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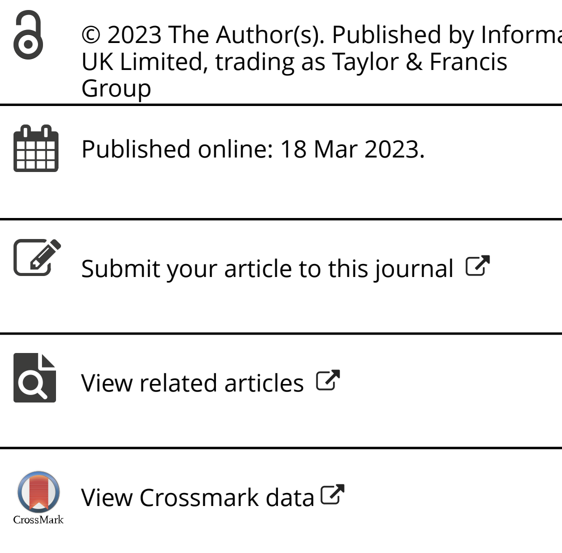

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Don’t touch my hair: a feminist Nigerian/British reading of the woman who washed Jesus’ feet with her hair in Luke 7.36-50

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ABSTRACT

Contextual Theology recognises that Euro-American biblical interpretation has an enduring, complex, and contested legacy of silencing particular voices in relation to considerations of race/ gender identity/religion and migration. Whilst postcolonial and African biblical interpretation have become more established in recent scholarship, there has been little, if any, consideration of the particular hybrid location of scholarship which is neither ‘African’ nor ‘European’ but formed precisely in the space formed by the long historical connections between these continents and peoples. As a Black British woman of Nigerian heritage, my ‘Afropean’ epistemological lens therefore, attempts to take into cognizance: hyper-sexuality, ‘otherness’, displacement, colonisation, and power. Here an Afropean epistemological lens is applied to the Woman who Washed Jesus’s Feet with her Hair in Luke 7.36-50. In doing so new possibilities arise beyond the hypersexualised Eurocentric interpretation of this woman displaying a highly erotic act. Using a Nigerian/British epistemology, informed by Emma Dabiri’s novel *Don’t Touch My Hair* (2019), in which hair is viewed as a symbol of colonisation, ‘otherness’ and displacement, this woman emerges not only as a sexualised figure, but also as a heroic female prophetess.

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Introduction

This paper seeks to present a Feminist Nigerian/British reading of ‘The Woman who Washed Jesus’ feet with her hair in Luke 7.36-50 (c.f. Matthew 16.6-13, Mark 14.3-9, John 12.1-8). In order to form this new interpretation, I will be juxtaposing Emma Dabiri’s book *Don’t Touch My Hair* (Dabiri 2019) alongside the pericope, in order to raise new questions apropos of the text. The Afropean epistemology adopted here, is situated within the wider context of Feminist and Postcolonial Biblical studies, which aims to ‘reconceptualise the relation of theology and empire through the multiple lenses of gender, race, class, sexuality, religion, and so forth’ (Kwok 2005, 144). Feminist interpretations of scripture that sought to expose androcentric interpretations for their concealed

