ONE IN CHRIST WHO LIVES WITHIN

DISPERSIVE UNIVERSALITY AND THE PNEUMA-SOMATICS OF IDENTITY

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This essay emerges at the intersection of theoretical and theological interrogations of Christian accounts of universality, especially as expressed in the Pauline corpus. Drawing on insurgent interpreters, Daniel Boyarin, John David Dawson, Alain Badiou, Giorgio Agamben, and Douglas Campbell, it explicates an account of dispersive universality that avoids the evacuation of difference and elimination of particularity. On the contrary, rather than requiring others to become identical to us, identity is constructed by becoming identified with others. This alternative politics of identification is announced paradigmatically in the baptismal formula of Galatians 3:26-28, and is intrinsically related to Paul's description of the new life of the Christian in 2:19-20. The unity of Christians in Christ (3:26-28) is constituted by the actuality of Christ living in them (2:19-20). Though as embodied beings the lives of Christians remain in the flesh, such life is now lived in Christ, and by Christ living in them. Individual and social bodies (the life lived in the flesh) are pneumatologically reconfigured within a Christological paradigm (the life lived by faith). Thus, baptism identifies the baptisand with Christ, inaugurates the new life of Christ living within, and initiates ongoing identification with others. The politics of baptismal identification is performative peacemaking; a pneuma-somatics of identity that is simultaneously a body politics and a politics of bodies.

> For *in Christ Jesus* you are all children of God through faith. As many of you as were baptised *into Christ* have clothed yourself *in Christ*. There is no longer Jew nor Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one *in Christ Jesus*.

> I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but it is *Christ who lives in me*.

THEORY, THEOLOGY AND THE APOSTLE

Contemporary critical theory focuses on questions of subjectivity and solidarity; that is, the politics of identity. Constructing more capacious conceptions of personhood and peoplehood, critical theory strives for non-exclusionary social arrangements whose cohesion (the strength of sociopolitical bonds) and comprehension (the scope of sociopolitical inclusion) are genuinely cosmopolitan. Cohesion and comprehension are constructed by discourses of alterity and mechanics of solidarity. The former name the boundaries of comprehension; who is alienated as 'them'. The latter, how those comprehended are constituted as a group; how filiation as 'us' operates. Critical theory thus develops a variegated identarian politics of resistance arrayed against those discourses and mechanics reliant on the evacuation of difference and/or the elimination of particularity. Such, elimination and evacuation subsume and subjugate difference within some ostensible similarity. For reasons enumerated below, I designate cohesion and comprehension so generated as aggregative universality. Thus, on the grounds of contemporary critical theory, there is a forced choice: assimilation, the politics of aggregative universality; or segregation, the identarian politics of endlessly proliferating difference. Unless some alternative not reliant on

evacuation of difference and/or elimination of particularity can be found, the quest for universality will have to be abandoned altogether. Inasmuch theology cannot abandon universality altogether, this dilemma is most unsatisfactory.

More recently critical theory has pressed this issue by taking an interest in theological accounts of universality, especially as expressed in the Pauline corpus.[1] The Epistle to the Galatians serves as the interpretive epicentre of such inquiry, especially the baptismal formula of 3:26-28 and its seemingly excessive, supersessive, and transgressive pronouncement of nondifference. This formula is taken as the seminal manifesto of a radical universality, a militant Pauline politics of identity. Beginning with the declaration that the Jew-Gentile distinction is overcome in Christ, theory and theology attempt to negotiate multiple relationships of difference analogically via this paradigmatic binary.[2] At issue is whether or not Pauline universality requires the evacuation of difference and the elimination of particularity, especially with respect to Jewish difference and particularity.

This essay thus emerges at the intersection of these theoretical and theological interrogations, and is intended both as theoretical theology and theological theory. Drawing on an array of insurgent interpreters, it is an exercise in bricolage in which Daniel Boyarin, John David Dawson, Alain Badiou, Giorgio Agamben, and Douglas Campbell each figure prominently. As it is the most thorough treatment of the problematic, Daniel Boyarin's provocative text, *A Radical Jew: Paul and the Politics of Identity*, will serve as our point of departure (Boyarin 1994). Though all politics of identity evince reciprocity between their discourse of alterity and mechanics of solidarity, Boyarin construes Paul's allegorical (re)reading of the Old Testament as a fully comprehensive reciprocity; in short, 'hermeneutics becomes anthropology' (Boyarin 1994: 13). On this account, Pauline universalism is of the aggregative variety; the apostle's hermeneutic is thoroughly supersessionist, and eliminates Jewish anthropological particularity. This is a rather damning charge against the gospel's claims of peace and reconciliation. But following John David Dawson, I do not believe Boyarin's critique to be devastating.

Following a treatment of Boyarin's problematic and Dawson's rejoinder, I will explicate an alternative account of universality with reference to the work of Badiou, Agamben, and Campbell. Though each offers a unique account of identity – of both alterity and solidarity, their language evinces a degree of consonance and confluence. Taken together, this constellation of interpreters suggests a discourse of alterity and mechanics of solidarity that avoid the evacuation of difference and elimination of particularity. On the contrary, rather than requiring others to become *identical to* us – the discursive evacuation of difference, identity is constructed by becoming *identified with* others. Solidarity is achieved via *recognition* and *reconciliation* (*Anerkennung*), not by *overcoming* or *removal* (*Aufhebung*). I designate the alternative identity politics achieved via identification as dispersive universality.

This alternative politics is announced paradigmatically in the baptismal formula of Galatians 3:26-28, and is intrinsically related to Paul's description of the new life of the Christian in 2:19-20. In fact, this politics is only possible given the fact of this new life; it is predicated on the Christ Event itself. The unity of Christians in Christ (3:26-28) is constituted by the actuality of Christ living in them (2:19-20). Though as embodied beings the lives of Christians remain in the flesh, such life is now lived in Christ, and by Christ living in them. Individual and social bodies (the life lived in flesh) are pneumatologically reconfigured within a Christological paradigm (the life lived by faith). That Christ has identified himself with humanity and infuses himself within

them both allows and compels Christians to identify with others despite previous divisions and enduring differences.

