

THESIS

ROMERO'S RHETORIC: BLURRED AUDIENCE IDENTITY AS UNIFYING TACTIC IN
WAR-TORN EL SALVADOR

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Darcy Gabriel

Department of English

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Master's Committee:

Advisor: Sue Doe

Antero Garcia
Stephen Mumme

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ABSTRACT

ROMERO'S RHETORIC: BLURRED AUDIENCE IDENTITY AS UNIFYING TACTIC IN WAR-TORN EL SALVADOR

In this thesis I examine a homily given by Archbishop Oscar Romero of El Salvador in 1979, "The Church's Mission in a Crisis." In particular, I use critical discourse analysis in three main areas. First, I analyze the intertextuality and genre conventions associated with Archbishop Romero's homily. Second, I examine the ways that Archbishop Romero brought various audience groups into his homily in order to broaden the scope of audiences who could be receptive to his call for social justice. Finally, I examined how the homily interacted with and interrupted power relations.

I found that Archbishop Romero followed the tradition of Catholic doctrine from Vatican II and Puebla in making direct connections between scripture and daily life in his homilies. In this way Archbishop Romero was able to incorporate into his homilies the call to action for social justice. "The Church's Mission in a Crisis" upheld the distance between the Church and the poor, but it also pushed back through the inclusion in the homily of results from a diocese survey.

Through my examination of the influence of the homily, I used the framework of social movement rhetoric in order to examine the influence that Archbishop Romero had rather than attempt to trace the ideological impact of one homily. In this way, using critical discourse analysis to examine texts within social movements allows for in-depth case studies of texts in a way that encourages situating the case study within the larger social movement.

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Chapter 1. Introduction and Background

“In the name of national security hundreds of lives have been sacrificed. In the name of national security human rights have been violated. In the name of national security insecurity has been implanted among the people.”¹

1.1 Introduction

This project began during a graduate seminar on the History of Writing with Dr. Tim Amidon. As a class we were examining *Rhetorics of the Americas* ed. Damián Baca and Victor Villanueva and *The Darker Side of the Renaissance* by Walter Mignolo. In examining historical rhetorics of Latin America, I decided to form my seminar paper on something within the realm of Latin American rhetorics as connected with social movements. I have been studying Latin American social movements since 2012, so continuing to study them through a rhetorical lens is of particular interest to me. I remembered Archbishop Romero and the international attention he received for his homilies calling out the government abuses of human rights.

I am invested in understanding movements for social change, especially in Latin America, because one of my continuing interests is to listen to, and bring into discussion, “forgotten” or ignored stories and histories. Social movements are important to me because they represent a group defining their identity and, as such, creating their story. I am particularly invested in movements about marginalization and discrimination. In studying the rhetoric of Archbishop Romero, I am able to examine how he connected with his context in order to focus his call for social justice at the audiences who needed to hear it.

In this thesis I aim to understand the ways in which Archbishop Oscar Romero used shifting conceptions of audience in order to inscribe the largest circle around the target audience of his

¹ Archbishop Oscar Romero, Aug 6, 1979

call for change. Through my analysis of “The Church’s Mission in a Crisis” I am able to see how Archbishop Romero included various audiences in a move to rewrite the narrative of who was pushing for social change and the way the government was portraying the situation. By getting international attention on El Salvador, Archbishop Romero ensured that the social movement, and their story, would be acknowledged.

An examination of Archbishop Romero’s conceptions of audience may shed light on the successful and failed approaches of activist and social movement spokespersons today.

Archbishop Romero blurred the audience identity groups of his audiences and in a sense both included and excluded each of his audiences in turn. Because everyone was both included and excluded in some measure, the shared experience gave audiences a way of connecting with Archbishop Romero's argument that they may not have accepted if the audience identity groups hadn't been blurred. I utilize critical discourse analysis to write this historical case study of a social movement. CDA is a method that includes an integration of understanding the broader context with the specific language of the text. I use this type of analysis to understand the ways that Archbishop Romero blurred audience group boundaries through direct and indirect references to increase effectiveness of religious and nationalist appeals in a call for national peace and unification.

Critical discourse analysis offers rhetoric and composition scholars a way of examining the power structures and power relationships in and surrounding a text in one larger analysis of the effectiveness of a text. This analytical maneuver adds analysis at the level of language itself alongside the intertextual and contextual aspects informing the text. Critical discourse analysis is nonneutral and allows for an interrogation, a questioning, an examination of hegemonic power

structures as found within a text as well as the ways that those are/can be resisted by a particular text.

I focus on the homily related to his fourth pastoral letter, “The Church’s Mission in a Crisis,” because it was the last pastoral letter he would address to his archdiocese and because he likely had the best conception of his audience by this point. “The Church’s Mission in a Crisis” offers a case study of social movement rhetoric and is particularly interesting in that light due to the international influence of Archbishop Romero. The “crisis” indicated by the title of the homily was a crisis of human rights violations, frequent violence, and an intense movement for land reform.

As audience and context are so crucial to rhetorical analyses, critical discourse analysis offers a tool for rhetoricians to deepen our understanding of a text in a way that allows for acknowledging and questioning power relationships. This allows for a focused examination of the role of a text within a social movement and within the context more generally. As a historical case study of social movement rhetoric, this thesis engages critical discourse analysis and rhetorical analysis to understand “The Church’s Mission in a Crisis” and how it fit within a social movement agitating for a change in the social structure. Using critical discourse analysis provides the nonneutral stance important to the understanding of the connection between power structures and a text as well as to the understanding of the influence of a text.

I integrate a discussion of context and author, dig into the text and to examine purpose, and then combine all of that to go back and consider audience more broadly. Within the text I also look at audience. The keen focus on audience of this project suggests the importance and continued need for studying audience responses to social movement rhetoric. The preservation of the powerful rhetoric employed in Archbishop Romero’s homilies offers an opportunity to

understand the ways that social movements can push for wide-scale change by carefully addressing varied groups within their audience. Shifting the conversation of Archbishop Romero's broader influence to focus on his rhetorical choices connects historically successful rhetorics with current understandings of communication during times of national and international strife.

Because of the necessity of being aware of multiple audiences for any action, especially with current international social movements, examining the ways that Archbishop Romero spoke to and with polarized audiences in a call to action might suggest particular strategies for particular contexts to smooth the tensions between audiences long enough for some common ground to come to light.

Today Pope Francis, the first Latin American pope, is in the international spotlight for his discussions of current social issues, including widespread poverty that bears likeness that which Romero addressed over 35 years ago in El Salvador. Francis addressed the United Nations in 2015 with a call for many of the same changes that Archbishop Romero advocated ("Apostolic Journey"). In operating on the global level, Pope Francis may have a larger overall influence on the implementation of reform. However, Archbishop Romero's position as standing with the poor physically, being under an almost constant threat of violence, and staying focused on one nation's problems may have ingratiated him to audiences. While a full comparison between Archbishop Romero and Pope Francis may not be warranted yet, in particular due to their differing material contexts, Pope Francis echoes Archbishop Romero's call for an end to violence and an end to poverty ("Apostolic Journey").

1.2 Background

In this section I present a background for Archbishop Romero and “The Church’s Mission in a Crisis.” I begin with a discussion of the history of El Salvador as this is crucial to understanding the intensity of the political situation in which Archbishop Romero was writing. I then discuss the role of poverty and liberation theology. The section ends with a discussion of Archbishop Romero and his influence on El Salvador.

Social strife was not uncommon in the mid- to late- twentieth century as Latin Americans began to push for land reform. During colonization by the Spanish and Portuguese, much of the land had been parceled out to wealthy elite families. This state of land ownership continued into the age of industrialization, where most of any remaining communal land was parceled out to large landowners. Thousands of people were displaced and many of those lived in abject poverty (Quiroz 2-3). Through literacy initiatives and Church community programs, peasants began to develop a critical consciousness. This consciousness resulted in pushback against repressive political regimes and the economic systems keeping the poor in their place.

In 1932 a peasant uprising aimed to take control of the government and implement land reform. They were found out and slaughtered—up to 12,000 died in what would be known as *La Matanza* (the Slaughter) (Montgomery *Revolution* 52). The military took over the government and ruled as an oligarchy for decades. A major way that the military retained control was to rig elections, especially when substantial agrarian reform was being considered (Quiroz 4).

Because of the leftist leanings found in much discussion of liberation theology, many of the elite in the Catholic Church wanted to keep their distance (Montgomery *Revolution* 102). When a new archbishop for the San Salvador archdiocese was needed in 1977, the Church opted for the

“bookish” and conservative Oscar Romero (Shortell 87). Through the appointment of Romero to Archbishop, the Church thought they had solidified the relationship between Church and State.

But Archbishop Romero’s conservatism was short-lived. His close friend, Father Rutilio Grande, was assassinated outside the town of Aguilares on March 12, 1977—three weeks after Archbishop Romero’s appointment. Father Grande had been a proponent of the preferential option for the poor, and was the first priest noted as being killed in the rising violent conflict in El Salvador (Montgomery *Revolution* 109). Assassinations of priests began in 1977 and continued throughout the early 1980s. The assassinated priests were primarily targeted as they had been combining discussion of scripture with references to current situations, especially widespread poverty in the nation (Martín-Baró 6).

Father Grande’s death radicalized Archbishop Romero (Shortell 87; Montgomery *Revolution* 109). From that point forward, Archbishop Romero called for peace and began advocating for a preferential option for the poor. While he never adopted the portion of liberation theology calling for large-scale institutional restructuring, Archbishop Romero enhanced calls for the alleviation of poverty and the cessation of violence in El Salvador.

Each of Archbishop Romero’s homilies was broadcast throughout El Salvador making it possible to be heard in Guatemala, Nicaragua, and Honduras. Often, the broadcast was rebroadcast as far away as Argentina. The international acclaim that he gained ensured that El Salvador was in the international spotlight as it fell into civil war. By bringing international attention to the violence in El Salvador, Archbishop Romero had attempted to hold the state of El Salvador accountable.

In his final interview, Archbishop Romero said “I have frequently been threatened with death....If they kill me, I will rise again in the people of El Salvador” (qtd in Sobrino 50-51).

Knowing his death would likely come soon, Archbishop Romero continued to advocate for the people. On March 24, 1980, while saying mass, Archbishop Romero was assassinated after having “just preached that a life offered for others is a sure token of resurrection and of victory” (Martín-Baró 18). Archbishop Romero’s final homily was videotaped as well as recorded for radio broadcast. Because of the large audience for all of Archbishop Romero’s homilies, both national and international audiences heard and saw the assassination.

More than 150,000 people attended Archbishop Romero’s funeral on March 30, 1980 (Martín-Baró 18). The violence didn’t stop with Archbishop Romero’s assassination. During his funeral, bombs went off killing a few and wounding hundreds (Martín-Baró 19). A man calling for the end of violence, including the violence of poverty, could not be put to rest without further violence.

After Archbishop Romero’s death, El Salvador fell into an official civil war that cost more than 70,000 lives. The time between Archbishop Romero’s death and a peace treaty in 1992 was particularly violent. Of the 70,000 estimated lives lost,

[t]he great majority...were killed by the government’s campaign of terror and aerial bombardment in the countryside; thousands of others died at the hands of death squads acting in collusion with the Salvadoran military. (Bokenkotter 531)

While there were deaths as a result of the social organizations as well, they were not nearly as numerous, or as gruesome, as those of the government.

Archbishop Romero’s rhetoric was influential enough to earn him a nomination for the Nobel Peace Prize in 1979, which he lost to Mother Teresa, and to earn him the Prize posthumously in 1981. Archbishop Romero was beatified in May of 2015 and is now one step below sainthood. If the Church determines that Archbishop Romero has completed one miracle, preferably posthumously, he could be declared a saint. Because of his radical rhetoric and his calls for social change, many in the Catholic Church “attempted to picture him as a tool of the left-wing

factions, a basically weak man who succumbed to the pressures of radical priests and leftists” (Bokenkotter 530). Even with the strained relationship between Archbishop Romero (and his legacy) with the Church, “Romero continued—and continues—to live in the hearts and minds of ordinary people” (Bokenkotter 530).

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter I examine the rhetoric of Archbishop Oscar Romero alongside the literature of social movement rhetoric. Through this combination I hope to situate my study of the Archbishop Romero's rhetoric in "The Church's Mission in a Crisis" within the field of social movement rhetoric (SMR). By examining Archbishop Romero's rhetoric within the framework of social movement rhetoric, I show the ways in which historic case studies of social movement rhetoric connect to their audience(s).

This section begins with an overview of the current literature about Archbishop Romero himself and then an overview of the current literature about his rhetoric. The second part of this chapter situates my study of Archbishop Romero's rhetoric within scholarship on social movement rhetorics. I here examine the historic grounding of the field of social movement rhetoric. Moving on to examine the current discussions of social movement rhetoric, I situate the rhetoric of Archbishop Romero within current understandings of social movement rhetoric. I finish the section with a discussion of the importance of audience to Archbishop Romero's rhetoric as well as to social movement rhetoric more generally. In particular, I examine how audience inclusion/exclusion functions through the creation of ingroup/outgroup audience identity within texts. The combination of audience with social movement rhetoric and Archbishop Romero's rhetoric in particular showcases the ways in which a particular context, the context that includes the sets of audiences for the rhetoric of the social movement, deeply influences the texts produced through social movements.