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ideological bias (Schüssler Fiorenza 1990, 5), have in turn been criticised for silencing the voices of working-class women and women of colour (Whelehan 2020, 129). Subsequently Womanist and post-colonial interpretations, which sought to readdress this balance and reject 'the superintending tendencies of western intellectual tradition' (Sugirtharajah 2020, 12), completely omit the experience of European Black women and focus on Black American women (Floyd-Thomas 2010, 48). As such, Black European women, like myself, descended from Africa, who live in the invisible 'liminal' space of Afropeanism (Pitts 2020, 16), require a specific Afropean epistemological lens through which to interpret scripture. Constructing an Afropean epistemology uses an inter-disciplinary methodology that draws upon: literary criticism, feminist/gender studies, postcolonial studies, and anthropology. It has four main components: (1) Engaging Afropean novels written by Nigerian/British Women; (2) Nigerian/British themes; (3) Feminist critical readings of scripture; and (4) creative actualisation of biblical characters. Creative actualisation 'allows women to enter the biblical story with the help of historical imagination, artistic recreation, and liturgical ritualization' (Schüssler Fiorenza 1990, 20). It affords the biblical interpreter creative licence with which to create possible alternatives to the assumptions that have been made about female New Testament biblical characters within previous reading paradigms. Although this methodology originated within the Global North, women in Africa have always invented creative ways of retelling bible events in a way that African women specifically can relate to (Landman 1996). The structure of this paper will therefore follow these four 'steps' for how to construct a Feminist Nigerian/ British interpretation of the woman in Luke 7.36-50. This creative actualised refiguring of this woman will uncover unseen plausible possibilities to explain her actions, in order to free her from the dominant flat[1] character label she has unfairly acquired throughout scholarship, that of being a mere 'sinner'.[2]

History of interpretation: hair and hyper-sexuality

Within existing scholarship, Eurocentric male interpretations of the woman in Luke 7.36-50 have largely presented her as a 'passive personage' (Kilgallen 1998, 106) or non-player character (NPC) [3] in Luke's wider Christological focus (Brown, Fitzmyer, and Murphy 1991, 697; Gooding 1987, 139). Scholars have argued that this woman anointing Jesus' feet with her hair in the presence of Pharisees, offers nothing more than a further insight into the benevolence and all-encompassing compassion of Jesus towards sinners.[4] The woman is interpreted to be a flat character, who represents all sinners, who can now be embraced and enveloped by the love of Jesus (Marshall 1978, 304). She is used as an insignificant means to the end of showing the reader that Jesus has the 'ability to know hearts and a complex instruction on forgiveness, love and hospitality' (Meyers, Craven, and Kraemer 2000, 440). Just as an NPC in a computer game has no other function than to be rescued from the arms of the enemy in order for the protagonist of the game to gain points (Warpefelt and Verhagen 2017, 41), she is insignificant and unheard in order for Luke's Christology to be the focus (Bauckham 2020, 201). This notion however does not seem to trouble scholars within the hegemonic androcentric world view. There is little attempt or desire to find out anything about this woman: Who was she? Where was she from? Was she married? These questions are overlooked. The main question that these hegemonic interpretations are concerned with apropos of this

woman, is 'what is the nature of her sin?' Extant interpretations have been heavily consumed with trying to speculate on the exact meaning of the Greek word ?*μαρτωλός* that Luke uses to describe her apparent lifestyle (Luke 7.37). The majority of scholars conclude, solely on the basis that she used her hair to wipe Jesus's feet (Luke 7.38), that she must have been a prostitute (Plummer 1910, 210; Orchard 1937, 244; Corley 1993, 92; Meyers, Craven, and Kraemer 2000, 440; Green 1997, 310). This is problematic for many reasons; firstly, her hair is referred to as being 'long' and 'flowing' (Morgan 2018, 24), which is an entirely Eurocentric depiction of hair. The passage makes no mention of the type of hair that she had, only that she 'wiped them [Jesus' feet] with her hair' (Luke 7.38). This hegemonic depiction has gone unchallenged for centuries. What if she had thicker afro hair? Afro hair doesn't grow 'long'; it grows 'out'. How does hair function in other societies? An Afropean epistemology aims to bring in a whole new perspective to the pericope. If we looked at the function and symbolism of this woman's hair in a different context, the entire reading of the story could be enriched beyond just a hypersexualised narrative. What else could this woman possibly be saying through her hair?

