a feat that few can equal, bringing together Jewish and Christian practices and understandings so that both sides can feel that she has their own interests and sympathies at heart. Strong on both theology and critical theory, this book draws particularly on sensitive interviews with those deeply engaged in the liturgical lives of their respective communities. The spirit of Vatican II is alive and well in this remarkable book, which must be read and meditated on as a prolegomenon to liturgical studies in a comparative setting."

—Theodore A. Perry, PhD
Emeritus Professor of Hebrew Bible and Comparative Literature
University of Connecticut

"In this excellent book, Emma O'Donnell considers the experience of time in the ritual contexts of Jewish and Christian liturgy. Convinced as she is that religiously formed experience of time is part and parcel of both Jewish and Christian faith, O'Donnell embarks on a journey exploring the subjective realm of experience in both liturgical traditions. This detailed comparative and empirical research contributes not only to the domain of liturgical theology but also to the fields of comparative theology and interreligious studies. O'Donnell's understanding of liturgy as a site for interreligious learning especially will be welcomed by scholars interested in the ritual dimension of interreligious encounters."

—Marianne Moyaert
Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam
The Netherlands

Emma O'Donnell

Remembering the Future

The Experience of Time in Jewish and Christian Liturgy

A PUEBLO BOOK

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So teach us to count our days that we may gain a wise heart.

Psalm 90:12

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Preface

I awake to utter silence. It is a still night, and through the windows I see the brilliant stars sliding in their slow and steady journey across the arc of the sky. The time is 2:00 a.m., and I know that at this hour, across the field under the star-scattered sky, in the chapel nestled inside the monastic cloister, they are chanting. Through the silence, I imagine I hear the voices steadfastly chanting the psalms in Latin, their measured rhythm patiently marking the passage of time.

The next day there is hay to be bailed and brought into the barns. All afternoon we labor under the sun, heaving bails high onto trucks, the fields ringing with laughter and the clatter of engines. After the last bail is in, the clamor subsides and silence slowly settles back onto the fields and barns. And into this silence enters one of the monastery bells, intoning the hour of prayer. It is 5:00 p.m., and Vespers is about to begin.

In the monastery church, a new order of time drifts in and rests upon the tired bodies whose muscles still ache, skin still warm from the sun. With each intonation of the bell, as steady as a heartbeat at rest, time takes on a new shape. Jagged breath and spinning thoughts come to rest with the rhythm of the bell. As one, the community inhales and exhales in chant, finding the pitch and rhythm that will sustain this time of prayer, this unique hour existing only here and now and measured by the ritual and the rhythm of chant. Existing only in this point of the present, yet also dwelling in all spaces of the remembered past and anticipated future. As the ancient poetry of the psalms remembers and announces the stories of the past, the liturgy is held aloft by hope, ritually performing the anticipation of a new world.

It was during visits to a Benedictine monastery over the course of a number of years that I began to see the relationship between liturgy and time. As I looked deeper into it, the particular aspects of the correspondence between liturgy and time that unfolded proved to be subtle and elusive, but very real. I began to see that ritual performance, especially in the contexts of the highly temporal narratives and time-focused theologies of Judaism and Christianity, has the capacity to transform the way that time is experienced.

This book explores the experience of time in the ritual contexts of Jewish and Christian liturgy. Many studies have addressed the relationship of liturgy to time, both in terms of the annual calendar and daily scheduling, yet this one is different. This book examines the *experience* of time in liturgy, and, in doing so, it addresses the existential human condition of being located in time and the fundamental awareness of time as it is informed by religious tradition and practice.

Jewish and Christian narratives of the religiously envisioned past and future are embodied liturgically, and this book charts the ways that liturgical communities perform the temporal orientations of the religious tradition, clothing themselves in the memory and hope embedded in their narratives. It argues that the ritual enactment of collective religious memory and hope evokes a unique landscape of time, the contours of which are determined by the ritually remembered past and the anticipated eschatological future.

The title of this book evokes a complex temporality—indeed, an interpenetration of the past, present, and future—evident in both Jewish and Christian thought and ritually performed in liturgy. Since its earliest beginnings, Christian thought has envisioned a reshaped temporality, a virtual temporal interpenetration. As Louie-Marie Chauvet observes, "As the ancient anaphoras show, in the recalling—the anamnesis—of the *second* coming of the Lord Jesus, as well as of his death and resurrection, the Christian memory is eschatological: it is memory of the future."[1]

[1] Louis-Marie Chauvet, *Symbol and Sacrament: A Sacramental Reinterpretation of Christian Existence*, trans. Patrick Madigan and Madeleine Beaumont (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1995), 239.