2.2 Archbishop Romero and his Rhetoric

Scholarship on Archbishop Romero himself falls into two main categories: discussions about Archbishop Romero's life and especially on his assassination; and discussions on his theological standpoint. In a collection of Archbishop Romero's writings and homilies, *The Voice of the Voiceless*, both introductory materials focus on non-rhetorical matters. Many others, including Berryman, Bokenkotter, and Montgomery also focus on the life and death of Archbishop Romero. Each of these authors contextualizes Archbishop Romero and talks about the importance of the reception of his speeches/homilies. However, none of them focus on the ways in which the general groundswell of support, or the pushback from the elite, are textually based.

Swanson bridges this gap as he examined the ways that Romero used moral arguments alongside his ethos for effectiveness; of course, one of the pieces of ethos that Archbishop Romero brings to the table is the fact that he died doing what he preached (140-142). The ethos discussed by Swanson was founded on a shared experience of nationalism and theology between Archbishop Romero and his audience (131-134). Swanson offered some discussion of audience in a way not found elsewhere, and is particularly interesting alongside Shortell's discussion. Shortell uses discourse analysis of selected homilies from Archbishop Romero in order to examine the ways that context influences changes in Archbishop Romero's rhetoric over time (88-90). This study is particularly relevant to understanding the rhetoric of Archbishop Romero as it so clearly brings together the contextual and the textual. In this way, Shortell begins to bridge a gap between cultural context and religious context. Neither Swanson nor Shortell, however, discusses the role of audience on the level of the language of the text.

While none of the themes within the overall scholarship discuss the particular audience-identities within Archbishop Romero's homilies, each theme offers points on which to expand

the research. Looking at the roles of homilies in social change alongside both liberation technology and the official Catholic catechesis simultaneously will give fuller context for understanding the role of homilies within a religious context. Coupling that understanding with the historical context and the rhetoric of a key figure in *both* the religious and historical contexts, a fuller picture of the role and effects of Archbishop Romero's rhetoric is possible.

2.3 Foundations of Social Movement Rhetoric

While Archbishop Romero didn't start a particular social movement, he was clearly involved in the Salvadoran struggle for social change. In order to understand the way that social movement rhetorics can lend additional insight into the situation of Archbishop Romero, this section will begin with an overview of the foundations of social movement rhetoric. The section will then move to a selection of current discussions surrounding social movement rhetoric, especially as regarding non-Western movements and/or historic movements.

The study of the rhetoric of social movements started in the late 1960s, propelled especially by the earlier text of Leland Griffin. Published in 1952, Griffin's "The Rhetoric of Historical Movements" offered the first attempt to delineate rhetorical study of social movements. This text was the catalyst for rebuttals which called Griffin relativistic and clinical (Simons 33) and pushed for expansion on the theory and definitions for studying SMR (Andrews 133). Griffin offered steps for the study of historical social movements and emphasized the need to study rhetoric over the life of a movement rather than strictly focusing on the great orators (10). Griffin urged scholars taking on the study of the rhetoric of a social movement to begin with small, manageable projects before attempting to write comprehensive understandings of larger movements such as the abolitionist movement (11). Acknowledging that it would take a number of smaller analyses before larger projects could begin, Griffin built into his argument room for

the study of rhetoric in social movements to grow and change (13). While Griffin's argument does not contain as much theory as scholars might hope, Griffin's focus on historical social movements is nonetheless influential.

In particular, Charles J. Stewart's "Functional Approach to the Rhetoric of Social Movements" questions the level of theory included by Griffin (140) while also offering a framework for undertaking rhetorical studies of social movements. Together with Griffin, Stewart offers one of the foundational texts for studying the rhetoric of social movements. While other frameworks have developed to understand the rhetorics of social movements, the frameworks of Griffin and Stewart are seminal in the field. While both frameworks mention the necessity of studying historical social movement rhetorics, each focuses on a different aspect. Griffin's discussion of historical case studies focuses on the ways in which an individual scholar might go about writing about the rhetoric of a movement (11-12) whereas Stewart focuses on the role of movements to re-envision history as an important aspect of social movement rhetoric. Stewart focuses on the necessity for social movements to consider history whereas Griffin argues that scholars need to consider history. Overall, these frameworks suggest that studying a social movement requires studying the movement over time and in a way that suggests, if not outright analyses, the "success" of a movement.

2.4 Liberation Theology and Archbishop Romero: Rhetoric's Religious Context

Liberation theology has been the focus of extensive scholarship for decades, so the following section will explore only those portions of liberation theology directly relevant to Archbishop Romero's rhetoric. In particular, there are two strands of examination of liberation theology relevant to the current study. The first type examines liberation theology itself alongside the

Church's perceptions of liberation theology. The second type places liberation theology in a context contemporary to Archbishop Romero.

Liberation theology has been best explored by Gustavo Gutiérrez' "The Task and Content of Liberation Theology." In this piece, Gutiérrez outlines the ways that "[t]hese times...bear the imprint of a new presence of the poor, the marginalized and the oppressed. Those who were so long 'absent' in our society and in the Church have made themselves...present" (20). Gutiérrez' discussion of the ways in which the poor, and poverty, need to be addressed through both spiritual and secular means situates liberation theology as firmly within the theology of the Catholic Church as well as in the material realities of the people (19-24). In his introduction to the Cambridge Companion to Liberation Theology, editor Christopher Rowland points out that "Liberation theology is above all a new way of doing theology rather than being itself a new theology" (3). Rowland continues to draw on one of the main tenets of liberation theology (4-14): the preferential option for the poor. Gutiérrez' work grounded liberation theology in the Bible, which led the way for a number of reactions and interpretations within the Catholic Church.

Within the many approaches to understanding liberation theology, those that focus on the ways in which it fit within Church teachings were more likely to have been familiar to Archbishop Romero. In particular, the address at Puebla by Pope John Paul II was a response in some ways to liberation theology. Not a proponent of liberation theology, Pope John Paul II pointed out "The truth that we owe to man is, first and foremost, a truth about man. As witnesses of Jesus Christ we are heralds, spokesmen and servants of this truth. We cannot reduce it to the principles of a system of philosophy or to pure political activity" (I.9). It is clear that Pope John Paul II knew of liberation theology, and of the various ways it was manifesting in Latin America

when he spoke in 1979. As the address at Puebla was designed to be disseminated by bishops (including archbishops) to their home communities, this address was a direct addition to official Church doctrine.

Moving slightly outward from strict catechesis, Hebblethwaite offers an understanding of where the Catholic Church stood on liberation theology and offers a “careful reading” of Puebla (182-186). Hebblethwaite offers insights into the ways in which the Church hierarchy was evaluating and responding to the development of liberation theology. This basis is crucial if the roughly congruent context of liberation theology with Archbishop Romero is to make sense.

Hebblethwaite’s “careful reading” of Puebla (182-186), moves the discussion away from hierarchical concerns based in catechesis and closer to placing liberation theology within its sociohistorical context. In turn, Berryman offers a theological perspective for lay people. Offering three points which allow people to simultaneously understand and evaluate liberation theology for evaluation of the movement (6), Berryman grounds his description of liberation theology in its context of Latin America more broadly. Smith’s overview of liberation theology places it firmly in its political, religious, and material circumstances (4-24), while Herndl and Bauer argue that the way in which liberation theology stems from a particular community’s context in Latin America, often rural and poor, is why liberation theology resonated with people in poverty (564).

2.5 Audience, Archbishop Romero, and Social Movement Rhetoric

Looking at Archbishop Romero’s rhetoric through the lens of Social Movement Rhetoric (SMR) offers a focus on the text within the larger movement—beyond just the reputation of Archbishop Romero. Looking at Archbishop Romero’s rhetoric with the SMR lens offers insight into a non-archetypal text which pushes SMR to adapt to the smaller texts within a movement.

This is particularly important given the current climate of social media as platform for speech within a movement.

In my analysis of Archbishop Romero's rhetoric within the frame of social movement rhetorics, I examine audience closely. Without an audience, there would be no "movement" in a social movement. Audience is a particularly important part of understanding the rhetoric of social movements. However, as much of SMR studies movements as a whole rather than detailed analyses of single case studies, the importance of the intentional framing of audience within individual texts is not highlighted in the literature. Blee and McDowell focus on the ways that shifting conceptions of audience shifted the overall focus of individual activist groups (9-10). This approach offers insight into the ways that audiences influence social movements, but does not help to explain the role of constructions of audience within rhetorical practices of social movements. Simons points to the role of a leader in a social movement as balancing influences from multiple audiences (38). Taken together with Blee and McDowell, Simons' discussion of the trials faced by a leader in a social movement showcases the strong role that audience plays in determining the identity of a movement.

Many of the movements studied in contemporary SMR are focused on movements in the United States and the identities that come out of the particular contexts in the U.S. Current SMR scholars Robert Cox and Christina R. Faust argue that "the failure largely to include non-Western case studies and perspectives remains a challenge for the study of SMR. This is particularly relevant in light of controversies surrounding the effects of economic globalization in many Third World Nations" (98). By offering a direct critique of many of the structures present in studying social movement rhetoric in the United States, Cox and Faust put forth a call for broadening the perspectives of SMR. This call, when coupled with Griffin's (10), Stewart's

(142), and others' (Zarefsky 116; Lucas 130) suggests that SMR is a field with plenty of room to study and bring new perspectives to the table. In bringing in interdisciplinary understandings of texts, in bringing in perspectives outside the norm, and in pushing SMR for frameworks that assist in analysis, the study of SMR seems to offer great promise.

Every text has an audience (Ede and Lunsford 169), and when studying SMR the audience becomes particularly important in attempts to understand effectiveness. With Archbishop Romero's position as archbishop, he was required to give public speeches, especially homilies, frequently. The point of a priest, or an archbishop, is to bring people together into the kingdom of God, into the Church. Their discussions must be aware of audience if they are to be successful, and Archbishop Romero's "The Church's Mission in a Crisis" is no different.

To look at audience within Archbishop Romero's homily, I primarily look at the idea of ingroup/outgroup identity. Ingroup/outgroup audience identity is useful to understand the ways in which audiences respond to social justice rhetoric. Drawing on social psychology research, Roberts-Miller explores ingroup/outgroup identity within a rhetorical framework as perpetuating the idea that the world is a stable place and easily divided into a good/bad dichotomy (185). Ingroup and outgroup responses often correspond with confirmation bias, but may also imply that members of the other group are homogenous (Roberts-Miller 184). This is a particular issue in that when calling for social change, those in the outgroup from the social movement need to destabilize their assumed homogeneity as represented by those in the movement if they are to be receptive to the rhetoric. Roberts-Miller points out "...a certain kind of discourse is effective to the extent that it persuades the audience that they and the speaker are members of an ingroup; this very act of persuasion thereby confirms "the" values, and value, of that ingroup relative to an outgroup" (184). This statement is particularly valuable place to begin understanding some of

the ways that public rhetorics employ different tactics in order to achieve a particular audience reaction.

Understanding the creation of ingroup/outgroup identities is also important when considering “[that] the power comes from the promise that the world is a stable place, and that all that one really needs to know is the very easy to know fact of whether an interlocutor is an ingroup member” (Roberts-Miller 185). Archbishop Romero pushes against the ideal stable world through his blurring of ingroup/outgroup identities throughout his homily.

2.6 Conclusion

Archbishop Romero spoke at a time of strife within El Salvador and Latin America more generally. In his position of institutional power through the Catholic Church, Archbishop Romero joined the movement in El Salvador calling for an end to institutionally-encouraged poverty. His theological perspective offered him a particular way of joining the movement in that he had the resources available to him to appeal to religious audiences of a large population. This allowed him to bring context into his religious discussions in such a way as to forward the goals of the movement. By blurring ingroup/outgroup boundaries, Archbishop Romero conceived of his audience as a set of people who might engage with various types of appeals and then he followed through on engaging those appeals. Archbishop Romero pushed against the ideal stable world through his blurring of ingroup/outgroup identities throughout his homily.

Chapter 3. Methodology

This project offers a critical discourse analysis (CDA) of Archbishop Romero's homily, "The Church's Mission in a Crisis" accompanying his fourth pastoral letter of the same name. I chose critical discourse analysis for this project rather than rhetorical or genre analysis because the three lenses of CDA can "speak to and, perhaps, intervene in institutional, social, or political issues, problems, and controversies in the world" (Gee 9). CDA questions power structures within the text in a move away from more neutral descriptive analyses. As Archbishop Romero's rhetoric was intended to create social change, the use of CDA is appropriate for an evaluation of its effectiveness. My examination of his rhetoric within one homily adds to understandings of social change rhetoric more broadly. In using critical discourse analysis, my study focused on the ways that power influences a text and a historic moment. While CDA in itself does not generally include close analysis of the inclusion of audiences in the way that examining ingroup/outgroup audience does, there is space to make that addition. This addition allows CDA to offer a stronger example of rhetorical analysis than either would alone.

