

Article

Epistemology of Bodies as Closets: Queer Theologies and the Resurrection of Martyrized Christo-Morphic Bodies

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Abstract: This article seeks to rethink martyrdom, suffering, and resurrection from the perspective of queer theologies within the Latin American context and in dialogue with the praxis of the first faith communities who witnessed Jesus' martyrdom. Starting from the queer body of Jesus—which incorporates in its praxis an ethos without gender violence and discrimination—the theological reflection contributes to the recovery of the fundamental principles of human experience. To this end, the analysis begins by addressing the feminist contribution to the understanding of violence against women to then rethink the intersection of bodies, sexuality, and violence against queer individuals and communities as a theological *locus*. It concludes by recognizing that queer theologies configure a resistant theological community that empowers queer bodies as a territory of hope of resurrection and transformative political action that does not disregard the suffering and the injustices perpetrated against them.

Keywords: queer theologies; violence; marginalized bodies; queer hermeneutics; martyrdom; resurrection



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1. Introduction

This article seeks to rethink the evolution of queer theologies in the Latin American context and dialogue with the praxis of the first communities of faith and the martyrdom of Jesus. Starting from the queer body of Jesus—which incorporates in its praxis an ethos without gender, violence, and discrimination—I rescue the theological reflection that searches for the recovery of the fundamental principles of human experience. To this end, I will conduct a bibliographical exploration to point out a series of insights that lead us to rethink both bodies and sexuality. The goal is to reclaim the body as a theological *locus*, adopting the perspective of an *organismo-pueblo* [people-organism] (Segato 2013a, 2016). That concept represents a collective of individuals who can reconstruct history, addressing its core of suffering and oppression at the grassroots level. The *organismo-pueblo* catalyzes the emergence of imaginaries that facilitate profound social transformations. It signifies a communal entity with the potential to reshape the narrative of history by challenging its foundational aspects of pain and subjugation at the grassroots level.

The reason that led me to my analysis resides in the high levels of violence against feminized bodies that respond to the imposition of a cis-heteropatriarchal system in my context of El Salvador. Although visible in the social body, this system is present in cis-heteronormative theologies, which deconfigure, mutilate, and expurgate diverse bodies, condemning them to live clandestinely. Rethinking a queer theology that dismantles the mechanisms of power inscribed on our bodies is vital in a context of Christian hegemony such as the one Latin America is experiencing. This aims to give birth to new theological discourses that empower the life of queer bodies through the theologization of their experiences, which embody the resurrection anticipated by Jesus' return to life.

The first section of this article, then, presents a background on the topic based on the perspective of the Argentine anthropologist Rita Laura Segato (2003, 2013a, 2013b, 2014, 2016). I am interested in commenting on her work's dialogue with the proposals of queer

theory. The second part analyzes the subject based on the structure of the hermeneutic circle. Based on the hermeneutic circle proposed by Latin American liberation theology, this article is organized around the four elements offered by this dialogical structure:

1. Experiencing reality: the current state of gender violence;
2. Suspicion: gender violence from anthropology;
3. Exegetical suspicion: gender violence as political fiction;
4. New hermeneutics: defying and overcoming the necro-theological hermeneutic of the past.

The relationships between bodies, violence, politics, and theology are broad and complex. Because of this, this article offers a proposal to continue the dialogue and analysis to understand this phenomenon.

2. Background: The Rampant Violence against Women

For this article, I start by addressing the violence against feminized bodies proposed by the Argentine anthropologist [Segato \(2003\)](#). Her contribution approaches the subject from new anthropological perspectives necessary to gather and unmask patriarchal violence in Latin America. Thus, [Segato \(2016\)](#) states:

(...) the expression “sexual violence” does not lie only in a sexual desire but from the “order of power.” Patriarchy is a “mandate of masculinity” that, by belonging, must “spectacularize.” Male power is expressed, exhibited, and consolidated before the public gaze, representing a type of expressive and non-instrumental violence. (p. 18)

According to the anthropologist, patriarchy—or gender relations based on inequality and violence—is humanity’s most ancient and permanent political structure. On the other hand, she states that:

(...) gender is, in this analysis, the elementary historical form or configuration of all power in the species and, therefore, of all violence since all power is the result of an inevitably violent expropriation. To “dismantle” this structure will be, for this very reason, the condition of the possibility of any and all processes capable of reorienting history in a sense demanded by ethics of dissatisfaction. ([Segato 2016](#), p. 19)

This structure is based on an “ethos” that comes from a historical narrative based on the universality of the myths of origin; as [Segato \(2016\)](#) states, patriarchy is deeply embedded in the origin myths, which also represent the feminized body as defeated, dominated, and disciplined, always in a place of subordination. It is also essential to consider Segato’s contributions to the new forms of violence expressed on feminized bodies, which she names “territory.” A body is inscribed as territory and labor under a hidden script of unconventional war through which power acts directly on the body, making the bodies and their immediate environment a battlefield and power struggle. For Segato, sexual violence is not instrumental but expressive. That is to say, it is a warlike and political act of power that is inscribed in the body. This warlike act sends a message to an interlocutor who understands the code enunciated in the violated body. Therefore, violence becomes a pedagogical function with its language. For [Segato \(2013b\)](#), “If rape is, as I claim, an enunciation, it is necessarily addressed to one or more interlocutors who are physically on the scene or present in the mental landscape of the subject of enunciation” (p. 22).

Graphic violence shapes a discourse embedded in society, transcending individual experiences to reflect a politically structured societal framework. Consequently, comprehending sexual crimes necessitates moving beyond viewing them as isolated incidents, instead recognizing their integration into a profound symbolic structure. Such a structure provides the acts with intelligibility within the broader societal context. The language that emerges from graphic violence not only communicates the brutality of individual acts but also unveils systemic issues, societal norms, and power dynamics. Thus, analyzing sexual

crimes through this lens facilitates a more comprehensive understanding, prompting a nuanced dialogue that extends beyond immediate actions to address the complex interplay of societal elements influencing such behaviors.

Graphic sexual violence, within the broader spectrum, is an integral component of the language employed by various collectives, spanning societies, cultures, religions, or political orders. It emanates from a societal construct, imbuing it with a profound sense of political order. This implies that sexual violence is not solely a manifestation of unchecked sexual desires or the aberrations of an isolated individual. Quite the opposite, sexual violence stands as a social and political act intricately woven into the fabric of its own language and gender dynamics. It underscores the communal aspect of such acts, dispelling notions of abnormality, and calls for an examination beyond individual motivations, delving into the intricate interplay of societal, linguistic, and gender-based forces.

For Segato (2013b), femicides are messages emanating from a subject–author who can only be identified, located, and profiled through a rigorous “listening” to these crimes as communicative acts. According to her perspective, the analysis of femicides serves as a unique channel to unveil the intricate narratives embedded within, allowing for the identification and understanding of the underlying forces shaping these violent expressions against women:

If the violent act is understood as a message and the crimes are perceived as orchestrated in a clear responsorial style, we find ourselves with a scene where acts of violence behave as a language capable of functioning effectively for the knowledgeable, the warned, those who speak it, even when they do not participate directly in the enunciative action. (Segato 2013b, p. 32)

This language of violence undoubtedly operates in material and subjective spheres and dimensions of everyday and social existence. For Segato, gender and violence are synonymous since gender represents the first foundational cell of all powers, and violence is that which redirects women to a position of subordination. For this reason, sexual violence is not framed in terms of sexual desire. To do so would turn it into a disorienting category that would lead us to misunderstandings by saying that the reason is sexual and that it has to do with a domestic and not a political sphere. For Segato (2016): “(…) rape as a method, in the new war context, is not appropriation, but destruction—that is—the physical and moral devastation of a people-organism [*organismo-pueblo*], that female or feminized body, of women or of children and young males (…)” (p. 82).

The notion of *organismo-pueblo* is central here, as it refers to the understanding of a people as “(…) a collective, living and dynamic subject (…),” which “(…) is perceived as weaving the fabric of a common history, coming from a common past and moving towards a shared future (…)” (Segato 2013a, p. 173). At the same time, that *organismo-pueblo* is understood as a “(…) historical vector, that is, as a cultural process with dynamic and changing uses and customs, as opposed to a stable, permanent and fixed constant (…)” (Bertona et al. 2017, pp. 100–1; emphasis in the original).