A similar virtual reshaping of time, in which the boundaries of the past, present, and future stretch and become porous, is seen in Jewish thought. Jewish thought evidences none of the radical reworking of time characteristic of Christian thought, however, the latter of which arises out of belief in the divine identity of Jesus Christ and the need to formulate the role of the paschal mystery in history. The vision of time and history in Jewish thought, while less radically reshaped, is flexible and interactive, determined not by the straight ruler of chronology but by the narratives of religious tradition and the emphases of religious memory. In an analogy offered by Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi, rabbinical thought seems to "play with time as though with an accordion, expanding and collapsing it at will."[2] In Jewish practice, moreover, the sense of communal identification and collective memory is central within a tradition which is both intensely memorial and eschatological. In the words of Orthodox Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik, "To exist as a Jew means to be at the juncture of past and future, of that which is no longer real and that which is not yet real. Our mission is to live in both dimensions."[3]

In the temporal landscape of both Jewish and Christian liturgies, time is experienced as multidimensional; memory is eschatological and hope remembers. Hope, as the anticipation of a religiously envisioned future, engages the remembered past and takes from it promises for the future. It sees God's intervention in history, in time, to be a promise for the "future history." Memory speaks to hope and hope speaks to memory. This, in other words, is eschatological memory; this is remembering the future.

Part 1 introduces the concept of the disintegration and subsequent reintegration of the boundaries of the past, present, and future in the context of liturgical performance and lays the methodological foundation for this book. Part 2 takes an ethnographic

[2] Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi, *Zakhor: Jewish History and Jewish Memory* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1982), 17.

[3] Joseph B. Soloveitchik, *Festival of Freedom: Essays on Pesah and the Haggadah*, ed. Joel B. Wolowesky and Reuven Ziegler (Jersey City, NJ: Ktav Publishing House, 2006), 177.

turn and presents interviews conducted with Jewish and Christian individuals who reflect on their own experiences of time in the contexts of halakhic Jewish practice or as members of Catholic religious orders. Part 3 addresses the Jewish experience of time, beginning with an investigation into time in Jewish thought and followed by an exploration of the experience of time in Jewish liturgy. Part 4 addresses the experience of time in the Christian context, following the same format as part 3. Finally, part 5 examines the ritual, performed nature of liturgy and considers the ways in which ritual performance shapes the experience of time.

In the Christian liturgical context, this book focuses on the Catholic celebration of the Liturgy of the Hours. The Liturgy of the Hours performs the Christian narrative of salvation history within the setting of liturgical services that regularly punctuate the hours of day and night. In the Jewish liturgical context, it addresses a wider range of liturgies, for although the Jewish daily services are celebrated at intervals throughout the hours of the day like the Liturgy of the Hours, the intensely memorial and eschatological holidays of Passover, Tish'ah b'Av, and Shabbat are highly influential in shaping the liturgical experience of time.

This study moves beyond the most readily observable elements of liturgy, such as history, text, and rubrics and enters into the subjective realm of experience, which offers no clear platform for observation and interpretation. It does so in the attempt to better understand an element intrinsic to human experience, i.e., the experience of time. It embarks on this journey motivated by the conviction that the religiously formed experience of time is an integral part of the experience of faith in both Jewish and Christian contexts.

I wish to thank all those who participated in the interviews for part 2 of this book, giving their time and sharing so openly their intimate experiences of liturgy and time. I am particularly grateful to the community of the Abbey of Regina Laudis, for their participation and also for teaching me about community, tradition, and the practice of living in time.

I would like to acknowledge and thank the members of my doctoral committee, whose guidance was invaluable when this project

was in its earliest form: John F. Baldovin, SJ, for his support and clear vision of the path forward; Ruth Langer, for her indefatigable attention to detail and scholarly accountability; and Liam Bergin, for his generosity, his precise attention to language, and his warm support. I also wish to thank Hans Christoffersen, Patrick McGowan, and their colleagues at Liturgical Press; my academic community at Boston College; Mary Troxell, for her friendship and for that invaluable necessity, a room in which to write; Tony Perry and Marc Epstein, for their insistence that my out-of-the-box ideas matter; and Catherine Cornille and Marianne Moyaert, for paving the way with their own work and for supporting mine. I would also like to thank Arvo Pärt for his musical compositions which kept me company as I wrote this book, and the work of the Paleolithic artists who painted the walls of the Chauvet Cave, whose paintings ignited in me thoughts on time, memory, and the divine.

The discussions of collective memory in this book are dedicated to the memory of the members of my family whose lives were taken in the Holocaust—my great-grandparents and many of their children and grandchildren, killed at Auschwitz in 1944—and to the memory of my grandmother, Sheindl, and the others who survived, each of whom passed on the gift of collective memory and hope across the generations. And to all the members of my family, with love.

I especially want to thank two people to whom my gratitude knows no bounds: Valery, for being my companion every step of the way, for listening tirelessly, and for his incomparable generosity; and finally, my mother, Patricia O'Donnell, for everything—for the gift of life, for laughter, and for inspiring me with her own writing.

Part 1

The Liturgical Experience of Time

Chapter 1

Liturgical Time

These are the set times of the LORD*, the sacred occasions, which you shall celebrate each at its appointed time. (Lev 23:4)*[1]

The immediate event—the liturgy—makes sense and has a meaning for our lives only because it contains the other two dimensions. Past, present, and future interpenetrate and touch upon eternity.