Critical discourse analysis consists of a detailed examination of a text, while incorporating understandings of power and socio-historic context. In particular, CDA concerns itself with looking at texts in such a way for the analysis to be applicable beyond description of a text. To that end, the analyses produced through this method explore the role of context and power within, through, and as reflected by texts. Understanding the status quo is important to understanding the ways the text is influenced by power relationships. The understanding of context allows critical discourse analysts to understand how the text functions in ways that reflect that context while also pushing against it. By understanding the ways that texts reflect and

reform power relationships, critical discourse analysts also seek to understand the effect the text has on context.

Overall, critical discourse analysis integrates three types of analysis into one overall picture of a text and its effectiveness. The macrolevel analysis portion of CDA analyzes the social/political/historical context of a text in a large-scale perspective. The microlevel portion of CDA is a close reading of the text. The macrolevel analysis looks at the ways in which the text functions within power structures along with how the text influences power structures (Gee 9, Fairclough 12). The three analyses combine into one overall analysis of the ways that a text functions within and through context. While it can be useful to describe very specifically what a text does, CDA is focused on ensuring that the analysis is useful beyond description (Gee 9).

3.1 Defining Critical Discourse Analysis

Two major theorists in critical discourse analysis are Norman Fairclough and James Paul Gee. Both Fairclough and Gee point to the necessity of critical discourse analysis being applicable beyond describing what a text does on the level of language and instead that it should “speak to and, perhaps, intervene in, institutional, social, or political issues, problems, and controversies in the world” (Gee 9). Fairclough offers a three-level approach to CDA that foregrounds the examination of the context as influencing and influenced by the text combined with a close reading of the text. This close reading brings a clear understanding of the role of language as stemming from the context, especially the texts that came before, as well as the role of language in larger contexts of social change. I used the three-level approach of Fairclough as Fairclough’s discussion of the analysis at the level of language focuses more on things such as content, structure, and theme, while Gee focuses on the smallest pieces of language. Since I was

primarily interested in looking at theme and audience I Fairclough's discussion of theme to guide my analysis of the text.

I also drew mainly on Fairclough's approach because it allowed me to incorporate a number of contexts into my analysis of a particular text. Through Fairclough's approach, I combined a deep understanding of power structures, context, and the language of the text itself for a rich analysis. In order for my analysis of "The Church's Mission in a Crisis" to be clear, I knew I needed to include a number of historical-political contexts. Fairclough's method is designed to allow for both close reading and contextualizing that reading in a socio-historical-political analysis. In using Fairclough's approach to CDA, I analyzed Archbishop Romero's context and the context of El Salvador more generally alongside a close textual analysis. This combination of approaches offered the depth of study of this homily that I wanted. Both Fairclough and Gee point to the need for CDA to take a non-neutral stance to language in order to see where and how power relationships influence and are impacted by texts. Archbishop Romero's intention was to change the status quo, so in studying the ways he understood and constructed his audiences it makes sense to take an analytic stance that looks at language in non-neutral terms.

Applying Fairclough's approach to critical discourse analysis to "The Church's Mission in a Crisis" required three main stages of analysis. The first involved looking at the various intertextual components of "The Church's Mission in a Crisis" as related to the political and historical contexts. This portion of the analysis serves as more than background information; it illuminates the various influences on the text and the situation the text (in this case, "The Church's Mission in a Crisis") responds to. I focused this first section of analysis on both the role that other texts play within Archbishop Romero's homily and the role of particular contextual factors. The second portion of the analysis entailed a close reading of the homily. Primarily, this

close textual analysis focused on understanding the roles of audience as mentioned within the text and as influenced by the contexts showcased in the first portion. This portion of the analysis used the language itself—structure, vocabulary, and content—to understand the ways that power structures and context are integrated into the text. The last portion of the analysis required examining "The Church's Mission in a Crisis" within its context after its dissemination. This portion of the analysis focused on the continuing importance of Archbishop Romero in both El Salvador and the Catholic Church. Typically, this level of analysis traces the reception of a particular text. However in this case it is particularly difficult to trace a single homily's direct impact on the larger context. In my discussion of the impact of this text, I examined some of the ways in which Archbishop Romero was historically significant and the way he influenced power structures. The third section of my analysis, then, included complicating the role of mesolevel analysis in studying social justice rhetorics as a move away from the impact one particular text has to the way a text fits into a movement that is impacting power structures.

3.2 The Text under Review

I chose this homily because of its position on a Catholic feast day and its relationship to the last pastoral letter written by Archbishop Romero. I narrowed to examining only one homily for the scope of this project because of the close focus a single text receives with critical discourse analysis. As a scholar in rhetoric and composition, my analysis was deeply connected with rhetorical analysis. Through examining the context of the homily, I expand its importance as the majority of Archbishop Romero's homilies have not been examined in-depth. "The Church's Mission in a Crisis" was given in person on August 7, 1979 on the feast of the transfiguration alongside the distribution of Archbishop Romero's fourth, and final, pastoral letter. At this point, Archbishop Romero had written three other pastoral letters and had given three accompanying

homilies. By the time he gave “The Church’s Mission in a Crisis,” he had arguably the best understanding of the context of the Church in El Salvador’s political and social situation as well as the best understanding of his audience.

The feast of the transfiguration is El Salvador’s national (Catholic) feast day. This means that the Catholic Church gathers each year on this day, often with celebration, ceremony, and an additional mass. Each day in the liturgical calendar has different collections of readings from the bible to be read aloud at mass and around which the homily is to be centered. The readings for the feast of the transfiguration center on the sight of Jesus shifting from being human to a divine being. This transfiguration is not the one at the center of Catholic teaching, with Jesus rising from the dead, but is nonetheless a very important motif because of the implication that everyone needs to change themselves to be worthy to enter into heaven.

The feast of the transfiguration, with its focus on the transfigured Jesus, was for Archbishop Romero’s El Salvador a time of reflection and a call to action on a national scale. This connection between religion and nationalism was made quite clear within the homily in question. El Salvador’s national identity as Catholic gave Archbishop Romero room to connect two sectors of society in his calls for change. Archbishop Romero points out that the feast of the transfiguration involves “our Church’s liturgy proclaiming that our patron is none other than my Son, the beloved...and that our duty is to listen to Him, constitute our most precious historical and religious legacy and the most effective motivation for our hopes as Christians in El Salvador” (1). The primary action called for by the homily is to bring El Salvador together as a nation of Catholics, but Archbishop Romero calls for another transformation as well—“the preferential option for the poor.”

“Preferential option for the poor” was the rallying call for those involved with liberation theology (Smith 33-34). Liberation theology stemmed from discontent with the material realities of widespread poverty throughout Latin America. Rooted in biblical teachings to care for one’s fellow people, liberation theology pushed not only for increased care for the poor, but also frequently pushed for large-scale institutional change to create a truly preferential option for the poor by eliminating the means of sustaining widespread poverty (Smith 34). Archbishop Romero refused to be considered part of the liberation theology movement. He advocated for the preferential option for the poor, without liberation theology’s concurrent push for larger structural changes.

By focusing on the gospel roots of the preferential option for the poor, Archbishop Romero nevertheless challenged much of the political order of the time. The Church in El Salvador had chosen Romero for archbishop precisely because he was more conservative than the prior archbishop had been (Martín-Baró 4). The Church hierarchy originally intended to maintain ties between the Church and the Salvadoran government (Martín-Baró 4), but shifted to an alignment with the poor through Archbishop Romero’s work (Martín-Baró 13; Montgomery *Revolution* 114). The wealthy landowners made up much of the government and business community and firmly wanted to keep the status quo, and at the same time there were social organizations rising to challenge the treatment of the poor. This polarized the nation and precipitated much of the violence to come.

El Salvador was plagued with violence up to and beyond 1979, when “The Church’s Mission in a Crisis” was written. The specific context of this homily factored into my choice to study it. First, the homily comes out of and refers to the recent assassination of Fr. Macías purportedly in response to a demonstration by priests against the government earlier in the year (Martín-Baró

13). Coming out of a tragic event, this homily was deeply connected with the issues of violence in El Salvador. Second, this homily was associated with a pastoral letter—a letter to the diocese about how to interpret current events through the newest teachings of the Church. As the final pastoral letter, and the last homily accompanying one, “The Church’s Mission in a Crisis” is the last substantial chance for Archbishop Romero to clearly delineate the issues in El Salvador, including poverty, as stemming from government abuses. While there are homilies with more directly confrontational content, the third reason I chose to analyze this homily is because the international reach of a feast day homily required different mechanisms for incorporating audience. People from Guatemala, Nicaragua, and Costa Rica were regularly within range of the broadcast homilies, and they were often relayed as far away as Argentina. Given the average scope of homily broadcasts, the religious status of the feast day likely brought in larger audiences nationally and internationally especially considering the international attention on the violence in El Salvador. Because of the push for social change grounding the homily, and because of the importance of context to the text, using CDA to examine the homily offers a deeper understanding of the text as well as implications for the rhetoric within it.

The version of “The Church’s Mission in a Crisis” that I analyzed in this study is a translation provided by The Archbishop Romero Trust. They have archived digital versions of Archbishop Romero’s homilies from 1977 through the 1980 mass where he was assassinated. I compared the Spanish audio to the written translation provided by the Trust and the translation is faithful to the audio version. The Archbishop Romero Trust was granted an award by El Salvador for their archival work, thus further suggesting the archive’s reliability in providing accurate translations (“El Salvador Honours”). The Archbishop Romero Trust has the recordings of each of Archbishop Romero’s homilies throughout his time as archbishop. Along with the

recordings of each homily are accompanying Spanish and English transcriptions. The Trust also has assorted other public statements, writings, and perhaps most interestingly, Archbishop Romero's audio diaries.

I limited my examination to "The Church's Mission in a Crisis" because it was Archbishop Romero's last celebration of the feast of the transfiguration and accompanied his final pastoral letter. Because this was his last homily of this type, Archbishop Romero had the best understanding of his audiences. The rhetoric in "The Church's Mission in a Crisis" is not radically different from that in the other homilies Archbishop Romero gave the weeks before and after. It does, however, take special care to focus the language on the good of the nation while staying rooted in the religious rhetoric expected on a feast day. This homily had a combination of heightened religious importance of a feast day compared with the average Sunday and the associated wider audience alongside Archbishop Romero's calls for increased efforts to alleviate poverty. I chose to examine this homily because of the tension between the push for change and because of the larger, more diverse audience that was involved in hearing its message. The physically-present audience for feast day celebrations is also larger than for the average Sunday homily due to the greater religious importance of the feast day. For national feast days, especially in predominantly Catholic countries, audiences are larger yet again. As all of Archbishop Romero's homilies were rebroadcast throughout El Salvador, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Honduras, and all the way to Argentina, the overall size of the audience for this homily was particularly notable.

3.3 Approach

This section introduces the overall approach I will take with each portion of my analysis. I begin with a discussion of the macrolevel analysis. This level focuses on understanding the

context of a text, with special attention paid to other texts directly influencing the studied text. The second portion of this section delineates the ways in which I examine the text on the level of language in a microlevel analysis. I examine the role of theme and audience within “The Church’s Mission in a Crisis” and this section showcases the theory behind that analysis. The explanation of the mesolevel analysis explains the way in which I examine the relationship between “The Church’s Mission in a Crisis” and the power structures present in the context.

3.3.1 Macrolevel

Fairclough’s macrolevel of analysis concerns itself with context. He provides several mechanisms for examining the ways in which contexts influence a text. Fairclough spends more than a chapter on understanding intertextuality in a critical discourse analysis. Drawing heavily from Bakhtin and Foucault, Fairclough discusses the role of manifest intertextuality. In studying this, “the objective is to specify what other texts are drawn upon in the constitution of the text being analyzed, and how” (233). In particular, Fairclough points to the importance of genre as “genres differ in the modes of manifest intertextuality...and one aim here is to explore such differences” (233-4). To that end, my discussion of the macrolevel of the homily will discuss the implications of homily genre conventions for “The Church’s Mission in a Crisis”.

My analysis of the macrolevel of “The Church’s Mission in a Crisis” includes examining the religious and political contexts leading up to the homily. The religious context branches out from the discussion of the homily genre as I examine the larger doctrinal issues Archbishop Romero was immersed in. My examination of context also includes a discussion of the history of El Salvador that directly affected the text in that the historical context included roots of the dissention that gave rise to the push for social change in El Salvador. Examining the political context allows me to pinpoint the strife happening in El Salvador. I look at the political issues

such as the rise of social organizations, the violence erupting in El Salvador, and the direct material conditions under which “The Church’s Mission in a Crisis” was written. I conclude this portion of my analysis with a discussion of the violence that directly influenced this homily. Because the combination of these religious, historic, and national contexts is directly referenced and reflected in the text of the homily, understanding these contexts is therefore paramount to understanding the homily itself.