Badiou describes this sequence as Paul's truth procedure; 'If there has been an event (in this case the Resurrection)… truth consists in declaring it and then being faithful to its declaration' (Badiou 2003: 14). In this case, the declaration is the liturgical identification announced in the baptismal formula; fidelity is the subsequent task of political identification with others. Baptism identifies the baptisand with Christ, inaugurates the new life of Christ living within, hallows the durable specificity of human identities (both subjectivities and solidarities), takes them into God's ongoing (re)creation, and initiates their serial identification with others. In so doing, the particularities of individual and collective human identities are rendered iconic, rather than demonic. That is, they are pneumatologically transfigured into sites of divine self-disclosure reflecting the harmonious difference of the Trinity constitutive of creation itself.[3] In conclusion, I will offer a final constructive gesture illustrating the operations of this alternative politics with reference to present dynamics of white supremacy in the United States. I will suggest how the specificities of white bodies might render themselves iconic, and be so-rendered by God within a particular mode of recognition and reconciliation that is performative peacemaking; it is a 'pneuma-somatics' of identity and identification that is simultaneously a body politics and a politics of bodies.[4]

PAULINE ALLEGORY – FIGURE AND FULFILLMENT

Daniel Boyarin offers what is perhaps the most thorough and provocative exposition of our problematic. Thus, our inquiry is well-served by using *A Radical Jew* as its point of departure. Boyarin contextualises the apostle within the Judaism(s) of his day, characterising Paul as a '*Jewish* cultural critic' troubled by the internal tension between Judaism's 'narrow ethnocentrism and universalist monotheism' (Boyarin 1994: 53). He explicates Paul's universal gospel through an exposition of the linkage between hermeneutics and anthropology, the relationship of texts and bodies. He compares Paul with Philo and Origen, charting a trajectory from Hellenic Judaism to Platonic Christianity through which allegorical reading becomes the dominant hermeneutic. In Boyarin's estimation, allegory is to be understood as standing in sharp contrast to the literal hermeneutic of midrash preferred by the Hebraic Judaism of the proto-rabbinic tradition (Boyarin 1994: 47).[5] On his account of allegory as hermeneutic and anthropology, both texts and bodies are composed of oppositional binaries: inner-outer, higher-lower, invisible-visible, spirit-flesh. In this allegorical schema, conceptions of person and text relate via a reinforcing reciprocity. Any politics of identity simultaneously is a politics of meaning; the reciprocity between its discourse of alterity and mechanics of solidarity is fully comprehensive.

Boyarin identifies Galatians as the centre of Paul's comprehensive identity-meaning reciprocity, with the baptismal formula (3:26-28) being the paradigmatic expression thereof. This text represents Pauline allegory's admirable quest for universality; 'a profound vision of a humanity undivided by ethnos, class, and sex' (Boyarin 1994: 181). But, this regrettably 'dissolves all others into a single essence in which matters of cultural practice are irrelevant' (Boyarin 1994: 9). Boyarin characterises this dissolution via a series of binary oppositions in which the latter term evacuates the former: flesh and spirit, body and soul, literal and allegorical, works and faith, circumcision and baptism, genealogy and promise, Jew and Greek, Israel and the Church. Moreover, these hermeneutic evacuations of literal meaning effected by Christological allegorical

meaning correspond to the political deprivation of corporeal difference. On Boyarin's view, this is a supersessionist evacuation-deprivation rendering 'bodily filiation' meaningless (Boyarin 1994: 36).[6] In other words, it describes Jews out of (meaningful) existence.

But as John David Dawson observes, Boyarin's reading of Paul and his correlative allegation of supersessionism are not decisive. While Paul *can* be read in the manner suggested by Boyarin, there is no *necessity* to do so. Dawson suggests Boyarin's construal of Paul and Origen obscures an important distinction between figurative and figural modes of allegorical reading; the former relies on tropes, the latter on figures. 'Tropes *replace* literal meaning with non-literal meaning, while figures *preserve* literal meaning in their generation of figurativeness' (Dawson 2001: 14–15). Though figurative reading performs the sort of hermeneutic evacuation Boyarin has in mind, figural reading does not. Thus, if Pauline and Origenist allegorical reading can be demonstrated to be figural (rather than figurative) reading, the force of Boyarin's critique dissipates. And though Dawson proceeds with precisely this demonstration, he affirms, 'Boyarin's criticism of Pauline interpretation… usefully makes explicit the kinds of conceptual decisions Christian readers must avoid if figural reading is not to become supersessionist in the way Boyarin describes… (and is to) remain true to its vocation of fashioning Christian identity *while simultaneously cherishing human diversity* (Dawson 2001: 7 – emphasis added).

The distinction between Boyarin's figurative allegory and Dawson's figural allegory reveals their fundamentally differing approaches to scripture; Boyarin's allegory is semiotic, Dawson's is performative. While Boyarin takes Paul to be substituting a new set of discontinuous meanings for prior texts, Dawson reads Paul as attempting a new embodiment of 'the God-ordained *transformative continuation of Israel*' (Dawson 2001: 3 – emphasis added). For Boyarin, the change of textual meaning precedes its communal performance. For Dawson, the performance precedes the change in meaning. Boyarin's semiotic orientation is prospective, whereas Dawson's performative orientation is retrospective. Boyarin cannot entertain the possibility; he simply asserts that there can be no such transformative continuation apart from circumcision and genealogy. '*Keeping the Law while being uncircumcised is simply an oxymoron from the perspective of rabbinic Judaism*' (Boyarin 1994: 96). Dawson notes this saying, 'In sum, Boyarin's characterisation… simply excludes the possibility that Paul as a Jew was radically transformed into a Christian as a fulfillment rather than as a repudiation of his Jewish Identity' (Dawson 2001: 23). But *pace* Boyarin, Dawson insists this is precisely what has happened and what Paul is describing. Thus, the contest is not between an embodied and a disembodied Israel, but between two competing embodiments.

Allowing for the possibility of such divine transformative action in history makes possible an account of allegory as Christian figural reading. Thus, Dawson need not rely on oppositional binaries. Instead, the Pauline dyads identified by Boyarin are conceived as being inherently complementary. The second term completes, or fulfills the first without erasing it; the fulfillment itself being impossible without the prior figure. '*Scripture's figurativeness is not non-literal*; it's figurative character is an extension rather than obliteration of the literal sense' (Dawson 2001: 15). Likewise, the spiritual does not replace the corporeal; the spiritual performance of the corporeal is an extension, not a replacement of the flesh (cf. Galatians 2:19-20). Read as extensive – rather than supersessive, the allegorical reading of Paul and Origen is shown to be doing that for which Boyarin argues; namely, 'even when it spiritualizes, the rabbinic tradition does so entirely

through the body' (Boyarin 1994: 126). Christian figural reading performs the very interpretive operations Boyarin ascribes to midrash. In short, we 'discern *within* the Christian hermeneutical tradition the opposition that Boyarin effectively finds *between* Christianity and Judaism (Dawson 2001: 15).[7]

Thus, Dawson demonstrates that although Boyarin's description of the problematic is accurate, his response is both unnecessary and unhelpful for Christian theological readings of Paul. Boyarin's 'framework of binary opposition relieves (him) from the challenge of examining the character of the relation Paul asserts (i.e. transformative continuation) by allowing him to dispense with the possibility of relationship altogether' (Dawson 2001: 43). But, if the discourse of alterity and mechanics of solidarity operant in Pauline universality do not necessarily evacuate difference and eliminate particularity, how do its cohesion and comprehension function? What is the nature of the transformative dis/continuity with Israel? How does this reconfigure the Jew-Greek binary and constitute universality? And how might it apply to present social antagonisms such as white supremacy? Turning to these questions, I will offer a synthetic account of dispersive universality drawing on Badiou, Agamben, and Campbell.