Whilst Feminist and postcolonial interpretations of the text offer new insights about the woman being a nameless (Fiorenza 1983, 129) boundary crosser, who subverted the social order of the day with her actions (Chung 2018, 89), other feminist interpretations of the bible passage argue that Jesus' treatment of the woman offers dignity, honour, and value to all women (Applegate 1998, 76; Swidler 1979, 272; Stagg 1978, 101). In *The Weeping Woman,* Chung (2018) conducts a postcolonial feminist reading of Luke 7.36-50 that addresses head on the pertinent questions that extant feminist interpretations have missed. Unlike Fiorenza, right at the outset of her paper she asks the question: 'why [did] Luke edit the story of the anointing woman in Mark 14.3-9 in such a different way?' (Chung 2018, 79). In her exegesis she seeks to 'expose Luke's colonial and androcentric bias embedded in the story', and then apply it within Korea (Chung 2018, 79). Although Luke is well known within scholarship for taking a special interest in women compared to the other gospels (Maly 1980, 99; Ryan 1985, 56; Via 1987, 38–55), this does not mean that Luke's always liberates women from their more traditional roles (Chung 2018, 82).[5] Chung's interpretation depicts the woman as a bold boundary-crosser who through her actions did not allow herself to be defined as a sinner. Chung states that 'no matter how hard Simon and Luke attempt to define her as a sinner, she appears to be superior to him and other disciples' (Chung 2018, 90). According to Chung, through the woman's deeds she succeeds in crossing the 'boundaries drawn by male-dominated values in the colony of the Roman Empire' (Chung 2018, 90).

Whilst Schüssler Fiorenza's interpretation succeeds in offering alternative possibilities for the nature of the woman's sin such as her being a 'criminal, ritually unclean or morally bad person' (Fiorenza 1983, 129), she ultimately presents the woman as a flat character within Luke's version of the story. Although Fiorenza rightly puts the blame upon Luke for purposefully editing the Markan narrative to label the woman as a 'prostitute' (Fiorenza 1983, 129), she ultimately plays right into his 'sinner trope', by claiming that the purpose of this biblical story is to show that Jesus invites 'not only women but even notorious and well-known sinners' to his table (Fiorenza 1983, 129). Other Feminists surprisingly buy directly into the notion that she was a prostitute, in a misguided attempt to redeem female sexuality (Applegate 1998, 83; Wallace 2010, 43; Hornsby 1998, 100). If the woman is only identified as being a sinner in the Lukan narrative, surely the bigger

question to be asked within Feminist interpretation is: why did Luke label her as that? What else might we be able to see in the depiction of this woman's actions? As a Feminist scholar, Fiorenza has failed to place this woman as the protagonist within her own story. Whilst Christian interpretation has historically focused on Jesus, and rightly so, has anyone stopped to think about what she may be trying to tell us about herself? African interpretations have completely ignored the subject of hair (Adeyemo 2010, 1244).

In summary, this section has sought to explore extant interpretations of the passage, in order to identify the main questions and themes that scholars have tended to be preoccupied with. Whilst there has been considerable discussion within current exegesis of the woman's hair in Luke 7.36-50, noticeable by its absence is any discussion of the deeper meaning and significance of hair in a way that actually changes the reading of the Biblical story. Throughout the centuries in Western interpretations, the woman's hair has either been hyper-sexualised, in order to place her as a 'sinner trope' who 'erotically massaged the feet of Jesus' (Corley 1993, 92,124), or completely ignored (Adeyemo 2010, 1244). A Feminist Nigerian/British interpretation aims to build upon these readings in order to bring a new perspective to this biblical text. The next section aims to do this by introducing Emma Dabiri's book *Don't Touch My Hair* (Dabiri 2019) as a conversation partner with the biblical text. What new insights and themes will be highlighted from the Nigerian/British experience? Can these new themes provide an innovative and fresh angle from which to generate a new reading of the narrative?

