11-2019

Written in Black, White, and Red: An Exploration of Civilizer Theology in American History

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Salve Regina University
HUM590: Humanities Thesis

November 2019

Chapter One: Introduction & Methodology

Introduction

Howard Thurman published his evocative and challenging work *Jesus and the Disinherited* in 1949 wherein he posed the question to which he would seek an answer throughout his entire life.

> "Why is it that Christianity seems impotent to deal radically, and therefore effectively, with the issues of discrimination and injustice on the basis of race, religion and national origin?" (Thurman 1996, 7)

Thurman, born in 1899, lived the vast majority of his life in a segregated America, within "a climate of separateness" which Thurman recognized as extending to, and maintained by religious life and practice. (Thurman 1959, 121) Thurman actively challenged this separateness through his writing and work including the establishment of The Church for the Fellowship of All People in San Francisco in 1944 as a tangible demonstration of "an interracial church….a racially integrated organization…" (Thurman 1959, 109) Thurman referred to this work as "The Religion of Jesus and challenged the normative vision of Christianity, one that propelled and glorified whiteness." (McCray 2019, 48) Thurman's life and work were focused on the creation and sustaining of an equitable vision of Christianity as a means towards remaking the social, theological and political frameworks shaping American society. In his autobiography, published in 1979 four years before his death, Thurman, bookending his question first posed in *Jesus and the Disinherited*, asked

> "What adjustment could be made to accommodate the ethic of a religion like Christianity to the political and economic demands of imperialism? What is the anatomy of the process by which the powerful and the powerless and draw their support and inspiration from the worship of the same God and the teaching from the identical source?" (Thurman 1979, 116)

In 2017, Dr. Ibram Kendi captured the essence of Thurman's questions with the term "civilizer theology" defined as "…[the process of] civiliz[ing] away the wayward behaviors of people, particularly the really bad people [who have been]…racialized as black." (Greer 2017) In 2016 Dr. Kendi was recognized as a substantial and erudite national voice when his book *Stamped from the Beginning: The Definitive History of Racist Ideas in America* won the National Book Award. In 2019, he published the searching *How to be Anti-Racist* and was awarded a Guggenheim Fellowship that same year. Amid a rigorous writing, speaking and teaching schedule, Kendi also works as the Founding Director of The Antiracist Research & Policy Center at American University. Like Thurman, Kendi's work and writing engages the "climate of separateness" that has characterized American life, seeking to understand how American life can hold the ideals of liberty and equality while simultaneously reinforcing a climate of separateness through practices, systems and structures.

Thurman and Kendi are linked in a scholar-activist tradition, connected to the work of Cornel West, James Cone, W.E.B. Du Bois, Frederick Douglass, and others which recognizes the importance of religion in the history and construction of American society while seeking to challenge the practice of religion that is interested in its own power. Thurman and Kendi are representative of a scholar-activist tradition that challenges the idealization of two foundational American ideals, liberty and equality, in their relationship to the horrors of slavery, systems of segregation and traditions of oppression that exist alongside those same ideals. Additionally, Kendi and Thurman are active participants in an intellectual tradition that challenges the expectations and perceptions of society through writing and public speaking applying these to lived experience. Their challenge of civilizer theology is not limited to the academic realm but extends to the spiritual and lived.

Hypothesis

Following Kendi and Thurman, this paper proposes an extended definition and discusses examples of civilizer theology within the perceptions and practices of white Protestant American Christianity faith traditions. This paper will be searching for patterns to provide insight into the ways that these faith traditions have been interpolated with racially biased social norms and political ideologies. Specifically, how have the Christian scriptures and theological questions been interpreted, mediated and received to have been subsequently enmeshed rhetorically within

a larger shared political and social community? The process of researching for this paper indicates there is not a shared term that theologians, scholars and other writers have agreed upon to refer to the use of the language of theology or religion that reinforces racist systems and practices. In part the argument presented in this paper proposes that civilizer theology is a term well-qualified to fill the role. Examples are selected guided by the following theoretical construct which identifies three significant dispositions characterizing civilizer theology: first, **cultural decay/moral decline**; secondly, **authority**; thirdly, **violence**. The following sections, rationale, structure and literature review, provide reasoning and arguement for why this construct was chosen.

These dispositions are deployed in defending absolutist claims to power, as well as a support for using racial bias to perpetuate beliefs regarding group superiority and are typically expressed as organizing themes and/or focal concerns. In turn, this paper will examine how the theological language of justification is employed by members of faith traditions and shaped by the dispositions of civilizer theology. This is not simply a case of religion being exploited as a political tool. The political sphere is a place where believers can support specific socio-economic policies that they believe echo scriptural interpretation and exegesis, specifically in the context of white Protestant theological practice. This paper's hypothesis is that theological interpretation, application and exegesis, mediated by the three dispositions, are deliberately applied to support socio-economic, cultural and political ends with the goal of maintaining power structures to the benefit of a particular group.

Conceptually, theological interpretation frames the application and purpose of violence (state-sponsored or extra-legal), identifies instances or points of cultural decay/moral decline (the resolution or prevention of which may require violence), and, provides justification for considering state-sponsored violence or extra-legal violent acts as appropriate or legal. This interpretive practice serves to set boundaries of authority while simultaneously preserving that authority in referring the theological framework for support of claims to authority.

Rationale

The examples provided in this paper in support of the stated hypothesis demonstrate how each of the three dispositions works as a starting point in the maintenance of power structures while also showing the interdependence of the three dispositions. The tracing of the dispositions

through the provided examples connect past with present to demonstrate how Protestant faith traditions motivated by civilizer theology maintain a societal framework with the goal of retaining power in order to shape culture, civilization and religious practice. This paper posits civilizer theology as a self-referential, self-fulfilling framework which actively shapes the expectations, behaviors and practices of societal norms that drive cultural practices. Subsequently this understanding actively shapes, and is shaped by, theological practice, interpretation and justification.[1] The examples employed focus on the intersections of society, culture, race and theology to examine the multiple responses to the question "what meanings do religious beliefs and practices give to life?" (Asad 2011, 37) as those meanings have interpreted American ideals of equality and liberty based on the color of a person's skin.

Civilizer theology is "an argument about competing claims to Christian orthodoxy…"; which voices and elements are defining practice and establishing tradition. (Dailey 2004, 122) As Thurman keenly observes, both the powerless and powerful are working from the same source material. The difference of interpretation of shared source material in defining practice and establishing tradition complicates historical understanding thus shaping and effecting action in the present. This difference of interpretation of how religion should be, that is, the work of definition, serves to "…endorse or reject certain uses of a vocabulary that have profound implications for the organization of social life…" (Asad 2011, 37) The three dispositions are proposed as a means of tracing the translating, mediating work of civilizer theology and its employment of Christian orthodoxy in service of racialized, whiteness-centered theology. This drive is not limited to private belief but seeks to shape "the dynamic network of dependencies into which a human life is woven…the molding of behavior and of the whole emotional life, the personality structure…" (Elias 1982a 86, 88). This is not to say that there are **only** three dispositions but that these three can be regularly identified in historical analysis as this paper will show. These dispositions are not selected at random, rather they consistently appear in primary and secondary sources. For purposes of space and time, I have chosen to limit the number of

Religion	
Culture	Civilization

Authority	
Cultural decay	Violence

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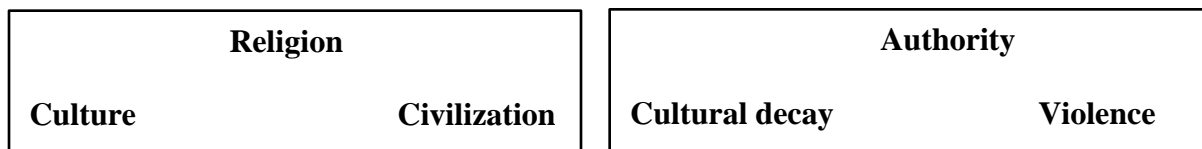
[1] Theology is the practiced or realized application of religion; therefore, theology is a translated, mediated act just as the civilizing process is a translated, mediated act.

dispositions examined to three. An example of another dispositional candidate would be chaos which can be found to substitute for violence as the logical conclusion of cultural decay/moral decline or as the outgrowth of violence.

The role religious institutions play as spiritual authorities, directly influence or feed into their mediating roles as cultural authorities which seek to shape the cultural language and exegete cultural events towards a particular end. The exegesis of cultural events through a shared theological framework comprises a cultural language that first, provides a means for members of the same community to recognize one another and secondly, serves as a connective thread for the three dispositions. Civilizer theology generates a cultural language to identify cultural decay/moral decline, authority and violence in ways that shape and characterize the interpretive practices of faith traditions from the past into the present.[2]

In positing the three dispositions as a means for identifying civilizer theology practice, this paper engages with the broader understanding of white protestant American Christianity, namely, in its functioning "…as a religion, a culture and a civilization." (Thurman 1979, 117). Seeing these functions as inter-related with the three dispositions connects civilizer theology to the political sphere, enabling the exploration of the historical pattern of civilizer theology. For example, religious authority calls out cultural decay, connecting cultural decay or moral decline as the directly or indirect cause for violence, both in past and present. In Christianity's function as civilization, state-sponsored violence can be defended as necessary in the state's God-given authority to prevent culture from falling into decay. This paper argues that patterns of civilizer theology are found in the interplay and interdependence of these ideas, forming systematic and structural figurations as actively interpreting and mediating frameworks that justify and support each other. Practitioners of civilizer theology seek to deny the constructed nature of the three functions (religion, culture, civilization) when seeking to justify their use of the dispositions. This constructed nature has been particularly prevalent regarding theology and race. Civilizer theology is characterized by a "white social theological imaginary"[3] purposefully at times and inadvertently at others. The dispositions of civilizer theology mask practices of racism which are

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[2] For example, Bowman identifies Ronald Regan as being particularly good at this; Reagan "…managed in speeches…to turn Christianity into Christian civilization, identifying what it meant to be Christian with those aspects of American civilization the Religious Right prized. His Christian civilization was built of free enterprise, traditional morality, and imagined racial harmony…" (Bowman 2018, 215)

[3] This is derived from George Lipitz's phrase "white social imaginary". See George Lipitz, *How Racism Takes Place,* Temple University Press, 2011.

the deliberate consequence of these constructed constellations. For example, as chapter three will discuss, when Martin Luther King Jr is declared apostate by particular religious figures of his time, it is not only to discredit his spiritual authority but by discrediting his spiritual authority he can be dismissed and declared as inferior. Civilizer theology is not the cause of racism but is a correlation and as such, is also a reinforcement; specifically, tracing the historic use of the dispositions in the shaping of theological practice over time demonstrates civilizer theology as grounded in an unwillingness to see all human beings as equal, made in the image of God. Civilizer theology in its deployment of the dispositions, is thus defined by "the social constellation, the social whole…deeply modified by the existence of racism." (Fanon 2016, 210) This paper argues that civilizer theology is constructed and maintained as a specific system embedded in religion, culture and "civilized practices" in order to seek to discredit particular groups from equal access to the public sphere as though that exclusion were natural and unconstructed.

Structure

This introductory chapter introduces the ideas, terms and conceptual framework of civilizer theology, as well as the dispositions. The second, third and fourth chapters examine the three dispositions in turn, cultural authority/moral decline, authority and violence, through the analysis of cultural, critical and historic texts and examples. Devoting one chapter to each of the dispositions provides space to independently develop each disposition while also making the specific argument for the interdependency of the dispositions in constructing civilizer theology. The conclusion will follow as the fifth chapter offering a summary of the arguments made and suggesting possibilities for application and future research.

The starting point for this paper is 18th century America. Starting from this point, allows for the opportunity to mine the significant scholarship and examples of interpretive practices in theological argument filtered through "socially patterned habits and impulses"; i.e. when pro-slavery arguments were, in fact, theological arguments presenting slavery as God's established order, presenting "…Scripture [as] woven into the very fabric of the defense system of slavery." (Buswell 1964, 49)[4] The discussion of the dispositions proceeds from this starting point in

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[4] There is certainly more material to examine prior to the advent of slavery in North America but for the sake of time and space this paper begins in mid-1700's. See Joseph Washington *Anti-Blackness in English Religion 1500-1800*, Edwin Mellen Press, 1985 for an excellent overview and discussion of this history. See also Ibram Kendi *Stamped from the Beginning* chapters 1-3

support of the hypothesis of civilizer theology as an ongoing practice following arguments for slavery, grounded in theological justification, did not end with Emancipation. Rather the theological argument for slavery morphed, employing Scriptural support for segregation while also fueling arguments against the Civil Rights movement. Theological interpretation and argumentation gave additional support and weight in justifying segregation as natural and God-ordained providing a justification for segregation as a national practice; "…segregation within religious institutions encouraged and justified segregation in every other aspect of American society." (Bennett 2016, 1) The examples employed throughout this paper locate the dispositions as a national, rather than regional pattern of behavior to show the presence and work of civilizer theology in America's so-designated North and South.

This paper proposes the dispositions as a useful tool in tracing certain connective threads from slavery to segregation to present to understand the past in the present and work for justice. While it is tempting to blame the South solely for civilizer theology, this misrepresents the extent to which segregation was enforced across the country, "in their findings historians have shown…northern whites were far less supportive of either civil rights or black equality than the traditional narrative holds. White resistance to desegregation was always present…." (Lazerow et al. 2006, 17) [5] Resistance to black equality has not been limited to a geographic area, a particular time period, or social class. Viewing supporting examples through the dispositions examines the role of religious institutions as spiritual authorities employed as supports for justifying their mediating roles as cultural authorities shaping the cultural language and exegeting cultural events, serving to "…obscure or make unexaminable some social realities." (Daly 2004, 11)

Civilizer Theology: Definition and Dispositions

Civilizer theology as an interrogated phrase or idea does not appear in the manner Kendi proposes in the scholarly literature. Thus, this paper proposes there are many examples of civilizer theology which can be located through the tracing of the dispositions as trail markers

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and Kristine Gerbner *Christian Slavery* for how slavery practice in regards to roles of religion and humanity were set in England and Barbados that definitively shape American's own practices of slavery and slavery's relation to religion.
[5] Following Kris Burrell's comments working to "…upend the popular understanding of racial segregation as a southern phenomenon, and of northerners as always more enlightened with regards to racial equality." https://www.aaihs.org/challenging-jim-crow-in-new-york-city/. Burrell further develops this idea in his chapter in *The Strange Careers of the Jim Crow North*, ed. Brian Purnell; Jeanne Theoharis; Komozi Woodard, New York University Press, 2019.

through the landscapes of past and present. [6] As Kendi has not offered a more substantial definition for "civilizer theology" there is a significant opportunity to further explore and define the impact of civilizer theology. Civilizer theology is defined as the justification of a socio-economic, cultural and political impetuses and practices by theological interpretation's application and exegesis as deliberately applied in support of socio-economic, cultural and political ends in order to maintain power structures benefiting a particular group (defined by class, race or both). Theological interpretation and justification is subsequently used to frame the application and purpose of violence, identify points of cultural decay (resolution of which may require violence, or used to justify instances of state-sponsored or citizen violence) and broadening the boundaries of its authority while simultaneously serving to preserve that authority by referring back to the theological framework.[7] The three dispositions are interdependent and are regularly referenced in support of one another. The dispositions are referenced to define what it means to "be civilized" in a particular society at a particular time; so that those operating from and working to continue their societal framework repeatedly use the dispositions in order to maintain and retain power for the purposes of declaring who, what and where is considered civilized. In short, civilizer theology is a self-referential, self-fulfilling framework which serves to shape the expectations, behaviors and practices of cultural norms that shape the cultural fabric as to what is and is not acceptable. Employing the three dispositions permit consideration of "how twenty-first-century manifestations of anti-black violence, dehumanization, disposability, and social death emerge in relationship to pasts and present…" particularly those past and present are shaped by theological interpretation and practice which are themselves shaped by and through cultural (interpreted as civilizing or being civilized) force(s). (Colbert, Patterson, and Levy-Hussen 2016, 2) This paper suggests the dispositions as a schema, tracing their presence through historical examples in the next three chapters, to argue for their presence as a useful framework in understanding the workings of civilizer theology in past and present. If a useful framework can be determined perhaps this can also guide future decisions and actions as well.

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[6] There is one instance of "civilizer theology" used as a phrase but is in reference to missionary work in Korea.
[7] Authority depends upon class, gender and socio-economic standing as well as to what end the authority is used. This is discussed in more detail in chapter three.

Constructing Facts, Building Societies: Networks of Understanding: A Theoretical Literature Review and Framework

Norbert Elias

      This paper applies the theory of civilization as found in the work of Norbert Elias (1897-1990). Elias wrote two foundational texts, *The Civilizing Process* and *Power and Civility*, originally published in one volume as Elias' dissertation, wherein Elias presents a framework for understanding expectations and practices of civilization in Enlightenment-shaped societies. Elias has come under criticism for presenting a theory of civilization from a colonial or colonizing viewpoint. However, based on the opening arguments of *History of Manners,* Elias is not positing a universal theory of civilization and its processes. Rather in his focus on Germany, France and England Elias is posing a theory of civilization of countries shaped in and by their response to Enlightenment thinking and principles. Recognizing the Enlightenment's profound impact, specifically for the ideals of liberty and equality, on America's founding and history, allows for a framework to engage a particular conception of civilized behavior. It is this conception that informs an understanding of the colonizing mindset so that is possible to read Elias in dialogue with Howard Thurman, for example, where Elias's framework as illustrated within Thurman's writing. For purposes of this paper, Elias' argument for understanding what civilization/civilized behavior is, should be understood in the context of the influence of Enlightenment thinking.

      Elias begins *History of Manners* with a discussion of the difference in terms between civilization and culture as understood in France, England and Germany. Elias observes that England and France tended towards favoring "national self-images" from ideas of civilization while Germany's "…concept of *Kultur* mirrors the self-consciousness of a nation which had constantly to seek out and constitute its boundaries anew, in a political as well as a spiritual sense, and again, and again…ask itself: 'What is really our identity?'" particularly in the light of (perpetually) dissolving modernities. (Elias 1982a, 5–6) Elias continues his exploration of the role of tradition in his work *The Court Society*. The translation of his work into English and the reissuing of his works in new editions and translation beginning in the 1980's into the present has helped to raise his profile in the 21st century. The three dispositions are derived from Elias as he identifies these three ideas as foundationally important to the civilizing process.