THE EVENT AND THE DIVIDED SUBJECT

Before beginning this synthetic account, a restatement of our non-exclusionary criteria for an adequate universality is in order. Filiation predicated on the alienation of certain persons falls short of the criterion of full comprehension. Likewise, filiation predicated on homogenisation of certain persons (and not others) is illicit cohesion. In short, an adequate universality must not rely on the evacuation of difference or the elimination of particularity. It is to be noted that critical theory is radically skeptical that an adequate universality as I have just described is possible; its assumption is that universality *necessarily* trades on segregation (alienation) and assimilation (homogenisation). If this is the case, theory suggests our only option is to resist by destabilising and decentring subjectivity and solidarity by an endless proliferation of difference. But now we turn to our synthetic account of dispersive universality as suggested by the consonance and confluence of Badiou, Agamben, and Campbell.

First, Alain Badiou. Badiou offers an avowedly (a)theological reading of Paul as the original revolutionary figure; his theoretical and philosophical interest in the apostle militant is only as 'a subjective figure of primary importance' (Badiou 2003: 1). Though Badiou does not foreground the baptismal formula of Galatians as his central text; like Boyarin he notes, 'To declare the nondifference between Jew and Greek establishes Christianity's potential universality' (Badiou 2003: 57). The basis of this nondifference is nothing other than the Christ Event itself. Badiou's sense of the structure of the Event can helpfully illumine the contrast between Boyarin and Dawson. An Event is 'an (irruptive) opening of an epoch, (a) transformation of the relations between the possible and impossible' (Badiou 2003: 45). Put simply, Dawson takes the Resurrection to be an Event whereas Boyarin does not. This difference precludes Boyarin from reading Paul figurally; 'For established languages (the Event) is inadmissible because it is genuinely unnameable' (Badiou 2003: 46).[8] What Dawson calls transformative continuation, Badiou calls fidelity to the Event; in both cases, this is the possibility and subsequent performance of non-aggregative universality. To this we now turn.

Badiou explicates his particular rendering of dispersive universality most fully in the chapter entitled 'The Division of the Subject'. He begins with an assertion consonant with Dawson's description of Pauline figural reading:

> This *figure* (i.e. the Christ Event) will deploy itself through the revelation that what constitutes the subject in its relationship to this unheard-of real is not its unity, but its division. For in reality, one subject is weaving together two subject-paths, which Paul names the flesh (sarx) and the spirit (pneuma)… *The opposition between spirit and flesh has nothing to do with the opposition between the soul and the body*' (Badiou 2003: 55 – first emphasis original, second added).[9]

Though it is to be remembered that for Badiou this is a fable, his articulation of the Event, its Subject, its Structure, and its Universality are not altered if one believes in Christ's historical bodily resurrection. Thus *mutatis mutandis*, we may explore the theological implications of Badiou's explication of the divided subject constitutive of Pauline universality.

Dispersive universality by division is effected by 'terminating the predicative particularity of cultural subjects' (Badiou 2003: 57). Though this initially appears antithetical to our project, Badiou's penultimate chapter 'Universality and the Traversal of Differences' shows this not to be the case. Despite the Pauline declaration of their termination, difference and specifiable particularity perdure; '*The fact is* there are Jews and Greeks… *there are differences*' (Badiou 2003: 98). Yet despite this Badiou insists, Whatever a people's opinions and customs, once gripped by a truth's post-evental work, their thought becomes capable of traversing and transcending those opinions and customs *without having to give up the differences that allow them to recognise themselves in the world* (Badiou 2003: 98–99). Here on Badiou's account, Paul provides *precisely* the universality sought by Boyarin.

Thus despite initial appearances, Badiou's treatment of Pauline universality is one whose discourse of alterity and mechanics of solidarity in fact are non-exclusionary. He elaborates upon the universal traversal and transcendence of the divided subject through the locution 'not… but'.

> The subject of the new epoch is 'not… but'. The event is at once the suspension of the path of the flesh through a problematic 'not' (i.e. termination of predicative particularity), and an affirmation of the path of the spirit through a 'but' of exception… We shall maintain, in effect, that an evental rupture always constitutes its subject in the divided form of a 'not… but', and that *it is precisely this form that bears the universal*. For the 'not' is the potential dissolution of closed particularities (whose name is 'law'), while the 'but' indicates the task, the faithful labor, in which the subjects of the process opened up by the event (whose name is 'grace') are the coworkers (Badiou 2003: 63–64).

In Badiou's paradigm this locution names the decentring and destabilising of subjectivity and solidarity effected by the termination of predicative particularity. The 'not' destabilises previously closed solidarities, opening them to a potential universality. The correlative 'but' qualifies that opening insisting, 'The universal is not the negation of particularity. (But) instead is the measured

advance across a distance relative to perpetually persisting particularity' (Badiou 2003: 110). That is to say, dispersive universality is a certain kind of mobile relationship of identification.

THE MESSIANIC CUT

Though Giorgio Agamben (2005) distances himself from Badiou by insisting that no whole is finally is achieved, with Badiou he articulates a kind of universality consisting not in unity but instead in division.[10] Agamben, a classicist, renders his account of division with reference to an obscure anecdote related by Pliny. The story tells of a contest between two painters, Protogenes and Appelles. Each artist seeks to prove himself the most adept by painting as thin a horisontal line as possible. Finally,

> Protogenes draws such a fine line that it seems not to have been made by the
> paintbrush of any human hand. But Appelles, using his brush, divides his rival's
> line in two with an even finer line, cutting it lengthwise in half (Agamben 2005:
> 50).

Agamben uses this figure to describe the messianic aphorism, the breaking down of the dividing wall of hostility and declaration of nondifference between Jew and Greek. Like Boyarin, Agamben traces the operation of the effects of the messianic cut in Pauline binaries such as spirit-flesh.