—Joseph Ratzinger[2]

INTRODUCTION

The traditions of both Christianity and Judaism are intimately related to the element of time. The religious narratives speak of a world in which time is created and determined by God, in which the unfolding through time of a mythologized history expresses God's will, and in which the future is given shape by the expectation of eschatological redemption. In this atmosphere of time, Christians and Jews return time and again to cycles of prayer, in which they gather to ritually perform these temporal narratives. They perform the memory of the past, the experience of the present, and the anticipation of the future. This book examines the interaction of communal religious memory and eschatological anticipation within Jewish and Christian liturgical performance. It illustrates how communal memory and anticipation, operating together in ritual performances infused with the awareness of time, contribute to a liturgical reshaping of the experience of time.

[1] New Jewish Publication Society translation.

[2] Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, *The Spirit of the Liturgy* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2000), 60.

Religious traditions provide metanarratives that shape the way that one's experience in the world is interpreted, and this interpretation is ingrained through religious ritual, from the simplest rituals of daily life to the most complex rituals of liturgical performance. Liturgy thus has the capacity to influence the way its participants formulate even the most fundamental elements of human experience, such as the experience of time. The centrality of time—including time measurement, time consciousness, and notions of historical progression—to Jewish and Christian thought and religious practice suggests that the elemental human experience of the passing of time is taken up and experientially transformed in these traditions.

Jewish and Christian traditions each understand the biblical narrative of the past to inform the way that the present world is interpreted and the present time experienced. The memorialized narrative of the past also indicates a shape for the future, and inversely, the contours of the envisioned eschatological future influence the perception of the present in each tradition. This dynamic lends a particular texture to the sense of the present, formed in the tension between a communally remembered narrative of the past and a communally anticipated vision of the future. Informed by the narratives and conceptual structures of each religion, this particular texture, or temporal landscape, constitutes a unique sense of the present. This book investigates this sense of the present, referred to here as the "liturgical present," and charts the ways in which Jewish and Christian narratives and liturgical practices inform the experience of existing within time.

The motivation for this book arose from a fascination with the experience of time. Our lives are so encased by time that it seems we are held captive within its inescapable structure. Yet time cannot be grasped, and it perpetually recedes. This condition has long inspired wonder and despair in many, as expressed by Saint Augustine's plaintive observation in *Confessions* that "time flies so quickly from future into past that it is an interval with no duration. If it has duration, it is divisible into past and future. But the present occupies no space."[3] And present in both Jewish and Christian

[3] Augustine, *Confessions*, trans. Henry Chadwick (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), 11.15.20.

liturgical practices is a preoccupation with measuring and contemplating time: the daily, weekly, and annual cycles of prayer require precise measurements of time, and Jewish and Christian liturgical celebrations are infused with expressions of memory and hope, repeatedly gesturing toward the past and the future.

According to sociologist Daniele Hervieu-Leger, religious rituals are defined by their enactments of memory, hope, and the marking of time. "And what characterizes a religious rite in relation to all other forms of social ritualization," Hervieu-Leger proposes, "is that the regular repetition of a ritually set pattern of word and gesture exists in order to mark the passage of time (as well as the transience of each individual life incorporated in the chain) with the recall of the foundational events."[4] In marking the transience of the lives of individuals, ritual meditates on cyclical time as experienced through the cycles of birth and death. And, in the recollection of religious or primordial history, ritual also contemplates historical time, experienced as the imagined ancient past.[5]

The ways in which this ritual marking of time is *experienced* in liturgy have not been thoroughly explored. While there are many studies of the role of time in Jewish and Christian liturgies, with few exceptions the main focus of discourse on the relationship between time and liturgy is the liturgical calendar, including studies of the development of the liturgical calendar, the relationship of cosmic cycles to liturgical practices, and the particular times of day when certain liturgies are performed. This means that, of the great wealth of theological work addressing the relationship between liturgy and time, the vast majority discusses the time within which liturgy is performed. This may seem to be a self-evident observation, for what else would be the focus of reflection on the relationship between liturgy and time other than the time within which liturgies are performed?

[4] Daniele Hervieu-Leger, *Religion as a Chain of Memory* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2000), 125.

[5] Anthropologist Paul Connerton argues for increased attention to the transmission of collective memory through "commemorative ceremonies and bodily practices" and investigates how "images of the past are conveyed and sustained by (more or less ritual) performances." Paul Connerton, *How Societies Remember* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 40.

This book proposes, however, that the time within which liturgy is performed is only one element of the relationship between liturgy and time, and that a great and largely untapped wealth of meaning can be found in exploring the way in which time is molded and experienced within liturgy. The relationship between liturgy and time encompasses not only the time within which liturgies are performed but also the *liturgies within which time is performed*. This book demonstrates how the religious narratives and theological traditions of Judaism and Christianity allow the performance of liturgy to transform the sense of time, bringing the past and the future into dialogue with the present; in other words, it examines the liturgical performance of time.

THE BIBLICAL CREATION OF TIME

Christianity and Judaism are each built around the notion of historical time; each was born out of the shared landscape of the narrative of the Hebrew Bible, and each is shaped by a biblical understanding of the progression of history. The biblical narrative paints a temporal landscape in which the unfolding of history is of utmost importance. That one event was followed by another bears great significance in biblical thought: God's voice was heard in history, and the divine promises were fulfilled.