On the other hand—for Segato—sexual violence is inscribed in the sphere of moral values and power relations that tend to regulate certain behaviors and normalize certain practices. This is why the rapist sees the victim of sexual violence as immoral. In this way, the rapist becomes the moralizing subject, who sees himself as having a morality superior to that of the victim. In this sense, the moral subject par excellence is the rapist:

It happens that the rapist emits his messages along two axes of interlocution and not only one, as is generally considered, thinking exclusively of his interaction with the victim. In the vertical axis, he speaks, yes, to the victim, and his discourse acquires a punitive character and the aggressor, a moralizing profile, a paladin of social morality because, in this shared imaginary, the woman’s destiny is to be contained, censured, disciplined, reduced, by the violent gesture of the one who reincarnates, through this act, the sovereign function. (Segato 2013b, p. 23)

Undoubtedly, Segato offers us a look at the violence exercised on feminized bodies. It is clear that, for the anthropologist, this violence responds to the sustainability of the capitalist project. This project destroys any form of escape or flight from this system since feminized bodies react to the new politics of an *organismo-pueblo* that breaks with the patriarchal foundations on which capitalism is based. Within rape, moral reduction is a requirement if domination is to be complete. In this sense, the moralizing subject is the one who feels the right and the power to intervene in feminized bodies to control them, normalize them, and, in the worst case, exercise the right of life and death over them. It, therefore, has a monopoly on the techniques of death. By fulfilling this last role, the murders behave as a communication system. If we listen carefully to the messages that circulate there, we will be able to access the face of the subject who speaks through them: “By understanding what he says, to whom, and for what purpose, we will be able to locate the position from which he issues his discourse” (Segato 2013b, p. 30).

Historically, language has been used as a tool of power from which different systems of domination are sustained. For Segato, sexual violence is another form of language. Certain groups use this expressive language through ethical codes to communicate through the desecration and violation of feminized bodies. In the end, these are techniques used to regulate and control the behaviors of certain bodies. For the author, this form of language makes visible the efficient magnitude of the pronounced discourse, a reality that, unfortunately, is exercised indistinctly from the passive body of aggression.

3. Bodies, Violence against Queer Individuals, and Resurrection

3.1. Experiencing Reality: The Current State of Gender-Based Violence

In contemporary society, violence against marginalized genders is not only physical but also deeply embedded in language, power dynamics, and social structures. Such violence operates as a tool to enforce and perpetuate a discourse and system of values that prioritize specific identities while marginalizing others. The system seeks to subjugate and control bodies, compelling them to conform to societal norms and expectations. While Rita Segato’s work primarily focuses on violence against feminized bodies, her insights are invaluable to understanding how this dynamic extends to queer bodies as well. Segato’s analysis delves into how violence is not just a random occurrence, but a systematic tool of domination used to maintain hierarchical power structures. Her examination of gender-based violence illuminates the mechanisms through which dominant groups exert control over marginalized bodies, imposing their will and enforcing conformity through acts of violence and coercion.

However, it is crucial to recognize that the impact of this violence is not limited to cisgender women but extends to individuals across the gender spectrum, including transgender, non-binary, and gender non-conforming individuals. Queer bodies are often targeted for violence as they challenge traditional notions of gender and sexuality, threatening the stability of the prevailing social order. Understanding the interconnectedness between violence against feminized bodies and violence against queer bodies is essential for developing effective strategies to combat gender-based violence. By recognizing the typical tactics and strategies used to perpetrate violence against marginalized genders, we can work towards dismantling the systems of oppression that uphold these inequalities.

Furthermore, acknowledging the experiences of queer individuals within the broader framework of gender-based violence is crucial for fostering inclusivity and solidarity within feminist and LGBTIQ+ movements. By centering the experiences of all marginalized genders, we can build more comprehensive and intersectional approaches to addressing violence and oppression in all its forms. Segato’s analysis provides valuable insights into the systemic nature of gender-based violence and its impact on marginalized genders, including queer individuals. By understanding the interconnectedness between violence against feminized and queer bodies, we can work towards creating a more just and equitable society for all.

3.1.1. Bloody June

The report of the [International Human Rights Legal Clinic \(2012\)](#)—dependent on the University of California, Berkeley School of Law—evidences the reality of violence experienced by our gender-diverse communities in El Salvador. This report gathers testimonies of violence suffered by members of gender-diverse groups. These testimonies were given mainly in June. Thus, they called this period “Bloody June” due to the increase in the rates of violence perpetuated in that month of 2009. Such a rate of violence perpetuated on the bodies of the sex–gender diversity generated an atmosphere of suspicion directed toward the sectors in power. This was because, until then, there had never been a phenomenon of widespread, systematic violence as pronounced as the one suffered by queer people.

These murders and the brutal violence with which people were martyred determine the homophobic social affiliation on these bodies. On the other hand, it is also necessary to explain that these systematic murders almost always go unpunished. Thus, the [International Human Rights Legal Clinic \(2012\)](#) reports the first signs of murders of transgender people:

In June 2009, El Salvador experienced unprecedented violence directed against the LGBTIQ+ community. On June 9, Tania and Katerina, two transgender women and sex workers, were kidnapped in San Salvador. The next morning, Katerina’s body was found face down in a muddy ditch; she had been strangled and beaten. Tania was still missing. When Tania’s friends called her cell phone, an unknown voice threatened: “She’s going to die; it’s what she deserves.” Seven days later, her body was found partially dismembered. She was only seventeen years old. (p. 19)

On the other hand, gay men were also targeted by this systematic campaign of extermination deployed from homophobic ideology and praxis:

That same summer, the body of a twenty-five-year-old gay male was found in a plastic bag, his hands had been dismembered, and his mutilated body bore other signs of torture. On June 30, the bullet-riddled body of another eighteen-year-old gay male was found, evidence indicating that he had been detained and tortured for several hours before being killed. A transgender woman, Betzayda, was found in July at the bottom of a ravine; authorities claim that the cause of her death was a gunshot wound. ([International Human Rights Legal Clinic 2012](#), p. 19)

The [International Human Rights Legal Clinic \(2012\)](#) concludes:

This series of murders has come to be known in the country as “Bloody June” and followed a heated political debate in the Legislative Assembly over the constitutional ban on same-gender marriage. Conservative parties had introduced a bill proposing an amendment to the Constitution to preemptively ban same-gender marriage and prohibit same-gender couples from adopting children. The bill ultimately failed, due in part to the opposition led by civil society groups, but the backlash appears to have been directed against the LGBTIQ+ community. No one has been convicted of any of the Bloody June murders. (p. 19)

These murders are not the work of chance but of a plan orchestrated to continue to oppress a sector of the population that is considered despicable or lacking in dignity and rights.

3.1.2. Understanding Bodies: Feminism and Queer Theory

Violence based on gender and sexual orientation occurs in all spaces and spheres of human interaction, whether public or private. Of these, the contexts of the family, the community, the workplace, leisure, politics, sports, health services, educational environments, and even government institutions stand out. In the current context, we cannot leave aside violence through technological environments that occur online and in social networks. In all these spaces, an internalized ideological pattern governs power relations over bodies

outside the cis-heteropatriarchal norm. Therefore, these data show that public spaces are a terrain for the exercise of violence against feminized bodies, which known and unknown aggressors use. In this context, diverse bodies are exposed to multiple aggressions, primarily denoting severe violence. This situation limits women's mobility—transgender, gay, lesbian, cis-heterosexual—and limits their personal development possibilities.

On the other hand, the issue of making a spectacle of violence towards these bodies responds to Segato's analysis, for whom patriarchy exhibits violence as a form of domination, power, and belonging to a territory—the bodies—that gives signs of a new order. The same is constituted in a different *organismo-pueblo*—which, through its corporeality—shows signs of not belonging to the modern capitalist world-system (Wallerstein 1989), such as cis-heteropatriarchy. Because of this, it is necessary to dismantle the cis-heteropatriarchal system and the patterns of power internalized in masculinized and cis-heteropatriarchalized bodies. Therefore, creating a theory that goes against all the control mechanisms inscribed on our bodies is necessary. One of these contributions is queer theory, destabilizing the body's supposed "naturalness" (Jagose 1996).