The messianic cut, as the impossible bisection of a line, is the division of a division; in this case the division of the Jew-Greek binary. Thus, the previous division between Jew and Greek yields two new divisions; one within each previous group. Paul describes the four resultant subjective categories as Jews according to the flesh and Jews according to the spirit; and likewise, Greeks according to he flesh and Greeks according to the spirit. 'Under the effect of the cut of Appelles, the partition of the law (Jew/non-Jew), is no longer clear or exhaustive, for there will be some Jews who are not Jews and some non-Jews who are not non-Jews' (Agamben 2005: 50).[11]

Having rendered the initial binary simply as Jew/non-Jew, the newly redivided subjectivities take the form of double negation, 'non-non'. Both those who are Jews and those who are not non-Jews according to the spirit are non-non-Jews (Agamben 2005: 51). Notice the similarity to Badiou's 'not… but'. Those who are Jews according to the spirit do *not* cease to be Jews according to the flesh, *but* they are more than that; likewise, those who are not non-Jews according to the spirit do *not* cease to be Greeks, Romans, Americans, or New Zealanders according to the flesh, *but* they are more than that. The new subjectivity and solidarity rendered as non-non-Jew 'introduces a remnant [*resto*] into the law's overall division of the people, and Jews and non-Jews are constitutively "not all"' (Agamben 2005: 50).

Here the contours of dispersive universality come into sharp relief. Aggregative universality claims previous centres of solidarity are too small and need to be absorbed and/or assimilated into something larger. On the contrary, dispersive universality suggests they are too large. We can make this plain by reference to cohesion and comprehension. Aggregative universality critiques local subjectivities and solidarities (race, gender, etc.) on grounds of their not being comprehensive enough, and thus universality thus aggregates to itself these localities by sublimating them within some more global subjectivity and solidarity.[12] Hence the objection and resistance of critical theory whose identarian politics insist the comprehension achieved by aggregative universality

fails inasmuch as the cohesion of such subjectivity and solidarity is too weak to hold together disparate subalterities. But, as noted in Boyarin's framing of our problematic, identarian politics undermine social cooperation. While as a Jew he finds Paul's construction ultimately untenable, its enabling of such cooperation is precisely why Boyarin so admires the apostle.

In contrast, dispersive universality attempts to achieve both the comprehension of aggregative universality and the particular cohesion of resistant subalterities. It does so in the manner suggested by the messianic cut of Appelles as represented by the figures 'not… but' and 'non-non'. It does so by dispersing (dis-aggregating) local subjectivities and solidarities; suggesting their cohesion is in fact too weak, and their comprehension overextended. If we look closely enough, even those claimed/claiming to be included can be shown only to approximate the subjectivity and solidarity in which they say they are included, and are said to be included. Put directly, we can infinitely proliferate subalterities within subalterities until we are left with solitary subjects. And then as Agamben notes, we must finally face the impossibility of the individual subject even to coincide with herself.[13] The figures 'non-non' and 'not… but ' 'are something like a remnant between every people and itself, between every identity and itself' (Agamben 2005: 52).[14] The non-coincidence and remnant reveal the decisive rupture effected by the Resurrection.

Ultimately, dispersive universality is a radicalisation of the critical theoretical deconstruction of aggregative comprehension. After deconstructing aggregative universality, a reciprocal deconstruction is undertaken within identarian politics themselves. 'Universalizable singularity necessarily breaks with identarian singularity' (Badiou 2003: 11). But, dispersive universality does not stop here. Like Paul himself, it finally seeks a globally comprehensive solidarity; in the end it *is* a universality. Its universality is constituted in and by a double-move. First, there is a radical deconstruction of all subjectivities and solidarities which alienates all subjects from one another and from themselves. Not content with a world of radically destabilised solidarities and decentred subjectivities, secondarily there is a radical reconstruction. Christ, the God-man who is a truly universal particular – a universalisable singular, reconfigures those who were once alienated in his own image, thus filiating them to each other in and through himself.

PNEUMATOLOGICALLY PARTICIPATORY MARTYROLOGICAL ESCHATOLOGICAL RECONFIGURATION

At this point a number of potential objections present themselves. Though we will treat these more fully in the following section, we will make an initial attempt to specify, and indeed to justify this second move. Holding objections in momentary abeyance, let us turn to the second move; the reconfiguration in Christ's image of those once alienated and their correlative filiation with each other in/through him. This returns us to our focal texts (Galatians 3:26-28 and 2:19-20) and an explication of their interrelationship. In terms of our title, we now attempt to specify how the universality of the ecclesial body achieved *in Christ* (3:28) relates to *Christ living within* the perpetual particularities of individual bodies (2:19). With this, we turn to Douglas Campbell.

The Quest for Paul's Gospel puts forward a 'suggested strategy' for identifying the apostle's theological centre (Campbell 2005). Instead of justification by faith (JF) or salvation history (SH), Campbell suggests this center is best characterized as a 'pneumatologically participatory martyrological eschatological model (PPME)' (Campbell 2005: 4). That is to say, the redemption proclaimed by Paul consists in new life in Christ (participation) via being conformed to the

character of his death (martyrology) and resurrection (eschatology) by the activity of the Spirit (pneumatology). Against presently regnant interpretations, Campbell insists Paul's theological coherence derives from neither a particular rendering of confession (faith) correlative to the juridical status of the one so confessing (grace), nor from a particular historiography of election. Instead,

> I would suggest that Paul's centre, construed in terms of the PPME model has the following characteristics: it is asymmetrically dualist in its basic structure, and cosmic and universal in scope; it is radical in its analytic depth, where it posits stark relations of oppression and domination by superhuman powers; hence it is fundamentally liberative soteriologically, as well as being creative and ontological at this point… and, most importantly, it is unconditional and sovereign in soteriological and epistemological terms, which is to say that its perspectives and structure are strictly retrospective or a posteriori (Campbell 2005: 61).

Within this rather anguished locution, four features of Paul's gospel are especially salient: it is 1) universal in character, 2) inherently liberative, 3) ontologically creative, and 4) structurally retrospective. I think it is obvious how these four characteristics connect with Dawson (3, 4), Badiou (1, 2, 3, 4), and Agamben (2, 3), and thus integrate Campbell into our synthetic account of dispersive universality. Nonetheless, I will highlight some of these connections as we proceed to deploy Campbell as our description of universal Christological filiation via pneumatological reconfiguration.