3.3.2 Microlevel

The microlevel analysis focuses on the actual language of the text. Fairclough and Gee each offer lenses for microlevel analysis. Fairclough’s approaches are generally more content-focused and examine broader units of language, while Gee generally looks extremely closely at the fine-grained level of the text, even considering the inflection of voice in speaking the text. Together, in the microlevel analysis I discuss both form and content of a text in an effort to analyze as many levels of the text as possible.

Fairclough brings in the broader notion of theme and points to the importance of understanding motives behind them as one way to examine the microlevel text (236). In this regard, I look at theme in particular because “The Church’s Mission in a Crisis” is a homily given on a national feast day. I anticipate religious themes and national themes being present, and through looking at the level of pronouns alongside theme I was able to examine the ways that Archbishop Romero groups his audiences in order to incorporate a broader set of audiences in his call for peace.

At the fine-grained level, I focus my analysis on pronouns because I am interested in the ways Archbishop Romero depicts various groups of his audience within this homily. Because Archbishop Romero is known for contentious and controversial statements, especially against

state-sponsored violence, I examine how he talked with and about potential audiences. The country was tearing itself apart, so I analyze the ways that Archbishop Romero appealed to and talked about his audiences in an effort to understand if his rhetoric was polarizing or unifying. Archbishop Romero was trying to unite the nation, so I explore the ways in which he tried to persuade his audience to come together in support of the poor and in support of an end to the violence in the country.

Since persuading an audience is a key factor in rhetorics of social change, I focus my analysis of “The Church’s Mission in a Crisis” on the inclusion and exclusion of audiences. My analysis of the inclusion and exclusion of audiences centers on the ways in which Archbishop Romero blurred audience group identity via appeals to religious nationalism and through inclusive pronouns. In order to understand the influence of context on the homily, I examine the ways that audiences shape this homily because audiences embody many contexts at once and in different ways. The way that the text is constructed with these audiences in mind is not just a reflection of the context, but a key element in understanding the text and its purpose.

Notions of audience identity can be described as having ingroup and outgroup sets (Roberts-Miller 184-5). Ingroup audience identity points to the inclusion of the audience with the speaker. This in turn makes that audience more receptive to the argument being made (184). Outgroup audience identities, on the other hand, separate the audience from the speaker and reduces the receptivity of the audience to the argument (184). I use ingroup/outgroup identity to examine the ways that Archbishop Romero constructs audience identity. I hypothesized that Archbishop Romero intentionally complicated the audience identity groups in order to incorporate as many different audiences into his overall audience in an effort to unite people in better serving the poor and in ending the violence.

To understand the way that Archbishop Romero used language to create the ingroup and outgroup audience identities, I examine the ways that Archbishop Romero used “we” pronouns (we, us, our, ours, ourselves) and “you” pronouns (you, your, yours, yourself, yourselves) to align himself with his various audiences. I analyze these pronoun sets because they create different groupings of audiences—inclusive “we,” exclusive “we,” inclusive “you,” and exclusive “you.” This grouping of audiences allows me to further examine the ways that Archbishop Romero understood and related to his audiences.

3.3.3 Mesolevel

In this section of the analysis I examine the way that the text, in this case “The Church’s Mission in a Crisis,” influenced or was influenced by the power structures in its context. I analyze the ways in which “The Church’s Mission in a Crisis” aligned with contemporaneous power structures, such as the pedantic relationship between church hierarchy and lay people. I also examine the ways that this homily influences or pushes against the power structures, especially in regards to the expected distance between an archbishop and the larger population in his diocese. Because it is difficult to trace the importance of a single homily due to the size of Archbishop Romero’s oeuvre, I complicate the necessity of tracing the influence of a singular text and instead focus on the function of Archbishop Romero’s rhetoric nationally and internationally.

Because this was his fourth homily accompanying a pastoral letter and his third time giving a homily on this feast day, Archbishop Romero knew the conventions of this homily well. He arguably had the best understanding of his audience at this point as it was his last time addressing them in this manner; he was assassinated the following March. Archbishop Romero’s stance on helping the poor had earned him international fame and local death threats by this

point. Because of the power of his rhetoric more generally, Archbishop Romero had been labelled a champion of the poor and enemy of the state. I end this section of analysis with a discussion of the role of Archbishop Romero in the national and international contexts at the end of his life and his influence postmortem.

3.4 Summary of Methodology

Critical discourse analysis allows for the deep understanding of a text through multiple layers of analysis synthesized to create a full picture of a text and its influence. Rhetoric and composition scholars can use this tool as an extension of rhetorical analysis. Offering a number of options for exploring context—intertextuality, political context, historic context, etc.—critical discourse analysis digs deep into the rhetorical situation.

With increasing attention to interdisciplinary projects within rhetoric and composition, critical discourse analysis offers a framework for incorporating varying expertise into one analysis. This is a method, too, which offers options for both quantitative analysis and qualitative. Although I do not undertake a quantitative approach here, it may be worth noting that the microlevel analysis offers space to use more quantifiable data through corpus analysis and other tools of content analysis. Critical discourse analysis is a versatile tool for rhetoric and composition scholars, especially within the social turn of the field. The non-neutral stance and examination of power structures encourages social justice applications.

Chapter 4. Unifying Rhetoric in a Fragmented Context: Analysis

4.1 Introduction

The macrolevel perspective that I undertake offers insight about the broader social context in which the homily was written, focusing on the ways that “The Church’s Mission in a Crisis” fits within other textual discussion. The microlevel analysis demonstrates through close textual analysis that Archbishop Romero separated audiences and also brought them together. In particular, Archbishop Romero addressed variously in order to push people to get involved with social change efforts. I finish this chapter with an examination of the relationship between “The Church’s Mission in a Crisis” and Archbishop Romero’s influence on prevailing power structures in El Salvador.

4.2 Building a Homily: Genre, Papal Addresses, the Bible, and Political Context

Throughout “The Church’s Mission in a Crisis” Archbishop Oscar Romero directly brings in three other texts: Pope Pius VI’s address to the Eucharistic Congress in 1942, Pope John Paul II’s address at Puebla in 1979, and the Bible. In order to understand the full textual context of “The Church’s Mission in a Crisis” I examine the role of each text, the expectations and prior knowledge they bring, and how each text influenced Archbishop Romero’s homily.

4.2.1 Homily Bridging Religious and Secular Lives

In order to understand the way that other texts can influence a homily, I first offer a description of the homily genre. By understanding this genre and its conventions, it is easier to understand the role of each text referred to in “The Church’s Mission in a Crisis.” A full genre analysis of homily is beyond the scope of this analysis, so here I bring in description and discussion of only the major components of homilies given the context of this analysis.

A homily is a part of the Catholic mass where the priest (or archbishop) connects the readings given for the day, or other relevant readings from the Bible, to the context and/or daily lives of his parishioners. Homilies give the priest an opportunity to offer insight on current events while staying rooted in the readings associated with that day's mass. By discussing how scripture can offer a way of understanding daily life, priests are then strengthening the link between religious and secular realms. Combining the secular and religious realms is something that Archbishop Romero did consistently. In "The Church's Mission in a Crisis" he offers discussions of scripture and of other religious documents in a direct discussion of what they mean for people living in El Salvador at that moment.

4.2.2 Catholic Doctrine: Developing the Preferential Option for the Poor

I begin this section by examining Catholic doctrine and then continue on to examine the roles of homilies in social change in the context of liberation theology as well as official Catholic doctrine. This offers a fuller examination of Archbishop Romero's religious context and the role of homily in that context. Combining an understanding of Archbishop Romero's religious context with an examination of the historical context and some of Archbishop Romero's own rhetoric, a fuller picture of the role and effects of Archbishop Romero's rhetoric is possible.

Vatican II and Medellín: Bringing Scripture to Daily Life through Homily

Archbishop Romero was archbishop after both Vatican II and Medellín, and these documents clearly framed his approach. Vatican II and Medellín are two defining doctrinal documents that refocused the Church to encourage discussion of connections between immediate material reality and the spiritual. Foley points out "the...overriding message of the documents of Vatican II is that scriptural grounding is important, definitive, and essential" (13). Moving from a pedantic stance often found in the teachings coming out of Vatican I, Vatican II shifts much of the

teaching that clergy do into a contextual relationship. In particular, this focuses on the way that homilies were presented. Vatican II encourages homilies as a major pedagogic moment for priests, rather than sermons. Homilies use scripture, often the daily readings, to connect the sacred and secular in parishioners' daily lives. Sermons, on the other hand, are a way of discussing Church matters without necessitating direct connections to scripture or to daily life. With the increased focus on homilies, priests grounded their discussions of scripture in the daily lives of their parishioners.

This textual grounding is clear in Archbishop Romero's homily. Sobrino points out that Archbishop Romero was "scrupulously faithful to Vatican II, to Medellín, to Puebla" (27). After Vatican II, Medellín shifted Catholic discussion away from upholding the status quo and to supporting the poor (Berryman 23). Because of the more radical moves in both Vatican II and Medellín, portions of the Church in Latin America got nervous. Puebla, then, had a strong admonishment for injustice of all kinds, while also forbidding priests from becoming involved in political organizations (Bokenkotter 499).

Archbishop Romero brought these together by grounding his focus on the preferential option for the poor firmly in texts, using that grounding to advocate for sometimes anti-establishment solutions to the issue of poverty, and then to focus on poverty as violence and continue to push for change from the pulpit. In this light, Archbishop Romero grounded much of his support for the preferential option for the poor with "whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me" (Matthew 25:45). Archbishop Romero's calls for a preferential option for the poor fit firmly within the Catholic catechesis.

By grounding his analysis of the need for the preferential option for the poor in accepted texts, Archbishop Romero was building credibility within the institution of the Church. He was

using a recognizable form, a homily from this time period, to advocate for the preferential option for the poor. A macrolevel analysis shows that although Archbishop Romero's rhetoric seemed radical and potentially substantially different from the catechesis of the Church, his homilies were one section in a long line of religious texts that came before. The combination of following in the Church's doctrine and using a recognizable genre such as the homily indicates a strong sense of audience as seen by the institutional credibility he has built through these tactics. He was successful at appealing to audiences; if he had not been as successful in this aspect he may have not been considered as much of a threat by the wealthy in charge of the country.

Pope John Paul II's Address at Puebla: Institutional Encouragement of Social Justice

The largest direct influence, via direct quotation, on Archbishop Romero's homily was Pope John Paul II's address at Puebla. In January of 1979, there was a conference of bishops held in Puebla, Mexico. Conferences of bishops are designed for the Church to come together around an issue in order to come to an understanding of new facets of Church doctrine so that they can then disseminate the teachings of the Church to their respective communities. The opening address was focused on the role of the Church in Latin America.

Much of the text of the address at Puebla focuses on ending the violence prevalent throughout the continent (Romero 2). Archbishop Romero quoted this address 12 times, and that set of quotes amounts to more than 75% of the direct quotes in the homily. By relying on direct quotes from Puebla, Archbishop Romero was likely "affirm[ing] [his] authority while avoiding the appearance of argument" (O'Keefe 152). Referring to a major religious statement lent Archbishop Romero authority as he talked about day-to-day life as relating to scripture. Puebla denounced violence, national security doctrine, and human rights violations. Archbishop Romero

integrates his denunciation of the national security policies of El Salvador between quotes from Puebla, saying

In many instances the ideologies of National Security have helped to intensify the totalitarian or authoritarian character of governments based on the use of force. In the name of national security hundreds of lives have been sacrificed. In the name of national security human rights have been violated. In the name of national security insecurity has been implanted among the people. Puebla goes on to state: the ideology of national security is not compatible with the Christian vision of the human being as responsible for carrying out a temporal project and to its vision of the State as the administrator of the common good. (6-7italics original)

In bookending his statements on national security policy in El Salvador with quotes from Puebla, Archbishop Romero was able to back up his own argument and preclude potential questions as to the reliability of his argument as being based in religious doctrine (O’Keefe 151). In this way, Archbishop Romero was able to use his institutional credibility to speak out against one of the major issues facing Salvadorans.

As one of the stated purposes of the homily was to disseminate the information from the address at Puebla (Romero 2), it makes sense that there would be frequent and substantial references to that address. While Puebla did not discuss El Salvador in particular, Archbishop Romero points out that “Puebla uses words that could have been written just for the people of El Salvador” (4). Puebla called for the dissemination of the teachings from the opening address, so Archbishop Romero relied heavily on the opening address to ground his 1979 pastoral letter and the accompanying homily “The Church’s Mission in a Crisis.” Pastoral letters are open letters written from a bishop (or an Archbishop) to the people in his diocese. Hard copies are distributed, and there is generally an accompanying homily to explain and possibly elaborate on the content of the written letter. These letters function in various ways depending on the clergyman writing them. Archbishop Romero used religious references and rhetorics in order to continue his demand for social justice. In using Puebla as a support for the majority of his call to

action, Archbishop Romero followed the conventions of a pastoral letter—especially as the Church requested that the text of Puebla be disseminated. Archbishop Romero’s rhetoric comes out of a doctrinal tradition, while pushing forward an agenda of social change that was perhaps more intense than the writers of the doctrinal texts had intended.