In *History of Manners* and *Power and Civility*, Elias argues that civilized behavior is understood as those "socially patterned constellations of habits and impulses…" (Elias 1982a, 189) which through practice over time form a framework of standards for expected behavior, subsequently shaping "…standards of conduct and drive control…." (Elias 1982a, 88) Additionally these frameworks of standards are continually mediated and translated; that "the very transformation of the whole social structure…is itself…a rationalization…What is rationalized is, primarily, the modes of conduct between certain groups of people." (Elias 1982b, 289) Elias' framework provides a means to engage civilizer theology as a rationalization instrument; a framework which mediates and translates the social structure(s) which produce that framework in order to justify and continue those structure(s). Elias writes "…when enquiring into social processes one must look at the web of human relationships, at society itself, to find the compulsions that keep them in motion, and give them their particular form and their particular direction." (Elias 1982b, 32)[8]

Elias' "web of human relationships" places authority, cultural decay/moral decline and violence in context, understanding these as constructing civilized or uncivilized patterns of behavior, depending on who or what is translating or mediating particular events, speech acts or texts. The interpretational and application work of civilizer theology has shaped, and continues to shape, America's perceptions of race and thus directly impact social structures, policy decisions, economic availability, etc. Understandings and perceptions of authority, cultural decay/moral decline and violence are bound up in the ways and means that "…the structure of society…demands and generates a specific standard of emotional control." (Elias 1982a, 201) so that "…we realize to what degree the fears and anxieties that move people are men-made." (Elias 1982b, 327) Fear ties the three dispositions together, providing energy and motivation. Civilizer theology employs the fear of violence connecting that fear with the violation of authority, arguing both are a result of a state of cultural decline/moral decay. For example during the Civil Rights Movement "conservatives mobilized fear around riots and used the recently ascendant and accepted language of equality and citizens' rights…to argue that riots were not only disruptive, but criminal in nature." (Lebron 2015, 81) Understanding the linking of fear and criminality in the public mind added these perceptions to questions about the motivations and

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[8] This is Hartman's particular insight that racism is not the failure to recognize humanity but the recognizing of humanity and reducing it that humanity to something less than through legal, social and other means. Thurman makes this point as well specifically in his books *The Luminuous Darkness*, chapter 1, and *Footprints of a Dream*, chapters 3-4, epilogue.

end goals of the Civil Rights Movement. Examining expectations of "socially patterned constellations of habits and impulses…" (Elias 1982a, 189) as formed and informed by theological practices, both directly and indirectly, as well as class, economic, and other material factors, shape how ideas of authority, violence, and cultural decay are interpreted and practiced in everyday life. These constellations of habits and impulses are epistemologies, forming and being formed in response to social workings

In *History of Manners* Elias examines books of etiquette, beginning with Erasmus, to explore culture and civilizing processes, that is, the means by which manners are established, taught and codified, parallel and interact with other significant means of establishing what defines civilized behavior. From this study Elias discusses authority, cultural decay/moral decline and violence. This discussion is shaped by "…the structure of society…demands and generates a specific standard of emotional control." (Elias 1982a, 201) The idea of "the standard" as operating within "the framework" is a key element of Elias' theory of civilization which is routinely applied to this paper. This concept posits that societal standards and frameworks shift and move over and through time while still being deeply rooted in the affective present and to history. The role of affect is particularly important to Elias' work in the linking of action, emotion and being as part of the forming of personal and societal framework and structures. What Elias calls "the pattern of affect control" directly informs the justification and use of violence in response to cultural decay, the presence of which allows for a loosening of affective controls in order to address that cultural decay with the goal of stopping it. The presence of cultural decay provides the tacit permission for those in authority to deploy violence as response. For example, the KKK regularly employed narratives of cultural decay, to justify violence, recruit members and for their actions. James Cone also employs discussions of cultural decay in his writings, arguing that cultural decay is located in the failure to treat black people as fully human drawing upon the treatment of black people by the law, society and white theological praxis and that these treatment failed to meet purported standards of Christian religious practice.[9] Cone asks, echoing Thurman, "How could any theologian explain the meaning of Christian identity in American and fail to engage white supremacy, its primary negation?" (Cone 2016,

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[9] This is a regular theme in Cone's writing. Cone posits that "Whites have learned to use less offensive language, but they have not changed the power relations between blacks and whites in society. Because of the process of changing their language, combined with the token presence of middle-class African-Americans in their institutions, it is now even more difficult to define the racist behavior of whites." (Cone 1969, x)

xvii) The dispositions then serve as shared points of cultural language used to call those who share or interpret those symbols in the same manner towards a common purpose which has both positive and negative application. For example, this is what Harvey Young calls "God talk" which is used in American culture "to sustain exclusivism…Those on top use God language to reinforce racist tendencies…" (H. Young 2010, 129) Elias argues that this type of binding work is affectively motivated and thus forms exceptionally strong bonds. Thus, in the manner that dispositions are linked to religious practices further serves to amplify affective connections; "…people are emotionally bound together through the medium of symbols…The individual who has formed such a bond will be as deeply affected when the social unit to which he is devoted is conquered or destroyed, debased or humiliated, as when a beloved person dies." (Elias 1978, 137)

Examining the role of the individual in shaping society and how society shapes the individual requires a combination of viewpoints, a bringing together of disparate threads, to generate a framework towards interpreting the patterns of past and present. The interpretive practice matters significantly in this shaping as the means of interpretation is also its message. This means and message derive from engaging with ideas of self and society as inextricably intertwined with the idea of habitus. The attempt to identify patterns, practices and behaviors through the study of systems, texts and theory regarding the questions of self and society is the focus of habitus, defined as "…the system of socially constituted dispositions that guides agents in their perception of action." (Calhoun 2002, 6) This system of socially constituted dispositions is akin to Elias' "web of human relationships" clarified through the application of dispositions which are used to guide agents in their efforts to shape that web.

The idea of dispositions, within habitus, is understood as what gives a system its shape as dispositions are "...the character or propensity of an organization that results from all its activity." (Easterling 2016, 21) Applied to this discussion, the dispositions of civilizer theology are both the character of the organization (i.e., white Protestant religious tradition) as well as what defines the organization as visible in the results of that organization's activity.   As the disposition of the system illustrates its character the disposition of the interpretive act focuses upon and identifies aspects of the system within which it operates. The hermeneutical thread moves through tradition, practice and sacred texts connecting the past and present while also linking historic layers of interpretation that lead to and inform understanding of the immediate

moment. Thus, in order to interrogate how civilizer theology employs the dispositions in mediating and interpretive roles, the work of Bruno Latour will be consulted.

Bruno Latour

Latour provides a complimentary counterpoint to Elias and this paper to recognize civilizer theology's dispositions in action, engaged with their historical moment and in the present. Latour develops the metaphor of networks or "web of relations" (Latour 2003, 39) to trace how "in practice we actually mix politics, science, culture, human beings, things, religious, economics, society regularly and routine, and yet we conceptualize them as distinct entities." (Van Krieken 2002, 262) Latour's concept of network closely mirrors Elias' concept of interdependency as "socially patterned constellations of habits and impulses…" (Elias 1982a, 189). Also, Latour's emphasis on mediation connects to Elias' discussion of rationalization, providing a construct to understand how theological structures are active as hermeneutical systems in shaping society and cultural life. What Latour calls "conceptions of what was associated together…" speaks to the translating and rationalizing work of interpreting present and historical events. (Latour 2005, 6) Additionally these conceptions of association undergird the interdependence of the dispositions as constellations of habits, impulses and drive control. Like Thurman and Elias, Latour is interested in tracing "…the anatomy of the process…" the constructed elements forming the social constructed body of behavior and practice. Latour identifies this construction in the following way: "They have not made Nature; they make Society; they make Nature; they have not made Society; they have not made either, God has made everything; God has made nothing, they have made everything." (Latour 2003, 34) This will be further explored in chapter two as this formulation embodies civilizer theology's fluidity in relation to its constructing and generating abilities; specifically to arguments that framed slavery or now frame racism as natural, God-ordained or scientifically provable state of being rather than deliberately constructed towards a deliberate socio-political end. Connecting Latour with Elias locates civilizer theology as a pattern of socially, politically and culturally normed behavior and language that consequently "…accommodate[s] the ethic of a religion like Christianity to the political and economic demands of imperialism." (Thurman 1979, 116)

Latour asks, rhetorically, if, "…the networks…[are] simultaneously real, like nature, narrated like discourse, and collective like society?". (Latour 2003, 6) Applied to an

understanding of civilizer theology, this question locates the simultaneously real, narrated and collective web of concepts emanating from theological practices as informing an individual's relationship to the divine, the social, the political, etc. specifically that the interpretation of these concepts inform what it is means to be civilized or that the resultant interpretations and their applications are indications of being fully human. Theology is certainly real, but it is also interpreted, narrated and collective as it is being constructed recognizing that "theology is *human* speech and *not* God speaking….*all* attempts to speak about ultimate reality are limited by the social history of the speaker." (Cone 1969, ix) Latour's web of relations is also applicable to the functions (religious, culture and civilization) where each can and has been situated as real, like nature, narrated as discourse and collective as shared experience.[10] The dispositions are typically presented as separate and unique entities from the functions but are better understood as intertwined and interdependent.

This intertwining connects Latour's metaphor of networks with Elias' "web of concepts". The network and web metaphors provide a rich visual of the historical scope and tendril-like reach, the interdependent winding of happenings through history that can be traced, examined and explored, like trying to trace and pull an entrenched root system from basement pipes. Latour calls the practice of differentiation between these interdependent areas, translation, which the modern critique has actively attempted to compartmentalize to construct the world in its own image; separate but equal; constructed but not. Latour argues that the self and society are best understood as networked (that is, intertwined and interdependent) while Elias' engagement with the civilizing processes contextualizes and frames those networks. Latour's concept of network can be conceptualized as the framing out of a blanket or tapestry, the outlining of the basic structure on a loom, the loose organization of forms, where civilizing processes are the warp and woof, the thread patterns intersecting and woven together to show an image which as a totality "…share structurally similar experiences of social relations, processes and structures." (Grenfell and Maton 2014, 53) Elias' web is that pattern of images, the play and interacting of colors that are actively interpreted by the viewer to bring certain images or patterns into focus. Latour adds the dimension of time; that is, the boundaries of the fabric. Understanding socially constituted

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[10] A particularly apt example is the phrase "Home of the free, because of the brave" which implies the constructed nature through individual bravery in war to defend the nation. This sentiment exists side by side the belief of God's forming and holding of America as a blessed, chosen nation, made particularly clear in arguments for American exceptionalism. However the posting of this sign on a church's signboard raises the question of God's providence in the work of the brace? Is God responsible for freedom or is it the result of human bravery?

dispositions as woven together, threaded and linked sees them not only **in** their specific historical moments but also linked **across** time.

Civilizer theology, comprised of its constituent dispositions, can be traced in its historical deployment to motivate agents to action by seeing it as active in-network. Recognizing civilizing processes and expectations of social order as intertwined with theological interpretations and societal perceptions challenges the understandings that these processes and expectations are naturally occurring. Theology is an ongoing action present in social relations, processes and structures, shaping and being shaped by the construction and perception of those relations, processes and structures. This is particularly true in American history with its identity formed and grounded in a potent "…compound of evangelical Protestant religion, republican political ideology, and commonsense moral reasoning." (Noll 2005, 9)

Latour provides the mediating means along with Elias' framework to argue for theological/religious structures as an active component in a society's construction; "…the world ceases to be modern when we replaced all essences with the mediators, delegates and translators that gave them meaning." (Latour 2003, 129) This connects to the dispositions as shaping and defining the system(s) within which those dispositions are active and applied. Additionally, the reinforcement of the practice of translation as an essential practice in the civilizing process is also emphasized. Elias's discussion of affect in its connection to being civilized serves to identify affect as one particular translator and delegator. Affect is the socially constituted means by which one determines what is an appropriate action in a particular setting and coheres the social meaning and place of those actions.[11] Affect, as a holistically constituted element of human experience, is shaped by multiple levels of interaction (family, school settings, friends, social contexts, class, etc.) that serve as confirming and reinforcing roles. If the disposition of one's worldview requires a violent response in order to defend authority, the violence of that response tends to be greater than the societally constructed affective resistance that would typically act as a restraint to that violent act, whether that act be extralegal or state-sponsored. Latour argues that an essential part of understanding the role "mediators, delegates and translators" play requires recognizing their work of/as translators; especially since this work of translation claims to be transparent and independent, rather than embedded and contextual.

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[11] Brian Massumi writes "affects…are basically ways of connecting, to others and to other situations. They are our angle of participation in process larger than ourselves." (Massumi 2015, 6) Sara Ahmed writes "to be affected by something is to evaluate that thing. Evaluations are expressed in how bodies turn toward things." (Ahmed 2010, 31).

Latour makes this distinction to argue for the presence of translation in all epistemological practices and habits. The history of politics and the history of science are both equally constructed by the "…translating of the silent behavior of objects" both scientific **and** historical. (Latour 2003, 29)

Latour's argument for the artificiality of nature and society can be applied to a broad array of the attempts to construct and maintain the world in particular ways and means. Latour observes "Boyle and his…successors go on and on both constructing Nature artificially and stating that they are discovering; Hobbes…go[es] on and on constructing the Leviathan by dint of calculation and social force, but…recruit more and more objects in order to make it last." (Latour 2003, 31) These forces mimic, at a particular scale, the "…antitheses between the two…groups are too great to make a decisive compromise between them likely; and the distribution of power, together with their close interdependence prevents….a clear predominance…they must leave to a central ruler all the decisions they cannot bring about themselves." (Elias 1982b, 180) While Elias is discussing the power distributions between aristocratic and the bourgeois, his observation is broadly applicable to the point Latour is making. Latour argues that Hobbes and Boyle are constructing an artificial separation between science and politics. This is a necessary point in Latour's argument; acknowledging this separation is to recognize the shared translating work with which both science and politics are engaged. Recognizing both fields are actively translating and interpreting the same information providing their readings of these as fact. Facts claim to be the central ruler; both science and politics purport to interpret and exegete how the networks of meanings should be established. These networks of meanings are codified through practice and codex; through tradition and time. By establishing the concept of facts as the standard for science as well as politics, history or philosophy, their interpretation provides means for the various methodologies to stake their claims, arguments and approaches. An example can be found in the arguments made for racial superiority that appeal to science as authority. "The supposedly objective scientific bodies of knowledge, mathematics, biology, and grammar serve as tools or technologies of re-creation power when used by the dominating culture." (Hopkins 2000, 2) The appeal to science as authority is attempting to move an already held racist idea to fact; "the presence of large numbers of blacks in the debased condition of slavery and the grassroots white antipathies…clearly made many Americans extremely receptive to theories of inherent racial difference; indeed it helped

create a scientific attitude of mind that was willing…to develop such theories." (Horsman 2006, 102) The disposition of science as authoritative either supports and reinforces "socially patterned constellations of habits and impulses" or comes into conflict with those constellations. The search for a scientific response to racial difference deliberately disconnected from the political or economic implications is an exact example of constructing Nature while claiming to discover it. Connecting a scientific response for racial difference and connecting that response to a theological justification continues that argument.

These attitudes, these modes of translation must be re-interpreted as "to interrogate modernity's *thinking* about race is to interpret it within the arc of time and to see its emergence as reflexive of political and cultural…change." (Carter 2008, 47) Note Carter's use of interpretation here, in order to get to the place where "…the everyday of interactions of white superiority over black subordination are seen as natural" a significant amount of translation work in that particular direction is necessary. (Hopkins 2000, 3) This translation has been continually reinforced through the "…framework of a particular "civilized" standard of behavior…." which emphasize the natural humanity of whiteness and de-emphasized or disregard the humanity of blackness. This connects back to Kendi's initial definition of civilizer theology as racializing black people as bad. Carter argues as well "…to interrogate race is to interrogate our *thinking* about it which is always already linked to embodied structures within which race…is known only in realities of life itself." (Carter 2008, 47) Civilizer theology acts as an embodied structure claiming in its history to occur naturally but are in fact constructed and maintained through the deployment of the dispositions.

Civilizer theology posits that certain embodied structures are divinely set rather than constructed and thus it is necessary to recognize "…the place of divine sanction in the legitimation of social order…" as applied to race and culture. (Fox-Genovese and Genovese 1987, 213) Theology, as the interpretative layer for religious practice, brackets and structures agent's dispositions as related to how they are being in the world. Carter's "embodied structures" are Elias' framework are, in turn, Latour's "constructed facts". The seemingly fixed status of each of these are, as Elias demonstrates, constructed and determined through long chains of behavior that are shaping and shaped by their continuance. Similarly, if Horsman's "scientific attitudes" can be established as "facts" indeed, if they can be proved or demonstrated as true, establishing their erstwhile truthfulness serves to engage a self-fulfilling feedback loop, self-

referentially mediating and bearing out what becomes a now self-evident truth about race. These structures are particularly good rationalizing forces as what Elias describes, quoted above, "particular patterns of conduct and… very specific functional chains…"

Civilizer theology borrows these scientific "facts" while failing to interrogate them theologically to claim the authority of the constructed fact for the purposes of retaining an absolutist claim to power. This tacit or explicit support of these so-called scientific attitudes from a theological perspective participates in the self-referential feedback loop that precedes to construct the dispositions of the agents in that network. Like science, theology generates structures while simultaneously conveying authority to those structures. These structures are hermeneutical in function, rendering the means to read, interpret and mediate the word of God towards the application of that word in everyday life to draw the believer closer to fellow believers and to God. Engaging the religious or theological aspect of habitus and network is necessary due to the nature of religion as embedded or interdependent in interpretive acts and practices in American history.

Religion and Civilizing Processes

For purposes of this paper, a working definition of religion/theology is helpful. There are any number of definitions of religion and the discussion of choosing the best one is well beyond the scope of this paper. The following definition is chosen for its breadth, applicability to this paper and its fit with Elias and Latour's frameworks. Religion is the "…confluences of organic-cultural flows that intensify joy and confront suffering by drawing on human and suprahuman forces to make homes and cross boundaries." (Tweed 2006, 55) Tweed argues religion "shapes and is shaped by cognitive (*beliefs*), moral (*values*), and affective (*emotions*) processes…religions help determine what human wants and how they feel." (Tweed 2006, 68)[12] Following Tweed's definition of religion as making homes, a place of being, the interpretive work of theology serves as the foundation for that home making it difficult, even impossible, to uproot or change without requiring the demolishing of the entire structure.[13]

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[12] It is worth pointing out that Tweed references via footnote both Elias and Latour in the chapter he dedicates to exploring his definition of religion.

[13] Ninian Smart has defined religion as "…a six-dimensional organism, typically containing doctrines, myths, ethical teachings, rituals, and social institutions and animated by religious experiences of various kinds. To understand the key ideas of religion, such as God and nirvana, one has to be able to understand the pattern of religious life directed toward these goals." (Smart 1976, 16) Smart continues that to understand a religion requires understanding its elements in context that "…elements in a religious organism are affected by the other elements present." (Smart 1976, 17) Both Tweed and Smart recognize the identity piece that

Stephen Mennell observes religion's "cognitive and affective aspects…help people make sense of the world, what is often referred to as one's "worldview"". (Mennell 2008, 267) The idea of worldview also serves as means of clarifying one's personal identity through that of sense-making power of a particular religion; "indeed, at the heart of religion lies a kind of quest for identity…and…what the identity of the human being consists in…." (Smart 1976, 14) The affective aspects of religion serve to place additional strictures on one's behaviors, at times, in direct response to the affective practices of the greater society. Religion also functions as habitus bringing a particular belief system into conflict or congruence with other pre-existing societal practices. This conflict can range from mild to extreme, resulting in significant violence or suppression by legislation or any host of major or minor responses depending upon the place of religion in that network. The place of religion in making homes implies there will or should be a defense of that home; that is, "religion as home" is a strong affective bond which Elias observes which bound people as tightly to ideas as to relatives or close friends. It is this affective connection that allows for the powerful and powerless to operate from the same source material.

A discussion of the practice of religion, the working out in public and private life of one's theology, as structuring and standardizing human relationships and feeling, is very much at home in Elias' work. Elias explores the way that development of particular sets of manners over time, a means of bracketing the experience of "…a very particular standard of human relationships and structure of feeling." (Elias 1982b, 1:67) Theologies serve a similar purpose and can be understood as the interpretive layers by which religious practices are made real. Like the earlier example of the weaving of a blanket or tapestry, religion can be understood as the greater framework while theology makes the warp and woof; the patterns of being, rendered and tied together. The focus of Tweed's definition on religion's work in making a home and its relation to joy and sorrow are affective processes which closely fit with Elias and connect to the work that theology performs in interpreting religious practice. Theologies exist within a particular standard of human and divine relationship as well structure cognitive, moral and affective processes. Theologies themselves form a network of socially constituted elements built from moral, cognitive and affective elements that maybe congruent with or in conflict the greater societal moral, cognitive and affective standards directly shaping and informing an understanding

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religion brings to its practitioners and the way that identity is shaped and shapes the engagement with the world around the individual. It is this shaping of the engagement with the world because of worldview that is particularly worth noting for purposes of this paper.

"civilizational order." (C. Taylor 2007, 514)

To return to Tweed's definition, to make a home is to put things in order to establish a sense of place; it is an act of construction. Part of making that home is bringing in the artefacts and practices that define that home; the framework of standards for the expectation and definition of what is a home. Theologies provide a means for their adherents to be at home when in exile, both spiritually and physically. What does this mean or how do these define civilizer theology, particularly in the historical record? Elias eloquently captures this idea when he writes that historiography should "…be concerned with those problems which facilitate penetration of the underlying regularities by which people in a certain society are bound over and over again to particular patterns of conduct and to very specific functional chains…" (Elias 1982b, 288) Just as there are recognized authorities in the history of manners, such as books of etiquette, codifying acceptable manners, authority shapes the understanding of religious practice. Elias argues in the same section that these changes come about through "rationalization…[the] expression of the direction in which the molding of people in specific social figurations is changed…Changes of this kind…do not "originate" in one class or another, but arise in conjunction with the tension *between* different functional groups in a social field and *between* the competing people within them." (Elias 1982b, 289) This thinking engages with the questions and issues surrounding race in America and the profound way it has been shaped by and through its interaction with theology. The manner in which the interpretation of the authority of the Biblical text comes into tension with specific social figurations, namely economic and class-related, are readily apparent in American history, particularly when those figurations are slanted towards maintaining power imbalances. Depending on how authority is interpreted will either reinforce the reader's pre-existing "socially patterned constellations of habits and impulses" or come into conflict with those same habits and impulses. How the individual responds out of one's theology then typifies the disposition of the network within the authority being interpreted. This tension and pull between socially authoritative force and theology and the ways that those serve to form society already has presented in some previous examples, and more will follow. Bennett sums up the interdependence of the authority of religious practice and of societal perspectives in their worldview-shaping activity as well as the shaping work that each brings to the other.