Nigerian/British cultural reference: Emma Dabiri's, 'Don't Touch My Hair'

Emma Dabiri is an academic, author and advocate for Black British rights, born in Dublin to an Irish mother and a Nigerian (Yorùbá) father. As the only black girl in her school, she personally experienced her afro hair being constantly policed by her teachers. In this iconic piece of literature, which is half autobiography, and half black cultural history, Dabiri presents her own autobiographical experiences of having her afro hair policed and denigrated as a child (Dabiri 2019, 6–8). She also explores the cultural and colonial history behind the defamation of afro, that spans from ancient times right up until social media in modern times (Dabiri 2019, 31).[6] Emma Dabiri's work is supported by broader cultural studies of hair, shame, and identity (Barak-Brandes and Kama 2018; Vincent 2018; Ellington and Underwood 2020; Maine 2023). Temitayo Olofinlua, a Nigerian scholar at the University of Ibadan, highlights a unique and significant theme within Dabiri's book that could open the door to a whole new interpretation of Luke 7.36-50: 'Dabiri refers to numerous arguments that show the power of Black hair. For instance, even today, many Africans do not want their hair in the hands of strangers for fear of witchcraft. The Yorùbás use the same word to describe the physical head (orí) upon which one's hair grows with one's destiny (orí), thus by extension connecting one's head/hair and spiritual well-being. The reader sees how 'the crown' of hair was lost through colonialism, and how it was rediscovered. It puts into perspective why natural hair became a trend again' (Olofinlua 2021, 113). This powerful insight by Olofinlua regarding Dabiri's book creates a new line of enquiry in regard to the pericope. If according to Dabiri 'hair has power in many different ways' (Dabiri 2019, 33), then how could this change the interpretation of Luke 7. 36-50? It raises new questions such as: What was the potential power of the woman's hair at that time? How much did her hair play into the

marginalisation that she faced? How can Dabiri's experiences of feeling 'othered' because of her hair in Ireland, bring new insights into the biblical text? Dabiri's exploration of the cultural history of hair, has made me more sensitive to the dimensions of its cultural history and interpretation. In Dabiri's book she also explores the notion of African hair being a mode of communication. According to Dabiri 'hair is an embodied visual language and can be understood as one of these indigenous 'texts'; another would be the *bata* drum that mimics the tonality of the Yoruba language' (Dabiri 2019, 36).

Dabiri's presentation of 'the power of hair' within *Don't Touch My Hair* (Dabiri 2019) is therefore fruitful as a new lens from which to re-read the text. In doing so, the hair of the unnamed woman in Luke 7. 36-50 becomes a powerful extension of her personhood. In this interpretation, it is the woman and her hair that are no longer a 'passive personage in the drama Luke portrays' (Kilgallen 1998, 106). It is understandable that this key topic has been overlooked within hegemonic interpretations of the passage, as hair simply does not have the same significance within European culture. Dabiri's book serves to alert scholars within the field of Theology that 'a lot [can] be told about a person, as well as the values, ethics and priorities of their culture, by their hairstyle' (Dabiri 2019, 47). How could looking into the symbolisms surrounding hair at that time offer new insights into the text? The next section will explore a Feminist Nigerian/British reading of the woman in Luke 7.36-50, that uses the notion of hair being powerful, derived from the book *Don't Touch My Hair* (Dabiri 2019) in order to stimulate new possibilities within the text through creative actualisation.

Using creative actualisation to construct a Feminist Nigerian/British interpretation of Luke 7.36-50

The woman in Luke 7.36-50 'learned that Jesus was eating at the Pharisee's house' and so 'came there with an alabaster jar of perfume' (v.37). The Greek words used to link verses 36 and 37 are *καὶ ἰδού,* meaning 'and behold' or essentially 'pay attention to'. Whilst this interjection has often been minimised within extant interpretations (Reiling and Swellengrebel 1971, 316), within a Feminist Nigerian/British interpretation it is significant, as it is a key indicator that the reader's attention should be on the woman and not on Jesus for this moment. In the New Testament *καὶ ἰδού* is used before something significant is about to be said or done (Matt 28.20, Luke 13.30), therefore signifying that this woman entering the scene is about to do or say something powerful. The woman is also said to have 'learned' (Luke 4.37) that Jesus was at the Pharisee's house. The Greek word used here for 'learned' is the aorist participle ἐπιγνοῦσα indicating that she had come to know this before coming to the house. Scholars have never thought to ask, how a prostitute would have 'known' about the Pharisee's lunch plans with Jesus. What this 'knowledge' may allude to however, is this woman possessing some kind of divine prophetic insight into Jesus's whereabouts that was unlikely to have been known by other means. Only a few verses back in Luke 7.21, Jesus was seen curing 'many who had diseases, sicknesses and evil spirits' and teaching crowds of people (Luke 7.24). Surely if it was public knowledge that Jesus would be reclining in someone's house, that the crowds would have followed? But no, just one lone woman appeared uninvited by herself. It seems fair therefore, to characterise this woman as being a somewhat uniquely insightful, knowledgeable prophetic figure.