Now, after two centuries of struggle by queer bodies seeking liberation from the patriarchal and hegemonic dominance of the cis-heteronormative system, it is necessary to locate violence as a historical fact. This has been perpetuated and has shown different scenarios and faces, from individual violence to structured violence. This violence expresses power in patriarchal models that seek domination over feminized bodies and gender diversity. This domination over them responds to power relations in different structures: language, religion, politics, and culture. Following Segato (2003, 2013a, 2013b), this violence is of mythical origin. This being so, it leads us to question the imaginary of heritage, its order, structure, symbols, and language. It is inescapable to point out that this structure is based on an "ethos" that derives from a historical narrative that has its foundations—as previously pointed out—in the universality of the myths of origin. Segato locates the foundation of violence in gender relations. For her, this model is based on the etiology of violence:

(...) the structure of male initiation rituals and creation myths speak universally of this economy of power, based on the conquest of male status through the expurgation of women, their containment in the restricted niche of the position that traditional morality destines for them, and the exorcism of the feminine in the political life of the group and within the very psyche of males. (Segato 2003, p. 145)

On the other hand, queer theory is a critical theory of politically transformative action. It takes up the experience of oppression and marginality lived by the bodies discarded by the cis-heteronormative system. These bodies appropriate and convert the insult thrown upon them. That is to say, they (re)construct it into a theory that helps them to position themselves in the political, religious, and cultural sphere from a perspective that dissociates themselves from the different cis-heteronormative systems of oppression. In this regard, David Córdoba García (2007) states:

Constructing a queer discourse implies situating oneself in a strange space that constitutes us as subjects of unknown, inappropriate, unwholesome knowledge. To make and speak of queer theory is, in this context, to assume a particular political act of enunciative intervention by which, in a certain sense, the authority of the academic discipline is suspended and challenged from one of its margins, with the aim of mobilizing and displacing that margin. (p. 23)

For queer theory, the cis-heteronormative system has enunciative power over bodies, as it organizes and orders relationships and sexuality. In this way, bodies are immersed in a political field where power relations operate on them. In this sense, bodies are always oriented to this system of power. Therefore, queer theory constructs its language far from the realm of "nature" and places itself in a critically subaltern position. This allows it to see how this cis-heteronormative system creates—from the order of power—the notions and

relations of masculinity and femininity through their bodies. From a supposedly “natural” order, these operate as devices of domination and control over bodies. In this regard, Charles [Shepherdson \(1994\)](#) states: “The energy of human sexuality is thus not a purely biological energy, a ‘physics of libido’ governed by natural laws—chemistry or biology or mechanics—but an energy regulated by the laws of language, the laws of representation” (p. 167; emphasis in original).

Therefore, queer theory constructs a critical analysis that leads us to a rupture of the cis-heteronormative system and its naturalization processes of gender and sexuality. This critique is based on the sexual and identity experiences of queer bodies. Although these queer bodies have been historically silenced, today—through the movement of diverse bodies—they have begun to flourish. As [Córdoba García \(2007\)](#) argues, sexuality is situated in modern discourse as the last aspect of nature in the human. As such, it signals the foundation of social identity for humans and becomes a space in which society and nature are discussed and dichotomous.

Coming out of the closet has led to discovering other criteria that operate marginally but emerge creatively, positioning other forms of subjectivity, knowledge, language, bodies, and sexuality. It refers to a theory of the “abnormal” ([Foucault 2006](#)) that does not emerge as an effect of Western thought or naturalization processes but as a form of disqualification of the cis-heteropatriarchal order and its notions of nature. For Marcella [Althaus-Reid \(2019\)](#):

(...) the Queer movement is a marginal movement that wants to remain somehow marginal to answer heterosexual discourse and not assimilate. In fact, «Queer» is a disparaging word that means «strange» and refers to a «strange» person. Finally, queer theory has a sexual epistemology—or way of knowing—that challenges the heterosexual postulates that we handle, for example, the binary categories of thought of opposition that heterosexual thought uses. Because sexuality implies an epistemology—a way of understanding and relating to the world—configures a particular type of structured or institutional thinking. (p. 43)

For this reason, queer theory unveils how this cis-heteropatriarchal system constructs the sexual politics, languages, and identities associated with political projects that manage our bodies and our sexuality and the relationship between them and power. According to Hugo [Córdova Quero et al. \(2016\)](#): “(...) taking corporeality as the analytical epicenter allows us to assume a turning point that more clearly conjugates the modes of fusion, resistance, legitimization, and revolt of the diverse social processes that traverse human life” (p. 3). In this way, bodies become a field of intervention and social construction that responds to a political project that uses gender and sexuality as devices to dominate bodies. In doing so, the cis-heteronormative system is established, hegemonically reproducing violence and death. How sex and gender are configured produces subjects in positions of domination and subordination, leading to a system of unequal power.

Undoubtedly, queer theory constructs a critical analysis that destabilizes the cis-heteronormative order. This analysis serves as a tool to fight collectively against all forms of domination and the naturalization of bodies. Through identities and their performative function, domination is established that represses and drives the life and actions of human beings in all their existence. Using queer theory, the aim is to identify and unveil how these devices operate on bodies. Whether through sexuality or gender identity, the objective is to establish a rupture with this cis-heteronormative system to find new forms of the signification of bodies and sexuality. Therefore, queer bodies have the character of establishing a “second act” ([Boff 1978](#)) concerning the primary reality of oppression.

3.2. Suspicion: Gender Violence from the Perspective of Anthropology

[Segato \(2014\)](#) has problematized the new role of women. According to this author, women are not considered subjects but objects of war. In this sense, their bodies are the instrument to write the political message of control over life and territory. This slogan is drawn violently. On the other hand, [Segato \(2016\)](#) argues that:

War today is technical; it involves professionals, social psychologists, and neuro-programmers. Just as there is neurolinguistic programming, there is clearly neurobelic programming. These are studies that makeup almost an engineering, a type of social engineering that seeks to identify where is the center of gravity of a social fabric, of a community fabric, where it is destroyed in a more efficient, direct, and fast way, and without spending so many bullets. (p. 162)

Therefore, rape is not an anomaly of a solitary subject, but a message pronounced in society, an efficient and ‘cost-effective way’ of constructing and reconstructing masculinity. After reading the narratives of violence experienced by sex–gender diverse communities—especially those I mentioned in the context of my own country, El Salvador—we understand that an internalized cis-heteronormative power pattern perpetuates them. According to Segato, this must spectacularize its dominance and belong to that dominant system. For this reason, patriarchy is the spectacularization of violence exercised through belonging to a power group (patriarchy) over feminized bodies or gender diversity.

As a result of this spectacularization process, diverse and feminized bodies are exposed to and suffer extreme degrees of violence, whether sexual or psychological. This violence is not only a relationship between gender subordination and prestige. Today, cis-heteropatriarchy is based on power structures functional to the capitalist vision in conjunction with religious, political, and cultural aspects. Because of this, cis-heteropatriarchy concerns male–female relations and private life and constitutes a structured system that seeks the colonization of bodies through violence, desecration, and rape. This also responds to the expurgation of the feminine or the abject to give continuity to the colonization project. In other words, the continuous desecration of knowledge, experiences, and languages through the annihilation of dissident bodies.

On the other hand, Adriana Guzmán Arroyo (2019, p. 36)—working from the community feminisms of native peoples—affirms that queer theory does not seek to masculinize the feminine. It would seem that masculinization would leave the oppressions of the cis-heteropatriarchal system without effect. Therefore, if this situation became a reality, it would signal the end of cis-heteropatriarchy. However, according to the author, this would be impossible. Feminized bodies continue to be violated bodies as they reproduce violence. In short, it is not a matter of masculinizing women but of dismantling the cis-heteropatriarchal system built on and in their bodies.

To destroy and dismember a queer body is to eradicate part of an *organismo-pueblo*, which positions itself as an antagonist of the modern capitalist world-system. This violent performativity shows another common sense since it comes from other histories and other systems of life organization. These different histories and systems converge in an identity axis related more to the people whose history has been taken away. That is, colonized peoples, native peoples, Afro-descendant peoples, genderless bodies, and queer bodies, among others. These actors constitute an *organismo-pueblo* that become narratives of hope that move and fracture the foundations of capitalism and its alliances.

3.3. Exegetical Suspicion: Gender Violence as Political Fiction

3.3.1. Techniques of Power and Body Politics

From the eighteenth century onwards, a set of political techniques for the normalization of bodies began to appear. In other words, bodies become the central axis of political management. In this way, life becomes the object of power, and power articulates itself with each body. Given this situation, bodies materialize and objectify the political order, thus becoming the field of the exercise of power. According to the philosopher Byung-Chul Han (2014), the new techniques of neoliberal capitalist power operate on bodies at the level of the psyche. For such reason, the construction of subjectivities is deepened. This prevents the visibility of power since it is installed in the depths of human beings, that is, in their thoughts and desires.