The Hebrew Bible tells a story bound by time, beginning with the creation of time and continuing with the development of a people through time. The opening word of Genesis, which serves as the first line of both the Jewish and Christian sacred texts, is the Hebrew word *bereshit*, "in the beginning." The *bet* at the beginning of this word has multiple connotations, meaning alternately "in," "with," or "when." In the context of Genesis 1:1, it has been translated and interpreted in multiple ways. The King James Bible translates the *bet* as "in": "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." The New Revised Standard Version, on the other hand, maintains the "in," but includes the temporal designation "when": "In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth . . ." Reflecting rabbinic interpretations of this verse, the New Jewish Publication Society translation favors the temporal indicator and translates the line as "When God began to create heaven and

earth . . .” As in the Hebrew original, each of these diverse translations introduces the sacred text with an evocation of time.

The first chapter of Genesis offers a narration about the creation of the world, and significantly, about the establishment of night and day to mark time. The first thing to be introduced after the creation of heaven and earth is the division between night and day: “Then God said, ‘Let there be light’; and there was light. And God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness. God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day” (Gen 1:3-5). The creation of undifferentiated light is immediately followed by the division of light from darkness, establishing the foundational temporal distinction of day and night. The categorization of time into day and night is developed further in the narration of the fourth day:

> And God said, “Let there be lights in the dome of the sky to separate the day from the night; and let them be for signs and for seasons and for days and years, and let them be lights in the dome of the sky to give light upon the earth.” And it was so. God made the two great lights—the greater light to rule the day and the lesser light to rule the night—and the stars. God set them in the dome of the sky to give light upon the earth, to rule over the day and over the night, and to separate the light from the darkness. And God saw that it was good. (Gen 1:14-18)

Here, the categorization of time is celebrated; time is divided and put in order. No longer a meaningless void of timelessness, the world becomes organized in a system of days and nights. It is given order, and this order redeems it from the chaos from which the world was created. The creation of day and night gives form and definition to the passing of time, and as indicated in Genesis 1:14, this definition of time is intended to separate time into even more specific divisions. It is to be not only for the division of day and night but also “for signs and for seasons and for days and years.” In this opening narrative, the passing of time is sanctified; the element of time is introduced as a medium of God’s work in the world. Time is equated with progress, and in the progression of time, the idea of past, present, and future arises.

The Hebrew Bible introduced a new sense of time, transforming the cultures that received it with a sense of time as an ongoing continuum of great breadth. In his Haggadah commentary, Rabbi Jonathan Sacks notes that while a sense of cyclical time is innate to animals who observe the cycles of night and day and the changing seasons, the sense of a distant past and a distant future is unique to humans, and it is this sense of the broad reach of the past and future that was introduced and developed in the Hebrew Bible.[6] The shape of time that developed in the Hebrew Bible marked a major departure from the cyclical understandings of time prevalent in the polytheistic traditions out of which the biblical tradition emerged. Within the biblical narrative, Sacks observes, the exodus is one of the first narratives to exert a sizable impact in the development of the idea of time: "For the first time an abyss opened up between the past and the future, Egypt and the promised land. The journey through space, across the wilderness, came to symbolize a journey through time, whose destination is something new, unprecedented, a tomorrow radically unlike yesterday."[7] The narrative of the exodus entails a shift from a vision of time as that which is experienced in the moment and encased within a larger cyclical pattern of seasons into a vision of great chronological breadth.

The vision of time introduced in Scripture provides a structure for understanding change, development, loss, birth, and death. It gives meaning to these processes, revealing an image of time that is ultimately and spiritually meaningful. The biblical conception of time lends itself to understanding that a particular time can be quantitatively like any other time and yet qualitatively different. Through the intervention of divine action, it can be transformed into something entirely unique. It is no longer seen as an endless cycle, mirroring the cycles of the seasons. Nor is it seen as simply a meaningless stream of events moving forward in a linear motion, each moment disappearing into the past without leaving a mark. Rather, in the biblical landscape, the progression of time is given shape and meaning.

[6] Jonathan Sacks, "Time as a Narrative of Hope," in *Rabbi Jonathan Sacks' Haggadah* (New York: Continuum, 2006), 76.

[7] Ibid., 77.

This meaning is also forward looking, as the idea of time indicates that the historical precedents point to future events and a future goal. In the biblical narrative, God's action in history functions as a promise that God will act in the future. The history of divine intervention, as it is preserved and kept alive in communal memory, indicates that the future is no longer entirely unknown and shapeless. In this way, the religious imagination is focused both on the past and the future.

Arising from the biblical text is the notion that memory is a fundamentally religious act.[8] The remembrance of the work of God in history becomes an act of faith—as a thanksgiving for divine action and a hope for future action. The past anticipates the future, and so, just as memory is a religious act, so too is the anticipation of the future. Religious memory provides a shape for the future. The contemplation of the past, present, and future through ritual acts of memory and hope is central to both Jewish and Christian practice.