As Campbell identifies baptism as the decisive site of reconfiguration, of both alienation and filiation; once again, the liturgical formula of Galatians 3:28 comes to fore.[15] Here he interprets '*ouk eni* (in 28a) as a shortened form of *ouk enesti* yielding the emphatic negation "it is not possible to be (Jew or Greek, slave or free, male and female)"' (2005: 97). This forcefully expresses Badiou's notion of the Event as a radical reconfiguration of the coördinates of what is possible *and impossible*, and echoes Agamben's contention concerning the resultant non-coincidence of every identity with itself. In baptism,

> As the Spirit configures people to the template of Christ – specifically in his descent into death and ascent into glory – they too are thereby delivered from their present oppressed and corrupted condition by means of its termination in Christ's execution and their recreation in a new liberated and transformed condition that is grafted onto his resurrected existence and is now no longer inhabited by the powers of Sin and Death (Campbell 2005: 59).

Since Paul's gospel is universal (1), this impossibility is taken to be (proleptically) true of all identities. As such identities are the source of alienation, hostility, oppression, and domination; this impossibility is liberating (2). Such liberation yields new ontological categories, both subjectivity (personhood) and solidarity (peoplehood); and these are only recognised retrospectively in light of the resurrection (3, 4). The dialectic of 'termination (execution) and recreation (resurrection)' is our double-move; the transformative continuation of previous subjectivities and solidarities.

The transition from the previous state of alienation (dispersion) into the subsequent state of filiation (reconciliation – cf. Ephesians 2:11-22) is described as being accomplished 'through faith (*dia tes pisteos*)' (3:26). In rejecting the justification by faith schema Campbell prefers the subjective reading, rendering *pisteos* as 'the faithful one' (i.e. Jesus Christ). Filiation as children of God and as a unified body is accomplished '*by means of Christ's great act of faithfulness…* (in which) the cross is the point where God has acted to terminate the divisive categories of the present cosmos' (Campbell 2005: 100). Here the implicit theological and inherent linguistic connection with 2:19-20 comes into view. In baptism the believer is terminated (executed) and reconstituted (resurrected); 'I have been crucified (terminated) with Christ – nevertheless I live' (19b). Continued (reconstituted) life after crucifixion is described as being 'no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me' (20a).[16] And, 'the (transformative continuation of the) life I now live in the flesh I live by the faithfulness (*en pitsei*) of the son of God' (20b).[17] Again, though baptism is the decisive site,

> The termination and reconstitution of Easter that are so stark in relation to Christ himself seem to be applied *by the Spirit* in a far more diffuse manner within the broader soteriological process, which is to say *the process of 'mapping', whereby people are saved through being plotted by the spirit onto Christ's prototypical trajectory*, seems to be a subtle process at work within creation, constantly terminating and reconstituting (Campbell 2005: 64 – emphasis added).

That which is predicated of Christ transfers to the baptisand, initiating an ongoing transformative process of reconfiguration. Thus, the unity (solidarity) announced in 3:26-28 is seen to be based on the ongoing pattern of being (subjectivity – Badiou's 'subjective path') described in 2:19-20. As our title contends, Christians are made one in Christ inasmuch as it is Christ who lives within them.

But here we must rejoin those objections looming in the wings. Three come to mind most immediately. As the first is answered directly by Badiou and Campbell, we will address it now. As the second and third introduce new figures into our unfolding synthetic account, they will be addressed in the following section under the topic of essentialism. The first objection pertains to Christians themselves, excluding unbelieving and otherwise-believing persons for the moment. Put simply, *how* does the reconfiguration of the Christian in Christ overcome their alienation and accomplish their filiation with others? Together, though in different idioms, Campbell and Badiou declare our reply; it does. For Campbell – a Barthian who takes the Resurrection to be an actual Event, one cannot know Christ apart from the divine self-presentation; one cannot know that oneself and the world have been reconfigured in the manner described by Paul apart from the attestation of the Spirit. For Badiou – a Marxist who takes the Resurrection to be a fable that discloses a subjective Truth,

> [T]he event has not come to prove something; it is pure beginning. Christ's resurrection is neither an argument nor an accomplishment. There is no proof of the event; nor is the event a proof (Badiou 2003: 49).

Given its retrospective structure, the Event cannot be known in advance or demonstrated by prior argument. Thus, the gospel is foolishness to the Greeks (wanting proof by argument) and a stumbling block to the Jews (wanting proof by accomplishment). 'Truth is entirely subjective (it is of the order of a declaration that refers to a conviction relative to the event)' (Badiou 2003: 14). Its only evidence is divine self-presentation and pneumatic manifestation in the life of the Church; thus, baptism itself becomes a figure awaiting fulfillment – both immediate and ultimate.

ESSENTIALISM RECONSIDERED – ILLUSORY OR STRATEGIC?

Though this declarative response to our first objection is likely unsatisfactory to skeptics, regrettably no other answer is possible. However, our second and third objections afford a more extensive reply. The second is a two-fold objection to our first move; the radical decentring of solidarity and destabilisation of subjectivity entailed in dispersion. Firstly (1a), this does not comport with the evidence of our experience. People (subjects) and peoples (solidarities) simply do not think of, or experience themselves as decentred, destabilised, or radically dispersed. Secondly (1b), this seems to eviscerate any resistance to the savage inertia of aggregative universality. Likewise, the third is a two-fold objection to our second move. Firstly (2a), assuming *arguendo* that our specification of Christological reconfiguration and filiation is plausible, it remains unclear how this attaches to and operates in unbelieving and otherwise-believing persons and peoples. Secondly (2b), these same persons and peoples evince a significant degree of filiation *absent* confession of Christ. These objections raise questions of essentialism.

Terry Eagleton's *After Theory* is a protracted meditation on our first two-fold objection. Therein he considers the gains and losses made by critical theory, and prognosticates about what comes next. What is after theory, now that theory has in large measure won the day? He specifically is concerned with the disjunction between theoretical descriptions of subjectivity and solidarity and the actual material conditions thereof (1a); especially as these empower or impede resistance to the domination and oppression of late modern global capitalism (1b). With respect to the latter he rightly notes, 'It was majorities not minorities, which confounded imperial power in India and brought down apartheid' (Eagleton 2003: 15). Neither unaware nor unsympathetic to such an observation; Douglas Campbell says,

> (The PPME) model causes an unacceptable rupture in the personal history of the Christian… How can problems and difficulties raised within the Adamic age… be resolved in a way that is effective for those continuing to occupy this age? *Surely we cannot merely proclaim the termination of the very parameters of the conflicts taking place here?*… (The PPME) model of the atonement seems to cut across multiple relations when their preservation still seems intuitively to be important; it seems to slice through both creation and Israel, as well as our own existence, and also to cut the Christian community off from its created context (Campbell 2005: 63 – emphasis added).