Even as Archbishop Romero became more radical, he maintained distance from calling himself a liberation theologian. According to his assistant he had a copy of Gutierrez’ *A Theology of Liberation* but never opened it (Montgomery “Church” 81). While this may seem to preclude an examination of the role of liberation theology in Archbishop Romero’s texts, it remains an important part of both his context and the contexts of those attending mass or listening to his homilies.

In official documents, Archbishop Romero distanced himself from liberation theology as a whole and social organizations pushing for major change more generally, but his actions speak to a largely liberation agenda. Archbishop Romero’s seemingly “radical” tendencies stemmed from his belief in the gospel teaching of “whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me” (Matthew 25:45). This passage is associated with liberation theology’s “preferential option for the poor” in that the idea is to stand with the poor in order to alleviate both the causes and the symptoms of poverty. Liberation theology often included a push for large-scale institutional reform to eradicate poverty, but Archbishop Romero was able to officially distance himself from this movement by focusing on the spiritual lives and day-to-day lived experiences of poor people rather than pushing for a full-scale restructuring of the social order. He says that the preferential option for the poor “implies understanding the mechanisms that engender poverty, struggling for a most just world, supporting workers and the *campesinos* in their just demands and in their right to organize, and being close to people who are poor” (7).

There is room here for intense restructuring of the social order, but overall this is very focused on the material reality of daily life than on agitating for structural changes. It suggests support for those actions, implicitly, while taking a more centrist stance on the issue. It is possible that he hoped that in positioning himself this way, he was providing a kind of bridge that would be palatable to a wider audience than might be obtained if he were to formalize an allegiance to radical ideology.

Biblical Foundations for Radical Change

The particularly obvious text that Archbishop Romero brings into his homily is the Bible. Each day in the liturgical calendar has associated readings, and so the readings for the feast of the transfiguration remain the same each year. Each reading discusses the transformation of Jesus, for a moment, into purely divine in the material world. This is a very important motif as Jesus is the son of God, and showcasing the divinity being brought into daily life is evidence of the connections between God and the people. This particularly fits well with the encouragement to engage readings from scripture with the immediate context. Because of the consistent readings to draw from, Archbishop Romero was able to bring new understandings of the political context into his homily as he connected that context with the readings (Romero 1). In centering his discussion of the feast of the transfiguration on the transformation of the nation into the nation of God, Archbishop Romero tied together the significance of the feast day with the immediate political context. In calling for the nation to move forward on the path that God intended, Archbishop Romero was able to call upon people to enact social change. Centering himself within the scripture of the feast day, as well as within the context of his material world, Archbishop Romero emphasized the importance of social change as necessary for the nation to move forward.

Another way that Archbishop Romero centered himself within Catholic doctrine is the inclusion of a quote from Pope Pius. Pope Pius is quoted as saying “it was not only through the piety of Don Pedro Alvarado that we were baptized with so majestic a title, but it was also the providence of God that baptized us --- the same providence that gives each people its own name, its own place, and its own mission” (1). This quote points to the history of El Salvador as beginning with Don Pedro Alvarado. Here, there is an assumption of knowledge of Salvadoran history that befits the occasion of a national feast day. Pope Pius points to the religious aspects of a country being baptized, which assumes religious knowledge—something also assumed through the act of listening to a homily whether in person or elsewhere. Overall, understanding the role of the quote prior to its location in the text isn’t required or assumed. The content of the quote requires prior, but common, knowledge. This allows those without detailed knowledge of Catholic teachings to still access the message, and it positions Archbishop Romero within the Catholic doctrine contemporary to his addresses.

The use of the quote from Pope Pius draws not only on an immensely important religious concept, that of baptism, but also on the nationalist sentiment of the formation of El Salvador as a nation. The religious appeal to baptism is one of the strongest appeals in Catholicism as it represents the washing off of prior sin and beginning a new life in the family of God. Baptism is important because it also represents answering a call to repent from sin and take God into their hearts. Pius draws on the idea of the nation being established as a form of baptism. Here the comparison serves as an appeal to religious nationalism, a theme found throughout the homily. Understanding the historic context of the creation of El Salvador allows full access to the context of the quote, but a “full” understanding of the historic context is not necessary for the use of the quote to make sense.

The last direct connection to the Bible that Archbishop Romero used was a quote from Matthew 25:40 “whatever you did for one of these least brothers or sisters of mine, you did for me.” He brings this quote into the homily twice, thus emphasizing its importance. This quote in particular was favored by Archbishop Romero in this homily as a way of grounding his discussion in the gospel, again aligning his homily with generic expectations. Of more importance, though, is the significance of the quote. Archbishop Romero uses this quote as direct support for his alignment with the preferential option for the poor. In addition, this quote is the only biblical quote that Archbishop reads word-for-word and it’s the only one repeated in the homily. The emphasis on this message throughout the homily showcases its importance for Archbishop Romero’s argument overall.

4.2.3 Political Context: Violence, Poverty, and Protest Direct the Homily

In order to understand the context in which Archbishop Oscar Romero was writing, it is imperative to understand the historic context which led to the wave of violence in the late 1970s in El Salvador. Like most Central American countries, the late 1920s through the 1930s was a transition from a primarily agrarian society to a capitalistic one. The shift was precipitated in El Salvador an increase in political organization, most notably the organizations led by Farabundo Martí. In 1932, *campesinos* (rural farmers) protested in a botched collective uprising (Montgomery *Revolution* 52). Up to 30,000 people may have been killed (Montgomery *Revolution* 52). This massacre is now known as *La Matanza* (the Slaughter). Rebellion was all but erased through repression in the western part of the country, but “the eastern half was virtually untouched...The military consolidated its hold on the government, and there was no more pretense of popular political participation” (Montgomery *Revolution* 53).

At this point, the Church had decidedly determined to maintain closeness with the government in direct response to the fear of the changes liberation theology asked for, namely changes to social systems in order to care for the poor (Hebblethwaite 182, *Montgomery Revolution* 102, 79). Because of this desire to retain the relationship with the Salvadoran government, they chose Archbishop Romero when it was time to appoint a new archbishop (*Montgomery Revolution* 110; Martín-Baró 5).

El Salvador was unstable for almost all of Archbishop Romero's time in the position. Government repression worsened, executions and massacres became more frequent, and "[u]nder the shelter of both darkness and of official protection, [bands of extreme right-wing terrorists] spent nights eliminating supposed members of the opposition" (Martín-Baró 14). With the increase in repression, the social organizations also increased their tactics and "[i]ncreasingly there was talk of 'civil war'" (Martín-Baró 14).

"The Church's Mission in a Crisis" and Archbishop Romero's work more generally fits best in the frame of uprising and/or revolution in El Salvador. Archbishop Romero's rhetoric likely would not have had the same impact without the other groups and organizations advocating for change at the same time. He could, and did, respond to the social organizations in his homilies. In the same vein, Archbishop Romero upheld some of the power differentials between the Church and the poor in order to retain the position from which he could speak to these issues. Because El Salvador was already agitating for change with Romero was appointed archbishop, there was something already in place for him to latch onto in his rhetoric as he built his arguments. Archbishop Romero didn't always agree with everything the social organizations did or how they did them, but because of the way they worked in tandem there were tangible results on the society and history of El Salvador.

1979 was a year of crisis for El Salvador. Between January and September 1979, “the Salvadoran security forces illegally arrested an average of three persons every two days and, on the average, killed another four” (Martín-Baró 13). In addition to the large numbers of people arrested and killed by the security forces, El Salvador faced “almost insupportable levels...of... economic, political, and institutional crisis that affected the country” (Martin Baró 13). In response to a demonstration by priests who were spontaneously joined by the people, “two priests were assassinated in the course of the year, Fr. Rafael Palacios on June 20 and Fr. Alirio Napoleón Macías on August 4” (Martín-Baró 13).

“The Church’s Mission in a Crisis” is dedicated to Fr. Alirio Napoleón Macías and invokes him at the beginning of the homily. The absence of Fr. Macías was notable because of the immediate reminder of the violence that continued to plague El Salvador, as was the physical context of the homily since the homily was given in the park rather than the Cathedral. Throughout the homily, Archbishop Romero references the heat (8), the people he sees in the audience (3,7), and fact that they are not in the Cathedral(2,8). Not only are the words within the homily affected by the contexts, for “The Church’s Mission in a Crisis” the location was, too.

Ignacio Martín-Baró, a contemporary of Archbishop Romero, points to the necessity of fully understanding the context of El Salvador in order to hear the resonance of Archbishop Romero’s rhetoric. He points out that

the archbishop’s words ... were words spoken in history. Their universality, their capacity for uplifting hearts so different and so distant, comes about precisely because they were uttered in a particular place and time, in the here and now of the people of El Salvador in the closing years of the 1970s. (Martín-Baró 2)

In this macrolevel analysis I have examined the role of homily, religious doctrine, and the political situation on “The Church’s Mission in a Crisis.” The shifting genre conventions of a homily, in part because of religious doctrine shifting, gave Archbishop Romero the footing to use

more radical rhetoric. As an institution, the Catholic Church was opening to the concerns of secular life in a way that gave space for more radical rhetoric to seep through. In advocating connections between context and scripture, Catholic doctrine pointed Archbishop Romero in the direction that ended up being particularly radical. Archbishop Romero included in his homily a number of important connections to important Church texts as well as the concerns of the people in his diocese. Archbishop Romero was situated in a religious context that was beginning to open to direct connections with secular life. He was also situated in a political context that offered violence and poverty as daily realities. In his homilies, Archbishop Romero brought his contexts together so that the preferential option of the poor would be enacted through both contexts.

4.3 Textual Analysis of Theme and Pronouns Signaling Audience Inclusion

4.3.1 Introduction

My analysis overall focuses on the role of audience in Archbishop Romero's rhetoric and the ways in which he unites or divides his audience as a part of that rhetoric. The microlevel analysis, in which I look more closely at a small set of language choices, reflects that Romero's homily centered around three thematic audience appeals—religion, nationalism, and religious nationalism. Within the discussion of each appeal I focus on the ways in which Archbishop Romero created ingroup/outgroup identities via language choices. Throughout my discussion of audience appeals and group identities, I focus on the use of pronouns to examine how Archbishop Romero positioned himself alongside, or distant from, his audiences. The pronouns I look at are the “we” set of pronouns (we, us, our, ours, ourselves) and the “you” set (you, your, yours, yourselves). These sets of pronouns point to a distinction, or lack thereof, between speaker and subject and offer insight into the positioning of Archbishop Romero with respect to his audiences. In this close analysis of the language of the text I found more than 150 instances of

“we” and “you” pronoun sets throughout the text. I end my microlevel analysis of “The Church’s Mission in a Crisis” with a discussion of the importance of blurred audience identity groups as connected to Archbishop Romero’s goal of uniting his audience in the act of creating changes in El Salvador.

4.3.2 Appeals of Faith: The Language of Religious Appeals

As “The Church’s Mission in a Crisis” is a homily, religious themes are part of the genre. I analyze the ways in which Archbishop Romero used religious appeals within the homily to connect with or disconnect from his audience. In this section I focus on the ways that religious references construct ingroup and outgroup audience identities. In examining the role of religious appeals in uniting or fracturing audience groups, I use pronouns as indicators of distance or connection with audience. This analysis of indicators of ingroup or outgroup audience identity highlights the distance, or lack thereof, between Archbishop Romero and his audiences. As Archbishop Romero was advocating for change in a religious setting, examining the ways in which he appeals to a number of audiences highlights the ways that he called various audiences together for change.

Within the analysis of pronouns, more than 125 instances of the “we” pronoun set and all 30 of the “you” pronoun set are tied in some way to religion. Direct connections to religion do not necessarily point to audience *appeals* of a religious nature, however the number of combined instances indicates a strong prevalence of these appeals throughout the homily. The references to “you” were almost universally based in religious appeals. The “you” pronoun set does include a few passing references to their particular subject without being directly tied to a religious appeal. Overall, both pronoun sets figure heavily in Archbishop Romero’s construction of religious appeals throughout his homily. By using both pronoun sets in the religious appeals, Archbishop

Romero created both ingroup and outgroup audience identities. In addition to creating distinct ingroup and outgroup identities, Archbishop Romero used religious appeals to blur the lines between ingroup and outgroup identity in a move that serves to bring larger portions of the audience together in the hope that they will then follow that unity through into working to alleviate poverty.