In this sense, bodies become part of the political territory where their power is constructed. As Hugo Córdova Quero (2011) affirms:

Bodies have been the geography of this occupation, the place where heterosexual colonialism has held sexuality captive and demarcated its limits. In Christianity, then, bodies and sexuality have been forbidden terrains in pursuit of a supposed “spirituality.” The violence of this process is revealed in the normalization process, also called heterosexualization. (p. 59; emphasis in original)

This has evidenced the techniques of power inscribed through biopolitics and necropolitics established in Latin America. We are referring to new ways of organizing life and how our bodies are worked and watched. That is to say, where there is an attempt to abolish and destroy all symbolic and material space to make the act of imagining, building, and thinking of another world impossible.

3.3.2. Disciplinary Society and Counter-Sexual Movement

This matrix is inscribed in constructing techniques and control mechanisms centered on life. It is a disciplinary society that uses and dominates the body to base its power. Thus, the individual body becomes an extension of the exercise of power to control and monitor the social body (Foucault 2002).

Here, identity politics associated with biopolitical and necropolitical projects begin to be constructed, established on bodies and cis-heterosexuality as the only form of sexual identity. However, for Monique Wittig (2005), heterosexuality is not based on sexuality but is a political regime of normalization of the body and sexuality that robs feminized bodies of self-affirmation. That is why sexuality is used to control bodies, as practices that support the cis-heterosexual order are considered normal. Queer bodies initiate a counter-sexual resistance movement that exposes how domination is exercised through the political fiction of sexuality. Therefore, counter-sexuality is not the creation of a new nature:

(...) it is not the creation of a new nature but rather the end of Nature as an order that legitimizes the subjection of some bodies to others. Counter-sexuality is, in the first place, a critical analysis of gender and sex difference, a product of the heterocentric social contract, whose normative performativities have been inscribed in bodies as biological truths. (Preciado 2003, p. 18)

Similarly, Paul-Beatriz Preciado (2003) states:

Homosexuality, so well controlled and produced by the nineteenth-century scientia sexual, has exploded; it has been overwhelmed by many *queer* “bad subjects.” The politics of queer multitudes emerges from a critical position concerning the normalizing and disciplinary effects of all identity formation, from a de-ontologization of the subject of identity politics: there is no natural basis (“woman,” “gay,” and the like) that can legitimize political action. (p. 165, emphasis in original)

For this reason, Preciado and Judith Butler (2001) see the need to create a political theory capable of denouncing and evidencing the mechanisms of control that operate in the different identities and their effects on our bodies. Because of this, a critical analysis of how we recognize and relate to each other as bodies through the social contract by order of a supposed nature is already necessary. According to Preciado (2002, p. 18), the aim is to replace the social contract wrongly called nature with speaking bodies; that is, bodies that recognize themselves and others as self-determining subjects. In short, counter-sexuality evidences gender and sexuality as performative enunciations that reproduce each narrative’s reality. Therefore, counter-sexuality seeks to break this normative affiliation and gives back to each body the right to the signification of language, gender, and sexuality.

3.3.3. An Organismo-Pueblo of Queer Multitudes

Bodies are immersed in a political field, where power relations operate on them. All the notions we have about gender and sexuality are not ascribed to nature but are socio-political constructions that are erected on bodies. Therefore, according to Preciado (2003), it is there where cis-heterosexuality becomes a political regime of normalization:

Sex, as an organ and practice, is neither a precise biological locus nor a natural drive. Sex is a technology of heterosocial domination that reduces the body to erogenous zones in the function of an asymmetrical distribution of power between the genders (feminine/masculine), making certain effects coincide with certain organs, certain sensations with specific anatomical reactions. (p. 22)

Therefore, it is necessary to stop thinking of bodies from the realm of the “natural” and “private” since these are the primary places where political power is established and constructed. Thus, both bodies and relationships constitute a way of objectifying power. Preciado (2003)—following Michel Foucault—argues that bodies are the central object of all politics. That is to say, there is no politics that is not political about them. These bodies become the field of the exercise of sovereign power, which manufactures them to reproduce itself. Foucault (1979, 2000, 2006, 2007) calls these power dynamics “biopolitics” and “bio-power.” Therefore, all policies of normalization of bodies are framed in biopolitics and necropolitics techniques. Their result is the management of the life and death of populations.

3.3.4. The Body as Social Text and Political Reinvention

For Preciado (2003), “[t]he sex-gender system is a writing system. The body is a socially constructed text, an organic archive of the history of humanity as a history of sexual production-reproduction (...)” (p. 23). All notions of masculinity and femininity, heterosexuality and homosexuality, gay or lesbian, are embodied in living political fiction. These are written on our bodies and belong to a political project of colonization of being, knowledge, and power. Thus, the author states that descriptive statements such as “it’s a boy” or “it’s a girl” have nothing to do with nature and more to do with performativity being inscribed. While imposing a performance on the body, the power of language also means that anybody threatening the performance’s cohesion can be sanctioned and rejected.

For this reason, bodies and sexuality are a political reinvention. Politics creates the human, and the human continues to reinvent itself through political power and its ascribed technologies. We must develop bodies that oppose the capitalist and colonialist practices of the cis-heterosexual regime and promote other forms of existence, life, and reality since bodies are creations. For Preciado (2003):

Sexopolitics is not only a place of power but, above all, the space of a creation where feminist, homosexual, transsexual, intersex, intergender, transgender, Chicana, and post-colonial movements succeed one another and juxtapose each other. . . Sexual minorities become multitudes. The sexual monster, whose name is a multitude, becomes queer.

The body of the queer multitude appears at the center of what we could call to take up an expression of Deleuze/Guattari, a work of “de-territorialization” of heterosexuality. This process of “deterritorialization” of the body implies a resistance to the processes of becoming “normal”. (pp. 160–61)

In this sense, bodies become a space of political action and transformation since it is through them that the processes of language signification are constructed. This determines how they are related and conceived. Therefore, the cis-heteronormative system is mobilized and consolidated through bodies in how we inscribe ourselves in their language. For this reason, Preciado (2003, p. 163) determined that the politics of queer people is not based on a natural identity but on a multitude of bodies that arise against the systems that attempt to make them “normal” and stand proud in their subjectivity.

Through the different theories presented, we note that sexual and gender violence is inscribed in bodies and continues to transform into regimes of normalization of both bodies and sexuality. According to Segato (2016), these start from a mythical provenance but have become political fiction, mechanisms of power, and new forms of violence, which seek the expurgation of every “organismo-pueblo” that gives signs of a new order. It is, therefore, fundamental for power to construct policies on bodies. They become the center

of creating all forms of knowledge and power. In reality, we are traversed by theories, texts, rituals, and political and theological fiction that bind our bodies through imaginaries and categories that internalize the order and patterns of cis-heteropatriarchal domination.

3.4. *New Hermeneutics: Defying and Overcoming the Necro-Theological Hermeneutic of the Past*

3.4.1. Classical Cis-Heterosexual Theologies as Control Devices

Classical cis-heterosexual theologies have historically wielded significant influence, not merely as systems of belief but as mechanisms of power and control, particularly over bodies and sexuality. These theological frameworks, rooted in a cis-heterosexual male perspective, function as technologies and devices for governing and regulating human existence. At the heart of these theologies lies an imaginary centered on cis-heterosexual male bodies, wherein a conceptual and theoretical framework is constructed to delineate and prescribe norms and behaviors. This framework not only shapes the understanding of bodies and sexuality but also dictates how individuals should move, relate, and exist within society, privileging the experiences and perspectives of cis-heterosexual men above all others.

However, rather than merely reflecting reality, this theological epistemology operates as a performative machine, reproducing and legitimizing existing power structures and hierarchies. By constructing a narrative wherein cis-heterosexual males are positioned as the norm, these theologies serve to reinforce and uphold a political order that centers on this normative identity. Moreover, this system of belief is not confined to the realm of theory but extends into practical applications through a range of discursive and therapeutic practices. These practices work in tandem to enforce and normalize the cisgender identity, relegating deviations from this norm to the margins of acceptability. Thus, classical cis-heterosexual theologies function as tools of social control, perpetuating a worldview that prioritizes and privileges the experiences of cis-heterosexual males while marginalizing and subjugating those who do not conform to this normative standard. By interrogating and challenging these belief systems, we can begin to dismantle the oppressive structures they uphold and create space for more inclusive and equitable ways of understanding and experiencing human existence.