We must deal with the fact that most persons do not experience or conceive themselves as destabilised, decentred, or dispersed. Their race, ethnicity, nationality, gender, religion, etc. are quite real to them. And more importantly, this (perceived) reality is what allows their resistance to oppression and domination.

Gayatari Chakavorty Spivak rigorously develops this theme under the concept of 'strategic essentialism', defined as 'a strategic use of positivist essentialism in a scrupulously visible political interest' (Spivak 1996: 214).[18] Thus, essentialism cannot be dismissed entirely. As Boyarin insists, 'For subaltern groups, however, essentialism is resistance, the insistence on the 'right' of the group to actually exist' (Boyarin 1994: 241).[19] The provisional adoption and deployment of essentialist identities recalls Marx's two-fold conception of a class as a group having a shared social interest and/or a bond of affection. While denying such identities are fully naturalised or ontologically exhaustive, strategic essentialism provisionally trades on their currency inasmuch as they constitute a 'class' with shared interests and/or bonds of affection.[20] We also might describe strategic essentialism as contingent essentialism. It is essential to the degree that such identities (subjectivities and solidarities) behave as such; but, contingent inasmuch as their behavior is malleable and polyvalent.[21] Musa Dube posits the important qualifications that such 'essentialism is useful provided one understands that it is *always* socially constructed, temporary, fluid, partial, geo-specific, and it can never apply satisfactorily and precisely to all the members of any one particular group (nation, race, gender, and class) at any given time and place' (Dube 1999: 218 – emphasis added). Contingent essentialisms (plural) are polymorphic, self-defining, elective, and dynamic; they are mobile, multiple, and momentary. And as the criteria of self-definition and election imply, these are not the essentialism of the coloniser but those of the colonised. Thus, our first objection (1a and 1b) is deflected. Both the flexibility of our theoretical/theological description and the fixity of our experiential evidence can be held in tension; a tension productive of a field of power that is itself a resource and strategy for resistance.[22]

Now we turn to our second objection concerning the transferability of pneumatological reconfiguration and Christological filiation of unbelieving and otherwise-believing persons and peoples. In short, this is a question of the relationship of Church and World relative to the Kingdom of God. Again – though this time we offer slightly more elaboration, our response is simply declarative. Though they might not experience themselves as such, all identities and collectives are 'in Christ' protologically and will be in Christ eschatologically (see Colossians 1:15-20). This is not somehow to narrate all persons as so-called anonymous Christians. It simply is the radical extension of the logic of election (Pauline universality itself), especially as expressed by Karl Barth's omnidirectional supralapsarian Christology; everything is ordered in and by Christ in a seamless act of ongoing reconciliation encompassing creation and redemption.[23] Or as Dawson puts it, 'Because Jesus' enacted intentions are those of God, Jesus' story is no self-contained episode, but instead stretches back to God's primordial intention to enact human salvation, even as it stretches forward to God's final achievement of that end' (Dawson 2001: 181). Though again perhaps unsatisfying to unbelieving and otherwise-believing interlocutors, this answer is internally coherent and consistent with the Christ Event and its scriptural attestation.[24]

ONE IN CHRIST WHO LIVES WITHIN – RECOGNITION AND RECONCILIATION

The solidarity of the Church constituted in and by baptism is a pneumatic body politics. As it is a composite body of bodies whose specificities are deployed missionally, the Church is also a somatic politics of bodies. The unity declared in 3:26-28 is a prolepsis to be fulfilled in the new life described in 2:19-20. Thus, the identity politics figured in baptism and fulfilled in the life of the Church is a pneuma-somatics of identification. Baptism identifies the baptisand with Christ,

inaugurates the new life of Christ living within, and initiates the task of their ongoing identification with others. The particular mode of this identification is not asymmetrical uniformity (i.e. assimilation), but equitable unity (i.e. recognition). As Dawson puts it:

> The equality that stands behind the universal import of Christian fulfillment is grounded *not in identity as sameness* but in an identity that follows upon one's identification with the other. Christ deigns to identify with human beings, who are thereby invited to identify themselves with him. *The equality that underlies universality is thereby constituted by a mutual 'identifying with', rather than a 'becoming the same as'* (2001: 175–176 – emphasis added).

In short, *baptism itself* is fulfilled serially until the consummation of the eschaton.

Thus, there is after all a prospective element following from the Event. And for both Badiou and Campbell, this is the labor of fidelity to the Resurrection. It now remains to explicate this labor and its import for Christian theology and the witness of the Church. Christian theology and the Church's witness consist in the retrospective declaration of this figure – the irruptive Event by which Christians are grasped and reconfigured, and in the prospective performance of its fulfillment – fidelity to its truth. This task is nothing short of rendering the particularities of subjectivity (individual bodies) and solidarity (social bodies) as iconic sites of divine self-disclosure. It is the taking up the relative fixity of the givens of our existence, and fashioning their flexibility into Christoform identity. Again Dawson,

> From this point of view, the differences that constitute identity are firmly in place and cannot be altered (but can be reconfigured)… Equality means that wholly distinctive (i.e. radically dispersed) individuals align themselves with, or 'identify with', one who has chosen to align himself or 'identify himself' with them (i.e. Christ)' (2001: 177 – emphasis added).

This identity is fashioned via identification and filiation. Its discourse of alterity is recognition; its mechanics of solidarity is reconciliation. Thus, it is intersubjective, rather than subjugating.[25]

Now in a final fulfillment of a previous figuration internal to this paper, we will attempt to analogically address the present social antagonism of white supremacy via the overcoming of the paradigmatic Pauline binary of Jew/non-Jew. We attempt an answer to J. Kameron Carter's provocative question, 'What would it mean to say that in baptism, the baptisand is no longer white?' More pointedly we offer a brief account of the pneuma-somatics of identity the Church would have to instantiate in order to fulfill the figure of the Galatians baptismal formula rearticulated relative to the white/non-white binary.[26]

Here we finally come full circle to Daniel Boyarin. Within the formation of the European nation-states, the Jew and Judaism serve as site of, and cipher for difference itself (Boyarin 1994: 230).[27] Since the nation-state is constituted by the operations of aggregative universality, difference as such becomes the source of disorder constantly threatening to return us to a bellicose state of civil, international, or universal war. Carter affirms Boyarin's judgment, deploying it in his genealogy of the American nation-state. His deployment involves the analogical transposition of the Jewish figure into that of the African American.[28] In the American setting, blackness is the site of and cipher for social antagonism.[29] Unsurprisingly, here again we undertake another

double-move; this time from the Jew/non-Jew binary in Pauline communities to early modern iterations of this same antagonism, and finally to the analogous ongoing late modern antagonism of the white/non-white binary.