Together as Catholics: Ingroup Audience Identity and Religious Appeals

The types of ingroup identity that Archbishop Romero signals among those assumed to be listening are the Church, Catholics, Salvadorans, priests, and those presumably Catholics who are present at the mass. These ingroup identities are frequently referred to through the collective pronoun “we” as well as occasionally an inclusive “you” to refer to laity within the Church so that then all are considered part of the Church albeit in distinct positions.

A particularly interesting finding was that “you” and associated pronouns could be used as an ingroup maneuver. A typical Catholic phrase, “...to our Divine Patron and to you, my sisters and brothers...” (1) begins with an ingroup move with “our Divine Patron.” This groups everyone as Catholics with the same higher power. Then, Archbishop Romero moves to “you, my sisters and brothers.” This places the audience with Archbishop Romero as family. Here, the “you” signifies Archbishop Romero bringing the audience into his circle (his audience group). By beginning the homily with a standard greeting, Archbishop Romero not only brings the audience together, but also creates an atmosphere that might suggest he will do that elsewhere as well.

To address his audience directly in the beginning, Archbishop Romero states “I greet you, this beloved multitude that has filled the park in front of the Cathedral...” (1). Here, he uses an inclusive “you” to encompass the entire crowd gathered to hear the homily as well as the word “beloved” to indicate that the “multitude that has filled the park” is not unwelcome. Combined,

this greeting serves to unite the physically present audience and to foster positive sentiment before getting to the in-depth portion of the mass.

Archbishop Romero directly addresses his audiences several times throughout the homily. He points to those physically present when he describes those physically present as including

children who at a tender age must earn a living, young women and men who do not have an opportunity to develop themselves, *campesinos* who lack the most basic necessities, workers whose rights are not respected, the underemployed, people living on the margins of society, and the elderly who feel useless in society. (3-4)

This description of the audience not only welcomed those in these groups into the intended audience with open arms, but also positioned Archbishop Romero in relationship to these groups. He stood firmly alongside all those facing economic and social turmoil due to the present context. Aligning himself with the poor in this way showcases the hardships of daily life in El Salvador while sending a clear message in his faith in the preferential option for the poor. He sent a clear message through this iteration of audience that he spoke with and alongside those facing injustice. This is a note, rather than a warning, to those who opposed the demand for social change. They likely understood the inclusion of the people described, and without being explicitly excluded (or hinted at being the cause of the situation) those who opposed changing the system had the option of remaining included in the audience.

Archbishop Romero also used “you” as an ingroup signifier is when he stated “You and I have written this pastoral letter...” (2). Archbishop Romero claims that he directly included his audience in the crafting of his homily as well as his pastoral letter. Explicitly including his audience in the process of composing the text, Archbishop Romero again brought the audience into the ingroup. This also allowed for the government to be implicated—while they may not have been constructively writing the letter, they were part of the reason the letter was written and their policies greatly influenced the context in which this homily was written and delivered.

While members of the archdiocese provided answers to a questionnaire which assisted Archbishop Romero in understanding the daily realities of those in his archdiocese, the archdiocese of San Salvador “included...40% of the population [of El Salvador]” so the government was directly implicated in crafting the letter by answering the survey as well as by creating the context that preceded the letter. Some of those working for the government may have filled out questionnaires and helped to create the letter in that way. Others may have been only implicated through their negative association with the violence plaguing the country. As many of the audience was likely Catholic, the number of religious appeals to the necessity of caring for the poor and ending the conflict makes sense as well. Archbishop Romero welcomes his audience to the celebration as he said “I greet you...our people who have a deep religious sense and a richness as human beings” (2). Complimenting and appealing to the religious sensibilities of his audience created a clear ingroup identity. Aligning the audience right away with a “deep religious sense” allowed Archbishop Romero to draw on that using other religious appeals.

There is a portion of the audience, possibly not physically present, that Archbishop Romero addresses specifically. While describing the purpose of this homily, Archbishop Romero praises the groups that worked with him to understand the issues within the archdiocese as being “mature,” having “boldness,” and having a “preferential option for the poor” (2). Not only is Archbishop Romero praising the groups, he is also acknowledging the hard work of lay people in creating the mission of the Church. The traits of maturity, boldness, and a preferential option of the poor are themes to which Archbishop Romero implicitly returns throughout his homily (with the notable exception of the preferential option, which is explicit throughout). Beginning his homily with such direct references to the ways in which the audience shapes and can participate

in furthering the mission of the Church aligns the audience with Archbishop Romero via an appeal to the Church as hosting a group identity. Bringing the audience together in this way allowed Archbishop Romero to include as many portions of his audience as possible.

Archbishop Romero stood at an in-between position of power. He was a particularly important figure in the Church and he had international audiences. At the same time, he was advocating for social change to audiences of people already clamoring for it as well as those who had kept distant from it. While it would have been fairly easy to only consider one audience while writing homilies, Archbishop Romero opted to include as many audiences as possible. In standing with the poor, he was demonstrating the preferential option for the poor through which he advocated for social change. Throughout “The Church’s Mission in a Crisis,” Archbishop Romero avoids admonishing individuals participating on either side. This allows him to include more audiences within the target audience, a move which encouraged those who had not engaged with the movement to align themselves with the poor even if only for part of a homily. In this way, Archbishop Romero’s blurring of audience lines as a mechanism to include more people in the movement for social justice was a way of creating audience identity groups that may spill over into other aspects of people’s lives.

Outgroup Audiences: Religious Appeals Aren’t for Everyone

Outgroup identity manifests in implicit ways more often than in explicit ways. The appeals based in religious motives for change create outgroup audiences for those who are listening although not Catholic. Other audiences that have outgroup identities include Catholics who don’t follow Catholic doctrine to the letter, those outside of Archbishop Romero’s diocese, and those not regularly involved with Church activities. For these three audiences, the outgroup identity is

constructed in part through the genre of a homily as well as through Archbishop Romero's appeals to religion that miss the mark with these listeners.

No pronoun is used to point to Catholics as a referent, but the distinct sense is that "Catholics" here is a distancing move when he points to Catholics as "just say[ing]: *Marxists are condemned!*" (8, italics original). Because this was the homily of a Catholic mass, a reasonable assumption is that the majority of the audience was Catholic. With an assumed audience of Catholics, and references to "the Church" as "we", the above move to distance "Catholics" from the primary audience is interesting. It could point to a subtle chastisement—there were undoubtedly Catholics listening who had engaged in activities contrary to the Catholic value system. By speaking to an audience of presumable Catholics, this distancing move creates a smaller ingroup, those who behave in line with Catholic values, while chastising those Catholics who stray.

"Allow yourself to be guided" (7) is shortly followed by teamwork within ministry and pastoral activities. This suggests that the people in the archdiocese are a collective, who have ministerial activities and who are looking for guidance. Here, the "allow yourself" feels passive, implying some lack of agency on part of the parishioners—while still giving space for them to choose, seen in "allow." This section in particular is an outgroup use of "you" because it puts the people at a distance. This is interesting because it doesn't imply that Archbishop Romero had pastoral or ministerial activities, although he clearly does given his position within the Church. The section about ministerial activities implies that parishioners *need* guidance as they do this. While needing guidance is generally a characteristic of Catholic teachings, as God/Jesus will guide you on the path of righteousness, the implicit command to accept guidance indicates that Archbishop Romero is playing on passivity and "religious guilt" to push people *out* of the

passive role and into an active one. This aligns with his overall message throughout the homily as encouraging action for change.

The encouragement to take action for change is mirrored in “...by you who are able to do this” (4). Here, the Archbishop seems to be continuing the call for Catholics to engage in actions beyond Church constraints. It’s an imperative for average Catholics to step up and demand change, both within the Church and beyond the Church. Combined with the passivity earlier, it’s clear that the audience group is being shown a path to creating change in El Salvador through religious appeals.

Opiate of the Masses: Religious Appeals and Blurred Audience Identities

Archbishop Romero later describes others as being included in the audience he is addressing. He mentions the audiences present and “those who are reflecting with us as they listen to our radios” (6). Here, it is clear that Archbishop Romero is speaking specifically with each of those audiences in mind. He returns to a mention of the physically present audience with a mention of the hot sun (9). By directly naming his audiences in this way, he not only acknowledges the places from which they approach his homily, but also demonstrates that he has thought about his audiences beforehand.

4.3.3 The Language of Nationalist Appeals in a Fragmented Nation

Archbishop Romero is known for advocating for an end to poverty in El Salvador, an end to violence, and for both of those to be based in the religious teachings of the preferential option for the poor. His rhetoric is tied to his place, and given the specific context of a burgeoning civil war, deciding on what counts as good for the nation was a hotly contested subject. Knowing that his national feast day homily would be heard both nationally and internationally, next I examine the role of nationalist appeals. I examine this in terms of constructions of audience especially

because of the scope and range of Archbishop Romero's homilies and the importance of this homily in particular.

Within the text, the 12 instances of "we/us/our" that were not tied in some way to religion *were* tied with being Salvadoran. There were no instances of "you" that were connected with national appeals that were separate from religious appeals. This implies that Archbishop Romero directly connected himself with the rest of El Salvador with his appeals to nationalism. By doing this, Archbishop Romero focused on including those audiences who may not respond directly to the religious appeals but who were still interested in Archbishop Romero's discussion of national context on this feast day.

Together as Salvadorans: Ingroup Audience Identity and Nationalist Appeals

Archbishop Romero calls on his audience as Salvadorans to fix the current national crisis. By inscribing himself within the category of Salvadorans, Archbishop Romero positions himself as someone who needs to do more. This puts him alongside the rest of El Salvador as someone needing to help the country work towards peace.

The strongest example of ingroup Salvadoran identity is when Archbishop Romero calls everyone to action. He says "We thus fulfill the duty which today is incumbent on all the people of El Salvador, all the organizations and all the different sectors of the nation. No one can be passive" (2). Archbishop is very clearly indicating that every Salvadoran is included in the audience for this when he says "all the people of El Salvador." He includes specific appeals to organizations and "sectors of the nation" as well, which emphasizes the idea that this message is for everyone in the nation. Because of the use of "We" at the beginning of the quote, Archbishop Romero suggests that he too needs to refrain from being passive. Placing him at the same footing

as the rest of his audience builds his credibility and creates an ingroup audience identity with perhaps more permeable borders.

Different National Visions: Outgroup Audience Identity and Nationalist Appeals

Archbishop Romero points to “some people” and “other people” in reference to those who value wealth above the human condition and those who perpetuate violence as a way of avoiding saying that the elite and soldiers/guerilla fighters killing people (6). In this way, Archbishop Romero is able to create an outgroup of the state and those killing people, while not naming them so as to potentially allow individuals to separate themselves and instead work for social justice. This unnamed group is carefully excluded from “the Church” in such a way that it’s clear that the government as a whole is excluded without admonishing individuals who happen to be working for the government and who aren’t perpetrating the violence. The outgroup, here, is the government as an entity, not the individuals. The national government as outgroup audience points to Archbishop Romero’s argument as including the idea that nationalism isn’t the same as accepting the current government without question.

The Future of the Nation: Blurred Audience Identity and Nationalist Appeals

This indirect criticism evolves into direct critique when Archbishop Romero specifically brings those with outgroup identity—those who don’t consider themselves part of the audience—into the discussion by addressing the ways that “individual options or the options of any group or organization” might overshadow the decisions of others (7). Archbishop Romero addresses all audiences—those with ingroup and outgroup identities alike—by saying “No individual and no organization can pretend to express the total thinking of the people...The organization is not more important than the country, the country is more important than the organization” (7). The

in-group/outgroup lines have been blurred as a way of bringing the audience into one group identity of Salvadorans invested in the future of the country.

By explicating the types of problems El Salvador is facing, Archbishop Romero used a blurred line between ingroup and outgroup in order to combine group identities in an appeal to nationalist values. Through repetitions of “our country,” it is clear that Archbishop Romero intended that those listening care about the future of El Salvador. While different “organizations” had different solutions for the country, the primary issue at hand was the future of El Salvador. This is potentially a particularly effective move in that even those in the outgroup who are listening for political gain or for military information, the audience here is clearly Salvadorans as a whole. Regardless of level of participation in the violence plaguing the country, Salvadorans can hear the calls to unity in order to preserve the nation with more of an open mind than they might have had they not been included in the group identity appealed to.

4.3.4 The State of the Church/The Church of the State: Religious Nationalism

By encouraging audiences to draw their own conclusions, Archbishop Romero pulls all of his audiences together in helping create the answers. Vasquez points to the idea that individuation in understanding sermons “...should be motivated toward the same communitarian goal...the improvement of society” (181). This pulling together of audiences is something that Archbishop Romero repeats in various forms throughout his homily. Primarily, he focuses on appeals to two major value systems: Catholicism and nationalism. By appealing to and combining appeals to these values, Archbishop Romero attempts to blur the ingroup/outgroup boundaries.