3.4.2. Queer Theologies Give Birth to Other Theological Bodies

Queer theologies emerge as radical departures from traditional cis-heterosexual theologies, offering alternative perspectives that challenge and disrupt normative understandings of bodies, sexuality, and power. These theologies give rise to theological bodies that transcend gender, language, and institutional power dynamics, presenting an inherently inclusive and liberating vision of theology. At the core of queer theologies lies a profound reimagining of bodies as foundational to theological inquiry, serving as sites of divine creativity and agency (Althaus-Reid 2000; Córdova Quero 2020; Shore-Goss 2020; Santos Meza 2023).

By centering bodies in theological discourse, queer theologians dismantle the entrenched cis-heteronormative regimes that have historically marginalized and oppressed non-conforming identities. This reclamation of the body as a locus of divine action destabilizes the foundations upon which hegemonic power structures are built, offering a pathway toward liberation and empowerment for marginalized communities. Queer theologies position bodies as foundations or ontological grounds, foundational sites of God's creative action. Bodies destabilize cis-heteronormative regimes from the root since they recover the territory on which the whole edifice of hegemonic powers is built (Córdova Quero 2011). Likewise, queer bodies liberate an *organismo-pueblo* from oppression since they dismantle the technologies and mechanisms of power inscribed upon them.

Furthermore, queer theologians engage in a process of "disidentification" (Muñoz 1999) from traditional cis-heterosexual theologies, critically examining how these dominant theological frameworks perpetuate political projects of normalization and control over bodies and sexuality. By exposing how traditional theologies reinforce oppressive power

dynamics, queer theologians pave the way for radical forms of resistance and subversion that seek to dismantle these systems of oppression. In embracing queer theologies, individuals and communities are invited to embrace a vision of theology that celebrates diversity, complexity, and radical inclusion. By centering marginalized voices and experiences, queer theologies not only challenge existing power structures but also offer a transformative vision of spirituality that affirms the inherent worth and dignity of all bodies and identities. Through this process of theological exploration and liberation, queer theologies give birth to new possibilities for understanding and experiencing the divine, fostering communities of radical love, justice, and liberation.

3.4.3. The Clash of Two Worldviews: Queer Theologies Disrupting Cis-Heteropatriarcal Imaginaries

The clash between cis-heterosexual theologies and queer theologies represents a fundamental confrontation between two distinct worldviews, each grounded in divergent understandings of bodies, experiences, and the divine. Cis-heterosexual theologies, rooted in Western thought, have historically operated through a process of extraction and expurgation, marginalizing and erasing bodies and experiences that do not conform to normative standards of gender and sexuality. In contrast, queer theologies undertake the radical task of reclaiming and centering marginalized bodies and experiences, offering a theological framework that emerges from a different historical position. Queer theologies initiate their discourse by envisioning the emergence of queer bodies, prophesying a resurrection of sorts for marginalized communities. These theologies proclaim the possibility of an *organismo-pueblo*. In this prophetic vision, queer bodies are not passive victims but active agents of change, bearing witness to the transformative power of a liberating God.

The image of the crucified queer body resonates deeply within queer theology, echoing the cry of abandonment on the cross: “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” (Matthew 27, p. 46). Yet, this cry is not one of despair but of faith in a God who stands in solidarity with the marginalized and oppressed. Queer bodies, like the crucified Christ, have borne the weight of suffering and injustice, yet they also embody the hope of liberation and renewal. The cross, far from symbolizing defeat, symbolizes resistance and resilience, signaling the possibility of redemption and transformation. In the clash between cis-heterosexual theologies and queer theologies, we witness not only a contest of ideas but a struggle for the very soul of theology itself. Queer theologies challenge us to reimagine theology as a dynamic and inclusive discourse, one that embraces the full diversity of human experiences and identities (Santos Meza 2023). Through this radical reorientation, queer theologies offer a vision of theology that is not merely about abstract concepts or doctrinal formulations but about the lived realities of embodied existence and the transformative power of love and justice. Still, it constitutes the beginning of a community of Christic bodies resurrected for a new faith experience. In this regard, Althaus-Reid (2004) affirms:

The fact is that Jesus’ resurrection was also a community event: women and men witnessed how he came back from death, walked among them and continued the dialogue which existed before his crucifixion. Every death changes the life of the survivors, because some humanity is removed from them, so it is legitimate to think that, starting with Jesus’ resurrection, a whole community of people who suffered his loss when he was crucified came back to life again. Their eyes were opened in the sense that death took on another meaning; the resurrection became the paradigm showing us the durability and indestructibility of life and justice. (p. 113)

Althaus-Reid’s assertion underscores the communal nature of Jesus’ resurrection, highlighting its transformative impact on individuals and the entire community. In this interpretation, the resurrection of Jesus represents not just a personal event but a collective experience of renewal and restoration. According to Althaus-Reid, the resurrection signifies the triumph of life over death and justice over injustice. It marks a shift in perception,

wherein death itself is imbued with new meaning, seen not as a finality but as a gateway to eternal life and justice. This reframing of death and resurrection as paradigmatic events inspires hope and resilience in the face of oppression and suffering. Althaus-Reid's interpretation of the resurrection holds particular significance in the context of liberation and social justice for LGBTIQ+ individuals. It speaks to the resilience and collective struggle of marginalized communities, who, like the witnesses of Jesus' resurrection, experience loss, suffering, and oppression. The resurrection symbolizes liberation, affirming the enduring power of life and justice even in the face of persecution and discrimination (Córdova Quero 2019).

Such a notion of resurrection calls for a committed prophetic praxis that extends beyond discourses to affect the materiality of bodies and lives here and now. In exploring such a situation, theologians Figueroa and Tombs (2021) eloquently affirm:

There can no longer be a question that a strong pastoral and theological response is needed to sexual abuse and sexual violence in its many different forms. If this response is to be adequate it will need to be courageous and honest. It must be willing to confront difficult issues, stigmas and taboos, and not fall back on platitudes or abstractions. The churches need a clear-sighted sense of the problem and an understanding of how its legacies continue to affect the lives of survivors long after the abuse itself. (p. 290)

Emphasizing the communal aspect of the resurrection implies bringing the entire community to be witnesses and prophets of the situations that produce death and suffering. Thus, in bringing resurrection to the forefront, Althaus-Reid underscores the importance of solidarity and community support in the liberation struggle. Just as the early followers of Jesus found strength and courage in their collective witness to his resurrection, LGBTIQ+ individuals find solidarity and empowerment in their shared experiences and struggles. The resurrection thus becomes a rallying cry for justice and equality, inspiring marginalized communities to continue their fight for liberation and dignity. In summary, Althaus-Reid's interpretation of Jesus' resurrection as a communal event with profound implications for life and justice resonates deeply with the quest for liberation and social justice for LGBTIQ+ individuals. It offers hope, resilience, and collective empowerment, encouraging marginalized communities to persevere in their struggle for a more just and inclusive world.