> "…religion involved a wide range of activities, not merely the realm of formal theology or personal spirituality. Such theoretical or inward religious thoughts had little meaning until

they found outward expression. The activities and practices of religious institutions were a far better measure of a church's theology than declarations about a sacred text. A church's acceptance or rejection of racial inclusion not only worked to shape racial attitudes in the society in which it operated, it was itself an expression of religious belief." (Bennett 2016, 31)[14]

Bennett's focus on the "activities and practices" as defining religious institutions, and shaping their adherents, connects directly to Elias's "habits and impulses" as related to civilizing force. This is disposition in evidence, where Latour's translation is writ large.[15] Bennett's argument captures how shaping of racial attitudes were influenced by the church's role in working out its theology in relation to the people in its congregation; racial inclusion or racial exclusion in the church are themselves are a loud and clear expression of religious beliefs.

Methodology and Application

This paper's methodology is framed by the identified dispositions, cultural decay/moral decline, authority and violence, which are proposed as a gauge for identifying, reading and analyzing the patterns and relationships that have determined and defined white Protestant theology, and subsequently Protestant Christian political action in the context of race history. The following three chapters will discuss each disposition, focusing a chapter on each disposition laying out the historical analysis and argumentation for how the dispositions construct and undergird civilizer theology. Before engaging with the dispositions separately in the following chapters, a present-day example is provided as an example of civilizer theology and the dispositions working together.

Charlotte, 2016. Franklin Graham, posts the following Facebook message:

> "Listen up—Blacks, Whites, Latinos, and everybody else. Most police shootings can be avoided. It comes down to respect for authority and obedience. If a police officer tells you to stop, you stop. If a police officer tells you to put your hands in the air, you put your hands in the air. If a police officer tells you to lay down face first with your hands behind your back, you lay down face first with your hands behind your back. It's as simple as that. Even if you think the police officer is wrong—YOU OBEY. Parents, teach

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[14] This statement is worth reading alongside texts like Kevin Kruse *One Nation Under God*, Matthew Bowman *Christian*, Mark Noll *America's God* or Daren Dochuk *From Bible Belt to Sun Belt*. Each of these authors offer nuanced, historical understandings of particular slices of American history focusing on the ways that religion has been applied to public and private life and understood in relation to legal precedent and the pursuit of power and control.

[15] Steiner defines interpretation as "understanding in action" and as "lived" which speaks volumes to the working out of understanding of theology in everyday life. (Steiner 1989, 8, 11)

your children to respect and obey those in authority."[16]

Graham's post exemplifies and actively employs the three dispositions of civilizer theology. Graham calls out what he sees as cultural decay/moral decline in his comments on "respect for authority and obedience," in his implications of absent or insufficient parenting. This decay/decline can be deterred through "compliance with law in expectation the law will be fair and unbiased" with obedience to police authority as a primary means to deter or avoid police violence. Graham, in speaking from his position of authority as president of Samaritan's Purse and Billy Graham's son, is recognized as an evangelical cultural authority and as such is perceived as able to interpret and mediate conflicts in culture, society, etc. In this statement, Graham argues that police violence is the result of failing to obey and the resultant violent response is brought upon the individual by that failure.[17] By themselves, these remarks are certainly problematic and naïve in their historical awareness. When read through civilizer theological analysis they become significantly more troubling. Graham's phrases "…respect for authority and obedience…" and "…respect and obey those in authority…" recall Paul's writings in Romans 13 and 1 Peter 2, where Paul urges respect for the authorities that God has put into place.[18] Graham's comments implicitly appeal to the authority of Scripture to bolster his authority as well as that of the state. If the understanding of Graham's paraphrase of Romans 13 is accurate, in failing to obey the authorities, one is in fact failing to obey God and the subsequent violence could be read as not man's punishment of man but God's direct punishment. This same argument is used against the dissolution of slavery and for the continuation of segregation. Additionally, there is the implication that an uncritical approach to obedience to authority is not only right, but such an approach is necessary to maintain a civilized society.

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[16] This quote is available on Graham's Facebook page (https://www.facebook.com/FranklinGraham/posts/883361438386705) and archived version of the message are available at the links here https://churchleaders.com/daily-buzz/251027-open-letter-franklin-graham-facebook-post-sinful-crude-insensitive-paternalistic.html and here https://www.gospelherald.com/articles/66804/20160926/franklin-graham-offers-simple-advice-to-americans-stopped-by-police-follow-their-instructions.htm

[17] This is by no means unique to Graham. "Conservative evangelicals are much more likely to point to individual sin and the persistence of evil in a fallen world than progressives, who are more inclined to explain the world in terms of systems of power." (https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2019/08/mass-shooting-christian-response/595522/)

[18] There is no degree of lack of writing on these two passages and the interpretation of them. The debate around these passages is significant. It is at least worth pointing out that evangelicals tend to use this passage to justify certain expressions against particular kind of authority (Bonhoeffer's resistance to the Nazis is a particularly favorite and oft-noted example) while stating that beneficial forms of authority for their viewpoint should be supported. Understanding these passages, in the discussion of civilizer theology, in the context of civil religion helps to flesh out some of the inconsistencies of this approach. At the very least, it is helpful to think of Elias' "dynamic network of dependencies" in how these frame an individual's relationship to ruling authorities.

Graham's calling out of cultural decay and the resultant violence incurred in failing to obey the authorities, places responsibility squarely on the individuals who have failed to obey, not in the state's response. Graham evidences no understanding of the historical complication between black bodies and police; no understanding of interpretation of Romans 13 and 1 Peter 2 in regard to enslaved peoples; and no apparent recognition of the fallibility of the state in its propensity to violence. There is evidence of both cultural and theological hermeneutics of civilizer theology at work in Graham's statement. Referencing Graham's opening words, "Blacks, White, Latinos and everybody else…" the reason that in 2016 that he felt the need to post this had nothing to do with white people being shot by police.

Later in 2016, Franklin Graham responded to protests in Charlotte following the shooting to death of Keith Lamont Scott by police with a statement that included the following: "Our nation is in trouble not just politically and economically — it's in trouble racially, and only God can fix it."[19] Graham echoes the civilizer theological characterization of American society as both structured/and not. Graham places himself in authority to read the situation as requiring divine intervention without recognizing any human culpability or responsibility for the situation. He also manages to simultaneously place blame on God for racial conflict while also seeming to position God as the only one able to fix it. The idea of a racially conflicted nation implies cultural/moral decline, however Graham might be thinking of that state of decline, the following statement "in trouble racially" is a confusing and fraught statement. The present racial "trouble" can be directly linked back to the practices of slavery and systems of segregation justified by theological arguments and preserved through state and extra-legal processes. To attribute the addressing of the racial trouble's fixing to God only, ignores human culpability in those troubles in past, present and potentially the future. There is the echo of Latour's "they have made/they have not made" in Graham's statement where the situation at hand has somehow emerged into existence without influence or shaping from human agents. This also recalls Latour's observation "We know the nature of the facts because we have developed them in circumstances that are under our complete control." (Latour 2003, 18) Graham's statement references an overly simplified understanding of American history that has struggled with meaningfully wrestle with

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[19] This type of language "only God can fix it" in regards to the state of America can be found throughout the 20th century national discourse. See Kevin M. Kruse *One Nation Under God* and Paul Boyer *When Time Shall Be No More*. See the following link for the quote https://www.christianpost.com/news/franklin-graham-condemns-violent-charlotte-protests-issues-call-to-prayer-for-nation-in-trouble.html.

the complicity of theological practice in maintain racist practices. More broadly, this second statement of Graham's builds on the idea that negative critiques or protesting responses to the state are inherently criminal and illegal. Graham as a white man of not inconsiderable cultural cachet has presumably not had a difficult or life-threatening engagement with police authority and so assumes that the same forces that treated him equitably treat all other people as such while the protests to which Graham was responding are attempting to point out that exact opposite. Elias' web of relationships is evident here that Graham's relationship to police authority/violence shapes his response in ways that he seems to be unaware.

Making an argument for the presence of the dispositions, is being made with the goal that civilizer theology is shaping the logic of Graham's comments. Civilizer theology connects the fear of violence with the violation of authority because of a state of cultural decline/moral decay. The perniciousness of civilizer theology as a practice is that it carries a historical perspective that seems to make a sense as it provides a means by which to read and sift through the wreckage of history. However this paper seeks to demonstrate the deep flaws of this perspective and demonstrate how it is inherently harmful to human flourishing, theological justice and democratic practice.

Conclusion

This chapter has introduced the thesis of this paper and established the working hypothesis of this paper, setting the direction to engage the three dispositions which will comprise the subsequent three chapters. These dispositions also form the methodology of the paper, presenting primary and secondary sources as evidence in support of the dispositions as means of tracing the practice of civilizer theology. This chapter also presented the work of Norbert Elias and Bruno Latour as forming the theoretical framework for understanding civilizer theology as an actively interpreting, translating and delegating force as this is a foundational reference in the discussion of the three dispositions and their link to civilizer theology. Chapter two will discuss and explore the idea of cultural decay/moral decline, tracing its presence in slavery, segregation and democracy.

Chapter Two: Cultural Decay

Introduction

This chapter introduces cultural decay as the first disposition, providing a definition and overview of the concept to understand how it has been applied historically. This chapter will briefly discuss slavery and its theological supporters and how enslaved people and masters disagreed over instances of cultural decay. A brief exploration of democracy and decay as linked ideas will follow the discussion of slavery. Cultural decay will be shown in this chapter as a regular rallying point which connects to the discussion of violence in chapter four. The examples discussed below demonstrate show cultural decay as a mediating and interpreting agent that must always be addressed, particularly when cultural decay/moral decline is framed as the entropy of religious practice.

Definition

Religious practice is understandably concerned with issues of cultural decay/moral decline. Religious practice in its interpreting and mediating work frames for its adherents what behaviors are considered as moral or immoral: these are "…concerns [which] were existential and epistemological: They had to deal not just with points of belief, but with how Christians accounted for human knowledge, how they lived in the world…" (Worthen 2016, 7) Cultural decay is both an existential and epistemological challenge as identifying it requires shared agreement of knowing what cultural decay is and how embracing practices identified as cultural decay subsequently impact religious practice. For example, in instances where a religious voice has a perceived loss of influence on public life, this may be ascribed to "cultural decay" as a slipping of standards; that is, a move away from authority as interpreted and perceived by that religious practice. Essentially the struggle against cultural decay is the "...experience [of] time as a revolution that always has to start over and over again." (Latour 2003, 70)[20] It is not a mark of civilizer theology when religious practice identifies cultural decay/moral decline but rather then that is done so in order to preserve or pursue power in coordination with the other dispositions.

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[20] An example would be Kevin Kruse's *One Nation Under God* where there is a constant refrain in the 20th century of "returning to God", "religious revival" and "spiritual renewal". Another example would be the career of Billy Graham which was very much founded on the platform of the necessity for ongoing spiritual renewal and development. This itself has a long history in America for example the Great Awakening(s) as a specific cultural moment that emphasized spiritual renewal as the basis for national blessing and success.

As this chapter will further develop the abolishment of slavery, the dissolution of segregation and legalization of inter-racial marriages were decried as instances of moral decline and cultural decay from notable white Protestant voices. In the context of civilizer theology, cultural decay is typically framed as an attack on standards or as a decaying of established practices. Biblical authority is then often leveraged, directly calling on individuals to act in order to maintain those standards in danger of being degraded. In this understanding, joy can be intensified by the maintaining of those standards. The examples provided show how cultural decay is often used by the white evangelical Protestant project, as linked to perceptions of national identity and ways of being good citizens. By way of this linking, the work of protecting against cultural decay can then be framed as a stance of honor. In this light it is perhaps helpful to think of evangelicalism presenting itself, in all of its permutations, as a "…more solid framework, a structural nexus…" which serves to highlight "…the boundaries of the interdependencies…" at play in America's religious and cultural histories. (Elias 1982b, 289) In the example closing the previous chapter, obedience to the state would provide that more solid framework, following Graham's logic. This framework provides not only a means of being in the present but also the ability to interpret and analyze American history through a particular theological lens. That if there is moral order societal order will follow; as Bellah et al write "Religion did not cease to be concerned with moral order but interpolated with a new emphasis on the individual and the voluntary association. Moral teaching came to emphasize self-control rather than deference." (Bellah 1996, 222) Bellah emphasizes the moral and affective nature of religious practice in its role of drive control. Historically, however, Protestant American theology has the tendency not to see issues of race as a religious or spiritual issue but rather as political.

Cultural decay is an essential connection between civilizing processes, violence and religious practice. Cultural decay is often seen as first affecting the individual, and proceeding from the individual threatens to overwhelm the entire network or system. Cultural decay is typically framed as a self-evident truth, so that the ability to recognize cultural decay is referred to as common-sense. In response to the threat of cultural decay a society or culture must be made ready and mobilized to combat it.[21] The declaring or implication of cultural decay serves as a

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[21] In the spirit of exploration I ran an Google NGram search on the phrases "moral decay", "moral decline", "cultural decay" and "cultural decline"; the results of which are here. Recognizing the limitations of NGram, it is worth noting that "moral" takes precedence over "cultural" and while there are peaks and drops to the usage of the terms, and relative to the increased production of printed texts, there is consistent growth of concern for the moral state in the NGram report to whichever English-speaking

shibboleth for identifying insiders, those who agree with the interpretation and act accordingly and outsiders, those who disagree and/or do not act.[22] To say that a culture is decaying is to argue that boundaries are in danger, values at stake, identity must be rediscovered, reinvigorated or reconstituted to protect against those who wish to harm or disrupt a particular way of being.[23] Decay conjures up ideas of rot, death, danger and decomposition; it is simultaneously real, (from the perspective of those identifying it) narrated (in that it fits into a particular narrative arc about the society in which that decay is supposed to be occurring) and collective (the effects of the decay/decline are wide-ranging and significant), following Latour, in its construction. Cultural decay is posited as antithetical to a flourishing civilization claiming to be able to clearly point out instances of decay with the same ease as locating a rotten grape by color and feel or the smell of mold a slice of bread into which one is about to bite; "…the first authority in our decision between "civilized" and "uncivilized" behavior…is a feeling of distaste." (Elias 1982a, 127) Closely linking cultural decay and distaste, Elias argues cultural decay includes "any other behavior, any breach of the prohibitions or restraints prevailing in his society means danger, and a devaluation of the restraints imposed on himself." (Elias 1982a, 167) Cultural decay actively links distaste to danger and to fear. This linking of cultural decay to specific or abstract dangers, often related to or framed by violence, taps into fears of a disordered, uncivilized, world and is repeatedly used as a particularly useful means of setting the energies of a particular network against a particular group of agents inside or outside the network. In order to maintain a defense against cultural decay, that decay must be framed as ever-lurking or even attacking established structures and framework of society or culture.

There are definite moments when culture must be defended. For the purposes of this paper, in the interpreting and mediating work of civilizer theology, specifically assigning aspects of cultural decay/moral decline as inherent to a particular people group or particular societal movement are used as rhetorical tools to frame present events with an implied future so that if

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audience is being addressed. This idea of moral decay/cultural decline is present as a response to what is experienced as the unraveling of expected societal norms.

[22] At the risk of seeming repetitious Latour's thought "We know the nature of the facts because we have developed them in circumstances that are under our complete control." is very apt here.

[23] Marshall Berman's examines this idea of disruption in the modern project in his reworking of Marx's adage in Berman's text *All that is Solid Melts into Air*. Authority, or at least the perception or recognition of authority is often marked as one of the first things to go, as it were. Decay and melting look very similar and be very compelling arguments, through the lens of the modern constitution for a circling of the wagons against attack of those would threaten to destroy one's culture and subsequently identity. There are multiple examples of this in Berman's text, see the preface, introduction and chapters two and four. See Marshall Berman. 1988. *All That Is Solid Melts into Air: The Experience of Modernity*. New York: Penguin Random House.

the cultural decay is not halted will result in violence and chaos.[24]

Slavery

The role of cultural decay/moral decline in the context of civilizer theology begins with an understanding that the theological arguments made in support of the institution of slavery did not dissolve in the signing of the Emancipation Proclamation but rather are of piece of interpretation, mediation and translation encoded through Reconstruction, Jim Crow, the Civil Rights movement and into the 21st century.

To illustrate the problem of understanding cultural decay as common sense, Oast documents Presbyterian churches in Virginia in the late 1800's which financed their pastor's salaries through the purchasing of enslaved people and subsequently hiring them out. Pastors who spoke out against this practice soon found themselves out of a job and out of that particular parish. Oast observes the slaveholder's view of slavery as "good" or "beneficial" serving to lift the slave up from their moral and mental degradation, provided an eliding point to resolve any tensions between the presumably incompatible Presbyterian beliefs and doctrines and the selling of human beings for profit. Oast argues that "slavery was…so deeply embedded in Presbyterian culture in the American south by the antebellum period it was hard for churches to rid themselves of the practice. Slave ownership by the congregations was profitable…" (Oast 2010, 868)[25] Oast writes "…if God prospered their church's investment in slaves and used slavery to promote the Presbyterian faith, could slavery be wrong?" (Oast 2010, 68) Irons similarly notes "White Virginians found the mission to the slaves ideologically useful in the escalating conflict with the northern antislavery evangelicals. In their minds, the mission's success in making new Christians proved that God intended to use slavery for good…Whites came to believe that they

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[24] The history of rock n' roll is a great example of tracing how a cultural movement was repeatedly called out as cultural decay and then eventually, and enthusiastically, embraced by large swaths of the American evangelical church into worship services. There is a significant amount of documentation of church leaders calling rock n' roll music sinful and harmful to the body. These ranged from the significantly racist idea that the drum beats were harmful because they came from African tribal dances to the medically dubious claim that rock beats went against the rhythm of one's heart. It is interesting to see over time that hip hop and rap genres have replaced rock as become the points of argument for cultural decay in popular culture. Another fruitful example is that of "godless communism". (Taylor 2007, 506) Civil rights organizers being regularly associated with communism as a means of connecting them with further cultural decay implying a spiritual degradation and that these civil rights activists were seeking to undermine the American way of life. See Bob Jones Sr. "Is Segregation Scriptural" wherein he describes the civil rights movement as "agitation" which "…is a Communistic agitation to overthrow the established order of God in this world." (Jones, Sr 1960, 27). Jones' speech will be examined at length in chapter two of this project.

[25] It's worth pointing out that Oast' article focuses on the 1840s around the same time when Tocqueville would have been observing and writing. The demonstrated means that slavery was indeed profitable makes it difficult to fully give credence to Tocqueville's argument that slavery was going to be abolished because of lack of profit.

alone knew how to meet the unique spiritual needs of African Americans." (Irons 2008, 170) While some pastors left historical records challenging this practice as morally and culturally degenerate and, most significantly, contrary to the authority of the biblical text, the economic and social benefits of the practice were not sufficient to convince those congregations that the practice of hiring out constituted cultural decay or moral decline. The pastors who insisted on contesting hiring out as morally bankrupt were dismissed from their posts as the hiring out could not be morally problematic because it was financially successful, thus indicative of God's blessing. "Thus it seemed the Christian commission to preach the gospel to all nations ran directly counter to the economic interest of the Christian slave owner." (Raboteau 2004, 98)

The consistent and ongoing reinforcement of the idea that slavery was good for the enslaved because they now had access to Christianity in the context of church economics and practice subsequently enabled the rationalization of the economic benefits. This practice was not limited to the late 1800's. Emphasizing the link between slavery and segregation, in March 1957 Dr. Aubrey Brown, giving a speech in his home state of Virginia, commenting on late-1800's Virginia, stated "…the preacher who stood up in public meetings in defense of the democratic ideal finds himself another church..." or the Baptist pastor who remarks on his sympathies for civil rights in private conversation "because of the powerful political leaders in his congregation, he finds himself without a church." (Houck and Dixon 2014, 2:86–87) Brown's speech is worth noting for the weight he places on the economics, not only of pastoral employment, and the identity element that would carry for a clergy member, but also of the economic and social influence that was present in shaping church life and theological practice.