Together on the National Feast Day: Ingroup Audience Identities and Religious Nationalism

Archbishop Romero calls to religious Salvadorans to come together and better the nation through religion. This creates two types of audience groups within this appeal. First, it creates a

group for those who would respond to *either* religious or nationalist appeals. In this sense, the ingroup identity could be quite large. The second type of audience groups is a small in-group, as some of the appeals to religious nationalism are for Catholics to change their behavior in order to bring about national changes. In this section I first talk about the larger audience group and how the appeals to religious nationalism function within the text. I then move on to a discussion of the second type of audience appealed to with religious nationalism.

The larger audience group that Archbishop Romero appealed to with religious nationalism was an audience who would respond to religious appeals and/or nationalist appeals. In effect, any part of the audience who would respond to either of those appeals was the audience for some of the appeals to religious nationalism. In ending his discussion of national security, Archbishop Romero quotes Puebla as saying “the ideology of national security is not compatible with the Christian vision of...the State as the administrator of the common good” (6). In pointing to the fact that “national security is not compatible with...the State as the administrator of the common good,” Archbishop Romero is appealing to those groups who want the government to be helping the average person. Here, the nationalist appeal is a focus on the need to build nationalism through building a better State. Those responding to this appeal may not respond to the religious aspects of it, but it nonetheless brings this section of the audience into the discussion. Religious aspects to the appeals in this quote include appeals to the authority of Puebla and juxtaposing “the ideology of national security” with “the Christian vision.” This juxtaposition pushes religious audiences to take note as false ideologies are something that the Church denounces regularly.

The smaller audience group that Archbishop Romero appealed to with religious nationalism was an audience who would respond to both religious and nationalist appeals. Here, anyone who

would respond to religious appeals but not nationalist appeals, or vice versa, was not included in the ingroup. Archbishop Romero appeals to the combination of religion and nationalism when he says “as long as the people of El Salvador do not walk along the path of conversion, there can be no solution to the crisis that threatens our people” (5). “Our people” could be Salvadorans or Christian Salvadorans. However, the admonishment to continue converting others or there will be consequences suggests that Catholic Salvadorans are the audience as the crisis is Salvadoran in nature and non-Christians likely won’t respond to the push to convert others.

All or Nothing: Outgroup Audience Identities and Religious Nationalism

While the appeal to religious nationalism could be particularly inclusive, as explored above, it also served to form some outgroups. In particular, the appeals to religious nationalism in “The Church’s Mission in a Crisis” focus at times *only* on the small group of Catholic Salvadorans. In this way, anyone who is not both a Catholic and someone who has a strong nationalist sensibility would not be included.

Archbishop Romero brings in a quote from Pope Pius XII relating the creation of the nation of El Salvador to the sacrament of baptism (1). In contextualizing this quote for his audience, Archbishop Romero says “...and the most effective motivation for our hopes as Christians in El Salvador” (1). Archbishop Romero specifically includes “Christians in El Salvador” indicating that at this point he is focused on that audience which is both Christian and Salvadoran. Non-Christians or non-Salvadorans would not find the “historic and religious legacy” as compelling. Considering the reach of the homily and that due to Archbishop Romero’s high-profile status, it seems to be a deliberate act of excluding those parts of the extended audience who were not Catholic and/or not Salvadoran.

In focusing on this audience to the exclusion of others, Archbishop Romero aligned himself with the fact that this mass was a celebration of the national feast day. Because this falls within the very beginning of the homily, Archbishop Romero could have been following the genre of the homily more closely or he could have been keeping the expected audience the focus until he was able to bring in Puebla. In following the genre of the homily, Archbishop Romero showcased the nature of his religious position; this is a national feast day and Catholic Salvadorans are the expected audience, so by speaking to that small group rather than the fuller audience of the homily Archbishop Romero fulfilled some expectations of the role of archbishop. Due to the radical nature of some of Archbishop Romero's statements throughout the homily, beginning by excluding anyone not formally expected to be in the audience could have been a move to keep audiences from disengaging with the homily too early.

The "Savior" of El Salvador: Blurred Audience Identity and Religious Nationalism

Out of 31 discrete instances of "you, your, yours, yourselves," only four were from gospel quotes. All four instances were from iterations of "whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me" (Matthew 25:45). This quote appeared twice, so 12.9% of the references to "you" are from this quote. This is particularly interesting. The specific "you" here is directed at all people. It is an outgroup move because the implied referent of "you" is "all you who are not me" and this posits all who are not Jesus as the only ones who can treat him poorly. Because *all* people listening are not Christ, the outgroup becomes an ingroup. This new ingroup is the only group capable of working for the preferential option for the poor. They are, then, the only group capable of protecting Jesus in this way. The blurring of ingroup and outgroup here encompasses literally everyone. This has particular appeal for anyone with Christian sensibilities, and for those without is still a call to treat people fairly and with kindness.

There is an inherent religious appeal here, and it is a strong religious appeal because Catholics (and Christians more broadly) want to protect Jesus, to do his work, and to honor him. Because of the nature of the statement, there is no room to exclude anyone as the audience identity moves from one of outgroup to one of ingroup. The religious appeal works for many within this new ingroup without excluding those who don't act in the way many would consider worth of this particular quote.

One of the early ways in which Archbishop Romero blurred the lines between ingroup and out-group identity was through incorporating the “authoritative word of Puebla” at the beginning of each argument within the homily (4). This allows Archbishop Romero the hierarchical backing and enough distance from the initial shock of controversy to insert his own point and to push for peace. After a brief introduction to the topic “...the deterioration of the political situation...,” Archbishop Romero notes that “Puebla uses words that could have been written just for the people of El Salvador,” (4) Here, he introduces an idea, uses the ethos of Puebla within the Church and ties it to the current situation in El Salvador. Religious nationalism is thus achieved.

The portion of Puebla that Archbishop Romero quotes here discusses the ways that governments take “repressive actions to prevent...organizing.” The analysis offered by Archbishop Romero does not contain direct critique of the Salvadoran government. Instead, Archbishop Romero offers statistics about assassinations and arrests, pointing out

this year... there have been 406 assassinations, 107 of these *campesinos* and not one of them a large land owner. During the same period there have been 307 arrests, 127 of these *campesinos*, and again not one of them a large land owner. What does it mean when there is such deterioration among those who have been entrusted to seek out the common good of people that they become concerned about the interests of only one sector of society? (3)

This juxtaposition of the Puebla statement about “repressive measures” with the idea that large landowners were not being arrested or assassinated is intentional. Archbishop Romero doesn’t explicitly make the connection between “repressive measures” and selective assassinations/arrests. He allows the audience to wonder about “What...it mean[s] when...those who have been entrusted to seek out the common good of people...become concerned about the interests of only one sector of society” (4).

Moving on to another point directly after this question, Archbishop Romero names the problems going on in El Salvador but does not explicitly exclude individuals who may have been involved as being unworthy of being called Christians in order to directly offer them the opportunity of returning to the Church in the way that they “should.” In particular, Archbishop Romero says

The Church cannot abandon these individuals who sincerely opt for a political party or a political organization. We must accompany these men and women and do so in such a way that these Christian women and men can experience wherever they go that they carry within themselves the Word, the seed of salvation and the light of the gospel.* (7-8)

Archbishop Romero specifically brings those people who will not remain neutral back into the fold of Christianity. This gives those who have decided to work for their vision of a better nation the explicit opportunity to be considered as being within the Church. They move from potentially being an outgroup to being welcomed into the ingroup should they wish to join. The ties between religion and nationalism here suggest that this is part of the heart of Archbishop Romero’s argument. Anyone is welcome in the Church if they have faith. They are welcome if they choose to be involved in various organizations as long as they continue having faith and following their consciences.

While making clear that he sees the issues in the country as having a particular source, but not directly stating it, Archbishop Romero gives a bit of room for the audiences that disagree

with him to hear the issue without being explicitly blamed for it. This creates the ingroup identity of those who agree with the implicit denunciation of the state-sponsored violence, without creating a firm outgroup of the members of state who could be listening. Archbishop Romero critiqued the government as a whole without excluding Catholics working in the Salvadoran government. This gave space for those who were a part of the government writ large to individually consider their role in the crisis.

Archbishop Romero's blurring of the ingroup/outgroup identities is especially visible in his discussion of the role of the Church as needing to convert all Salvadorans to Catholicism in order to save the nation. When discussing evangelization, Archbishop Romero states "as long as the people of El Salvador do not walk along the path of conversion, there can be no solution to the crisis that threatens our people" (6). Here, Archbishop Romero brings all those non-Catholics in the audience together in a move to get them to consider conversion. If they care about the state, the message is, they will convert as this is the only "solution to the crisis that threatens our people." "Our" in this case could signal either Salvadorans or Catholics. The ambiguity here reifies the blurred boundaries between those with the religious values appealed to and those with nationalist values being primary. This brings religious values to the forefront of the path to bringing El Salvador back to peace. Valuing both nationalism and the Catholic belief system is not necessary for the appeal to work because the combined appeal also encourages those without one of the value systems to consider the other.

4.4 Influence and Power Relations: Meso-Level Analysis of the Homily

The mesolevel analysis revolves around placing the text in its context in order to examine the ways in which a text influences its context, rather than influence going only the other way—from context to text that the context gives rise to. In analyzing how a single text by Oscar Romero

influenced power relationships and reflected those relationships, I hope to show the connections between audience, power, and language. In this section I examine the social matrix of discourse surrounding “The Church’s Mission in a Crisis.” I focus on the ways the language of the text indicate coherence or dissonance with regard to the power relationships of the larger context. In doing this analysis, I also complicate the notion that individual texts must have an independent influence on power structures. I argue instead that a more inclusive strategy for understanding the influence of a text is to consider the larger social movement of which it is a part and how that movement influences power structures.

4.4.1 Social Matrix of Discourse

The social matrix of discourse looks at two main factors, reflected power relations and resisted power relations. The context of “The Church’s Mission in a Crisis” clearly impacts the text, as seen through the direct inclusion of intertextual elements as well as through the types of audience group identity established in different points of the homily. This mesolevel analysis focuses on the ways that the power relations in the wider context of the text are reflected in the language of the homily itself and the way that the language of the text in turn influences power relations. In looking at the ways the homily interacts with its context, connections between context, language, and audience are highlighted.

Reflected Power Relations

“The Church’s Mission in a Crisis” reflects the power relations of its time in three key ways. First, it retains the power relationship between clergy and lay people. Second, it focuses on seemingly easy ways to fix the situation rather than calling for large-scale changes. Third, the relationship between the haves and the have-nots is preserved as Archbishop Romero talks *about* the poor rather than *to* them. The combined elements showcase the ways that Archbishop

Romero retained much of the particular power relationships of Salvadoran society even as he worked to change many of those same power relationships.

Because of the role of the pastoral letter, and accompanying feast day homily in this case, as being one of educating the masses, “The Church’s Mission in a Crisis” reinstates the church hierarchy by speaking to the masses about the masses. In order to be a priest, one has to go to seminary and be able to read the bible in order to understand how to best guide their parishioners. One of the major ways that Archbishop Romero guided his parishioners outside of mass was through his pastoral letters. The written pastoral letter accompanying “The Church’s Mission in a Crisis” goes into much more detail than his homily and calls for much more radical changes (Martín-Baró 14). This demonstrates that the wider audience, including many who may not be able to read the letter itself, gets a watered down purpose compared to those who can read. In fact, in 1977 nearly half the population was illiterate (Beverley 56). By including a number of textual sources in his homily, Archbishop Romero reinstates the division where those in power have education and those without education have no power to enact the institutional changes needed to enact the preferential option for the poor.

While speaking to broader audiences during “The Church’s Mission in a Crisis,” Archbishop Romero separated himself and his message from the masses. This power dynamic is made clear when Archbishop Romero points out “I am not going to go into great detail here since you can read this for yourselves” (6). Archbishop Romero points to a lengthy written pastoral letter in order to make time/space for the rest of the content in his homily. In many ways, this could have been just a practical consideration. However, due to high rates of illiteracy, many within the intended audience of the homily could not access that portion of Archbishop Romero’s argument. Because of the differences between the spoken and written argument, literate and

illiterate people were given different strategies and different information about the situation in El Salvador. The illiterate were encouraged, in some ways, to help make change through solidarity and conversion as these were the prominent appeals in the spoken homily. The written argument offered explicit details about things that needed to change in El Salvador, suggesting that only those who had access to the written pastoral letter would be able to create the larger change that would be needed to alleviate poverty.

One of the biggest ways that Archbishop Romero's homily maintains power relationships is by talking *over* and *about* poor people. Archbishop Romero brings in the words of Pope John Paul II at Puebla talking about the ways in which many Catholics haven't put themselves in solidarity with the poor often enough (4). Here, the Pope implicitly puts the poor as other than Catholic. In assuming that his audiences needed reminding about working in solidarity with the poor, Pope John Paul II demonstrated that his principle audience was not the poor. The poor wouldn't need the reminder that an increased focus on working with the poor would be beneficial to the poor, as Berryman points out "only the nonpoor can 'opt' for the poor" (42).