A CHRISTIAN-JEWISH COMPARATIVE STUDY

Christianity and Judaism each hold visions of time that are notably different in many regards and yet nonetheless very similar. The concept of time in both traditions is based in the narrative of the Hebrew Bible, which introduces time as a linear progression from the distant past to the distant future, imbued with the significance of memory and eschatological hope. Yet despite the similarities, the perception of time is articulated differently in each tradition, reflecting the distinct temporal narrative of each. The distinction is

[8] E.g., "That was for the LORD a night of vigil, to bring them out of the land of Egypt. That same night is a vigil to be kept for the LORD by all the Israelites throughout their generations" (Exod 12:42); "Let the Israelites keep the passover at its appointed time. On the fourteenth day of this month, at twilight, you shall keep it at its appointed time; according to all its statutes and all its regulations you shall keep it" (Num 9:2-3); "You must not eat with it anything leavened. For seven days you shall eat unleavened bread with it—the bread of affliction—because you came out of the land of Egypt in great haste, so that all the days of your life you may remember the day of your departure from the land of Egypt" (Deut 16:3); "Then he took a loaf of bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to them, saying, 'This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me'" (Luke 22:19).

even evidenced in the computation of years, for while the Gregorian calendar counts time forward and backward from the date of the birth of Jesus Christ, the Jewish calendar counts the years based on the date of creation according to rabbinic tradition. The computation of months also differs, as the Gregorian computation is solar whereas the Jewish calendar computes months based on the lunar cycle, set within a calendar that takes account of both lunar and solar cycles.

Christianity and Judaism each maintain distinct emphases of memory and anticipation within their respective visions of time. For Judaism, the sense of memory and historical consciousness is rooted in the narrative of the exodus from Egypt and entrance into the land of Israel, guided by the covenantal relationship between God and Israel. In contrast, the Christian sense of memory, while also understanding itself to be rooted in the narrative of the Hebrew Bible, is based primarily in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

A disparity is also seen in their eschatological visions: For Judaism, the final redemptive vision is of a messianic future yet to come. In contrast, the Christian eschatological vision is considered to be already partially inaugurated, growing out of the tension between the redemption already brought about by Christ and the fullness of the kingdom yet to come. At the same time, both traditions share a vision of earthly time in which the seven-day week serves as the building block of the calendar, bounded by the Sabbath in each tradition and enunciated within the weekly cycles of the Liturgy of the Hours and the Jewish daily services. Accordingly, this book examines the experience of time as it is shaped and expressed by Jewish and Christian liturgies, each reflecting a temporal narrative unique to its religious tradition.

The comparative study rests on the conviction that the experiential quality of liturgical performance and the complex content of that experience—as subjective, elusive, individual, or collective as it may be—has much to contribute to interreligious learning. Religious identity and belief take root in religious practice and ritual participation, and it follows that a comparative study of liturgical experience may yield unforeseen insights in interreligious learning. This comparative study is intended to provide a new path for

understanding the relationships between Judaism and Christianity, based not on the familiar precedents of historical interaction or doctrinal comparison but on the liturgical experience of memory, hope, and time in each tradition.

METHODOLOGICAL CHALLENGES

The notion that the experience of time is transformed in liturgical performance may seem to be evident to the liturgical participant, yet there is nothing *self-evident* in this claim. It is only a sense. Likewise, the suggestion that the experience of time might be a vehicle for religious understanding rests on the experiential. Even in the highly structured ritual form of liturgy, the experience of time is just that: experience. It is inescapably subjective, and what is absolutely clear to experience is, paradoxically, seemingly impossible to demonstrate objectively.

The claim that the experience of time is transformed in liturgical enactment leads to a unique methodological challenge: liturgy speaks in a language that transcends the verbal and objective. The language of liturgical enactment is symbolic and performative and is more experiential than propositional. This language is not communicated by words alone but through physical gesture, vocalization, repetition, and an engaged involvement of the person acting in time. Because of the experiential nature of liturgical performance, the full range of its content cannot be objectively determined. Thus, its study defies standard systematic, textual, and historical methodologies. For this reason, a methodology that "reads" liturgy as it is *experienced*, grasping its complex extraverbal content, may be capable of shedding light on elements of faith inaccessible through the traditional propositional mode of theology.

The claim that the experience of time is altered through the liturgical performance of memory and hope is suggested indirectly in diverse sources and is touched on by a number of scholars.[9] Yet

[9] E.g., Jeremy S. Begbie, *Theology, Music and Time* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2000); Abraham Joshua Heschel, *The Sabbath: Its Meaning for Modern Man* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2005); Yehuda Kurtzer, *Shuva: The Future of the Jewish Past* (Waltham, MA: Brandeis University Press, 2012); Bruce T. Morrill, *Anamnesis as Dangerous Memory:*

despite the fact that support for the thesis is implied in many sources, it has not been explored substantially. It remains a "sense" that people experience. The task of this book, then, is to draw together these various sources, each of which suggests that the perception of time is transformed in liturgy, and to construct from them a cohesive proposal on this particular function of liturgical performance.

The arguments presented here rest on a few claims about the nature of liturgical experience. This book claims, first, that experience matters. Experience is not just a by-product or reflection of liturgy. It is not secondary in relation to an ontological primacy of liturgy; liturgy is inherently experiential. Second, it claims that experience is not always and only individual. Experience is, by nature, subjective, but that does not preclude the possibility of shared or communal experience. Third, experience is real. That is, that which one experiences and perceives constitutes one's vision of reality; the experiential functions as the real.