Foucault in his 1978-1979 lecture at the College de France observes "The economic bond is a principle of dissociation with regard to the active bonds of compassion, benevolence, love for one's fellows, and sense of community, inasmuch as it constantly tends to undo what the spontaneous bond of civil society has joined together by picking out the egoist interest of individuals, emphasizing it, and making it more incisive." (Foucault and Senellart 2011, 302). Foucault's observation reinforces Oast's historical research and Brown's comment of the continuation of hiring out slaves to support church pastors. Tracing slavery's contribution to the economic life of the church, Raboteau makes note of Morgan Godwin "an English divine who spent several years in Virginia…in a sermon published in 1685 with the accusatory title "Trade preferr'd before Religion and Christ made to give place to Mammon." (Raboteau 2004, 99) In

the 20th century John Perkins has continued this critique writing that "we have so organized and incorporated the church into our economic system…that [the] system can't be disciplined…" (Perkins 1978, 9) The economic benefits of slavery outweighed the "active bonds of compassion" in the interpretive reading of slavery's economic benefits as God's blessing. Rather than seeing the sale and hiring out of other human beings as problematic and theologically contradictory, theological justifications were located to justify the practice in no small due to its economic benefits.

Faust locates a similar justification in the collected essays of proslavery apologists arguing for the necessity of slavery from its economic, social and theological role(s). Their work to maintain the construction of a world founded on slavery was reliant on that construction continuing as though it were natural. The goal was "...to convince the Christian and conservative elite of…the free states that the Southern way was honorable, God sanctioned and stable." (Kousser, McPherson, and Woodward 1982, 28) The representative collection of writings that Faust presents go to significant lengths to present the elements of slavery as natural and necessary, arguing that their removal would bring chaos and societal instability. Faust argues in her introduction, "Slavery became a vehicle for the discussion of fundamental social issues-the meaning of natural law…the respective roles of liberty and equality, dependence and autonomy." (Faust 2007, 2) In the context of the ideals of liberty and equality, while slavery as an institution was limited to southern states, there was certainly nationwide support for slavery.[26] Faust observes "One of the earliest slavery debates took place in colonial Massachusetts; northerners continued publicly to defend slavery in significant numbers through the time of the Civil War." (Faust 2007, 3) This same defense can be located in defense of segregation as "…many pro-segregationists, northern and southern used biblical warrants to ground racial separatism and the status quo." (Houck and Dixon 2006, 1:8)

In his essay "Letter to an English Abolitionist", John Hammond laid out his specifically biblical defense of slavery. "*We accept the Bible terms as the definition of our Slavery, and its precepts as the guide of our conduct...*American Slavery is not only not a sin, but especially commanded by God through Moses, and approved by Christ through his apostles." (Faust 2007,

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[26] The idea of equality between black and white is a secondary motif in this paper as the idea of equality formed a barrier in the white mind, nationally, not just in particular regions. As Kendi points out even in the abolitionist movement there were those who argued that enslaved people should be freed and returned to Africa so as to maintain a white state in America. See Kendi *Stamped from the Beginning*, chapter 12. The fear of equality is definitively the fear of a black or brown planet and in this fear accusations of cultural decay/moral decline are regularly leveled against those particular populations.

175) In this essay Hammond links his argument for the Biblically approved appropriateness of slavery as practice with stability and peace, arguing that the goal of slavery is peace. Hammond strenuously argues that slavery served to construct and continue society in a way that benefits all serving as an exemplar of similar types of discourses taking shape around slavery in that time.

To recognize the impact of civilizer theology on a national scale, it is thus necessary to understand these discussions as interdependent and intertwined across the entire country; so that "…in the South as in the North theology and religious studies developed as inseparable from social thought." (Fox-Genovese and Genovese 1987, 214) The appeals to biblical authority in support of slavery were not crowd-pleasing rhetorical moves but were deeply engrained in the construction and formation of society especially as the authority of the Bible carried significant weight; "...faithful Christians should accept the legitimacy of slavery as it existed in the United States out of loyalty to the Bible's supreme divine authority." (Noll 1998, 43) The support for or against slavery was both social and hermeneutical (i.e. existential and epistemological) so that a theologically-grounded anti-slavery argument would have to justify its hermeneutical approach as well as the argument being made or would be accused of questioning the authority of the Bible. This is what Noll terms as "…a religious high-wire act…demonstrating why arguments against slavery should not be regarded as infidel attacks on the authority of the Bible itself...it is essential to remember that the overwhelming public attitude toward the Bible in the antebellum United States-even by those who in private never read or heeded it-was one of reverential, implicit deference." (Noll 1998, 44) Pro-slavery advocates argued in order to be consistent with a literal reading of the Scripture, and the authority of Scripture, one had to accept the Bible supported slavery. To argue against the literal hermeneutic was to question the authority of scripture, which doing so actively invited cultural and moral, not to mention spiritual, decline. This argument was compelling, albeit misleading, as it forced anti-slavery advocates to defend themselves on multiple fronts in attempting to maintain a consistent hermeneutic.

Being Chosen

Exemplifying Latour's constructed/not constructed paradigm Eddie Glaude points out the double standard that white evangelical Christianity has held for itself while denying the same to black bodies.

> "American structurers of oppression are understood in relation to the dispositions of a people who have constituted themselves as a community of the faithful, the chosen people of God. This sense of being chosen aided in the development of a national consciousness…and a national mission…The conjoin action of African Americans…had to offer a moral vision not only for the black nation but for those against whom they struggled… African American appropriations of the Exodus story designated the God of Israel as the God of oppressed blacks in the United States. This designation was important in the processes of self-identification which stood over and against white Christian claims that God intended Africans to be slaves." (Glaude 2007, 43–44)

Black and white people in America saw themselves, in parallel, as a uniquely chosen people. Both produced narratives to describe participating as a community of faithful as realizing a new type of Exodus story. For white people, America was the promised land but for enslaved people it was Egypt, a place of decay and oppression though a potentially redeemable Egypt. From the enslaved persons' perspective, the very existence of slavery, as well as its defense on theological grounds, were substantial examples of cultural decay. This is an example of "oppositional consciousness"[27] where the oppressed uses the same paradigm to critique and contest the framework being used to maintain the oppressive circumstances. The appropriation of the Exodus story was meant to provide a hermeneutical means to counter the narrative of slave-owners and pro-slavery advocates. Enslaved peoples' employment of oppositional consciousness against civilizer theology presented slavery as an example of cultural decay/moral decline which needed to be stopped. They argued for this through the practice of virtue and chosen-ness against significant and hostile opposition. Raboteau suggests that in the early decades of the 19th century

> "black evangelicals in the North also viewed moral reform, self-help, and education a part of the campaign against slavery. Ignorance, poverty, crime and disease not only enslaved nominally free blacks, they were also excuses employed by racists to argue that blacks were incapable of the responsibilities of freedom and citizenship…for black evangelicals doing good and avoiding evil were proofs of racial equality…" (Fulop and Raboteau 1997, 99)

W.E.B. Du Bois commenting on these efforts in the early 1900's wrote "Essentially honest-hearted and generous people cannot cite the caste-levelling precept of Christianity, or believe the

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[27] This is taken from Samuel Harris' discussion of the topic in his book where he bring several different sources to bear on defining and exploring this term. See Harris, Samuel. 2001. *Something Within: Religion in African-American Political Activism*. New York; Oxford: Oxford University Press, chapter 3.

equality of opportunity for all men, without coming to feel more and more with each generation that the present drawing of the color-line is a flat contradiction to their beliefs and professions." (Du Bois and Gates 2007, 89) Du Bois draws attention to the failure of creating equality while also connecting the ideal of Christianity that are not being practiced. There is a contradiction between the beliefs and professions of faith and the actual practice of Christianity that was distinctly noticeable; Du Bois is describing the active presence of civilizer theology. The virtues displayed by black believers across denominations were meant to prevent cultural decay while also demonstrating equality of practice of civilizing behavior, through demonstrating virtue for both themselves and for their oppressors.[28]

Glaude observes how black Americans saw themselves as chosen like Israel to be preserved and saved which parallels and comes into conflict with the "city on a hill" narrative, chosen by God, as deeply embedded in American evangelical thinking and greater American culture. One was chosen by virtues of its exclusion while one saw it chosen as example of exceptionalism.[29] The actively oppositional consciousness of the black church arose in response to slavery and white supremacy in the attempt carve out a home, place and secure a means of identity and existence. The attitudes here find contemporary resonance in the 20th and 21st centuries as black power, black liberation and BlackLivesMatter movements have met with very similar responses being framed threats to civil society, threats to established order and generally distasteful to the white evangelical church. "There are constant attempts to connect the badges of inequality, including poverty and rates of incarceration, to culture, family structure, and the internal lives of Black Americans … Assumptions of biological and cultural inferiority among African Americans are as old as the nation itself." (K.Y. Taylor 2016, 23) A poignant example of this idea; "…most post-emancipation writers believe that slavery had sustained black people and protected them from their own defective biology and savage ways…" since the end of the 1800s provided a bridge between the end of slavery and the beginning of segregation precisely because of these viewpoints as advanced from social science, anthropologists and other "scientific

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[28] Kendi points out that Du Bois moves away from this idea of "uplift suasion" later in his life as that "drawing of the color line" is a variable one that is moved at the whim of white culture; uplift suasion is ultimately an empty promise, a bait-and-switch of equality for reduced social place and reduced social liberties. See Kendi *Stamped from the Beginning*, pp. 338-340.

[29] Both Glaude and Kendi spend some time dealing with Thomas Jefferson whose work as a Founding Father had significant philosophical and practical implications in the racial structure of early America and whose effects, as Glaude and Kendi separately argue, are still felt. Glaude's observations on Thomas Jefferson's "speculation on black inferiority" supports and undergirds Kendi's (these two sections complement and support each other. See Glaude *Exodus!: Religion, Race and Nation in early nineteenth-century Black America*, pp. 36-37 and Kendi *Stamped from the Begninning*, pp. 108-111.

viewpoints. (Muhammad 2011, 31) These accusations and assumptions fuel and enable the rationalization of racial inequality in "the tensions between different functional groups in a social field…" (Elias 1982b, 289). This is particularly illustrated in the 2014 protests in Ferguson, Missouri following the shooting death of Michael Brown by police officers. The response of America, as embodied in the militant responses to non-white revolutions (such as Haiti and Nat Turner) finds 21st century resonances in white responses to the BLM and other protests. These movements (black power, black liberation, BLM) and related protests are often linked to cultural decay and degradation, often racially framed in how these movements are described in news accounts and media coverage.

In order for cultural decay to be rendered visible there must be, as Latour identifies, "mediators, delegates, translators" to translate the current situation and remark upon the dangers present. It is the mediating and translating work that allows the American Revolution to be God-breathed while resenting any challenge of that authority by an enslaved people living in that same country. It is also mediating and translating work, as oppositional consciousness, that allows for enslaved to practice what Raboteau calls slave religion to hold a mirror to those practices of Christian orthodoxy serving to reinforce and undergird practices defining civilizer theology.

Democracy and Decay

There are few specters of cultural decay more regularly conjured in the United States than that of threats against democracy and religion is regularly employed in its defense. To that end, "capitalism and Christianity are viewed as partners in defending God, freedom, and democracy." (Cone 1994, 184) The place of democracy with its close ties to theological justification and support, as ideal and idea, is important to recognize.

Tocqueville explores the idea of democracy as habitus which serves as an interpretive means for understanding the democratic project in America. Democracy as a governing practice and perception of governing shapes actions within the network/infrastructure of democracy while those actions shape how democracy is realized. Democracy functions as a "…system of socially constituted dispositions that guides agents in their perception of action." Religious practice shares particular parallels with this idea both in relationship to practices of liberty and equality,

as well as individuality within a religious system, and how that system constitutes action(s); "equality brings men to very general and very vast ideas, must be principally be understood in the matter of religion." (Tocqueville, Nolla, and Schleifer 201b, 747) American democracy and religion have been interdependently linked since the inception of the American state in a system which the agents, largely, have agreed to the social dispositions to guide their actions. As Bellah, et al. observe "Tocqueville saw religion primarily as a powerful influence on individual character and action. He suggested that the economic and political flux and volatility of American society was counterbalanced by the fact that "everything in the moral field is certain and fixed" because "Christianity reigns without obstacles, by universal consent."" (Bellah 1996, 222)

Tocqueville expected the religious aspect of democracy to restrain the capitalistic enterprise; "religions will not succeed in turning men away from love of riches; but they can still persuade them to enrich themselves only by honest means." (Tocqueville, Nolla, and Schleifer 2012b, 751) Tocqueville also supposed that religion and democracy would work together, to the degree that religion would be subservient to democracy's aims to, in turn, reinforce the project of the other. "As men become more similar and more equal…" a phrasing and idea that is repeated throughout these two volumes demonstrates Tocqueville's belief in the uplift suasion of the democratic ideal. This phrase is difficult to grasp in light of thriving slave trade between Africa and the Americas at the time of this writing.[30] Though Tocqueville does write that "I do not think that the white race and the Black race will come to live on an equal footing anywhere." (Tocqueville, Nolla, and Schleifer 2012a, 1:572) Tocqueville definitely possesses a knowledge of racial disparities, as well as predicting future struggles for equality, in his discussion of enslaved people and free African Americans in the American North and South notes that the white northerner "…withdraws with all the more care from the [sic] Negro because he fears that someday he will merge with him." (Tocqueville, Nolla, and Schleifer 2012a, 1:555) Tocqueville is thinking with Hartman; that the recognition of black people as fully human allowed for the law to take over where "the codification of race in the law secured the subjugation of blacks, regulated social interaction, and prescribed the terms of interracial conduct and association." (Hartman 2010, 194) This bears out Elias' observation that the perceptions of what is considered

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[30] See Kahn, Andrew, Jamelle Bouie, and Annie Risemberg. "The Atlantic Slave Trade in Two Minutes." *Slate*, June 25, 2015. http://www.slate.com/articles/life/the_history_of_american_slavery/2015/06/animated_interactive_of_the_history_of_the_atlantic_slave_trade.html. This animated graph helps to illustrate the incredible number of enslaved people moved between the continents.

civilized and uncivilized is closely tied to distaste. Tocqueville's observation expresses the more subtle racism located in segregation to subtly and systematically maintain separation between races as a means of demonstrating superiority and authority.

In Tocqueville's celebration of equality and liberty of a fledgling democracy, there is also the dissonance of the use of freedom through individual liberty to repress and constrict the liberty of others. It is possible to deny equality while still allowing a freedom of movement to satisfy one's own perception of equality. Tocqueville, like Hobbes, in Latour's reading, in compiling his observations of the state and place of democracy in America is serving to construct democracy, like the leviathan, pulling together more and more pieces to make it last. Revolution is meant to level the playing field; to give all parties a place to start again. "The Americans arrived equal on the soil that they occupy. They naturally feel no hatred of some against others…where from the beginning, citizens have always been equal." (Tocqueville, Nolla, and Schleifer 2012b, 1211) Elias writes "…the framework in which the individual develops…evolves directly from [the]…interplay of social processes." (Elias 1982b, 86) Tocqueville's own framework as a French citizen in a period of revolution and upheaval would surely have welcomed the structure that the democratic ideal offered to American citizens. He does temper his idealism at times noting that the freedom occasioned by this democratic system can lead to violent expressions "…democratic revolutions dispose them to flee each other and perpetuate within equality the hatreds given birth by inequality." (Tocqueville, Nolla, and Schleifer 2012b, 886)

Tocqueville expresses his hope that the young American democracy will be able to break free of the historical entanglements of French and European history. This spirit breaking free into a new world was the revolutionary spirit of the modern project writ large. Latour might have cautioned Tocqueville that the "…past remains…and even returns." (Latour 2003, 69) To borrow from Elias, the American democracy project "…gave expression to their self-image [and]…in their own estimation, made them exceptional." (Elias 1982a, 62) But this sense of exceptionality is a construction, an interpretation through the framework and standard which Tocqueville's observations, in part, render as possible. Tocqueville helps to construct the idealized past by which future generations can look back to for framing and standards of being. Tocqueville's text then serves the same role as Erasmus' book of manners by documenting his "collection of observations from life…" (Elias 1982b, 71) Tocqueville is interpreting the character and

disposition of America in an attempt to understand the role of the self and society and in doing so serves to provide a means of constructing that relationship.

Slavery to Segregation

Slavery's interpenetration with American practice through the economic benefits slavery brought to non-slave owning parts of the country are not directly addressed in Tocqueville's work. Tocqueville succeeds in succinctly pinpointing the exact tension of the American democratic project: "The Americans are, of all modern peoples, those who have pushed equality and servitude furthest among men. They have combined universal suffrage and servitude." (Tocqueville, Nolla, and Schleifer 2012a, 1:561) This dialectic is at the heart of the American democratic project. It is this combination that informed theological engagement with enslaved individuals and continues to inform racial structures in American society.

Bennett commenting on the state of affairs four decades later writes "the struggle for an integrated society remained inextricably intertwined with religious practice. Church members insisted that the examples and efforts of religious institutions could turn back the rising tide of Jim Crow and thereby transform the South's racial future." (Bennett 2016, 2) Oltmann observes how the rise of strong black churches in Savannah, undergirded by a black Christian nationalism movement buoyed and strengthened the church's presence into the 1940's. "Theirs was a prophetic vision that placed the Kingdom of God at the theological center. Christian individualism, including personal salvation and redemption, was only part of the equation. The other part was a more perfect democracy, inclusive and just." (Oltman 2012, 75) But as Bennett chronicles the dissolution of AME project in the face of Jim Crow in the late 1890's, Oltman similarly documents the collapse of clergy cohesion in Savannah. However the network of churches and the "…community ward system…[was] adapted…to further…NAACP organizing goals." (Oltman 2012, 194)

The community ward system was originally put into place by middle-class mainline black Baptist churches. The NAACP was specifically working for voting rights in ways that sought to transform the racial future of the South though political power, specifically in Savannah. "[Black woman suffragists] …explicitly wanted the vote in order to restore black manhood, and the man could then in turn stake their rightful claim as protectors of and providers for their women and children, as God intended." (Oltman 195) Cultural order is restored in the, perceived, natural

order. There is the reference back to the idea of oppositional consciousness expressed as well as the recognition and understanding of who was American. In Bennett and Oltman's accounts, religious practice and structures provided space and place to be human.

Bennett writes "The activities and practices of religious institutions were a far better measure of a church's theology than declarations about a sacred text." (Bennett 2016, 31) Oltman writes in a similar vein "The foundation of religious life, no matter what denomination or doctrine an individual ascribes to, is more experiential than philosophical." (Oltman 2012, 61) As Elias argues it is the actions and practices that so characterized form and shape what is considered civilized, what determines society. Elias argues that the written books of manners are only produced after those practices are already established at table. So for Oltman and Glaude, and even Tocqueville, the spirit of American democracy has particularly been at odds with the actions and practices of that democracy, particularly the ideas of liberty and equality.

Oast's research provides a sense of tradition present in theological justifications of slavery. Faust's research also points out how significant work went into the justification of slavery as a truth. Elias calls this a "circulation of constraints" to which "people submit…because they [the constraints] accord with tradition, because this tradition guarantees their own privileged positions and reflects the ideals and value with which they have grown up." (Elias 1984, 266, 274) This "circulation of constraints" thus serves as the means of defining what is, and is not, cultural decay. That which breaks or threatens to break the circulation of constraints, of particular social elements, is closely linked to what is defined and established as moral and cultural standards. The sense of tradition in theological practice linked to slavery was a constructed move employed to preserve power and presented as truth, particularly in the interpretive authority derived from the Bible. As Foucault writes ""Truth" is linked in a circular relation with systems of power that produce and sustain it, and to effects of power which it induces and which extend it-a 'regime' of truth." (Chomsky and Foucault 2006, 170) The circular relations of systems of power as Elias' "circulation of constraints" help to understand how cultural decay/moral decline can be used as constraints to maintain power within particular systems. The pro-slavery supporters who claimed they were arguing from a literal hermeneutic applied to the bible and thus had access to truth, as discussed earlier, provide a reinforcing

example of this interplay.[31] Chris Lebron is drawing from the same well as Elias when he writes "The problem of social value indicates that our social practices, as embedded within a liberal democratic framework, are outwardly regulated by rules and principles meant to preempt categorical inequalities, but fail…in the face of race." (Lebron 2015, 139) This is illustrated precisely in the history of segregation as a nationwide issue rather than one specifically limited to southern location or attitudes towards race and religion. Lebron's characterization of values connects to segregation's invisibility operating "…as a system, upheld by criminal and civil courts, police departments, public policies, and government bureaucracies." (Purnell, Theoharis, and Woodard 2019, 5) The fact of slavery's existence was never in doubt; rather, its goals and purposes were debated. That is to say, chattel slavery was a tangible system with clearly stated social values and practices. Squarely in the middle of that debate was slavery's value as a culturally preserving and reinforcing institution, as has been discussed in this chapter.