The power relationship here between the Church and poor as entirely skewed in the favor of the Church is not entirely absent from Archbishop Romero's rhetoric. Archbishop Romero makes statements similar to those of Pope John Paul II about the poor including a description of "Our work on the behalf of the poor" as being one of the key points of contention within his public discussions (6). "Our work" indicates a distance from "the poor" that is reinforced to the work being "on behalf of the poor." If poor people are working together for an objective, I doubt that they would refer to themselves as "working on behalf of the poor. By including this type of phrasing throughout the homily, Archbishop Romero focuses his argument at Catholics currently in non-poverty-based situations.

Throughout most of “The Church’s Mission in a Crisis” Archbishop Romero talks about the poor as Other or as separate. Many of those listening were likely poor, so this distancing move aligned Archbishop Romero with others in positions of (relative) power and comfort within Salvadoran society. The distance between Archbishop Romero and the poor that he creates mirrors that same distance in society writ large.

Archbishop Romero had a particularly difficult position from which to speak. He was aligned with the poor, but he also had to somewhat align himself with the non-poor in order to bring them to action. Considering the balancing act of alignment and audience that Archbishop Romero needed to do, the fact that he was unable to fully include every audience makes sense.

Interrupted Power Relations

The first way that “The Church’s Mission in a Crisis” interrupts power relations is by including results from a popular survey in the homily. Archbishop Romero took results from a survey distributed to the archdiocese and included some discussion of the results in “The Church’s Mission in a Crisis.” In this way, Archbishop Romero pushed against the norm of being the sole author of his homily and bridged the gap between clergy and lay people. With relations between the ruling class and the poor particularly tense, Archbishop Romero’s inclusion of voices from the diocese in forming the homily points to a direct rejection of the tradition of the Salvadoran Church to align with the oligarchy. While that had shifted since Vatican II, the inclusion of context from those living the realities of poverty demonstrated a clear alignment with the poor.

Instead of only including his own interpretation of the context, Archbishop Romero listened to those in his diocese and incorporated their view. In particular, he included their understanding of the context as a key portion of his overall message. Power relationships between archbishops

and parishioners are generally more distant and their homilies can focus on spiritual matters to the exclusion of some of the most intense portions of parishioners' lives. By intentionally including the voices of his parishioners in his homily, Archbishop Romero positioned himself with the poor and against the often particularly unequal power relationship between those in the Church hierarchy and the poor.

Archbishop Romero points out one particular phrase from the questionnaire as being important "*there is no reason to fear Marxism because we can win this struggle if we take seriously our preferential option for the poor*" (6, italics original). Here, Archbishop Romero brings in the words of a parishioner to connect his overall context together with the religious aspects of the day. This quote is used to introduce the idea that the preferential option for the poor is the most important facet of much of what the archdiocese, and Catholic Salvadorans more generally, is working on. The quote itself reflects the idea of fearing Marxism as a baseline and moves to alleviating that fear through the preferential option of the poor advocated for by Archbishop Romero. Including this quote pushed back at power structures in allowing the laity to offer their voices within the homily and also pushed back through the words of the quote themselves.

A second way that Archbishop Romero interrupts power relations is by sharing ownership of the homily. He directly tells his audience that "you and I have written this fourth pastoral letter" (2). By including the people in the construction of the homily, Archbishop Romero suggests that those without institutional power influenced the message of the homily. He indicates in the homily that the people are shaping the priorities of the archdiocese and that he will listen to them. Instead of shunning the poor, the uneducated, the forgotten in society, "The Church's Mission in a Crisis" attempts to include them in the ownership of the message. This also is an

inclusive move to increase the sense of unity between the archbishop and the populace.

Removing some of the distance between a man with influence and those he leads aligns him with his audience in order to give them the sense of being included so that they align with his push for justice. Archbishop Romero brings his audience together in this way in order to push back at the power relationships that encourage an intentional ignoring of the poor.

Throughout “The Church’s Mission in a Crisis,” Archbishop Romero places himself alongside the poor, advocating for an end to the situation creating extreme poverty, a stance entirely in defiance of societal norms. By using the importance that society gave him by virtue of being archbishop, Romero used his societal influence to challenge the power relationships between the government and the poor.

4.4.2 Constraints of Mesolevel Analysis

One major component to consider while studying the mesolevel of a text is examining where it fits within the social matrix of discourse. Analyzing the ways that a text reflects the power relationships of its context is facilitated by the understanding of context that the macrolevel analysis provides. By looking at how Archbishop Romero’s rhetoric fits within the Catholic doctrine and the homily genre more specifically, it is easier to understand the ways in which he was able to influence the power dynamics within the Church. Archbishop Romero had the platform and respectability from which he spoke *because* of the Catholic Church. Having been trained by the Catholic Church, being dependent on them for his livelihood, and having worked within this hierarchical structure for decades, Archbishop Romero likely had internalized some of the power relationships that the Church context upheld. His rhetoric included some distinct ways in which Archbishop Romero upheld power relationships as he spoke with the masses. While it is impossible to fully extricate oneself from all power relationships, understanding ways

in which social movements reflect power relationships is necessary to understanding their rhetoric and the ways they were influential with their audiences.

Understanding the ways that power relations are influenced by a specific text rather than the ways that the text resists those power relations is difficult. “The Church’s Mission in a Crisis” is one of three homilies Archbishop Romero gave for the feast of the transfiguration, one of four homilies accompanying pastoral letters, and one of more than 200 preserved homilies Archbishop Romero gave throughout his time as archbishop. In general, understanding the effectiveness of a single text on a larger social movement, or its social context writ large, is a decades-long question in social movement studies with no clear answers (Cox and Faust 97-99).

Even if considering the many homilies in the same “family” of texts, it is still exceedingly difficult to understand the precise ways homilies influence people ideologically. Because of the role of Archbishop Romero in the movement for social change in El Salvador, it may be helpful to instead look at “The Church’s Mission in a Crisis” as part of Archbishop Romero’s homily corpus as a whole.

As a corpus Archbishop Romero’s homilies had a strong influence due to the way that Archbishop Romero used his position of power to advocate for controversial, even radical, changes to the social and political order. Archbishop Romero’s use of homily as his primary way of discussing larger social issues gave him space to push against Church hierarchical conventions as well. Homilies are traditionally single authored, and in “The Church’s Mission in a Crisis” Archbishop Romero directly includes words from his parishioners. Breaking the tradition of a homily in this way positioned Archbishop Romero as someone aligned with the populace and who designed the homily specifically with them in mind.

By broadcasting the homilies on the radio, those who could not have attended mass were able to hear a man with importance advocate for change. The multiple rebroadcasts of the homilies throughout the week gave each week's message more time to sink in. By using his position of power to make his homilies available, Archbishop Romero increased the accessibility and availability of his messages to the masses. In addition to being broadcast throughout El Salvador, most of Nicaragua, Honduras, and Guatemala also had access to the original broadcasts. They were frequently rebroadcast from Guatemala and the resulting broadcast was heard as far away as Argentina. This wide scope of the broadcast of homilies points to the impact Archbishop Romero had internationally.

One clear indication of how Archbishop Romero brought international attention to the plight of El Salvador is shown when, in 1978, popular media distributed video of military forces shooting on protesters and the international community responded intensely. Indeed, the Law of Defense and Guarantee of Public Order, the law which gave government forces power to enforce "national security" policies, was repealed because of the global pressure (Martín-Baró 13) immediately following release of the video, which might have fallen on deaf ears if broad publics had not been primed by Archbishop Romero's varied pronouncements. Even though Archbishop Romero's rhetoric wasn't directly the cause of the international outrage, because he had brought so much attention to the nation it is likely that he was in some way connected with this moment of challenging the authority and power of the Salvadoran government.

4.4.3 Balancing Power Relationships and Multiple Audiences: Mesolevel Conclusion

Archbishop Romero's "The Church's Mission in a Crisis" reflected power relationships as well as resisted them. Because of his position of authority coupled with his alignment with the poor, Archbishop Romero had to balance the amount of resistance he offered to the power

relationships. In attempting to get more Salvadorans working for social change, Archbishop Romero had to talk to parts of Salvadoran society who generally agreed with the status quo as well as talk to the poor. He was not entirely successful with this balance. This particular homily was not extraordinarily persuasive in its ability to get people involved with actions for social change. However, Archbishop Romero resisted power relations through his incorporation of the voices and experiences of his parishioners in his homilies. His rhetoric overall reached international audiences not only through the radio but because of the everyday realities he explained in his homilies. While the individual homily did not create large-scale change, as a part of the larger corpus of Archbishop Romero's rhetoric it certainly influenced the history of El Salvador.

4.5 Conclusion

Critical discourse analysis includes three major components: macrolevel analysis, microlevel analysis, and mesolevel analysis. The macrolevel analysis of "The Church's Mission in a Crisis" showed the influence of the shift within the Catholic Church to include direct connections between scripture and daily life. These connections allowed Archbishop to connect with the lives of the poor and advocate for change, while working within his role of archbishop. Archbishop Romero's homilies, fit the genre of homily to a point. His use of the homily as a push for social action broadened the application of the doctrinal additions provided by Vatican II, Medellín, and Puebla. Expanding his use of the homily allowed Archbishop Romero to bring in discussions of the violence, poverty, and corruption within the material context of his homily.

The disjointedness between the social organizations pushing for change and the government attempting to maintain the status quo ensured that Archbishop Romero had multiple, often polarized, audiences for this homily. In that vein, Archbishop Romero used the themes of

religion, nationalism, and religious nationalism to build and shift audience inclusion in his messages. Through the use of pronouns, Archbishop Romero signaled to his audiences whether each one was included in the audience for any particular passage. Rather than excluding those working for the state, Archbishop Romero's use of shifting audience boundaries and careful use of pronouns allowed for the possibility that individuals working for the government could begin to act for social change. The overall effect of Archbishop Romero's use of theme and pronouns was a sense of inclusion and call to unity in the support of social action. Given the intensely polarized political perspectives in the context, Archbishop Romero could have easily fueled the distance between sections of society. Instead, he used his rhetoric to urge unification.

Even as he worked to engage those not yet involved in actions for social justice, Archbishop Romero included the voices of the people of his diocese in his homily and his message. Pushing back against the distance between the poor and the non-poor, Archbishop also pushed back against the traditional distance between archbishop and parishioner—especially in the act of writing a homily. Archbishop Romero's homilies were broadcast internationally, and he is still remembered as a powerful rhetorician in the face of violent turmoil.

The combination of macro, micro, and mesolevel analyses shows the numerous ways in which context shapes a text. Archbishop Romero used the various contexts in which he found himself to write a homily working for unification in the push for social justice. By shifting the audience identity boundaries, he included many of his probable audiences. This homily is not among those frequently studied, but the rhetorical moves that Archbishop Romero displays through the blurring of audience identity boundaries in this piece showcases one point of rhetoric within the larger social movement in El Salvador at this time. This paper offered a historical case study of a moment within a social movement. Archbishop Romero's homily "The Church's

Mission in a Crisis” showcases the ways in which a relatively “small” text can be said to influence a social movement.

Chapter 5. Conclusion and Implications

Archbishop Romero was more than a public figure; he was also an advocate for the rights of poor people in a larger struggle for human rights in El Salvador. He was, then, a leader in a movement of social protest and social change. Speaking from a place of relative comfort, Archbishop Romero went out of his way to understand the trials of those in his diocese and of poor Salvadorans more generally. Intentionally taking his position of power to advocate for those whose situations wouldn't afford them that opportunity, Archbishop Romero focused his public rhetoric on the ways that the poor and the state were incompatible. This care for the poor and call to action has been mirrored in recent years by Pope Francis. In 2015 Pope Francis, the first Latin American Pope, said

It must never be forgotten that political and economic activity is only effective when it is understood as a prudential activity, guided by a perennial concept of justice and constantly conscious of the fact that, above and beyond our plans and programmes, we are dealing with real men and women who live, struggle and suffer, and are often forced to live in great poverty, deprived of all rights. (Address to the UN, 25 Sept 2015)

As this quote suggests, poverty remains a pressing issue globally. Neither Archbishop Romero nor Pope Francis spoke with intentions of placating the masses or earning a spot in an elected office, but rather spoke in order to rally people in a spiritual cause to care for their fellow people. Both religious leaders have spoken from their positions of privilege to point out prevailing hardships in ways that get people to listen.

My goal with this project was to understand the ways that context influenced Archbishop Romero's relationship with his audience in this text. Because I looked at a figurehead of a social movement, my analysis would not be neutral. CDA's decidedly non-neutral stance offers a way to understand the resistance to power structures that Archbishop Romero was known for. He had

a staunchly political and controversial point of view, yet was still able to reach out to a number of audiences.

In understanding how Archbishop Romero used rhetoric to merge polarized audiences, we can also see how a controversial push for social justice can refrain from alienating those not yet involved in the movement. Given the plethora of areas in which social change is needed, of which poverty remains one, Archbishop Romero's rhetorical strategies serve as an example of ways to engage complex and oppositional audiences to create social change.

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