Precisely, Anderson Fabián Santos Meza (2023) refers to the Christological resurrection of bodies in a profoundly queer way, which seeks to point out how dissident communities become a remembered body. For the author, there is resurrection when we resist oppression. Points of escape from the hegemonic system are proposed, which make community and complete life projects possible, allowing the recovery of fundamental aspects (such as love and companionship, partying and dancing, shelter, human rights, and access to health programs, spirituality, and religious communion, etc.). But, for this, it is fundamental to recognize that the resurrection of dissident corporealities or abject bodies emerges from those spaces that are considered "indecent": "There is not—nor can there be—any Latin American Queer Theology in those spaces where 'liberation' and 'sexual' theologies are produced from the standpoint of decency and hegemonic patronage. Latin American Queer Theology is, necessarily, indecent and perverted" (Santos Meza 2023, p. 7). The Colombian theologian and philosopher—who proposes to walk "Indecently with Marcella Althaus-Reid"—takes from the Argentine theologian the paradigm of indecency:

The paradigm is an indecent paradigm, because it undresses and uncovers sexuality and economy at the same time. Not only do we need an Indecent Theology which can reach the core of theological constructions, insofar as they are rooted in sexual constructions, for the sake of understanding our sexuality, we also need it because theological truths are currencies dispensed and acquired in theological economic markets. (Althaus-Reid 2000, p. 19)

Following these ideas, Santos Meza (2023) presents some places and experiences in which the event of the marvelous resurrection of dissident bodies can be evidenced:

There is Queer Theology in the postcard hidden in a notebook or a Bible and also between the separated hands of many queer couples who cannot hold hands inside the church. There is a rich source of wisdom and theological potentiality in the prostitute who enters the temple—despite not being well received—and kneels with devotion and sings with passion those religious songs that say that God is her beloved and her lover. There is Queer Theology in the *tangos* and ballads but also many of the dances and popular dances, parades, and indecent carnivals in the peripheries. There is Queer Theology in the libraries and gay bars, in the monasteries, and in the areas of sexual tolerance. There is Queer Theology, where nomadic subjects inhabit and transit the lands of exiled people and find their different forms of purity and holiness, discovering divine grace, especially in the lands occupied by sexually excluded people. (p. 7; emphasis in the original)

This parallels what transgender theologian Yacurmana De la Puente has examined in her piece “Taking Marcella Althaus-Reid into the Alleys: Towards an Incarnated Indecent Theology in La Rioja, Argentina” (De la Puente 2021), where she delves into the profound influence of Latin American Liberation Theology (TLL) on the 1970s’ political activism, serving as a precursor to the contemporary movements advocating for sexual diversity in La Rioja, Argentina. Presently, the activism within queer communities in the province vehemently critiques the Roman Catholic Church. Therefore, De la Puente’s central inquiry revolves around evaluating whether Marcella Althaus-Reid’s Indecent Theology can align itself as an ally to the ongoing militancy of sexual and gender diversity. By scrutinizing this dynamic intersection, the analysis seeks to unravel the potential for theological perspectives to harmonize with and fortify the struggles of contemporary social movements, providing a nuanced understanding of the intricate relationships between theology, activism, and evolving societal paradigms.

Undoubtedly, in both examples mentioned above, Christ’s resurrection is divinely omnipotent and, therefore, extends to all humanity, including LGBTIQ+ people, those who have been historically excluded by the dominant regimes that control institutional religion. Then, for queer theology, Jesus—in his praxis—produced an effect of physical and mental displacement, which builds as a transversal axis, a network of affects and value statements. In this process, queer bodies are not a limit to initiate the creative action of God, but they are the object and central subject of his theology. For this reason, the disruptive imaginaries of the historical Jesus link thought with bodies. They point to theologizing the mind and reasoning from a body theology. This turn is given through bodies as thinkers, bodily wisdom in which they can generate rules. Jesus gives the theological task a fundamental change in meaning. His praxis configures a new theological discourse, where bodies become a place of revelation and political transformation. Undoubtedly, the queer body of Jesus becomes a transversal axis that challenges cis-heteronormative theologies since an alternative political and religious system is reproduced where queer bodies find refuge and identification.

Through the body of Jesus, queer bodies acquire entity. Through that Christic body, we glimpse the arrival of an *organismo-pueblo* with its narratives, politics, and imaginaries about God. We must not fail to recognize that this “bodily rebellion” was the cause of his martyrdom and persecution, which led to his death on the cross.

4. Queer Theologies Offering Hope for Resurrected Queer Bodies

4.1. The Death of Jesus on the Cross Reveals the Cis-Heteropatriarchal System

The death of Jesus on the cross was an event that caused an incomprehensible scandal for the collective conscience of the different faith communities that accompanied Jesus of Nazareth. The cross became a revealing fact. It was an event established socially to reveal a reality that unfolded in the people of God against the dominance of the cis-heteropatriarchal system. Thus, in the episode of the cross and resurrection, women, poor people, and marginalized people are given prominence.

The death of Jesus revealed the cultural, political, and religious system that had been socially established—the cross—through the power and oppression imposed on the people of Israel. In this event, all the mechanisms of power expressed what this world’s conscience can do. Undoubtedly, the desecration of Jesus’ body was a clear message to his community.

On the other hand, the spectacle of violence through Jesus’ body consolidates the power of the cis-heteropatriarchal system, which presents itself as moralizing his body. Following Segato (2013a, 2013b, 2014, 2016), we could affirm that in him, it is announced with a morality superior to that of Jesus. The person who imparts morality is also the one who commits violence, which shows us the roots of the language of violence. Moreover, the faces of those who caused systematic violence through the persecution of Jesus and his followers, mainly through technologies of necropolitics such as crucifixion, become visible. There is an intertextuality between the bodily experience of Jesus and his followers with the mutilated, tortured, and murdered queer bodies on the crosses of modern societies.

Pronounced on the cross, the language written on Jesus’ body revealed the characteristics of the god constructed by power. It made visible its normativity and ethos, slave vision, and annexation to the necropolitical practices sustained by the utilitarian concept of religion. Therefore, the theological discourse in Jesus’ time supported violence. In other words, it was the theology of the cis-heteropatriarchal god, the god of power. In this sense, Jesus presents himself as revealing the true God. The God of Life promises us—through the risen Jesus—to have “abundant life” (Jn 10.10).

As I have said, violence as a political discourse is based on a cis-heteropatriarchal culture. Cis-heteropatriarchy has been based on an archaic mythical origin, becoming one of the first policies. Historically, politics has determined a cis-heteropatriarchal order. Jesus’ death on the cross led to the disorganization of an *organismo-pueblo*. This resulted in bodies that settled in the peripheries, dispersed, and lacked a community. These bodies abandoned their annexation to the liberating project of Jesus, an incomprehensible reality devoid of meaning. According to Jürgen Moltmann (1975):

The scandal of the cross we have adorned with roses. We have made it a theory of salvation. But this is not the cross. This is not the hardness that is in it, the hardness that God has put in it. Hegel has defined the cross by saying: “God is dead,” and he has probably seen things well in the sense that before us, there is in it the night of the true, ultimate, and incomprehensible remoteness of God, that before the “word of the cross” we have only the *sola fide*, as before no other reality in the world. Here faith in creation, from which all gentilism comes, is broken. Here it is seen that all philosophy and wisdom are insanities. Here God is not-God. Here triumphs death, the enemy, the unchurched, the state of injustice, the blasphemers, the soldiers; here Satan triumphs over God. (p. 94)

Undoubtedly, the cross is presented as a foundational and disruptive experience of the theological traditions that prevailed in Jesus’ time. It means that the cross reveals the image of a God no longer from the perspective of power or religious triumphalism but the one who bears the cross of the crucifixion in history. Those crucified are marginalized, violated, or dismembered by a system that imposes a cross on their bodies. The violence is produced because they have invalidated the established order with their actions. Throughout history in the West, queer people know perfectly well how our bodies have been crucified countless times due to our subversion of the hegemonic order. That applies to women but also to men, as Tombs (2023) analyzes in his work concerning abuse and power issues against men in detention:

The issue of power and control is just as important for an understanding of sexual violence against men as it is for understanding sexual violence against women. Put another way, sexual gratification is not a necessary requirement for the abuse inflicted in detention to constitute sexualised violence. It is possible that some guards might derive sexual gratification from sexualised violence—or at least some form of psychological gratification from their role in inflicting sexual harm.