In 1950-1952, Margaret C. Mulloch authored a report entitled *Segregation: A Challenge to Democracy*. This pamphlet was written as a "direct educational approach" to segregation to clarify, inform and give "…direction for action." (McCulloch 1950, 3) What makes McCulloch's observations in this pamphlet pertinent to this paper and serve as an eye-witness account of segregation existing in law and what McCulloch calls "customs" where "…sometimes the customs are more binding than the laws…Negroes may not attend "white" churches." (McCulloch 1950, 8) these customs form "…a spiritual glass wall of separation…the rules are countless." (McCulloch 1950, 12) McCulloch also writes that segregation is national ("Eastern, Northern and even Western" and "the basic form of segregation is residential…" (McCulloch 1950, 9) McCulloch in her responses to direction action specifically addresses churches as being active in numerous areas but specifically to "maintain unsegregated national and regional conferences." (McCulloch 1950, 34) But as McCulloch pointed out earlier in her report stated "…a minister may not openly preach against segregation without being liable not only to protests or violence." (McCulloch 1950, 8) McCulloch is trying to walk a fine line with her audience as action she proposes such as de-segregation colleges, churches and small community groups is able to be accomplished within the law (McCulloch 1950, 34, 35) In this report there are the connecting threads to church leadership in the community as continuing segregation practices

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[31] The lunch counter protests are particularly a good example of work required to change a tradition that is supported by a "truth" (black people not served) which required effectively the creation of a new tradition through the deployment of personal power against state and power of tradition.

within the web of human relationship and circulation of constraints that determine acceptable behavior within communities. McCulloch's observations provide additional support to the idea that segregation was a national issue and not limited to a regional area. There is still a commitment to operating within the bounds of the established order while still working to change the order. As will be discussed further in chapter two, the church's authority in speaking against segregation was challenged by voices claiming authority arguing on behalf of segregation as necessary and natural. As Charles Marsh observes in his history of the summer of 1967 on the continued practice of segregated churches that these represented "…a dimension of white anxiety that easily evades theological analysis. The purity of the white church must be guarded with the same vigilance given the protection of white feminine virtue." (Marsh 2008, 82)

Segregation thrives in its lack of tangibility, in the absence of its materiality. Segregation's many forms[32] (i.e. education, housing[33]) continue to generate debate regarding its existence and impact. Support for segregation is produced, within the framework of civilizer theology, as an effective means of combatting moral decline/cultural decay, requiring the authority of decision makers to deal with the imminence of violence, typically by controlling limiting the black population through a variety of geographical constraints.[34] The arguments around segregation from the 1800's into the 1900's share language with that of the same objections to inter-racial marriage that it was against nature, the will of the Almighty and the created order. The problem of pointing out the problems of cultural decay in someone else often means that one must often overlook substantial instances of decay in one's own area. The twin myths of the ending of slavery as ushering in equality and the north as racially liberal and egalitarian both serve overlook substantial instances of cultural decay.

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[32] This is not to say that slavery has not taken on multiple forms (human trafficking specifically) but that in American history slavery was a recognized, even euphemistically as "peculiar institution" where segregation while recognized was not formalized as institution.

[33] See Hartfield, *A Few Red Drops: the Chicago Race Riots of 1919*, particularly end of chapter 13. Also chapter 14 of the same book which discusses the complaints against black noise and the perceived "need" to assimilate these typically southern individuals into northern practices. However "…effort toward black respectability did not get very far in earning white respect." (Hartfield 2018, 111) Hartfield's research shows in the supposedly egalitarian North, African-Americans were considered as less intelligent, as problems and in school settings actively segregated from white students in classes, athletics and other extra-curricular activities. (Hartfield 2018, (112-113) For a contemporary accounting see https://nextcity.org/daily/entry/why-black-neighborhoods-are-valued-less-than-other-neighborhoods. See most recently Keeanga-Yamahtta Taylor *Race for Profit: How Banks and the Real Estate Industry Undermined Black Homeownership*. 2019. University of North Carolina Press.

[34] The foundation for this was laid in Haiti, West Indies. Katherine Gerbner quoting the 1697 Barbados Assembly act "every *white Man* professing the Christian Religion, the free and natural born Subject of the Kind of *England,* or naturalized, who hath attained to the full Age of One and Twenty Year, and hath Ten Acres of Freehold…shall be deemed a Freeholder." (Gerbner 2018, 86) Gerbner's book *Christian Slavery* is well-worth examining in full.

"…northern attacks against the South's racial system regularly ignore the racism that defined the North. Defenders of the Jim Crow North relied upon color-blind ideology and notions of the North as a meritocracy to explain how and why pervasive inequality in their society mapped, almost perfectly, onto patterns of race and class. The same ideas they used to take down the South's brand of Jim Crow became ones that masked and perpetuated the Jim Crow north. They created and maintained af system of racial inequality-all the while denying it was a system." (Purnell, Theoharis, and Woodard 2019, 7)

It is the transparency of segregation as a system which situates it nationally. Seeing civilizer theological practice as national rather than regional helps to see the dispositions applied more broadly and trace the extensions of the slavery debate as god-ordained to locate those same arguments in support of segregation. Namely, that segregation was a "divinely ordered racial plan"; euphemistically understood as "divinely ordered social inequality…" (Leonard 1999, 169) To allow integration, that is, "race-mixing" was to go against God's plan to keep the races separate and to allow inter-marriage between races was even worse. "The fear of intermarriage, born of the impression that it is unnatural, unchristian and physically harmful, stems in part, from the continuity of slavery thinking." (Buswell 1964, 70)

In the discussions of segregation, miscegenation was a significant part of the argument around cultural decay. Judge Bazile famously concluded his January 22, 1965 response to the Loving appeal in his ruling against interracial marriage that "Almighty God created the races white, black, yellow, and malay [inter-polated: red] and he placed them on separate continents. And but for the interference with his arrangement there would be no cause for such marriages." (Wallenstein 2014, 110)[35] As this case passed to the federal court in 1967, it is also worth pointing out that one of the arguments presented for maintaining the miscegenation law in Virginia was that the children of interracial marriages would be subject to greater pressures. (Wallenstein 2014, 129) Similar arguments were made in favor of segregation, explored further in chapter three of this paper, purporting to reduce violence by keeping black and white separate; never mind that most cases the violence was incited by white people responding violently to the equality of black and white people. Wallenstein documents that public opinion had largely turned against miscegenation in the mid-1960s which provided popular support for the Lovings and that body of support was brought to bear on Bazile and on the Virginian federal court. This body of

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[35] Wallenstein also observes "The 1965 General Assembly of the United Presbyterian Church, a mostly white denomination, adopted a statement condemning the "blasphemy . . . of racism" and denying any "theological grounds for condemning or prohibiting marriage between consenting adults merely because of their racial origin." (Wallenstein 2014, 94)

support garnered on the Lovings' behalf bears out Elias' argument regarding "socially patterned constellations of habits and impulses…" (Elias 1982a, 189) which can be changed and influenced in order to change previously established "…standards of conduct and drive control…" at the societal and affective levels. (Elias 1982, 88) Much of that support was supported and produced by the Catholic Church in Virginia.

Cultural Decay and Change

The equity of black to white was and has been consistently seen in American history as transgressing the cultural order. As Hammond argued "American Slavery is not only not a sin, but especially commanded by God through Moses, and approved by Christ through his apostles." (Faust 2007, 175) This allows Hammond to subsequently argue that attempting to change this order is itself sinful and "…do more to destroy his [God's] authority among mankind than the most wicked can effect, by proclaiming that to be innocent which he has forbidden." (Faust 2007, 175) The defense of each of these dispositions share a pushback against societal and affective change as being on par with cultural decay. Particularly for slavery the argument was regularly advanced that it was natural, an argument that would have echoes in the arguments for segregation as clear from the Bible as part of God's plan. Fitzhugh writes "…in defending slavery, habitually appeals to the almost universal usages of civilized man, and argues that slavery must be natural to man, and intended by Providence as the condition of the larger portion of the race." (Faust 2007, 286) Fitzhugh and Hammond stand in for the greater southern mindset which "…hailed slavery as civilization's one great bulwark against anarchism, communism, socialism, Mormonism …Christian values and the Christian family were crumbling throughout free society. Only the South stood firmly against all such madness." (Eugene D. Genovese and Fox-Genovese 1986, 8)

Throughout American history, black people are regularly referred to as inferior, naturally criminal, degenerate, etc. essentially as agents of cultural decay as a means of proving that "…self-evident and God-sanctioned legitimation of white over black." (Muhammad 2011, 21) The attempts of black freed people to demonstrate and fulfill their roles as equal and free individuals particularly in the late 1890s into the earlier 1900's were met with "nearly every manner of anti-black terror, oppression, and exploitation from lynching to convict leasing to

political disenfranchisement…as a product of a growing belief that black people could not and should not be assimilated as truly free member of a white society…" (Muhammad 2011, 30)

Identifying a person's skin color as inherently criminal provides an easy step to extend that label to their behavior, beliefs, political stance, etc. There is then an easy and obvious link from these two points to make arguments for these individuals and their behavior to be blamed for cultural decay in order to mete out extralegal justice to combat the perceived decay. "The notion of black criminality was essential for white supremacists. If blacks were going to roam American streets free, then they were a threat to the lives of good, upstanding whites, and the government could not be counted on to practice exacting justice." (Lebron 2018, 3) The numerous examples of the Civil Rights movement and leaders being simultaneously associated with Communism and Communist threats as being one of the most serious threats to democracy in the 20th century allowed for cultural decay to be linked to the already highly suspect black freedom movement, as an agent of communism, to increase the weight of the argument against civil rights. The Civil Rights movement was often characterized "at best… [as] a tool of socialists and communists…to bring down American democracy. At worst, the movement was itself a communist inspired attempt to destroy the nation, a threat to Christian civilization and freedom." (Leonard 1999, 168)

The linking of the civil rights movement to Communism built upon the distrust against black people built into the American social and political system, as described by Muhammed above, effectively doubling the elements of distaste and fear regarding the civil rights movement. Noting as well as that democracy and "Christian civilization" are closely linked as bastions against the perceived cultural decay/moral decline that the civil right movement was bringing. The linking of civilization, democracy and freedom to "Christian" connects as well to the Protestant church's "…preoccupation with law and order…" (Campbell 1962, 49) In the quotes from Hammond and Fitzhugh above, the argument that ending of slavery would result in cultural decay may seem astounding but in gathering the other examples from this chapter this argument can also be linked to the fear of loss of control to shape society and culture.

In responses to a 2016 Barna study, "…evangelicals…were almost twice as likely than the general population to agree strongly that "racism is mostly a problem of the past, not the present"." (Black Lives Matter and Racial Tension in America 2016) If America is indeed post-racial then segregation cannot possibly exist because that would mean that racism would still be

a problem. "Believing in the post racial ideation also allows Americans to claim that the country has moved on from its past's wrongdoings…" (Kiuchi 2016, ix) In this understanding, segregation is a matter of cultural decay/moral decline that is no longer an issue in this post-racial world. However as will be further demonstrated in the following chapters segregation continues to be practiced and used as a tool of control.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have introduced the first disposition, cultural decay, offering definition and examples to show the link between theological justification, slavery, segregation, democracy and how cultural decay has been used as a tool for power. In the next chapter I will continue this exploration in a discussion of authority connected to the discussion of cultural decay in Latour's construction of tradition as authoritative, creating and generating power and a truth of its presence and continuing.

Chapter Three: Authority

Introduction

  This chapter will define and discuss authority as the second disposition. This chapter will first show how authority and power are closely linked and how civilizer theology uses authority towards maintaining its power. This chapter will then discuss how the authority of Scripture was employed as an authority to maintain slave-owners' power with that same support subsequently transformed into support for segregation. A discussion of the role of spiritual authority and its role in Nat Turner's rebellion will connect to the scholarship of Sunday Schools in the Reconstructed South. Drawing from Elias' characterization of the civilizing process as affective, several accounts of working with children from settings as varied as Sunday schools to the efforts of the United Daughters of the Confederates are considered to engage with the affective means that children were educated. This chapter concludes examining addresses by Ed Gillespie in 1957 and Bob Jones, Senior in 1960 that employ the authority of God in support of segregation. These two specific examples are employed to demonstrate the interpreting, mediating and delegating work performed by civilizer theology to establish authority.

Definition and Overview

  Cleage observes that "we cannot discuss authority without considering power because in the final analysis authority depends on power for its existence." (Cleage and Bell 1987, xix) In the discussion of civilizer theology the disposition of authority has a physical and a spiritual aspect both of which lay claim to power. In the context of civilizer theology, authority is sought in order to retain the power to shape responses to cultural decay as well as to violence. The relation of civilizer theology to authority is mediated by power where civilizer theological practices seek to maintain authority towards the retention of power to shape what is considered civilized or appropriate behavior. As with the other dispositions, authority is undergirded by, and reliant upon, interpretive, mediating and translating practices. Civilizer theology makes claims to authority in order to simultaneously promote its own place and rightness while seeking to discredit other claims to and/or against those authority claims. This has applications across all types of authority; spiritual, legal, political, cultural, etc. If Cleage is correct then it is possible to

recognize these institutions of authority are also institutions of power, specifically how power facilitates, supports and maintains the positions of authority in particular areas.

In civilizer theology, authority is often referenced in a more opaque way than violence or cultural decay. Authority often acts or proceeds by implication and assumption which ties it back to power relations and the means that those possessing authority chose to reinforce and engage. For Elias the network of relations are themselves an authority and have power to shape interactions and set relations. For example, manners, as Elias explores in the network of relations are used to set apart different classes as a signifier. There was authority granted to the class of people who claimed knowledge of how to conduct oneself at table. But once it was determined that authority could be gained through knowledge of a particular set of manners, anyone with that knowledge could then adopt those same manners effectively undermining the power of that practice as authoritative and forcing the upper classes to devise new means of determining class separation. This is what Lebron calls "…the influence of the norms sanctioned by institutional practices, as well as the place given by the social scheme…" (Lebron 2015, 104) If the social scheme gives authority to a certain practice that authority is reinforced through the continuation of that practice. This is precisely Lebron's point: "On the view of socially embedded power, the influence of the norms sanctioned by institutional practices, as well as the place given by the social scheme, places obstacles in the way of developing a sense of self on par with whites." (Lebron 2015, 104) This helps to further clarify that civilizer theology's own claim to authority in the discussion of theology's relationship to racial inequality, emerges from the power of building upon a racist foundation. Civilizer theology can only be successful if the belief in white superiority can be maintained. Slavery and segregation are understood as social norms sanctioned by racism as an institutional practice that was given place by the social schemes invested in the continuation of those schemes. So that "as long as theology is identified with the system, it is impossible to criticize it by bringing the judgment of God's righteousness upon it." (Cone 1969, 87)

The transition from slavery to segregation saw the same employment of authority to maintain power over black people's social, legal and political rights and freedoms. Multiple authorities (scientific, historical, etc.) are brought to bear to reinforce the practices of segregation and supposed black inferiority. White supremacy in its claim to power through superiority, is driven by the desire to be authoritative in order to shape culture, social practices and norms.

Authority is, like power, relational and the move towards authority draws upon those elements recognized as authoritative within its proximity for reinforcement. For example, civilizer theology is particularly reliant upon biblical authority. The Bible as the word of God is regularly referenced as a source of authority to which the individual making the argument may refer to give weight to their argument. This is a regular occurrence during slavery and segregation, as discussed in the previous chapter. Defenders of slavery as being Biblically sanctioned referenced not only Biblical texts in support of slavery but also argued they were doing so from a literal exegesis. This then required abolitionists to attempt to defend themselves on two fronts that the bible was still authoritative (being read literally) and in that reading that the Bible did not support slavery. Through appeals to authority on two fronts, "…skilled defenders of slavery insisted that any attack on a literalist construction of biblical slavery was an attack on the Bible itself." (Noll 1998, 51) This same approach can be found in references to God's plan for segregation, as will be discussed toward the end of this chapter in Gillespie and Bob Jones, Sr.'s respective addresses. God's plan is often characterized as clear, with cultural decay the result of the failure to follow this clear plan. Often, as with slavery, this "clear plan" is attributed to God plainly speaking of which man's interpretive practice has no part. Similarly, adding to the examples in chapter one, there is regular phrasing that can been seen in sermons/writings defending slavery and segregation that the author or speaker recognizes no authority but the word of God while then ignoring the interpretive work that the speaker is performing. An example located in Thornwell's argument for slavery that "…no deductions of man can set aside the authority of God." (Thornwell 1980, 390) Since it is necessary to hold a position of authority in order to effectively to call out cultural decay, civilizer theology must demonstrate and maintain that position of authority in order retain its credibility in determining what is, and is not, cultural decay. By referring to existing authorities (science, religion, the state) the argument then attempts to prove, in and through relation, to also command the same respect by proxy as authorities with which it is attempting to relate itself. This also recalls Elias' comments on distaste and affect where authority sets what is or is not considered distasteful and how affect relates to violence.

The interpretive, delegating and mandating work of civilizer theology history serves the "opinion, ruling, mandate or order" that, broadly speaking, has more often sought to preserve its authoritative power or its relational access to power. This is then the relationship of spiritual

authority to power, whose application can encompass the physical so as to be applied to both spiritual and physical instances, such as when the slave is preaching to his master; a significant point of speaking truth to power.

Harvey observes that "White southern religious ideas of social and racial hierarchy did not have to be merely hypocritical cant...they could be grounded intellectually in a respected conservative vision of preserving godly order." (Harvey 2005, 221)[36] Harvey's phrase "conservative vision of preserving godly order" is of particular importance to the disposition of authority in its relation to civilizer theology. The idea of orderliness in relation to authority is one that consistently appears in reading through the literature. In and of itself orderliness does not seem to be a problematic concept. It is how the idea of order is interpreted and applied that reveals how it can be applied as an authoritative concept in service to civilizer theology. For example, throughout the history of black worship, the description of disorderly is regularly applied to those observations. (Jabir 2017, 44, 158) In the discussion of segregation later on in this chapter, segregation is presented as necessary for order. The Civil Rights marches individually and movement collectively is referenced as disorderly and threatening societal structures. Into the late 20th century, the "war on crime" is presented as a means to maintain law and order against supposed super-criminals or a nationwide wave of crime, masking the focus on urban black Americans.[37] Into the 21st century the BlackLivesMatter protests are also described as fundamentally disorderly and disruptive to social order. The desire for order is, like cultural decay, a constructed shibboleth presented as a natural social norm that frames and sets expectations for the type of expected behaviors that mark citizens in good standing.[38] Order is the standard for the social framework and is also applicable to the state of things as they are or should be. It is the relationship between order and authority where civilizer theology does its interpreting work.[39] When applied to understandings of racial relationship, civilizer theology

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[36] While Harvey's focus across the body of his scholarship is on the American South his understanding can applied more broadly to how these same attitudes are present nationally.

[37] See Elizabeth Hinton's *From the War on Poverty to the War on Crime*; the last chapter particularly focuses on this.

[38] Charles Taylor addresses order as well in *A Secular Age*. He argues there is a shift to a "modern idea of order…[which] places us deeply and comprehensively in secular time…the new Providential social order is meant to be established by human action." This new order "puts a premium n constructive action, on an instrumental stance towards the world…" (C. Taylor 2007, 541) While Taylor is certainly discussing time, the focus on constructing should bring back to mind Latour's constructed/unconstructed world. Taylor's ideas here can be read in support of Latour's observations that serve to further develop the use of the idea of order as a fundamental given, as an instrument used in making sense of the world that is doing interpretive, mediating work.