Again, we start with Boyarin's analysis of the Jew/non-Jew antagonism internal to the Pauline communities. Boyarin identifies Paul's primary concern to be the 'maximal unity' of his communities (1994: 50). Not unlike our present political milieu, Paul confronted two interrelated threats to this unity: assimilation (Judaising) and segregation (Hellenising) (Boyarin 1994: 112–113). It is well-established that Galatians is *locus classicus* of Paul's response to the assimilative threat of Judaising. Boyarin identifies 1 Corinthians 12:13 as a parallel text to the baptismal formula of 3:26-28, though it omits the final clause 'nor male and female'. Boyarin attributes this to different contingent issues unique to those communities. The Judaising contingencies of Galatians represent an overestimation of the fixity of bodily particularities (individual and social) tending toward assimilation. Those of the Hellenising (somewhat gnostic) contingencies of Corinthians represent an underestimation of bodily particularities (individual and social) tending toward segregation. In this latter case, the community was engaging in both libertine and ascetic bodily practices (individual and corporate) breaking the fellowship between that community and the larger Church without; and between rich and poor, and husbands and wives within.

Bypassing a full specification of the Jew/non-Jew antagonism within early European modernity, we move to the present context of white/non-white antagonism in late modern America. King's infamous dictum remains true; eleven o'clock on Sunday morning remains the most segregated hour in America; the triumph of the Civil Rights Movement notwithstanding. Though perhaps the continuing antagonism between white and non-white connections and congregations is not as pronounced, the fundamental fissure remains.[30] Moreover, most overtures toward overcoming such segregation are predicated on aggregative assimilation of non-white Christians to the theology, liturgy, and polity of white Christians. Consider the following typical example:

> 'The ethnic Church in this country is an abomination to the all-encompassing (universal) gospel message. Eleven o'clock on Sunday morning is the most segregated hour in America. We should all go to the same church'. So proclaimed a seminary professor while Ken Uyeda Fong sat in class. When the class paused for a break, Pastor Fong went to his professor and inquired if he planned to being attending the Asian American congregation where Fong was a member. The professor answered, 'Why, no. *I meant for you to come to our church*' (DeYoung et al. 2004: 113 – *sic*).

This seems to place us back on the now-sharpened horns of our original dilemma. How would the pneuma-somatics of identification render the specificities of blackness and whiteness iconic in this setting?

As my own subject position is that of a person raced as white, in concluding I will only attempt to suggest how the bodily specificities of whiteness might be rendered iconic within the coördinates of white supremacy. In order to do so, the answer described above is to be resolutely rejected. Insofar as 'ethnic' (meaning *non-white* ethnic) congregations might be inconsistent with the gospel's universality, culpability for their creation and maintenance falls squarely upon the shoulders of Americans of European descent. This requires repentance and reconciliation.[31] Instead

of answering like Fong's professor, we must reply, 'Yes. How may I do so unobtrusively and without reinscribing the dysfunctional dynamics of white supremacy itself?'[32]

To ask this question is to conceive and perform whiteness as a subaltern identity.[33] To do so is to undertake the task of *imago dei* as the difficult work of peacemaking and reconciliation. It is to enact a mobile relationship of identification continually undertaking the 'inventive transversal' (Badiou 2003: 110) of differences, and to do so as a process of 'eschatological clarification' (Campbell 2005: 7). James Perkinson summarily expresses the burden of this task in terms parallel to Badiou's 'not… but' figure. 'The conundrum of race is such that there is no salvation for whites as white and there is no solidarity with others except as white… The demand is double and damnable' (Perkinson 2004: 223).[34] That is, whites cannot be identified with Christ as white, but must identify with others from their subject position of being raced as white. The body politics of the American Church must become a politics of bodies. Double and damnable though this may be, this is the theological and political task at hand.

ENDNOTES

[1] This interest in the Apostle is manifest in the work of theorists such as Daniel Boyarin, Alain Badiou, Giorgio Agamben, and Slavoj Žižek. These four featured prominently as plenary speakers in a recent university conference exploring the theme 'Saint Paul Among the Philosophers: Subjectivity, Universality, and the Event'.

[2] The terms theory and theology here are relatively interchangeable. Even when avowedly atheistic, theoretical interpretations of scripture are (a) theological nonetheless. This is true in three senses. First, in reading biblical texts and assessing the ontological import of the resurrection, Boyarin, Badiou and Agamben are trading in explicitly, and inescapably theological categories and concepts. Second, as John Milbank has demonstrated, post/modern philosophical and theoretical paradigms can be identified as various species of heretical theology (see Milbank 2006). Third, as Žižek observes via Benjamin, the triumph of dialectical materialism and Marxism (among other a/non-theological paradigms) depends implicitly on the invisible operations of theology. But in these cases, and especially with Badiou, those theological operations are made visible. Albeit that in being made visible, their operations are simultaneously denied and disavowed as having anything other than formal significance. (See, Žižek 2003; 2005; 2006). That is, reliance on theological concepts – albeit disbelievingly, is theological despite itself. And likewise, theological interpretations deploying critical tools are theoretical.

[3] For a thorough account of the relationship between Trinitarian ontology and creaturely reality, and especially the *imago dei* of humanity, see Milbank 2006.

[4] This apt locution is Dawson's (2001: 209).

[5] 'As a professional and confessional student of rabbinic Judaism', Boyarin identifies himself and his project with this latter midrashic tradition.

[6] In a post-Shoah world, this is an accusation of Marcionism without equal. Should it prove true, it would devastate Christian theology and debilitate the Church's witness.

[7] While we lack explicit articulation of Paul's sense of figural reading, we may still make this assertion on two grounds. First, his assertion of his own (albeit radically altered) Jewish identity, and the pains he takes to show Christ comports with Old Testament texts. Second, we have explicit articulations from Origen. Being later, any inherent obliterating impulse in Christian figural reading likely would be more developed. If Origen insists on the integrity of body-spirit/literal-figural, so much more must Paul.

8   As Boyarin insists, this Event is oxymoronic within the language of Judaism.

9   First emphasis added, second original. He does not refer to Dawson, nor do I suggest an implicit reference or reliance.