Many prophetic women in the Bible are depicted as possessing divine knowledge through divination such as: 'Miriam, Deborah, Huldah, Noadiah, the unnamed woman of Isa. 8.3' … , 'the necromancer of En-dor' and 'Rebekah, who 'inquires' of YHWH, who in response grants her special knowledge about the twins in her womb' (Hamori 2013, 828–829). In 1 Samuel 28:7-24, Saul seeks a female necromancer from En-dor in order to summon the spirit of Samuel. Prophesy is defined to be 'the proclamation and/or performance of a divine word by a religious intermediary to an individual or community' (Gafney 2008, 25). During the Middle Bronze Age, it was common for female prophets to operate in Mari and around Mesopotamia (Nissinen et al. 2019, 7). These prophets were referred to as the *āpulis*, and were not 'always viewed positively by the royal establishment', hence they were forced to the periphery of Mari's central social structure (Wilson 1973, 101). These women were often viewed with 'deep suspicion', especially by the men at that time (Hagedorn 2013, 104). According to Meyers, female prophets of the Hebrew Bible such as: 'Miriam, Huldah and Noadiah, and several unnamed ones (Isa. 8, Joel 2.28 [Heb. 3:1]; c.f. Ezek. 13.17-23)' were 'the small visible part of a larger cohort of other Israelite women performing prophetic functions' (Meyers 2013, 174).

Historically, within scholarship, these prophetic women have been falsely labelled as 'witches' (Simon 1988; Smelik 1979) or portrayed as wicked figures (Frymer-Kensky 1992, 126–127). The necromancer from En-dor has especially been falsely over-sexualised in the same way that the woman in Luke 7 has been subjected to (Reis 1997, 13,8). Women who were necromancers were often first accused of abusing their powers and then labelled as false prophets (Stokl 2013, 76). However within antiquity, 'requesting money was the mark of a false prophet' (Townsend and Vidas 2011, 49), as these people would exploit others for their own financial gain. In Luke 7.38 we see the exact opposite of this behaviour, as the woman pours an alabaster jar of perfume on Jesus's feet. At that time incense was a luxury item that was particularly expensive due to high transportation costs and expenses (Frangié-Joly 2016, 40). This act therefore legitimises her status as a genuine prophetic figure. Could the dominant portrayal of the woman in Luke 7 as a prostitute be attributed to the common misunderstandings that scholars have previously had apropos of the necromancer of En-dor? Maybe this is just a common misogynistic label attributed to female prophets within antiquity?

The fact that this woman came pre-prepared with an alabaster jar of perfume (Luke 7.37) is also significant, as necromancers 'offered incense to the sprits of the dead' (Johnston 2004, 295). In antiquity, necromancers would place perfume and holy anointing oil on the forehead, eyes, palms of the hands and feet as part of their rituals (Turner and Tyson 2009, 97–98). In ancient Mesopotamia, aromatic substances were routinely used for a number of purposes including medicines, offerings and divinations (Hume 2020, 105); 'scents were a nearly universal component of ancient religious rituals in the Mediterranean area, and were associated with all that is sacred, heavenly or divine' (Hume 2020, 106). As it is not actually known how the necromancer of En-dor carried out her divination (Brenner-Idan 2014, 73; Meyers, Craven, and Kraemer 2000, 259), this leaves scope for creative actualisation to re-recreate the woman's actions in a way that places her hair at the centre of the pericope.