[39] This is also where the discussions of cultural decay enter, as the presence of moral decline/cultural decline are issues of orderliness and lack of order which must therefore be addressed in order to maintain that order.

seeks to maintain an racially unequal order masked in the authority of sacred texts to generate readings and interpretations that support these as natural and orderly.[40] Recalling the previous chapter's discussion of Faust's collection of pro-slavery essays and letters the idea of order is present throughout. "Reflecting the lessons of human experience through the ages, as well as the prescriptions of both divine and natural order, slavery seemed unaskable. The trust of science, religion and history united to offer proslavery southerners ready support for their position." (Faust 2007, 14) It is on the idea of order that authority and cultural decay can be understood to be linked; "…religious white superiority derived primarily from a vocational sense of divine mission: to discover, possess and rule over all lands and peoples created to be subdued by white images of and emissaries from God in heaven." (Hopkins 2000, 15)

Slavery, Authority and Nat Turner

Irons argues that "An appreciation of black agency within evangelical communities is…critical to understanding the evolution of the proslavery argument." (Irons 2008, 2) "Black agency within evangelical communities" was specifically ordered within the paternalistic spiritual relationship of white churches to the enslaved people. While black churches had some agency prior to the Turner rebellion, they were thoroughly under the authority of white individuals in those churches.[41] Additionally, as Irons points out, religious commitment was itself used as an ordering device between "heathen" and "civilized" behavior. But in the influx of black evangelicals "…clamoring for admissions to evangelical churches following the Revolution…" or "…starting their own churches when whites were too slow or unwilling to facilitate the admission of black to white congregations it became impossible for whites to maintain the illusion that religious commitment provided a meaningful distinction between them

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[40] The history of South Africa particularly in relation to apartheid and into the present offers a significant opportunity in which to apply a discussion and understanding of civilizer theology. Particularly there was overlap in the 1980's were certain conservative American evangelical figures visited South Africa and confirmed that the apartheid system was functioning well, notably Jerry Falwell, Sr. See Melanie McAllister *The Kingdom of God has no Borders* for her excellent history and tracing of this idea. See Nicholas Grant *Winning Our Freedoms Together: African Americans and Apartheid, 1945–1960* and Ivan Evans *Cultures of Violence: Lynching and Racial Killing in South Africa and the American South* as examples of scholars doing similar work in tracing the connections between America's and South Africa's racial histories and present states.
[41] This is worth pointing out here for the parallels to Jim Bennett's work on the history of the black church in New Orleans following the Civil War. The same issues of order and authority follow where in Reconstruction white people prove unwilling to cede any type of meaningful power or position to form diverse, thriving churches based on equality. Thurman's church is the first recognized interfaith, interracial church deliberately established for this purpose.

and their slaves." (Irons 2008, 61–62)[42] In the discussion of religious practice in and around slavery the use of that shared religious practice forced whites to engage with the humanity of the enslaved people who were worshipping in the same manner and at times, immediately alongside of them so that "the efforts of white evangelicals to maintain biracial community…gave African Americans a convenient measure with which to judge them." (Irons 2008, 92) Irons identifies the time period from 1815 to 1831 as a time of flourishing for biracial Christianity in Virginia. During this time, African American ministers were consecrated in the Baptist tradition, the African Baptist Missionary Society was founded and sent Lot Cary, its founder, as its first missionary and enslaved people received Sundays off. (Irons 2008, 106, 121, 113) Within this context, Irons places Nat Turner's rebellion as a spiritual, moral and civil challenge to white authority both in the economic and social structure of slavery as well as a challenge to spiritual and theological hierarchies. (Irons 2008, 57) Irons argues how in the aftermath of Nat Turner's rebellion, "whites saw with fresh eyes how empowering it could be for blacks who adhered to the Christian faith to wield spiritual authority over whites." (Irons 2008, 137) It is the evangelical response to Turner's rebellion that Irons posits resulted in the generation of a "proslavery Gospel" which was meant to preserve slavery while also allowing for the spread of a "…form of Christianity that did not legitimate resistance to slavery." (Irons 2008, 140) Irons is particularly erudite in his observation that this did not imply that all whites were in favor of slavery but that in order to prevent further violence a form of the Gospel was bought to keep slaves in their place, that is, in order.[43] The General Assembly of Virginia passed an act on April 7, 1831 that excluded freed enslaved people from Virginia and made any meetings of slaves illegal. Irons observes that the Act's language "the legislators stopped short of making an explicit connection between religion and disorder…" (Irons 2008, 143) As Irons argues, Nat Turner's rebellion was not only a challenge to legal authority and the authority of slavery as an institution but was also as a challenge to spiritual authority due in no small part to Turner's belief in his own authority granted to him by spiritual forces in his own interpretation and analysis of the spiritual messages he received. What is then documented is a simultaneous religious, legal and cultural shift against the freedoms in previous religious practices permitted to enslaved people. The spiritual challenge

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[42] The connection to revolution has examples such as when black and white abolitionists in Chicago in 1850 were organizing themselves against the slave catcher laws to use phrase in a public meeting "Give us liberty or give us death" in response to the fight for freedom from slavery. See Hartfield *A Few Red Drops: The Chicago Race Riot of 1919* pp 21-24.
[43] Earlier in his book Irons also notes the awareness of many white evangelicals of the very obvious parallels between the Revolution and its spiritual adherents and the same arguments could be applied to the enslaved peoples in Virginia.

of the aftermath of the Turner rebellion did not force slaveholders to engage with the parallels to the Revolution and subsequently with their own contradictions but rather to double down on the role of slavery and religious practice and more tightly tie the two together. Enslaved people would also respond to this action as a particularly devastating critique of the lack of moral authority present in those who claimed to carry spiritual authority over what the white slaveholders called uncivilized people.   The example of Nat Turner provided a convenient excuse for the subsequent increased restriction of freedoms as the rebellion "proved" existing stereotypes that whites held regarding blacks. "If Blacks did not violently resist, they were cast as naturally servile. And yet, whenever they did fight, reactionary commentators, in both North and South, classified them as barbaric animals who needed to be caged in slavery." (Kendi 2017, 173) This aspect of violence will be dealt with more in the next chapter but this quote helps to order clarify the relation of authority to violence. Glaude supports this, using the America Revolution as historic framing, "patriotic Whigs…characterized other revolutions as dangerous or anarchic or as threats to society while describing the American Revolution as the fulfillment of prophecy or the unfolding of a divine plan." (Glaude 2007, 47) The selective nature of which revolution or rebellion was indeed God-sanctioned not only calls back to Elias but also to Tweed's definition of religion; the use of revolution to make a home.[44]

Raboteau writes "…by obeying the commands of God…slaves developed and treasured a sense of moral superiority and actual moral authority over their masters." (Raboteau 2004, 318) In a similar vein, Hartman remarks, in the context of "stealing away", "that "serving God was a crucial site of struggle, as it concerned issues about sites of worship, the intent of worship, and most important the social conditions of subordination, servitude and mastery…the threat in serving God was that the recognition of divine authority superseded, if not negated, the mastery of the slave owner." (Hartman 2010, 66) Raboteau and Hartman are present in understanding Iron's depiction of Nat Turner's rebellion; that to claim divine authority returned authority back to the enslaved person which reinforced the enslaved person's humanity as well also his/her spiritual standing challenging the legal authority of slavery. This challenge was doubly terrifying for the master and, most often, resulted in violence against the enslaved person.[45]

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[44] This further underscores Tocqueville's observation of Americans being able to hold the contradictions of equality and inequality due to the economic advantage brought about, in no small part, by that inequality.

[45] It is this empowering that undergirds oppositional consciousness. This is not to disregard or ignore Kendi's definition or the role of Christianity in supporting slavery. Rather "socially patterns constellations of habits and impulses" can be reshaped through or as part of a response to significant influences, such as theological practice. While the power of civilizing theology to

Irons and Raboteau can both be read in the light of the public influence of the church as shaping and being shaped; linked to and with the culture in which it was located.[46] These also link to Bourdieu's concept of habitus and Elias' discussions of functional chains. As Irons demonstrates this search for an all-encompassing worldview was more often Procrustean than liberating. The violence of Turner's rebellion was interpreted and analyzed as the result of giving enslaved people too much freedom, too many liberties, which had led to the breakdown of societal structures. This breakdown then necessitated a significant violent response in return. This will be explored more in the following chapter where authority and violence are linked in the maintenance of order and in support of continuing segregation. As Howard Thurman observes that "The threat of violence within a framework of well-night limitless power is a weapon [and]…may be implemented not only by constituted authority but also by anyone acting in behalf of the established order." (Thurman 1996, 31) The violent response to the rebellion of Turner and his followers is of a piece of the history of white supremacy which would later see the rise of the Ku Klux Klan seeking to establish authority through claiming to act to protect the established order; that is defending against cultural decay/moral decline. Arson attacks against black churches through the 20th and 21st centuries take on new light when read in light of a civilizer theology's authority being challenged by a black church theology, informed by oppositional consciousness. It was not just religious norms at stake but "the racial hierarchy was threatened by any independent exercise of black authority, even though spiritual in nature." (Fulop and Raboteau 1997, 94)

Following the abolition of slavery and the end of the Civil War, MacMillen observes that in many cases for southern whites the interest in serving in African-American Sunday schools, particularly, was a based in seeking to establish a version of their perception of their own authority. The focus on children is deliberate. Elias focuses on children in *History of Manners*

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minimize is significant, the idea of oppositional consciousness helps to understand and see examples of how the system can be turned and shaped by a sort of civilizing theology in reverse. While Irons does not quote any contemporary authors as specifically referencing issues of cultural decay one can get a sense of those resonances in his descriptions of the responses. The loss of authority, perceived or real, can then be closely linked to accusations of cultural decay.

[46] J. Kameron Carter in *Theologizing Race* spends some time toward the end of chapter x discussing Paul Tillich's view of culture. He writes "Tillich observes that the modern West understands religion and culture as opposed to each other, when, in fact they are not." Carter observes that like Latour Tillich states that the dichotomies between religion and culture are false and instead "religion is the substance of culture and culture the form of religion." It is worth to briefly drawing attention to the fact that Tillich, like Latour, abhor, a dichotomy and like Elias see the interdependence of the frameworks of religion and culture as thoroughly intertwined and nigh inseparable. Elias notes he notes that "clerical circles…become popularizes of the courtly customs…*Civilite* is given a new Christian religious foundation." (Elias 1982a, 101) There are theology in our table manners. There are table manners in our theology and in our metaphors, to follow Lakoff and Johnson in *Metaphors We Live By*; "cleanliness is next to Godliness." See Carter *Theologizing Race* pp 186-187.

where Elias specifically points out that children are inculcated from the beginning as to to how to behave at table. Elias argues that the affective ties and restrictions are built and developed in this process as MacMillen's quote below similarly describes. There needs to be some consideration of engagement with children because civilizer theology, in all of its layers, is a product of multiple affective ties and societal layers built up over time in the same manner as other perceptions of societal roles, place and class. Taylor supports this also, writing that "…the matrix in which the young were brought up to be good citizens and believing worshippers; religion was the source of the values that animated both family and society; and the state was the realization and bulwark of the values central to both family and churches." (C. Taylor 2007, 506) Present in MacMillen's argument is the assumed authority of white people over black children to do the necessary shaping and molding work into good citizens and good Christians.

> "it is interesting that southern whites-who deemed blacks inferior, ignored many of their social and economic problems, and had no desire to welcome them into their homes or churches-expressed an interest in their Sunday schools…For some whites, Sunday school work helped assuage guilt over past injustices…[also] it was easier to influence the faith and upbringing of children than to tackle adult problems. African American Sunday schools had more opportunity for white involvement than black churches, where whites had little opportunity to dictate religious message and found black ministers difficult to handle. Missionaries could circumvent a preacher and conduct Sunday school work on their own." (MacMillen 2001, 188)

MacMillen also notes the role of paternalism that continued from slavery, "Working with black Sunday school pupils also seemed natural to whites because it reinforced their traditional view of proper race relationships-that of adult to child." (MacMillen 2001, 189) These histories help to show that the focus on children in engaging social change and/or maintenance of social structures as part of the civilizing process and an essential part of continuing civilizer theology. While not expressly connected to Irons' discussion of the Nat Turner rebellion there are echoes of the same fears of loss of control and mistrust of a free black population. MacMillen quotes from a "…Presbyterian…working in black Sunday Schools as saying "We must try to make better men and women of our colored population or they will ruin our civilization…" (MacMillen 2001, 188) There is a significant amount of fear embedded in this quote that a numerically minority population without significant resources of any kind would be able to singlehandedly "ruin" a civilization. This same idea helps to frame the Sunday school education not only in terms of spiritual but also in a civic light; not just how to be right before God but also

how to be a good citizen to preserve the Union.[47] The further underlying idea of religious instruction as forming, not just a more spiritual or religiously engaged people, but a more civilized person who would, presumably, know his place and not contribute to cultural decay/moral decline.

While Sunday schools were seen as a tool of enforcing civilizer theology, involvement with Sunday schools also gave authority to African Americans. MacMillen's research also shows how Sunday school conferences in the late 1800's specifically provided a means for black Sunday school teachers and church leaders to meet, commiserate and support one another. "Convention reports and denominational newspapers testify…[that] African Americans were anything but silent about racial injustice as they watched their rights disintegrate and violence against blacks spread." Often, the denominational Sunday school conference or convention setting was seen as an appropriate place to address larger societal concerns. In contrast to the dominant opinion that segregation was sanctioned by God, as a law of nature, McMillen shows how the conversations at these conventions emphasized and established that as "Christian men and women" these individuals actively "….condemned white southerners definition of justice that legalized segregation and eliminated black civil and political rights." (MacMillen 2001, 175)

There is a phrase MacMillen locates in the archive of one particular convention from 1894 in Kentucky; "we recognize that this [Sunday school convention] is not a political gathering yet we are none the less interested in the cause of our race…" The statement goes on to denounce lynching, rape of young black women that went unpunished, shooting of "*colored civilized citizens*[48]…in cold blood…" and enforcement of Jim Crow travel laws on high-ranking church officials. These convention-goers wrestled with the implications of religion and politics and their interdependence. MacMillen identifies through her research is that in these conversation around the Sunday school conventions is what James Baldwin observed namely "[r]ace and religion…are fearfully entangled in the guts of this nation, so profoundly that to speak of the one is to conjure up the other." (Baldwin 2011, 200) MacMillen also points out that some of the Sunday school conferences went out of their way, particularly when there were

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[47] The quote does not include any thoughts on the Confederacy's effect on the greater civilization of the United States nor a discussion of secession's impact or for that matter, slavery.

[48] Italics are original. Note the emphasis on/of being civilized which in contrast to the violence received being decidedly uncivilized with the freedom of those doing the killing being the most particular uncivilized aspect. Also the designation of civilized in contrast to the Presbyterian quote on the previous page. It is possible to read Elias here as the loosening of the affective restraints is sanctioned in particular moments by a society when particular groups are not protected under law, either state-imposed or affectively-imposed.

white people present, to deliberately not address any topics of race. But what MacMillen and Baldwin are both driving at is that in the context of a religious organization gathering to discuss and work on unrelated subjects, race along with perceptions and politics of race arose in conversation, seeking to address issues of civilizer theology. These are some examples of oppositional consciousness attempting to reframe civilizer theology's interpreting, mediating and delegating work in order to re-establish, in the context of religious practice and service, the full personhood of African-American people.

In addition to these histories tracing religious instruction, there are multiple sources that discuss the focus on children in reinforcing and developing language and etiquette which had served to embed slavery in the social fabric and now served to reinforce Jim Crow as practice which bolstered and undergirded its legal and civic authority. It is the learned-ness of this practice that helps to bring into connection with Elias' emphasis of what it means to be civilized. Jennifer Ritterhouse examines this in language and structure that closely tracks with Elias' observations, engages practices of southern etiquette pointing out that "as a shared language for designating status, racial etiquette allowed social relations to proceed relatively smoothly." (Ritterhouse 2010, 48) Particularly since "…most southerners, white and black, considered etiquette a better form of social control than the violence that always lay just beneath its surface." (Ritterhouse 2010, 48) Throughout Ritterhouse's account this tension between etiquette and violence is consistently in evidence particularly when Ritterhouse points out that "the prevalence of racial violence in the South is perhaps the clearest indication that racial etiquette was never wholly effective." (Ritterhouse 2010, 50) And while violence of lynching was primarily realized in the South the element of racial violence was, as has been mentioned previously, a national issue.[49] Particularly since black violation of etiquette was much more likely to be met with a violent response often resulting in the death or the fleeing of the black individual without legal repudiation of those responsible for that violence.[50] Ritterhouse emphasizes that "…among white children…racial etiquette achieved its greatest degree of hegemony…" (Ritterhouse 2010, 54) Including exposing children to significant violence, particularly being at the sites and aftermaths of lynchings (as Ritterhouse and others document) served to normalize and stratify this behavior as reasonable. Ritterhouse pointedly writes that

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[49] See *A Few Red Drops: The Chicago Race Riots of 1919* by Claire Hartfield. See also https://chicago1919.org/.
[50] Alissa Wilkerson's fantastically well-written book *The Warmth of Other Suns* provides multiple examples of this exact scenario.

"children who learned to treat blacks as inferiors at an interpersonal level were unlikely, as adults, to question laws and institutions that discriminated against blacks at a societal, structural level." (Ritterhouse 2010, 55) Like MacMillen, Ritterhouse points out that in Sunday school curriculum "…learning about the reinforcement of…white children's racial lessons" in ways that parallel and recall uses of Scripture to justify slavery. (Ritterhouse 2010, 67) Ritterhouse explores the development of childhood attitudes specifically as education (both direct and indirect) inside and outside the home. This locates understandings of race and racial attitudes/racialized in the context of habitus forming and shaping. These states of being are also closely linked to Latour's constructed facts that the reinforcement of racial attitudes and separations are confirmed as and in their place by parents who believed these ideas and reinforced those attitudes with or in their kids. Ritterhouse contrasts the development of black children and white children in their awareness and practice of being in the world and engagement with class, color and status. The accounts of black children gathered in Ritterhouse's work show them to be significantly more aware of their place in the world than the white children's accounts that she collects. This "web of frameworks" served to normalize significantly terrible behavior such as lynchings and to reinforce the view of black as less than or other; specifically that "white Americans had taught their children to subordinate black Americans…" a practice which was well-established in the 1800's and as Ritterhouse and Cox show, continued into the 20th and 21st centuries. (K. C. Jackson 2019, 155) Thurman tells a story when he was a young man of a white child stabbing him in the palm with a pin because as she claims that he could not feel it. While the child's behavior is reprehensible this behavior was learned in the "web of frameworks" the "circulation of constraints" shaping interactions between insiders and outsiders.

Cox writes "…involving children…remained an important ritual linking generations, educating them to revere and uphold Confederate ideals assumed even greater importance." Cox shows how the United Daughters of the Confederacy (UDC) in the late 1800's and early 1900's specifically targeted schools and school-age children drawing upon the authority of school education to incorporate the Lost Cause narrative into the curriculum of schools largely in the South but also into the north east as well. Members believed that if white children were properly instructed, they would become "living monuments" to the Confederacy." (Cox 2003, 120) As MacMillen and Ritterhouse both discuss, Cox demonstrates that ability to preserve and maintain Confederate culture and narrative was invested in children. As Cox writes the ties were

deliberately affective in the educational process, specifically rooted in nostalgia and pride for the supposed previous glories of the Confederacy.

The Lost Cause narrative was, and is, an attempt to reorder history and the historical record in a particular way that argues for the rightness of a previous social order that has been, supposedly, lost and even misunderstood. It is an attempt to impose an authoritative narrative. Cox writes that "…the Lost Cause narrative…was replete with racial stereotypes, emphasized the inferiority of blacks, and exaggerated the benevolence of slave ownership. Moreover the Lost Cause narrative provided more than lessons on the past; it served as a political and social road map for the future." (Cox 2003, 122) In regard to education, the UDC spent significant time and energy successfully lobbying for embedding pro-Confederate or Lost Cause supportive textbooks in northern and southern classrooms.