10 Though I cannot but trust Agamben's insistence on this point, I do not see the substantive difference between Badiou's 'not… but' and his 'non-non'. Though Badiou affirms 'universalism', it seems to me that even for him it remains an unfinished task whose comprehension never quite adds up to totality. For instance, Badiou says, 'The multiplicity that, exceeding itself, upholds universality. Its being in excess of itself *precludes its being represented as a totality.* Superabundance *cannot be assigned to the Whole*' (Badiou 2003: 78).

11 The assumption of Jews who are not Jews is not necessarily supersessionist. Boyarin notes this; 'Jews were saved through this grace (thus being/remaining true Jews) unless their disobedience was such that it marked them as having renounced the Covenant' (Boyarin 1994: 43).

12 On an aggregative paradigm subjectivities and solidarities of family, tribe, nation, gender, class etc. are all subsumed and homogenized within the ultimately comprehensive category 'humanity'. Though this inevitably coincides with some particular configuration of humanity (e.g. white, straight, male).

13 Here the ontological import of mathematics and set theory in Badiou's project becomes clear. Transfinite set theory maintains that no set is, or can be constituted intensionallly; that is by some shared similarity. This is the case because some dissimilarity can always be introduced to break a set so-configured. (In this case the introduction of the non-non.) And this, in principle, can be done ad infinitum, and thus generates an intractable excess of subsets. (In this case, subalterities.) Thus, sets can only be constituted extensionally; that is by axiomatic declaration. See "Appendix: On the Development of Transfinite Set Theory" in Hallward 2003.

14 Cf. Adorno, 'The non-identical element in an identifying judgment is clearly intelligible insofar as every single object subsumed under a class contains definitions not contained in the definition of the class' (Adorno 2005: 150).

15 See notes 14 on page 98 and 22 on page 102. Though decisive, baptism is not the only site; reconfiguration occurs elsewhere and is ever ongoing.

16 The implicit continuation of life after crucifixion made explicit by the KJV's amplification 'nevertheless I live' renders Badiou's 'not… but' rather nicely. This connection immediately is made explicit, 'It is *not* (no longer) I who lives, *but* Christ who lives in me'. Thus, 2:19-20 conforms directly to Badiou's pattern.

17 This seems consonant with Romans 1:17 (quoting Habakkuk 2: 4) – another epicentre of Pauline theology. 'For in it (the gospel) the righteousness of God is revealed through faith for faith; as it is written 'The one who is righteous will live by faith'. Read with and through our texts, the phrases 'through faith for faith' and 'by faith' can be seen to emphasize the intrinsic relationship between Christ's faithfulness and the faithful obedience of the Church. Christ's faithfulness creates the possibility of human faithfulness; moreover, inasmuch as Christ is the one who lives within, human faithfulness is in a very real sense Christ's own faithfulness.

18 Boyarin himself similarly states, 'Claims for essence are legitimation strategies for identity politics and, as such, are attacked at great peril to the cause of difference and liberation of differences' (1994: 238).

19 Frantz Fanon and James Scott describe these tactics using concepts of 'masking' and 'hidden transcripts' respectively (See Fanon 1991 and Scott 1992). Michelle Wright develops similar themes with respect to African diasporic identities in the American context (See Wright 2004).

20 Here, an analogy from contemporary physics serves to illustrate. Subatomic particles are always in motion, and thus even solid objects consist mostly of empty space. Yet were I to slam my hand down,

21 this library table would feel (and 'be') quite solid. Similarly, though strategic essentialism holds such identities to be so much empty space, it utilizes the ways in which they behave as solids.

21 As Scott and Fanon note, conformity to such identities (masks and transcripts) does not ensure meaning. Performance could be compliance; but it might be dissimulation or veiled rebellion.

22 For a theological treatment of the fixity and flexibility of identity, see Buell 2005.

23 On Barth's account, Christology is both the centre and circumference of theology. Thus, all theology is Christology and is a part of the doctrine of reconciliation.

24 While these rejoinders may be incomplete, I think they minimally establish dispersive universality's plausibility.

25 Badiou puts it this way; 'Every existence can one day be seized by what happens to it and subsequently devote itself to that which is valid for all' (Badiou 2003: 66). In other words, *all* identities are figures awaiting and portending Christological fulfillment. To reiterate our titular contention; the agency of the Spirit makes Christians one in Christ who lives within them via the indwelling of the Spirit.

26 I parse the binary this way for two reasons: firstly, though blackness includes persons who are not raced as black (Asians, Latinos, First Nations persons, etc.), these are fundamentally oriented to whiteness along a spectrum of relative non-whiteness (i.e. blackness); secondly, historically, the antagonism between Americans of European and African descent is paradigmatic of other antagonisms. While the antagonism with First Nations Peoples is similarly originary, it is somewhat eclipsed due to the former antagonism's inscription into the founding documents of the United States, and subsequent unfolding in the Civil War, Reconstruction, Jim Crow, Civil Rights, etc.

27 'The Jew becomes the very sign of discord and disorder in the Christian polity' (Badiou 2003: 66).

28 See Carter, forthcoming. Some might be skeptical of such transposition's transference of conceptualizations of race and ethnicity across time and place; especially from the antiquity to modernity. However, such skepticism is unwarranted. In both antiquity and modernity, race and ethnicity are malleable concepts variously deployed in constructions of identity. (See Jacobsen 1998 and Buell 2005). Though all transference is not legitimate, any diachronic or synchronic transference must be judged on an ad hoc basis and enjoys *prima facie* credibility.

29 See Goldberg (2001).

30 We underscore *perhaps*. Passive and routinized antagonisms are often more pernicious (see Bonilla-Silva 2006).

31 Reconciliation is not forgiveness. Forgiveness can be extended unilaterally absent repentance. Indeed, I would suggest the absence of widespread violent insurrection by non-white Americans indicates that it has (see Osayande 2005).

32 If this seems too individualistic and ineffectual, let me hazard a more systematic institutional rendering of this same repentance and reconciliation. I have suggested white Methodists must advocate a penitent reunification with those denominations created and maintained by its white supremacy (African Methodist Episcopal, African Methodist Episcopal Zion, Colored Methodist Episcopal). This reunion might amount to the resignation of UMC bishops and pastors, and the transfer of UMC property to a truly *uniting* Methodist church - a costly repentance transferring actual power and assets. Absent such a performance of dispersive universality, American Christianity remains what Foucault derisively calls 'a nostalgic renarration purged of historical responsibility' (Foucault 2003).

33 Which, given global population demographics, it is.

34 Cf, James Cone's admonition for whites to become (ontologically) black. See Cone 2005; 1988; 1997.

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