This book challenges the notion that a comparative liturgical theology limited to a study of readily observable elements such as text, rite, history, and creed is sufficient to understand the full dimensions of liturgical experience. It departs from the standard methods of liturgical theology and engages in the paradoxical activity of observing that which cannot be isolated or directly apprehended. It seeks to uncover phenomena under the radar of the observable and measurable, with confidence that this phenomenon

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Political and Liturgical Theology in Dialogue (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2000); Franz Rosenzweig, *The Star of Redemption*, trans. William W. Hallo (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1985); Alexander Schmemann, *Introduction to Liturgical Theology*, trans. Asheleigh E. Moorhouse (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1966); Alexander Schmemann, "Liturgy and Eschatology," *Sobornost* 7, no. 1 (1985): 6–14; Eliezer Schweid, *The Jewish Experience of Time: Philosophical Dimensions of the Jewish Holy Days*, trans. Amnon Hadary (Northvale, NJ: Jason Aronson, Inc., 2000); Joseph B. Soloveitchik, *Festival of Freedom: Essays on Pesah and the Haggadah*, ed. Joel B. Wolowesky and Reuven Ziegler (Jersey City, NJ: Ktav Publishing House, 2006); Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi, *Zakhor: Jewish History and Jewish Memory* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1982).

can indeed be perceived and understood, albeit through nonconventional methods.

POSTMODERNITY AND LITURGICAL REASONING

This book approaches the notion of the experience of time with a postmodern understanding of subjectivity. Following twentieth-century hermeneutics, it begins from the theory that experience is always a process of interpretation and that nothing can be perceived directly and without the mediation of culture, language, and symbols. The search for objective reality becomes a moot point, not due to any *a priori* conclusion about its existence, but because subjectivity mediates all experience.

The main task of postmodern thought has been to deconstruct the metaphysical foundations that were seen to undergird the intellectual structure of modernity. Whereas modernity had attempted to master and control, postmodernity attempts to deconstruct in order to reveal. For most postmodern thought, however, the "object" to be revealed by undoing the layers of modernity is not, in fact, objective. No foundational core remains intact after the postmodern unveiling of the structures of modernity.

From this perspective, faith seems to be an anomaly, if not absurd. Theology and the faith of which it speaks are understood to rest on the foundation of revelation in both the Jewish and Christian traditions, and the rejection of foundations and certitude proposed by postmodern philosophy poses a substantial obstacle to theology. If everything is contingent on yet another layer of shifting, ephemeral appearance, and if there is no certitude in an ultimate foundation of truth, then faith becomes a delusional activity, presupposing a core of reality where none exists and doomed to be nothing more than a reflection on contingent cultural constructions.

Postmodern thought, however, also invites a renewed turn toward the liturgical. In the postmodern intellectual atmosphere, metaphysical categories of "being" no longer hold as they once did, and we are invited to renew and rethink "doing." That is, we are invited to focus on religious experience rather than on religious truth claims and to contemplate processes of becoming rather than

states of being. This leads us to liturgy, and even more specifically, to liturgical experience.

This book examines both Jewish and Christian liturgical experience, not as expressions of individual spirituality, but as communal phenomena shaped by religious traditions that function as dense cultural and semiotic systems. A similar approach is taken by the movement of Liturgical Reasoning, described by Steven Kepnes in *Jewish Liturgical Reasoning* as "a postcritical attempt to rebuild after postmodernity."[10] Inspired by George Lindbeck's cultural-linguistic theoretical framework, Kepnes claims, "Judaism is not based on spontaneous insights and personal 'religious' experiences. Judaism is not invented anew by every Jew but is already there, a given, objective system that individual Jews need to internalize."[11] The current study also builds on Lindbeck's theoretical foundations, seeing religions as structures that shape the experience and worldview of its participants similar to the way that language shapes the formulation and expression of thought.

This book recognizes the importance in today's world of a theology that looks to ritual and experience as resources, reading the language of liturgical performance rather than a type of theology predicated on the systematization of knowledge, the process of "mapping all knowledge onto a manipulable grid."[12] Cognizant of the bold declarations and invitations of postmodern thought, the current study turns toward the ritual and experiential, searching for the experiential phenomenon of the liturgical sense of time.

This turn toward the experiential and liturgical suggests that postmodern thought and theology are not as incompatible as they may initially seem. In the intellectual climate of postmodernity, where it seems that the rejection of metaphysics and the so-called deconstruction of the metanarrative have made theology irrelevant, new theologies and methodologies have emerged out of the

[10] Steven Kepnes, *Jewish Liturgical Reasoning* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 9.

[11] Ibid.,15.

[12] Catherine Pickstock, *After Writing: On the Liturgical Consummation of Philosophy* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1998), xiii.

very elements that seemed to threaten. The leap that this book takes, namely, examining an elusive experiential phenomenon as it manifests in communal, tradition-bound ritual structures, tracing it to scriptural and philosophical roots and proposing that it alters the experience of time—all within a Jewish-Christian comparative context—is an unusual venture, but it joins the work of others exploring similar directions and identifies with those who find in a new wave of liturgical studies a renewal of theology after postmodernity.