On example of the quasi-religious approach taken by the UDC was the Catechism for Children. "Cornelia Branch Stone…prepared the *UDC Catechism for Children* in 1904…Children's learned responses to the questions from the catechism were a key ingredient in their indoctrination. Moreover, the catechism, combined with information children learned at school and at home, provided lessons that remained with them through adulthood." (Cox 2003, 139) [51] The catechism, as a form, is a specifically religious and theological document which through repetition and response engrains in the child the truths and doctrines as laid out in the catechism. Even though in the UDC catechism there is no overtly religious language, no mentions of God or religion, the form of the catechism in 1904 would have been unequivocally linked with church practice and the sacred. The catechism also offers an example of the intersection between the sacred and secular, serving to elevate the material from simply historical to something that should be internalized within one's self in the same way that doctrine should.[52] This exemplifies the practice of inculcating children with "socially patterned constellations of habits and impulses…" (Elias 1982a, 189) The catechism assumes adult interaction with the

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[51] The text of the catechism is available here: https://www.encyclopediavirginia.org/Children_U_D_C_Catechism_for_1904 and is as fine an example of revisionist history as one might want to find. It also serves as a touchstone for the ways that the Lost Cause narrative found purchase in reframing American history alongside other similar attempts such as *Birth of a Nation* or *Gone with the Wind*.

[52] This could be read as another example of what Matthew Bowman references as "Christian republicanism". This is a form of Christianity that "cloaked Protestant virtues like individual liberty and the priority of ethical behavior" into a broader understanding and interpretation of what being Christian meant. Additionally this was "…linked to an imagined idea of Western Civilization and hence to Europe, to middle-class sexual and economic norms, and to whiteness." (Bowman 2018, 4-5)

child's learning to further and continue the elements and 'truths' of the catechism. The catechism is a specifically ordering document that orients the child to history and the present social order.[53]

Cox argues that the UDC was successful because the "North had accepted the Lost Cause narrative as fact, which was an essential element…" (Cox 2003, 158) As was discussed in the opening chapter, following Latour, the ability to establish a fact is to establish it as truth, that is, as authoritative. Establishing the Lost Cause as "fact" using a focused effort directed at children through the authoritative structure of school was an effective means of weaving this narrative into the "web of human relationships" that comprise the history of the Civil War. The borrowing from religious practice (maintaining gravestones, memorizing the catechism) to merge into the Lost Cause narrative also served to align the UDC with the Protestant ideals of Christian republicanism. This is not to say that UDC was expressly theological but, like the Ku Klux Klan, borrowed or employed similar means to influence or shape the way that civilizer theology was maintained. It is efforts like this that created a generation convinced of the civilizational rightness to a segregated South. The work of the UDC was happening right alongside the work of Sunday schools, church and other civil and public life. These should be understood as interdependent and informing, not separate. It is not difficult to see then that "southern fundamentalists, therefore, responded to the civil rights movement…as a challenge to certain unchanging truths taught in the Holy Scriptures and required of all true Christians." (Leonard 1999, 166–67) Bill Leonard's research draws an important connection in identifying how civilizer theology arguments flourished in fundamentalist/evangelical writings during 1960s to the 1980s shaping past and present. Leonard traces three individuals whose writing and public thinking who provided the mediating and socially constituting work to continue to reinforce civilizer theology in the evangelical mind. John R. Rice, founder and editor of *The Sword of the Lord* (founded in 1934-edited until his death in 1980)[54]*;* J. Frank Norris, editor *The Fundamentalist,* and Noel Smith long-time editor of *The Baptist Bible Tribune* shaped national fundamentalist evangelical thinking through their extensive writings; with the goal to, using John

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[53] The borrowing from religious practice by white supremacy (see the KKK's use of similar religious symbolism) is consistent throughout the history of white supremacy. This will be further engaged in the next chapter on violence but the KKK, especially in its third iteration, spent a good deal of energy actively recruiting church support for their efforts. Since the KKK was also in support of Prohibition and maintaining other societal norms, they found support for many of their activities.

[54] As of 1999, Leonard characterizes the *Sword of the Lord* as "...one of the most widely circulated fundamentalist periodicals in America…" Randall Stephens in his excellent article "It has to Come from the Hearts of the People": Evangelicals, Fundamentalists, Race and the 1964 Civil Rights Act" supports Leonard's observations writing "The hardline Southern fundamentalist newspaper *Sword of the Lord* regularly lashed out at Martin Luther King, Jr., integration, and the civil rights movement…" (Stephens 2016, 571)

R. Rice's words "analyze the racial situation from the viewpoint of the Bible." (Leonard 1999, 169) In their editorial work and writing, Rice, Norris and Smith exemplify the calling out of civil rights as cultural decline/decay through their authority to opine and to interpret Scripture in support of their position. This is seen in the declaring of the civil rights movement as a crisis and segregation as a "divinely ordered racial plan"; euphemistically understood as "divinely ordained social inequality…" (Wilson and Silk 2005, 63) These three men argued that the civil rights movement was "…a violation of fundamentalist dogma and biblical norms…" labeled Martin Luther King Jr. an apostate, and characterized segregation, as well as inter-racial marriage, as unbiblical. In response to the riots that followed Martin Luther King Jr.'s assassination, Noel Smith "…attributed such radical, insurrectionists tendencies to the breakdown of the nation's moral fiber." (Leonard 1999, 169) Leonard quotes John R. Rice who "…concluded, there is a "distinction of race" which "God Himself" had created and it was unrealistic to pretend it did not exist." (Leonard 1999, 173–74). Leonard concludes his article with the following, "…the biblical and theological responses which the fundamentalists offered to the race question were shaped by their continued belief that African-Americans as a race were morally deficient." (Leonard 1999, 180) It is these "biblical and theological responses" which as interpreted through the dispositions both confirm and support the application of civilizer theology.[55] Additionally the latching of civilizer theology to such vehicles as segregation and "moral deficiency" were fundamental foundations to racist perceptions. This is especially necessary to recognize "…because the notion persists that the civil rights era has eradicated the legal barriers that prevent black people and black life from flourishing." (Colbert, Patterson, and Levy-Hussen 2016, 215) When in fact, in the manner that Graham's comments, as example, echo Leonard's observations of the impact of Rice, Norris and Smith on white evangelical life in the late 20th and early 21st centuries. Similarly, these echo the idea of "natural" black criminality as discussed in chapter one.

Leonard's work in this article serves to pull together many of the ideas touched upon in the work of Genovese, Fox-Genovese, Glaude, Oltman and Bennett in their work on slavery and antebellum America. The fundamentalist response, both southern and northern, to the civil rights movement was a direct continuation of the resistance to the equality of black people with white

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[55] In response, connected back to Glaude's exodus narrative, Jane Daily points out that Martin Luther King, Jr. saw segregation as sin and its Christian champions, heretics. (Dailey 2004, 119)

people in America. This is why, again, it is necessary to reiterate that the slavery was not the cause of racism but rather that racism was the cause of slavery and American history has been characterized by repeated theological arguments being made in support of racism. Leonard's synthesis of these threads is born out in other supporting scholarship. Joan Dailey's article "Sex, Segregation, and the Sacred after *Brown*" points out "…religion played a central role in articulating not only the challenge that the civil rights movement offered Jim Crow but the *resistance* to that challenge." (Dailey 2004, 122) Both Leonard and Dailey, while approaching from two different vantage points both demonstrate the significant belief that integration was wrong and even unbiblical, offering significant textual and historical evidence for the beliefs that were linked to biblical authority to support these claims. Daily quotes a 1957 South Carolina Baptist church's resolution that "…integration was wrong because…'God meant for people of different races to maintain their race purity and racial identity and seek the highest development of their racial group'." (Dailey 2004, 137).

In these examples one can see the multiple layers of authority at work, the church or church leadership issued calls out to God's ordained order which the church and the true believer should have maintained. Indeed, as Leonard and Dailey both point out, the indication of a true believer is demonstrated by their support of these ideas. Leonard points out that this is precisely what allows certain Southern fundamentalists to write off Martin Luther King, Jr. because he was theologically in question and therefore was morally questionable and couldn't be taken seriously on any political or theological ideas. (Leonard 1999, 178) Martin Luther King, Jr.'s authority was declared suspect and could thus be denied because it did not conform to the rigid set of fundamental doctrines determined by the southern fundamentalist interpretation. It is worth noting that these same arguments have already been covered in this paper as they were also presented in support of slavery, particularly the reliance on God's authority in establishing a natural order that should not be violated. Recognizing that this went both ways in that civil rights supporters in the churches were also drawing from this same source material. Dailey reports that "…the Southern Presbyterian General Assembly accompanied its support for school integration with the assurance that interracial marriage would not follow." (Dailey 2004, 130) While these examples seem to be particularly cut and dry uses of civilizer theology, Harvey points out that the Civil Rights movement, while seeming to arise out of religious footing had a complicated and contentious relationship to religion that allowed those supporting and those opposing to contest

the movement recalling the authority of their particular tradition. This recalls Septima Clark, activist, teacher and Civil Rights elder, recalling "…so many preachers support the Movement that we can say it was based in churches, yet many preachers couldn't take sides with it because they thought they had too much to lose." (Clark and Brown 1996, 69)

The groundwork laid for protesting against the Civil Rights movement from a theological perspective makes its presence felt in the 21st century. Stephens observes that "…not far behind statements about civil rights was the feeling, shared by numerous evangelicals, that the marches and protests were disorderly or had some hand in lawlessness." (Stephens 2016, 582) Lebron argues that "...present-day activists and intellectuals supporting the BlackLivesMatter movement have extended the call for Americans to acknowledge the very basic idea that blacks are worthy of a respect that whites take for granted." (Lebron 2018, 142) However particularly for the white evangelical church the emphasis on patriotism as "…a norm of acceptability" as well the notion that "…it is sometimes deemed uncivil, disloyal or destabilizing to criticize laws and the agencies and agents that enforce laws. When unarmed blacks are killed by police officers…and black Americans in return say harsh things against the police…[they] come under fire for being un-American." (Lebron 2018, 131) A 2019 Pew Research poll shows where "…compared to other religious groups like mainline Protestants, Catholics, and the unaffiliated, evangelicals are most likely to say police officers demonstrate fair treatment." (G. P. Jackson 2019)[56] This is not to say that black people are not included in this group but as 87 percent of those surveyed identified as white and supportive of police it would not seem to be a stretch that a significant chunk of those identifying as evangelical also are white. (Gecewicz and Rainie 2019, 46) In 2017, *Christianity Today* had followed a similar process after Pew released a report entitled "Behind the Badge" regarding public and police perceptions of policing in America showing the cross-reference of survey data to show respondents by religious group. Similar to the previous report "White evangelicals…and white mainline Protestants…were more than twice as likely than black Protestants…to give cops a positive rating regarding...officers' equal treatment of racial and ethnic groups." (Shellnutt 2017)

Lebron also echoes Kendi writing "…for black Americans to take absolute possession of their humanity in the course of asking others to recognize the worth of their humanity." (Lebron

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[56] *Christianity Today* received specific breakouts regarding religious affiliation from PEW that are not broken out in the original report. The breakout by religious group the quote is referencing is not available in the PEW report but only in the *Christianity* Today article.

2018, 144) Cone echoes here as well; "…Black Theology believes that the biblical doctrine of reconciliation can be made a reality only when white people are prepared to address black men as *black* men and not as some grease-painted form of white humanity." And a page later "…that the blackness of black people is a creation of God himself." (Cone 1969, 147; 149) And so it is particularly mystifying that for groups of believers who claim belief in a God who created the world to have responded to BlackLivesMatter with little to no support. But since BlackLivesMatter is framed as a political matter rather than linked to theological practice evangelical theology has not broadly located a reasonable response to BlackLivesMatter in a way that has touched the broader evangelical church. This is of a piece with evangelical history. Issues of race, from slavery to segregation and beyond are seen as "political and economic matter[s] rather than a religious one." (Johnston 2010, 141) This is in part because BlackLivesMatter has been accused of lacking, borrowing from J. Kameron Carter, the term "proper order"; thus lacking the practice of proper order, as a movement, it also must therefore lack authority. Civilizer theology responds that in order to raise an issue with the governing authorities there are channels which should/must be followed; there is a civilized way of things. To not follow this way, is to be uncivilized and the authority of the state is justified in responding in violence to combat this uncivilized behavior (read: cultural decay/moral decline). Therefore, the police response that followed in Ferguson, Missouri was justly meted out because the protests in response to Michael Brown's death did not follow the proper channels. Similarly, Franklin Graham's injunction, discussed in chapter one, to "obey the police" demonstrates a similar argument for "proper order" irrespective of a history of violence against particularly skin colors or ethnicities. Proper order sounds remarkably like the justification for the idea of "common sense" when used to justify the presence of practices that support authority of those who benefit from the control of is privileged by that authority.

Constructing Authority

Authority is constructed but presents itself as naturally occurring without any interpreting or mediating intermediaries; "…historically evolved power stipulates, the answer lies in whites' socially and politically dominant positions alongside their monopolistic access to institutions early in America's development." (Lebron 2015, 73) Whiteness, or more broadly the color of one's skin, has no authority except by the elements that are marshalled in order to construct that

authority. However, whiteness has been regularly constructed as inherently authoritative and simultaneously as a standard for what it means to be civilized so that the practice of white people in America could become its own standard. In 1904, historian Ulrich Phillips presented an argument, which manages to be impressively racist and anti-segregation simultaneously, stating that black people should go back to plantations to learn civilization as the "…progress of the negroes has been in very large measure the result of their association with civilized white people." (Phillips 1904, 258) If the standard of civilization was indeed set by white people, Phillips' argument is segregation is hurting black people as there was "...a tendency of the negroes, where segregated in masses in the black belt, to lapse back toward barbarism." (Phillips 1904, 258) Phillips is able to define barbarism in opposition to civilized behavior because "the average and the exceptional white men possess their civilization and capability as a natural inheritance… the exceptional negro has acquired this capability by borrowing and adapting the white man's ways of life…" (Phillips 1904, 265–66) Phillips also makes the argument that the white man is authoritative because "the average negro has many of the characteristics of a child, and must be guided and governed against himself, by a sympathetic hand." (Phillips 1904, 264) Phillips's paternalism argues that the black person cannot be authoritative as they are inherently immature and childlike. This argument is meant to fundamentally undercut any arguments of white and black equity by referencing a constructed version of black childishness, depravity and violence. Phillips does not offer any other argument for white civilization's authority other than to suggest it as already existing and that, combined with whiteness, was sufficient authority. If this position is held, then the equity of a black person with a white person becomes doubly fraught when confronted with or in spiritual authority and religious practice.

This can be clearly seen in James Bennett's scholarship which is focused on churches and religious practices of African-Americans in New Orleans and Louisiana in the late 1800's. The power structures play out in the way that blacks were allowed and not allowed, simultaneously, to do church. Bennett notes "Black church members remained in biracial denominations to hold their churches accountable to the higher ideals on which they were based, just as African Americans would remain in the United States to accountable to its democratic principles." (Bennett 2016, 9) The democratic principles Tocqueville notes provides significant opportunity for something great but can also be manipulated and bent back along themselves to retain and reinforce social and political dominant positions. Bennett argues that the decisions to exclude

blacks was "….like so many white church leaders, bracketed questions of race as political rather than moral and therefore outside [their] realm of influence or concern." (Bennett 2016, 68) This is itself an example of the tension that Tocqueville noted between equality and servility which Bellah et al build upon and bring into the 20th century: "Time and again in our [American] history, spiritually motivated individual and groups have felt called to show forth in their lives the faith that was in them by taking a stand on the great ethical and political issues of the day…Of course the church produced opponents of all these movements." (Bellah 1996, 248–49) Legislation such as Jefferson's 1777 *Freedom of Religion Act in Virginia* were lauded as it gave space to different religions to share and even worship in relatively proximity without fear of violent reprisal. This follows the move towards civilizing processes as Elias describes where the power over violence is taken by the state serving to establish an increased self-control in affect over personal violence. "…Jim Crow denied the fundamental claim of blacks to their right to be co-producers of democracy, as well as their legitimacy in participating in its regeneration. Societies, like person, can develop bad habits as well as long memories that shape, influence, confound, and reproduce political outcomes." (Lebron 2018, 63) Lebron pointedly recognizes that that Jim Crow did not have to follow slavery as a natural consequence of slavery but rather to understand Jim Crow as linked to "…slavery [as] only a part of a larger system of antiblack racism that governs the modern period." (Colbert, Patterson, and Levy-Hussen 2016, 212) In keeping with Elias' civilizing processes, in how civilizer theology shapes or informs these larger ideas in the present needs to grapple with the history of slavery, Jim Crow and the civil rights movement "…because the notion persists that the civil rights era has eradicated the legal barriers that prevent black people and black life from flourishing." (Colbert, Patterson, and Levy-Hussen 2016, 215) The 2016 Barna study, referenced at the end of chapter two, bears this out as well because if there is a belief that all have equal access than movements like Black Lives Matter are unnecessary; "13% of evangelicals and 7% of Republicans compared to 27% of all adults" were significantly less like to support Black Lives Matter. ("Black Lives Matter and Racial Tension in America" 2016)[57] Lebron observes "political history and sociology tell us that our institutions continue to operate under a logic that, while not identical to the explicit racist practices of the

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[57] "Captive to American individualism, evangelicals could only think about race as a matter of personal belief…" (Ream, et al, 2018, 145) See also https://www.barna.com/research/black-lives-matter-and-racial-tension-in-america/ as well as http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2017/04/26/among-white-evangelicals-regular-churchgoers-are-the-most-supportive-of-trump/

past, is continuous with it in morally problematic ways." (Lebron 2015, 124) It is precisely this aspect of continuation of logic that the idea and dispositions of civilizer are design to highlight in order to prevent their continuation.

Civilizer theology, in deploying the dispositions provides the means to trace a thread in the continuous presence of a racist logic that continues to erect legal and societal barriers in American society and culture. In this understanding, "…the reaction-"Black lives matter"-taps into a history of racial tensions that remains largely connected to the anti-black epistemologies that continue to govern modern thought." (Colbert, Patterson, and Levy-Hussen 2016, 215) It is this tension that is captured when Laymon writes that American culture possesses "…an insatiable appetite for virtuoso black performance and routine black suffering." (Laymon 2017, 28) Charles Lebron makes an argument for the necessity of understanding the role of social value in regards to race; "racial inequality, as the problem of social value, positions black identity as less morally worthy." (Lebron 2015, 112) This helps to understand that slavery, segregation and Jim Crow were responses to perceptions of social value rather than ends to themselves that can be marked as completed. This is one of Kendi's themes in *Stamped from the Beginning* as well; that from the beginning the idea of being black was equated to being less than, the claim for which was often rooted in arguments firmly planted in scripture and church practice; namely, the practice of civilizer theology.

In the discussion of authority "…institutions play an important role in giving sanction to certain norms through their commitments and actions, thus having a significant impact on our beliefs and reasons (thus, on our dispositions and actions.)" (Lebron 2015, 48) Note Lebron's use of dispositions here, tying back to Easterling's definition above where dispositions are the "…the character or propensity that are the result of institutional action…" Authority is perhaps the strongest connecting point that links the evangelical church's response to slavery, segregation, civil rights and, currently, BlackLivesMatter. It is perception of authority, scriptural particularly which frames the church's response to its perception of cultural decay and of violence. "…The Civil Rights Movement changed the manifestations of racism but not the racialized social structure, thus the institutionalization of inequality persists." (Weissinger, Mack, and Watson 2017, 95) White churches large did not, and have not challenged, the racialized social structures because those structures did not change or effect their ways of life but have taken on other social items, such as abortion and gender rights as these have been more closely linked to traditional

values in the evangelical tradition.

These same arguments continue to resonate into the present. While there is significant focus on the South, as summed up in Harvey's idea (remarkably close to Genovese's idea) that "the white southern theology of class and blood was premised on God-ordained inequality" this should not blind to the racist legislation, redlining and other practices (not selling homes to blacks) that were present in the North (Harvey 2005, 220). These practices, particularly in regard to housing segregation, have dramatically shaped the black community's interaction with police violence; "the concentration and effect of Black poverty provided a constant pretext for police incursions, arrests and violence, which fueled the antagonistic relationship between the police and African Americans…Police harassment and violence blurred the distinctions between the supposed "land of hope" in the North and Jim Crow apartheid of the South." (K.Y. Taylor 2016, 113–14) Civilizer theology frames these as natural and unconstructed, arguing that segregation is helpful in maintaining the separation between races. Coupled with a historical support and trust of police authority by evangelicals undergirded by a history of racial segregation combines to construct this process as the result of a supposed deficiency in black people not a problem located in societal structures or constraints.   Part of this framing is located in the construction of dichotomous categories of moral and political even as the attempt to separate those categories in reality served to blur them.