However, there are other priorities in inflicting sexualised violence in detention regardless of any sexual gratification. It is primarily a display of power and control and a form of humiliation. It is directed against a particularly vulnerable element in the prisoner: their sexual and their gender identity. (p. 29)

Drawing on such research, [Tombs \(2023\)](#) advances the analysis by pondering whether Jesus himself was abused when detained. [Tombs \(2023\)](#) engages with Brazilian journalist Márvio dos Anjos' piece from Palm Sunday 2022, in which the journalist portrays Jesus as a "victim of sexual abuse" (p. 66). While navigating this terrain, Tombs also highlights the resistance of many Christians to acknowledge the possibility of victims of sexual abuse identifying with Jesus. First Lady Michelle Bolsonaro threatened journalist Dos Anjos with legal action ([Tombs 2023](#), p. 67). Thus, [Tombs \(2023\)](#) asserts:

Few Christians would admit to blaming victims of sexual abuse or express negative views of survivors openly or explicitly. However, some responses to the presentation of Jesus as a victim of abuse bring such attitudes to the surface, sometimes forcefully. The purpose of this work is not to shock or provoke, or to diminish Christianity or Christians. However, when the work is criticised as provocative and shocking, this can offer a valuable opportunity for new thinking. (p. 67)

The interplay between the violence and abuse against queer individuals and communities and Jesus' experiences of suffering and abuse create a memory of faith that incarnates our realities. Thus, it is even appropriate to recall that it is possible to speak of the resurrection of queer bodies in terms of "re-membering." This idea is powerfully performative because it shows that it is possible to "re-unite" the fractured pieces of the unity of the human being. Still, it also goes further because it places us in an eschatological horizon in which resurrection is understood in a communitarian key, since not only can the person recover their unity, but the divisions that break human relationships can also be reconciled. [Santos Meza \(2021, p. 91\)](#) points out that mysticism and the wide range of "queer walk" in the same direction, that is, in search of unloading from the shoulders of humanity that cancerous yoke of cis-heteropatriarchy. It is about recognizing that the loving re-membering of bodies and territories dis-membered by global violence is an expression of messianic times. Thus, the bodies that matter, the abject, dissident, exploited, and invisible bodies of LGBTIQ+ people, but also migrants, the disappeared, the differently abled, are today the living members of the queer body of Christ. Therefore, "[t]heir multiple resistances, struggles for dignity, life and hope represent a precious dimension of the eschatological process of redemption" ([Knauss and Mendoza-Álvarez 2019, p. 9](#)). In the end, says [Santos Meza \(2021\)](#), it is about recognizing the trajectory of a subaltern and dissident eschatology that seeks to heal humanity from its brokenness and aridity. This path calls for the queer becoming of God.

In this sense, the death of Jesus on the cross reveals that the God of Life was rejected by institutionalized religion and theological discourses as it relates to a shared experience with the marginal movements of his time. Thus, the body of Jesus on the cross represents and evidences the living presence of a community of crucified bodies. Drawing from [Segato's \(2013a, 2013b, 2014, 2016\)](#) analysis, we can argue that the devastation of Jesus' body was intended to break and eliminate the community fabric that had been structured in his movement. That marginal movement mobilized countercultural values, whose very existence provoked the religious and political sectors that held power and were scandalized by its message. That message questioned the theological discourse and the imaginary of "god"—an idol—imposed at that time. It is for this reason that for queer theologians, Jesus is queer because—through his body—the systems of domination are not reproduced but subverted. At the same time, cis-heteropatriarchal power relations are transformed, and the marks and readings made on bodies are questioned. These marks marginalize and violate the lives of bodies dissenting from the sex-gender system. Jesus is not limited to being only a dissident body of the system but builds, convenes, and mobilizes values through an

alternative community. Such a community is an *organismo-pueblo* composed of bodies that carry this same cross but can propose other life forms.

Cis-heteropatriarchal theologies do not frame the origins of ancient Christianity but arise as a refuge for marginalized people who suffer violence and are impoverished. They constitute open, welcoming, communitarian, marginalized communities. They open themselves to a new horizon that dignifies the human experience. Guided by a marginal Jew who deliberately distanced himself from prevailing societal norms, these individuals embraced an unequivocally evangelical perspective, centering their worldview around the concept of the kingdom of God. This unique aspect marks the historical Jesus as genuinely distinctive. What emerges prominently is his establishment of a community characterized by diverse and unconventional identities, constituting a fellowship of queer bodies. Such an intriguing community becomes a focal point for queer theologians, serving as a reservoir from which they draw upon the foundational values and inspirations that initially defined the earliest communities of faith. In unraveling the essence of the historical Jesus, it is this distinctive community, challenging conventional paradigms, that not only stands out but also becomes a source of profound contemplation and reinterpretation for those seeking a deeper understanding of faith and its progress on the way to the establishment of God's promise.

4.2. *The Body of Jesus Crucified: A Rupture of the Theological Imaginary*

Undoubtedly, the crucified body of Jesus represents a rupture of the theological imaginary, which has had a long tradition in the thought of monarchy. The crucified body of Jesus, in the analysis of [Moltmann \(1975\)](#), reveals the image of a God from suffering, a condition that is proper to human realities. Thus, the crucified body of Jesus is the symbol of every queer body that transgresses the cis-heteronormative order. Their annexation to the body of Jesus makes them Christomorphic bodies ([Johnson 1991](#)) since—through their suffering—they have experienced the cross of Jesus in their bodies.

For Ignacio [Ellacuría \(1981\)](#), speaking of the crucified God is good, but talking of the crucified people is just as necessary, if not more so. This, moreover, elevates the reality of crucified peoples to a theological reality. In this sense, queer communities also become Christomorphic communities since—through their bodies—the crucified Jesus is revealed. In this same line, [Ellacuría \(1981\)](#) affirms:

That crucified people is the historical continuation of the servant of Yahweh, whom the sin of the world continues to take away every human figure, whom the powers of this world continue to strip of everything, continue to take away even life, above all life. (p. 58)

That is to say, the bodies crucified by this cis-heteronormative system share the cross and the cry exclaimed by the historical Jesus. They are bodies entirely abandoned by the different religious institutions for whom these bodies have no place in God's plan. In the face of this, the Gospel loses all signs of liberation, as [Ellacuría \(1981, p. 58\)](#) reminds us that the life of Jesus attested to the central worth of caring for the hungry, the thirsty, and the outcasts not in creating such situations and such outcasts. The death of Jesus shows that the condition of the cross is not the reality of an individual subject but a collective subject. It is an *organismo-pueblo* that distanced itself from the cis-heteropatriarchal values of religion.

For this reason, its praxis is based on socially oppressed collectives since these are potential subjects with a politically transformative action that generates another meaning. Queer bodies are Christomorphic because they come from a reality of the cross, allowing them to elevate their experience to a theological praxis. This praxis re-emerges as an *organismo-pueblo*, a community of queer bodies resurrected to offer hope, love, and justice.

4.3. *The Written Message on the Queer Body of Jesus Points to Resurrection*

Through the analysis of violence from anthropology and queer theory, I have confirmed that the meaning of reality is organized through language and the values it mobilizes. We have also explored how acts of violence configure a language capable of operating very

efficiently. This discourse of violence is orchestrated by a whole network of discourses, categories, and imaginaries that operate to control and eradicate life. This type of violence has a pedagogical function on those who listen to this message since it positions an order and a language through a communication system that engraves cis-heteronormativity in the consciences. In this sense, the body of the crucified Jesus has an enunciative and responsorial value. The message pronounced on his body shows us and reveals to us the norms and discursive rules written on it, as well as the values it mobilizes and transgresses. This means the cross (re)configures a new theological discourse with new discursive signifiers. Thus, we are facing an anthropological and theological rupture with the discourses of his time.

Thus, in the body of the crucified Jesus, the discursive language of theology that arises from power materializes. This language of violence rooted in a theological tradition aims to manage and administer the lives of human beings. Therefore, this discursive and theological language does not belong to the imaginary of the liberating God of the exodus. Still, it is a political and historical production from the power relations established in the time of Jesus. Such a type of violence cannot be understood outside of its performative and enunciative function since they respond to implementing a discourse, an order, and a cis-heteronormative model of social organization. That model establishes relations of subordination and domination, which annul any form of freedom. Cis-heteropatriarchal theologies are based on and validated by order of power.

For this reason, the body of the crucified Jesus is the normative text of the cis-heteropatriarchal system constructed and read in his body. It is a logos that was intervened and violated through the imposition of cis-heteropatriarchalism by a normative theology. Such a normative theology manages and controls life while writing its language of violence on the body of those who transgress its norm. It is for this reason that queer theologians make use of this organic text to invalidate the cis-heteronormative function of classical theology and its affiliation to the techniques of violence. To unearth the body of Jesus and to reconstruct it is to recover the logos of a theology that dignifies diverse bodies, a theology that contests those who carry that same cross. Such a perspective implies equal respect for both suffering and resurrection, as [Figueroa and Tombs \(2021\)](#) enunciate:

Some in the Church may wish to move too quickly from crucifixion to resurrection, and offer a cheap message of reassurance that denies the reality of suffering. A theology of resurrection has integrity only if it presents the full and painful truth of crucifixion. A message of resurrection cannot be a simplistic solution that evades what really happened, nor should it minimize the damage of abuse. Rather, a theology of resurrection must be reconsidered in the light of the actual experience of Jesus attested in Scripture. Survivors of sexual abuse must be fully heard in this process. This will be challenging work. Survivors do not always share the same views or the same experiences, and should not be seen as a uniform group. (pp. 301–2)

Therefore, the violence of the cross is a crucial point for queer theologians since—through it—the cis-heteropatriarchal system and its annexation to classical theologies are consolidated and revealed. However, a theology capable of dismantling this cis-heteropatriarchal order built on our bodies is also born from suffering and martyrdom. Thus, a theology is born that breaks with the dynamics of power, therefore leading to resurrection.