MEASURING AND DEFINING TIME

Two types of time are addressed in this study, both of which involve the phenomenon of time as experienced from the human perspective. The first is the passage of the kind of time that is marked by the earth's cosmic cycles as the sun rises and sets and the seasons pass. The second is the concept of historical time, which involves notions of the distant past and future. The first is cyclical and evident in nature; the second is linear and requires the cognitive maintenance of a sense of past and future.[13] Yet the two are intimately related in liturgical experience. When the historical narratives of religious tradition are performed liturgically, the temporal cycles and schedules of prayer, measured by cosmic motion, interact with the historical notion of time, which is fed by the narratives of religious tradition and brought to life through memory and hope. Reflecting this interaction, this book does not strictly compartmentalize these two types of time but explores them together as they relate to each other.

Given the significance of time to Jewish and Christian tradition, both in its cyclical and historical expressions, it is not surprising that the development of time-measurement methods was crucial to early Jewish and Christian communities. Prior to the regular

[13] Paul Ricoeur develops a related distinction between cosmological time, experienced as a continuous flow of time, and phenomenological time, experienced through the concepts of the past, present, and future. Paul Ricoeur, *Time and Narrative*, vol. 3, trans. Kathleen Blamey and David Pellauer (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988).

systematization of calendars, Jewish communities developed complex methods of calendrical computation to systematize liturgical celebrations. In later centuries, both Christians and Jews developed regulated times of daily prayer. The focus on timekeeping continued into the Middle Ages, as the development of early time-keeping devices, referred to under the blanket term "horologia," was largely centered in monasteries.

> It seems probable that the [modern] clock was invented by monks, because of the temporal regimentation of monastic life, but whether or not this is true, it certainly owed its development to the Catholic Church. The mathematics required to construct gear trains required a high level of education, which was provided only by the Church during that period. Also, the alarm mechanisms of the most sophisticated monastic water clocks were weight-driven devices that are the most likely forerunners of the clock's escapement.[14]

The maintenance of daily prayer services, at least in Christian monastic contexts, was highly influential in the development of timekeeping mechanisms.[15] The capacity to measure time with greater accuracy, therefore, increased in connection to liturgical

[14] Jo Ellen Barnett, *Time's Pendulum: The Quest to Capture Time—From Sundials to Atomic Clocks* (New York: Plenum Trade, 1998), 79. Eviatar Zerubavel also addresses the monastic development of timekeeping devices in "The Benedictine Ethic and the Modern Spirit of Scheduling: On Schedules and Social Organization," where he claims that the need for temporal regulation within Benedictine monasteries contributed to the development of the clock. Eviatar Zerubavel, "The Benedictine Ethic and the Modern Spirit of Scheduling: On Schedules and Social Organization," *Sociological Inquiry* 50 (1980): 157–69. Gerhard Dohrn-van Rossum criticizes this claim, however, in *History of the Hour: Clocks and Modern Temporal Orders*, noting that Zerubavel fails to distinguish between clocks and alarm devices, the latter of which were used by Benedictine monasteries to regulate the times of prayer. Gerhard Dohrn-van Rossum, *History of the Hour: Clocks and Modern Temporal Orders*, trans. Thomas Dunlap (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996), 34.

[15] Barnett, *Time's Pendulum*, 80. Early clocks were also often found in cathedrals, and the earliest records of clocks are of those in cathedral towers. The first known public clock was in the tower of the church of St. Eustorgio in Milan in 1309, followed by other early mechanical clocks in cathedrals at Caen (1314), Norwich (1321), Florence (1325), London (1335), Milan (1335), Modena

practice. Here we see the close relationship between the measurement of cyclical cosmic time and the practice of contemplating the sequential time span of the religious narrative: as the monastic communities regulated the daily celebrations of the office, they engaged in the practice of communal memory of the religious narrative and hope in the eschatological future within a carefully measured passage of cyclical hours. An early precedence for the role of time measurement in the regulation of liturgical observance can also be seen in the Jewish tradition. In the first chapter of the Mishnah, the ancient rabbis discuss the appropriate times for saying the Shema and argue over whether the morning recitation of the prayer may be said once there is enough light to distinguish between blue and white, or between blue and green.[16] This passage evidences the necessity of measuring time to the proper observation of liturgical traditions in a time before the development of mechanical timekeeping devices.

Yet, what *is* this time that Jews and Christians have sought to chart and measure? Time is famously difficult to define; various proposed definitions are offered by physicists, philosophers, and psychologists, but none is conclusive. In Aristotelian physics, taken up again by medieval scholasticism, time was understood as a measure of motion. This theory was altered during the course of the seventeenth-century scientific revolution as time became seen as a universal background against which properties such as motion can be measured. In other words, time became separated from physical properties. As defined by Isaac Newton in his 1687 *Philosophiae Naturalis Principia Mathematica*, "Absolute, true, and mathematical time, of itself, and from its own nature, flows equably without relation to anything external, and by another name is called duration."[17]

For Newton, time was absolute and was the same from all points of observation. Yet, this was overturned in the twentieth century

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(1343), Padua (1344), Monza (1347), Strasbourg (1352), Genoa (1354), Bologna (1356), Siena (1359), and Ferrara (1362).