This woman is then said to be crying so profusely, that even from her height of standing, she manages to wet Jesus' feet with her tears. Why is the prophetess crying? This is step two of her prophetic act, in which she is grieving the brutal death that Jesus is yet to

undergo in advance before it happened. Just like prophetess Anna in the New Testament recognised who Jesus was (Luke 2.36-38), this woman in Luke 7 knew by divine insight the fate that was to befall him. Rather than explicitly say anything in the presence of the Pharisees, she employs 'weapons of the weak' (Scott 1987) in order to get her message across in a way that would keep both herself and Jesus safe. The pinnacle of her prophetic act occurs in Luke 7.38 in which she wipes Jesus' feet with her hair to dry them. In Greco-Roman antiquity, a woman having their hair unbound in public was extremely shameful as 'it often had sexual connotations' (Cosgrove 2005, 679). If the purpose was to just dry Jesus's feet, why did this woman not use part of her garment? Or even her hands? The very specific act of using her hair to dry Jesus's feet therefore shows that the purpose goes far deeper than extant hegemonic scholars have thought. This woman unbinding her hair in public in order to dry Jesus's feet therefore has two prophetic functions. The first is that she was personally embodying the shame and ridicule that Jesus would later endure, as he was stripped naked before He was hung on a cross (Matt 27.28, Luke 10.30). As a prophetess, she was willing to bear the temporary shame of unbinding her hair in public, in order to point towards the ultimate shameful event of Jesus being crucified on a cross.

The second prophetic meaning of touching Jesus's feet with her hair, is to prophetically prepare Jesus's body for burial. Levine argues in her paper entitled 'The Gendered Grammar of Ancient Mediterranean Hair', that hair is a metonymic symbol for the physical self or 'whole person' (Levine 1995, 85). As hair is the most prominent visual part of the body that is capable of 'painless amputation, infinite manipulation, and endless generation', it is an apt tool to use within burial rituals (Levine 1995, 85). Due to its simultaneous physical properties of being both 'dead' and 'alive', hair is said to symbolise a *tertium quid* between death and life (Levine 1995, 86). Just like the dead, hair feels no pain, but just like the living, it continues to visibly grow as a person matures. According to Levine, 'it is this confluence of attributes – hair's metonymic relation to the whole person, its painless malleability, baldness as evocative or liminality, and hair's intermediary quality of being at the same time neither fully dead nor fully alive – that explains the widespread use of hair in many rites' (Levine 1995, 87). In light of this, the true prophetic meaning of the woman specifically using her hair to dry Jesus' feet in Luke 7.37 comes to the fore. By wiping Jesus' feet with her hair, she is simultaneously alluding to the death of Christ whilst pointing to his subsequent resurrection. In antiquity a woman having unbound hair was completely acceptable for a woman who was mourning (or in crises) (Bradley 2008, 241). According to Cosgrove, 'in view of the evidence for grieving rituals' and crucially because the woman was weeping, the people at that time would have been likely to be thinking 'why is she grieving and why does she show her grief in this way?' (Cosgrove 2005, 688). In Greco-Roman antiquity, women were allowed to grow their hair long during the mourning period (Alexiou 2002, 32). By pouring perfume on Jesus's feet, this woman was carrying out a recognised mourning ritual conducted on the dead, whereby aromatic substances such as myrrh and aloes would have been rubbed on the deceased (Piesse 1879, 9). However, because hair also instantiates 'possible renewal' and life (Levine 1995, 87), this woman's actions also point to Jesus' coming resurrection. Understanding this woman's actions in this way, transforms the previously labelled 'prostitute' into the only other person in the New Testament to divinely foresee the death and resurrection of Jesus, apart from Jesus himself (Mark 8.31, John 2.19, Luke 9.21-22). In no other

place in the Gospels, do we see a person display their understanding of Jesus' death and resurrection before it occurs; even the disciples whom Jesus explicitly told about His death refused to believe Him (Matt 16.21-22, Mark 8-9). This woman's prophetic acts that have been misconstrued as sexual advances for centuries, can now be appreciated through a decolonial approach to hair. As well as using her hair as part of her prophetic acts, this woman unbinding her hair in public is a powerful means for her to rebel against the patriarchal system of control that has been policing her hair for generations.