Ultimately, queer theologies reveal that no theology is not bodily. Every theology uses bodies as the organic text where its postulates are inscribed. Its central function is body production, which becomes the performative machinery that reproduces the cis-heteronormative system. At the same time, they thus constitute a system of theological communication. In this sense, all theology is corporeal; therefore, liberation comes from displacing and dismantling the cis-heteropatriarchal discourse and embodying another language. In other words, it implies moving towards another type of writing that does not subject us to the bodily closet in which we have been constructed. That closet is both

individual and communal constructions, as Japanese theologian Reina Ueno (2021) analyzes regarding the case of queer believers in Japan:

The queer body is neither an invisible body nor a body controlled by someone nor a body embedded in a body of the grand illusion. In the loneliness and resistance as a queer person in Japan, recalling the body of Jesus on the cross and resurrection radically changes the perspective. It was not a perfectly clean body. Jesus' crucified body was beaten, spat, and covered with mud and blood. Jesus' body is a body of resurrection, leaving behind the wounds inscribed by the cross. Jesus' body is not a body incorporated as part of the Roman Empire, but a body that has been damaged and abandoned by the ruler. Concurrently, queer bodies are also damaged and eliminated in invisible ways by the *Tennosei* and the family register system in Japan. The queer bodies will feel the same pain that Jesus felt from the wounds at the crucifixion. (p. 126; emphasis in the original)

It is a matter of constructing a theology from our bodily being and sexuality. Queer theologies seek to instill a discourse and a praxis that emerges from the forbidden and indecent spaces, from languages that are neither pronounced nor associated with biopolitical projects. In short, they embody the project of a theology that recovers the queer body of Jesus as a logos from which all narratives and forms of resistance subvert cis-heteropatriarchal discourses and theologies. That is something that Mexican theologian Ángel F. Méndez Montoya (2019) analyzes in his work:

The lamb is Christ, the innocent victim who opposes all violence and teaches us that at the eucharistic banquet it is possible to queer hatred by imagining and practising peace as performative acts of resistance, by living (partially and contingently), one day at a time, the promise that all crosses will disappear, and that all victims and excluded people will be special guests at this feast of love without borders. Human and divine desire feed off each other. The foretaste of this feast of eschatological love is shared in the eucharists of present, past and future history, transforming the guests into one queer body: a single body of solidarity, justice and mutual care. (p. 98)

In this quotation, the author explores a symbolic interpretation of the lamb as representative of Christ, emphasizing the lamb's role as an innocent victim standing against violence. The text delves into the transformative potential of the eucharistic banquet, framing it as a space to subvert hatred through performative acts of peace. Moreover, it underscores the temporal aspect of living out the promise of a future devoid of suffering, envisioning a gathering where all marginalized individuals become esteemed participants. It is in the symbolic and yet prophetic act of the Eucharist that queer bodies become one with the cosmic body of Christ. Such a transcendental act incarnates the ultimate goal of God residing and uniting the whole of creation.

Thus, the interplay between human and divine desire is presented as a driving force behind this communal transformation. The concept of a shared eschatological love feast, spanning present, past, and future, is posited as a means to unify individuals into a singular, inclusive body marked by solidarity, justice, and mutual care. Méndez Montoya (2019) states:

Consuming God, who as he enters our bodies makes us part of the body of Christ, must therefore include all bodies, especially those most wounded by a world that rejects them and sacrifices them violently as scapegoats. The words and actions of Jesus Christ anticipate this extravagant feast, because he himself invites to the table those whom society rejects and excludes. The purpose of the eucharist is to transform us into eucharistic beings and turn us into 'bread' to feed those who have the greatest hunger, physical, affective or spiritual. (p. 98)

Contemplating the idea of consuming God in the context of the Eucharist indeed emphasizes the transformative nature of this act that incorporates individuals and communities into the resurrected cosmic body of Christ. When advocating for a comprehensive

inclusion of all bodies—particularly those marginalized and wounded by societal rejection and violence—Méndez Montoya (2019) highlights the connection between suffering and resurrection. It draws a connection between the actions and teachings of Jesus Christ, portraying them as anticipatory of an inclusive feast where societal outcasts are invited to the table. In this regard, theologian Sharon A. Bong (2019) from Singapore, affirms:

Welcoming LGBTIQ+ persons to the bountiful messianic table—as a moral and political imperative—entails challenging the Church’s heterosexism, i.e., systemic and systematic discrimination, even demonization of LGBTIQ+ persons. It also involves re-imagining the body of Christ beyond ‘his’ presumed heterosexuality, virginity and celibacy—in effect, queering—which paradoxically renders Christ quite familiar to LGBTIQ+ persons albeit a stranger to others. In a queer body of Christ, LGBTIQ+ persons see the messy materiality of their body realities (blood, sweat, tears, semen and vaginal discharges) reflected and see that it is good—the profane becomes sacred. (p. 77)

The overarching purpose of the Eucharist is portrayed as a catalyst for personal and communal transformation into “eucharistic beings.” Their lives embrace body and sexuality but venture also into nourishing “bread” capable of addressing the diverse forms of hunger—be it physical, emotional, or spiritual—in others. Concurrently, the return from the spiritual manifestation of the resurrected Christ in the communion leads to the embodiment and incarnation reality of respect and value of all human beings who become part of the cosmic resurrected Christ.

5. Conclusions

Queer theologies unveil how power operates over our bodies and, therefore, “a body-paradigm, is therefore pertinent in theological analysis” (Althaus-Reid 2000, p. 19). They make us aware of gender and sexuality as mechanisms of control that subject bodies by imposing a cis-hetero-corporal norm on them through different theological constructions. These constructions are framed within the biopolitical and necropolitical techniques on bodies, as these continue to impose a death of the cross on each body that transgresses the cis-heteronormative dictates. These messages of violence inscribed on bodies have been maintained throughout history since they constitute a message that acquires a performative and moralizing function. Therefore, the theologies inscribed in these power mechanisms construct Christic bodies. They are theological texts and messages enunciated in their sacred spaces. This means that the death of Jesus on the cross reveals the annexation of that event to cis-heteropatriarchal theology. In this way, it constitutes a theology of the No God, the No Church, and the *Non-fidei*.

For this reason, queer theologies emerge from diverse bodies. From that experience, they interpret the body of Jesus as queer. This is so because Jesus does not respond to the cis-heteropatriarchal practices of his culture. On the contrary, he becomes a queer, a logos that create alternative communities. These communities become havens of hope that shelter the bodies discarded by the cis-heteropatriarchal system. In this sense, queer theologies configure a resistant theological community organized by occupying territories and constructing counter-narratives. Their praxis is to empower queer bodies as territories of evangelical hope and transformative political action. Undoubtedly, as stated by Lisa Isherwood (2000), “Our bodies and our sexuality are most our own but at the same time are the most taken away by all the edifices of patriarchy. . . Here it is a good place to start the revolution!” (p. 21).

From my perspective, queer is not another political fiction. On the contrary, it is a category that has given us hope because its countercultural and destabilizing tone has empowered minority and abnormalized bodies. Its proposal has led us to recover the dignity of dissident bodies and communities and their transformative agency in history. Taken to the religious-spiritual plane, queer has been embodied in liberating and transgressive theologies. From their proposal, queer theologies open multiple possibilities from which we are prophetically encouraged to build other worlds and languages. By announcing

the risen Jesus to us in his transcendental queer body, our bodies become more human, in solidarity and queer. At bottom, queer theologies reveal the disruptively faithful incarnate christomorphic bodies in the image of Jesus.

That offers a refreshing mobilizer toward the queer future of theology, a theological wind that shakes rigid ideas and promotes fruitful creativity in theology; precisely, the immense horizon of Althaus-Reid's (2000) proposition "God is what you digest, perspire and excrete from your body" (p. 92) remains to be explored. Undoubtedly, considering this question will help move toward new and innovative understandings of the place of bodies in theological epistemology.

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