[16] Mishnah Berachot, 1.2.

[17] Iaian Nicolson, "Mutable Time," in *The Book of Time*, ed. John Grant and Colin Wilson (North Pomfret, VT: Westbridge Books, 1980), 157.

by Albert Einstein, who began yet another revolution in the understanding of time. Einstein challenged the Newtonian concept of absolute, objective time by claiming that the objective observation of time is impossible. That is, because we cannot escape observations of time based on our position in space, we are able only to observe the appearance of time. Due to this condition, time can only be determined in the relationship between the observer and the universe.[18]

In a letter of condolence to his friend Michele Besso, Einstein wrote, "People like us, who believe in physics, know that the distinction between past, present, and future is only a stubbornly persistent illusion."[19] In fact, contemporary physicists also find that "the laws of nature do not appear to prohibit the possibility of time running backwards, and the reason why time should appear to us to flow uniquely in one direction is by no means obvious; indeed the whole concept of the 'flow' of time seems to be highly unsatisfactory."[20]

The idea of time as a linear progression relies on a particular mental state. Time is measured in relation to space and motion. The past and the future appear in the domain of the imagination, held into two distinct camps not by any rigid laws of temporality but by our perception.[21] Here we reach the central focus of this work. A state of temporal awareness is required for the mind to preserve the idea of time as linear and evenly measured; when this awareness shifts, the perception of time is altered too. It is no stretch, then, to claim that ritual performance, and Jewish and Christian liturgical performance in particular, contributes to a transformation in the perception of time. The past and future are

[18] Abhay Ashtekar, "Space and Time: From Antiquity to Einstein and Beyond," *Resonance* 11, no. 9 (2006): 4–19.

[19] Pierre Speziali, ed., *Einstein-Besso Correspondence* (Paris: Hermann, 1972), 32.

[20] Nicolson, "Mutable Time," 157.

[21] Gerald M. Edelman, *Wider than the Sky: A Revolutionary View of Consciousness* (London: Penguin, 2005), 102–3. Edelman, a Nobel Prize–winning neuroscientist, defines higher-order consciousness as "having the awareness of the past, the future and the self."

already conceptually present in ritual acts of memory and anticipation, and as the temporal orientation of the liturgical community shifts in the performance of the religious narrative, so too does the perception of time.

DISINTEGRATION AND INTEGRATION: CREATING LITURGICAL TIME

The idea of time requires maintaining the concept of the past, present, and future. Yet temporal consciousness can also function to disintegrate the boundaries between those temporal markers. When time is perceived in the mind and held onto through memory and anticipation, its measured chronology tends to become less regular. Certain events of the past hold more weight than others and seem to expand, taking up a larger portion of remembered time. Or, a projected future event may be anticipated to such a degree that it seems to dwell already in the memory. In this way, sequential time and the distinctions between the temporal markers of the past, present, and future have a tendency to stretch, condense, and disintegrate within the imagination.

It is my contention, developed in the following chapters, that this *disintegration* of temporal boundaries is actually an *integration* of time. The disintegration of past, present, and future creates a special quality of reintegrated time. In this new integration of time, the temporal markers of past, present, and future interpenetrate. The past bears influence on the present and the future, and likewise, the anticipated future informs the remembered past as the vision of the eschatological future exerts an interpretive influence on the time that precedes it.[22] This is counterintuitive, for in the

[22] This concept is clarified by Egyptologist Jan Assmann's concept of mnemohistory and the permeability of the present and the past in the memory: "Unlike history proper, mnemohistory is concerned not with the past as such but only with the past as it is remembered. It surveys the story-lines of tradition, the webs of intertextuality, the diachronic continuities and discontinuities of reading the past. . . . Mnemohistory is reception theory applied to history. But 'reception' is not to be understood here merely in the narrow sense of transmitting and receiving. The past is not simply 'received' by the present. The present is 'haunted' by the past and the past is modeled, invented,

simple linear vision of time, the past may influence the present, but the reverse cannot be possible. Yet this work argues that the religious vision of time, first introduced in the Hebrew Bible and then developed in Jewish and Christian traditions, not only involves but also requires a perceived interpenetration of the past, present, and future.

The liturgical enactment of memory transcends the simple recollection of chronological events of the past and allows the community to engage in an activity that draws the past into the present. At the same time, this engagement with memory is oriented toward a vision of the eschatological future in which the present is known and understood in relation to the promises of the anticipated future. Thus, through liturgy, the present time is envisioned to be impacted by the past and future, ritually remembered, and anticipated. In this unique quality of time, the distinction between past, present, and future is made porous, or even collapsed, in the perception and experience of the participants. Religious time is fluid; it reaches from the distant past to the distant future and flows in many directions and crosscurrents on its way, and it is in liturgical performance that the disintegration and subsequent reintegration of time into a new present is experienced most fully.

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reinvented, and reconstructed by the present." Jan Assmann, *Moses the Egyptian: The Memory of Egypt in Western Monotheism* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997), 8–9.