Conclusion

This paper has sought to offer a Feminist/Nigerian reading of the woman in Luke 7.36-50 by reading it alongside Emma Dabiri's book *Don't Touch My Hair* (Dabiri 2019). This new interpretation has been constructed through the lens of Dabiri's key notion as a Black/Irish woman that 'hair that power in many different ways' (Dabiri 2019, 33), in order to approach the text in a new way. I have argued that this woman's act found in Luke 7.36, has been interpreted in a parochial manner by extant interpretations, as being a highly erotic act.[7] I have exposed the male dominated Eurocentric assumptions apropos of long hair that have informed this interpretation (Synnott 1987, 384), and highlighted the fact that hair is considered completely differently within the Nigerian/British context. Within a Feminist Nigerian/British interpretation, this woman's hair is a symbol of colonisation, otherness and displacement within a context where 'woman had many cultural, religious and legal barriers to gain access to the rights and privileges afforded to men' (Parvey 1974, 140). Her taking her hair out therefore in public may not only have been an indication that she was a prostitute (Green 1997, 310), but also an act of liberation as she refused to conform to the expectations placed upon her to hide her hair. This allies with Dabiri's comment in her book where she states that 'the afro is a symbol of diasporic resistance, a rejection of an imposed value system that has denigrated us' (Dabiri 2019, 32). A Feminist Nigerian/British interpretation of this character ultimately depicts her as positive heroic female prophetess, vocalising her resistance to colonialism and patriarchal control of her day through the haptic of her hair. Taking into cognizance ancient Hebrew rituals, her actions can also therefore be reconfigured to be the first and only prophetic enactment of Jesus' death and resurrection in the New Testament.

Notes

1. Forster introduced one of the first definitions on characters within a narrative in 1927, by dividing them into 2 categories: 'flat' or 'round'. He defined 'flat' characters as characters that only embodied one specific trait throughout the whole narrative (Forster 1974, 73).
2. For example, see Miller (2017, 72); Brown, Fitzmyer, and Murphy (1991, 697).
3. The term NPC 'encompasses every kind of character found in the game that is diegetically represented in the world, is not controlled by the player, and that is actively involved in portraying some kind of character' Warpefelt and Verhagen (2017, 41).
4. See: Meyers, Craven, and Kraemer (2000, 440); Morgan (2018, 25); Miller (2017, 72); Brown, Fitzmyer, and Murphy (1991, 697).
5. In her book *The Double Message*, Seim highlights the conflicting treatment of women within the book of Luke, which in some ways affords women a positive function within the narrative, whilst in others reinforces the 'strict boundaries for women's activity in relation to the Jewish and the Greco-Roman public world' (Seim 1994, 259). Seim labels the oxymoronic depiction

of women in the book of Luke, the 'double mixed message' (Seim 1994, 249). See also: Schaberg and Ringe (2014).
6. Black women are also 'prime targets for backlash' within the British media (Sobande, Fearfull, and Brownlie 2020, 414). The 'racist' treatment of the Duchess of Sussex, Meghan Markle, within the British Press is a prime example of this (Biakolo 2021).
7. For example, see Corley (1993, 124); Green (1997, 310); Cosgrove (2005, 679).

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Notes on contributor

Olabisi Obamakin is a Theology PhD student at the University of Exeter. She originally studied Biomedical Science as an Undergraduate in London, before switching fields into Humanities and completing her MA in Theology and Religion. Her thesis, supervised by Professor Louise Lawrence (University of Exeter) and Professor David Horrell (University of Exeter), is entitled 'Constructing a Feminist Afropean Hermeneutical Biblical Framework'. As a Nigerian/British woman, she has a special interest in decolonial research methodologies.

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