Segregation in Theological Practice: G.T. Gillespie and Bob Jones, Senior

> "...White southern evangelicals historically have preached a clear distinction between matters of morality, on which Christians were obligated to take a stand, and matters of politics, which evangelical were supposed to avoid as divisive and detrimental to the advancement of God's kingdom. ...moreover, evangelicals were vigorous proponents of new systems of racial control, namely segregation, in the late nineteenth century, and many defend that system during its declining years into the 1950s and 1960s." (Harvey 2005, 252)

A particular and precise example is found in G.T. Gillespie's address *A Christian View on Segregation* to the Mississippi Synod of the Presbyterian Church on November 4, 1954. Gillespie is pro-segregation arguing that "Anglo-Saxon and English-speaking people have steadfastly opposed and resisted the mixture of their racial stock…and maintained a pattern of segregation which…provided an effective check…and…preserved [their] racial integrity…" (Gillespie 1957, 2) Gillespie echoes Jim Crow rhetoric that "segregation…tends to lessen friction

and tension…" between races to prevent "…such intimacies as…intermarriage and the amalgamation of the races…" (Gillespie 1957, 8) Gillespie presents the Hebrews in the Old Testament as a segregated people arguing that the Bible provides "…considerable data…in support of the general principle of segregation as an important feature of the Divine purpose and Providence…" (Gillespie 1957, 8) Gillespie provides several examples; one worth noting here is his reference to Paul's letter to the Colossians from which Gillespie uses to argue that Paul "…recognized the master-slave relationship…and enjoined obedience…" (Gillespie 1957, 8) It is not too far of a stretch to recall this text's use in justifying slavery now applied to a justification for segregation.[58] It should be noted as well that this address was delivered to the entire Mississippi Synod and Gillespie's biography at the conclusion of this pamphlet acknowledges him as "one of the outstanding leaders in the Southern Presbyterian Church." (Gillespie 1957, 16) Gillespie represents a person and position of authority in regards to segregation and Christianity through his position in the synod and in his referencing to the Bible's authority to establish and continue segregation as part of God's plan.[59]

In 1960, Bob Jones, Senior delivered a radio address entitled "Is Segregation Scriptural?". Like Gillespie, Jones opens his address by first establishing the authority of the Bible stating that "we folks at Bob Jones University believe that whatever the Bible says is so…when the Bible speaks clearly about any subject, that settles it. (Jones, Sr. 1960, 2) Latour's mediating, translating and interpreting concepts are clearly evident in Jones glossing over how interpretive practices filter the text for its reader. Arguing that the Bible "clearly states" is an interpretive act, arguing for Biblical authority that mirrors pro-slavery advocates use of biblical authority. Jones clearly states his thesis: "White folks and colored folks, you listen to me. You cannot run over God's plan and God's established order without having trouble. God never meant to have one race." (Jones, Sr. 1960, 10) And stated even more clearly later on: "racially we have separation in the Bible." (Jones, Sr. 1960, 21) The reason for racial tension and conflict is not, according to Jones, inequality or injustice caused by humanity but rather that God's plan is not begin followed and tension between races is the result. Jones is not arguing that injustice is

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[58] Thurman recalls how his grandmother, who was enslaved, would ask him to read from the Bible to her but never from the letters of Paul. When Thurman asked her why, she told him that it was because the slaveholders and/or the ministers they brought in would use those texts to justify slavery. His grandmother recounted that the minister "…would go on to show how it was God's will that we were slaves and how, if were god and happy slaves, God would bless us. I promised my Maker that if I ever to read or if freedom ever came, I would not read that part of the Bible." (Thurman 1996, 30–31)

[59] Gillespie also quotes from Abraham Lincoln and Booker T. Washington to further provide authority for his argument.

not present in the world rather that injustice cannot be made right without following God's plan. "I do not say that things are right. But things are not going to be made right by trying to overthrow God's established order." (Jones, Sr. 1960, 12) That established order being, of course, segregation. Those working to "overthrow God's established order" in Jones' phrasing are from Satan. (Jones, Sr. 1960, 11, 15, 17)[60] Jones' argues that the resolution to this is then "if we would just listen to the Word of God and not try to overthrow God's established order, we would not have any trouble. God never meant for America to be a melting pot to rub out the line between the nations. That was not God's purpose for this nation." (Jones, Sr. 1960, 15) Latour's observation of the constructed/not constructed nature is clearly in evidence. Like Gillespie, Jones argues that God segregated the Hebrews from the other nations thus codifying the Jewish people as a segregated people. Specifically Jones argues several times that segregation is Biblical because God "has fixed the habitations of their borders" (Jones, Sr. 1960, 13, 29) inferring that the Bible is applying only to race and not to language or other criteria.[61] As Graham argues in the example from chapter one, being against state or legal institutions is to be against God and His authority. "If you are against segregation and against racial separation, then you are against God Almighty because He made racial separation…"[62] (Jones, Sr. 1960, 19) Jones additionally ties this into his argument against interracial marriage, describing it as "…marrying outside the will of God." (Jones, Sr. 1960, 28) Jones bookends his address with Biblical authority in order to bolster and establish his own authority. He opens with a rhetorical move to establish empathy and agreement with his audience stating "…all orthodox, Bible-believing Christians agree on one thing; and that is, that whatever the Bible says is so." (Jones, Sr. 1960, 3) Jones is certainly borrowing on the authority of the Bible throughout this address. But, curiously, Jones at the end of his address emphatically states "I know what the Word of God teaches…I know what is going on." (Jones, Sr. 1960, 29, 31) If the Biblical text is as clear as Jones claims in its support of segregation why does Jones have to insert his own authority? It is Jones' statement "I know what is going on" which is meant to establish him as a recognized and respected authority in

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[60] References to the devil in arguments against Civil Rights or integration were not uncommon. Randall Stephens quotes Senator Willis Robertson as saying "…Satanic forces are at work to delude even the most wary among us" as Robertson was "fighting aggressively against the Civil Rights Bill in April 1964." (Stephens 2016, 581)

[61] It is worth noting that Jones' contemporaries were critical of this viewpoint. James Oliver Buswell III offers a good example of a rejoinder to Jones's argument "On this basis, not only races but language groups, sexes…should be segregated." (Buswell 1964, 58–59)

[62] https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/blogs/evangelical-history/is-segregation-scriptural-a-radio-address-from-bob-jones-on-easter-of-1960/

appropriately interpreting the Bible in regards to segregation. But if the Bible is clear why does Jones need to insist that he is right? Whether or not Jones would admit to it, the clarity of the Biblical message, and the established order of God as regarding racial separation are deliberate, interpretive acts that are specifically constructed in order to mask the interpretive layer with appeals to common sense, clarity and orthodoxy.[63] Jones and Gillespie both serve as significant examples of where "…Scripture is interpreted by the segregationist to support his own case and science (social and physical) is variously discounted or opposed." (Buswell 1964, 62) Jones ends his address by equating desegregation with the Antichrist; "The darkest day the world has ever known will be when we have one world like they are talking about now…the Antichrist will take over and sit down on the throne…we are going to face this." (Jones, Sr. 1960, 31) If there is an ultimate example of cultural decay/moral decline the Antichrist is certainly that for Protestant thinking. While Jones' language here does presage the Cold War language and imagery of Russia as linked to the Antichrist his application of desegregation as apocalypse gives a clear picture to the degree of fear and distaste that was associated with equality of black and white people.[64]

In his address Jones while dwelling most strongly on the aspects of authority also develops the other dispositions in his emphasis that cultural decay/moral decline is the result of doing away with segregation and any resulting violence is due to the failing to accept the authority of God's plan as outlined by the Bible.

Conclusion

This chapter has sought to show the essential nature of the role of authority in the three dispositions in support of civilizer theology. Specifically, how the perception of Biblical authority is used by civilizer theology to maintain and consolidate power and opinion, as demonstrated in the discussion of Biblical exegesis in support of slavery and in support of segregation. As demonstrated in this chapter these appeals to authority are often also connected to or a piece of violence. The next chapter will take up on the discussion of violence as the third dispositions of civilizer theology.

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[63] Understanding this a radio address originally, Jones uses the phrase "listen to me" six times which can also be understood as an appeal to be heard as authoritative. Especially when connected to the phrase "I know…" is trying to establish himself rhetorically as an authority to impress upon his listeners that his reasoning carried weight.
[64] For further discussion of Antichrist, Russia and End Times, see Paul Boyer's 2009 book W*hen Time Shall be No More: Prophecy Belief in Modern American Culture* Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Chapter Four: Violence

Introduction

Violence is the third disposition in civilizer theology. This chapter will argue that violence as embedded in the civilizing process, not separate from it. This chapter will also discuss how violence, and the threat of violence has been used as a means of motivation, grounded in fear, to support arguments of cultural decay and the need for authority. In the previous two chapters, discussions of violence have already occurred alongside the exploration of the first two dispositions, recalling Irons' discussion of Turner's rebellion as an example. It is impossible to talk about either cultural decay or authority without also discussing violence.

It is not my goal in this chapter to establish an argument that the church is directly responsible for racial violence; rather the 21st century white Protestant church's response to black people's experience in America continues to be defined by the responses set in the early 1900's, specifically grounded in practices of segregation as discussed in the previous chapter. The examples that follow are less invested in specific depictions of violent events of slavery and lynching, as these are already well-documented. Rather this investigation seeks to flesh what links, if any, exist between theology and violence as it relates to this history. I am seeking to tread lightly while still trying to draw out a compelling and meaningful argument. What should be noted in this chapter is that evangelical churches, both in their church bodies and the church's physical structures, and similarly the theology, homiletic and hermeneutics practices in the bodies and structures are both site of and sites for violence.

Violence and Civilization

While it has been argued that the progression of civilization is characterized by a reduction of violence, this utopic conception fails in understanding the interdependence of violence in the civilizing process. The civilizing process is not defined in the absence of violence but rather, as Elias argues, by the degree to which violence is restrained both by affective, social means as well the restraint of the state (ie, capital punishment). Violence is justified in its deployment against those who are perceived to challenge authority or bringing about cultural decay. Thus, Elias locates the role of violence as embedded in the civilizing process and not in opposition or antithetical to it. Elias argues that violence becomes restrained in conjunction with moves towards centralized authority, integrated economies, and personal affects but it never

disappears. Violence ebbs and flows in response to affective influences, economic changes and in response to centralized authorities. Elias explicitly argues against interpreting the civilizing process as a progressive movement toward improvement or regression but to recognize instead that civilization "…involve[s] quantitative changes…" and these changes are taking place within "…the dynamic network of dependencies into which a human life is woven, [wherein] the drives and behavior of people take on a different form." Discussions of violence are located in "comparative terms when discussing different phases" of the civilizing process." (Elias 1982b, 86–87) That historical context, interrelated with the "dynamic network of dependencies", frames the expectations of what civilized behavior is in the past as well as in the present where historical context meeting with societal structures and systems can simultaneously act as both a motivation of violence or as a check to it; "…the structure of society that demands and generates a specific standard of emotional control." (Elias 1982a, 201) This collective rise and fall of violence is what allows Elias to call this a process rather to describe civilization or being civilized as a move towards a utopia. Elias argues that it is necessary to plan for or allow for violence as civilization does not negate or eliminate violence but consigns it to a particular realm or area of oversight; i.e. the state. It is worth pointing out briefly Elias does argue that "religion…never has in itself a "civilizing" or affect-subduing effect…religion is always exactly as "civilized" as the society or class which upholds it." (Elias 1982a, 200) In relation to civilizer theology this can be certainly seen as true referencing Graham's, Gillespie's or Jones' statements. Recognizing that certain religious traditions do have a long history of anti-violence, particularly the Anabaptist movements, there is certainly more to explore in the relationship of violence and religion than this paper has the space to do so. Understanding violence as held in check as well as loosed by both societal structure and affective controls, helps to frame violence not as antithetical to being civilized but rather that the possibility of violence is always present and is not expunged from a civilized society and can be used or manipulated in a variety of directions. Thurman observes when living in California during World War II in California there were "billboard caricatures of the Japanese…the point was…to read the Japanese out of the human race; they were constructed as monsters and as such stood in immediate candidacy for destruction." (Thurman 1965, 2)

Like authority, violence relies upon proximity and power; the presence of one enables the possibility of the other. As quoted in chapter three, and equally applicable here, Thurman writes that "The threat of violence within a framework of well-night limitless power is a

weapon[and]…may be implemented not only by constituted authority but also by anyone acting in behalf of the established order." (Thurman 1996, 31) The idea of "anyone acting in behalf of the established order" is determined by the degree to which the affective societal impulses align with the established order. Lynching of black men and women is a prime example especially when connected with Latour's interpreting/mediating/delegating in regards to interpreting black men as dangerous and that any (white) person could, through the assembling of sufficient force and public opinion, could inhabit the roles of judge, jury and executioner.

Like Thurman, Elias also recognizes violence in its role within the civilizing process in order to emphasize the ambiguity of what it is to "be civilized"; "…tendencies towards an overall structure of human relationships in which individuals or groups can by direct or indirect threat of violence, restrict and control the access of others to certain contested possibilities…" (Elias 1982b, 151) Similarly, Braudy argues that "St. Augustine developed a theory of just war to justify Christians fighting the barbarians who attacked Rome….the preeminent validation was the Europe-wide model to channel the violence of knightly power into the idealized code of personal conduct called chivalry. Chivalry, properly understood, would shape the behavior of the true knight and allow the condemnation of the false." (Braudy 2005, 74) Chivalry for both Braudy and Elias provides then an affective mold to appropriately channel aggression and violence in defense of justice and righteousness. In an effort to generate its own authority and historical precedent/legitimacy, white supremacy has continued to use symbols and terms from knighthood and chivalry assuredly not limited to the role of chivalry defending innocent womanhood. The correlation then that many lynchings being based on the false accusations of black men raping white women while not holding white men to the same standard for the rape of black women should not be lost. This is also to recognize that violent actions could be modified within the constraints of chivalry so that violence is only enacted when the code of chivalry allows for it. This call to "morality and service" can thus be mobilized to serve as a shibboleth or organizing principle to define insiders/outsiders. Kendi cites examples from 1835 where "white male thugs…shouted about their mission to protect White women from the hypersexual Black-faced animals that, if freed, would ravage the exemplars of human purity and beauty." (Kendi 2017, 177) The indirect threat of violence must be understood as being experienced differently by different groups so that the possibility of encountering state authority, and thus its violence, can be engaged by one group without significant consequence or interference while other groups

regularly come into contact with the consequences of state-sponsored violence. There is no shortage of stories about DWB (Driving While Black) that expose the structure of relationship of black driver to police officer as a regularly contested one. The deaths of Philando Castille[65] and Sandra Bland[66] bear out the consequences of the weight of this structure when the violence of its constriction is brought to bear. It is this experience to which Young is describing when he writes the "…*idea* of a black body has been and continues to be projected across actual physical bodies; …how the misrecognition of individual bodies "as the black body" creates similar experiences." (H. Young 2010, 4)[67]

Elias' framing of violence situates its two-sidedness, its openness to interpretation: that the ability to frame violent acts or those who perpetuate them as "…barbarians, either from the outside or homegrown, flush with impassioned emotions, devoid of self-control, against which a…civilization could define itself." (Braudy 2005, 292) The characterization of violence in civilizer theology, as only deployed against lawlessness or disorder, fails, deliberately or otherwise, to understand the role of violence as a means of social control, informed by historical practice, and in affective relation to the state and the people living within it.

Based on this understanding violence is an effective motivator in the dispositions of civilizer theology linking the idea of Braudy's "barbarians" and Elias' civilizing processes. For example, this reasoning follows the pattern, as follows: If cultural decay, as linked to those individuals considered uncivilized, even barbaric, is not checked, then the authority of state and/or will begin to fail. Because morality is framed as in decline, the affective response, bolstered by a previous moral standard which would have previously worked to hold violence in check will no longer be sufficient to do so and violence will ensue. If violence can be framed as the result of the actions of undesirable outsiders then the defense that can be mustered does not have to contend with difficult questions of violence against its own community members.

Brundage reinforces Elias' framing of violence as affective response with the observation

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[65] Castille was stopped 46 times in 14 years. For additional statistics on DWB and Castille specifically see https://www.npr.org/sections/codeswitch/2016/07/20/486512846/46-stops-on-the-driving-life-and-death-of-philando-castile.

[66] Bland's death was initially declared a suicide which has been roundly contested as well as the allegations that Bland assaulted an officer. Her death lead to the hashtag SayHerName as well as the SayHerName report. See http://aapf.org/sayhernamereport. See https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2015/07/20/us/sandra-bland-arrest-death-videos-maps.html?mtrref=en.wikipedia.org&gwh=C5772A6767EF0B6E115360C5815BF91B&gwt=pay&assetType=REGIWALL for additional information on Bland's arrest and death.

[67] See footnotes 4 and 6 in this chapter for additional discussion of this misrecognition and its consequences as well as the way that this is baked into 21st century language. This extends to the findings that Black and Hispanic are more likely to be "ticketed, searched and arrested more often than whites." (see https://openpolicing.stanford.edu/findings/)

that violence "…flouted the purported refinement of the age…a reluctance to inflict cruelty was a mark of civilization, while a disposition toward cruelty placed one beyond the pale of civilized humanity. To surrender to passion, to display insensitivity to suffering, and to cause intentional pain was to mock the code of civilized society." (Brundage 2018, 95) Braudy points out that it was barbarians who were cruel and thus uncivilized and were meant to be fought; "…seeing the enemy as less than human, opposing his culture and eradicating his life." (Braudy 2005, 135) This also serves to strengthen the insider's sense of identity though this is definitively flexible; "…the opposition of civilization and barbarism similarly strengthened a sense of national identity…But "barbarism" historically has no fixed definition-sometimes, when it is "savage" it might be negative; at others, when it is "primitive" it might be positive." (Braudy 2005, 291) Civilizer theology employs these arguments against the humanity of black people to characterize them as barbarian and "the other", including depictions as savage or brutish, serving not only to ostracize black people but to enforce the togetherness of whiteness. Kendi pays close attention to the racist discussions of black people in *Stamped from the Beginning* as "animal" (340-341) "brute" (343) and "savages" (269). These citations are meant to show how these depictions are located throughout the history of America. These terms are particularly important in a paper like this one that attempting to connect ideas of being civilized as these terms are certainly antithetical to "being civilized." The civilizer theology framework uses the disposition of violence to its own ends, to define non-civilized behavior or to characterize behavior that is considered non-civilized as violent, while simultaneously cloaking its own defense of violence in theological language. To recall the Franklin Graham quote in chapter one, outbreaks of violence, even state violence, are interpreted as failures of obedience to which agents of state power are allowed to interpret and response with significant and even deadly violence. Graham's comments closely tie the work of police to the stabilization of civilization as legitimate violent acts. The individual or group who is labeled uncivilized can be disregarded or chastised for their inability to "be civilized". Similarly, recent responses to and by white supremacy follow Brundage's, and Elias's frameworks. The violence instigated by the white supremacist groups in Charlottesville, VA in August, 2017 is framed as distinctly un-American (i.e. uncivilized), as it was perceived to have violated the affective perception and the affective outlook of those onlookers, regardless of its historical precedent. In Elias' view these responses are better understood as a point in time wherein the affective controls, as well as state controls, shifted to the extent that such a display is

possible. These responses exists alongside the "I Can Breathe" shirts and hoodies worn by some pro-NYPD supporters and officers in response to the protests following Eric Garner's death, echoing the belief that if the state has punished an individual it is because that individual deserved it in violating social and legal standards.[68] This implies if there was no (public) resistance, there would be no (state) violence. Bob Jones, Sr. words are echoed here that if God's established plan was followed, violence would not. As discussed briefly in the previous chapter, somewhat paradoxically in the presence of "white evangelical anxieties about an intrusive, tyrannical federal government…", the white evangelical church has a long history of close association and support for America's military and police forces. (Stephens 2016, 575)

This connects to Elias' observation that the framework of civilizing processes sets traditions and standards, serving to then set an array of boundaries defining an acceptable range of behavior (i.e. civilized behaviors) which then also defines and sets the understanding of individuals and groups in relation to one another. As discussed in chapter one there is a long history of assumption of criminality around black bodies attaching this history to all black bodies so that "…blackness as an idea projected across a body… not only incorporated within the body but also influences the ways it views other bodies." (H. Young 2010, 20) and how other bodies view that body. How bodies are viewed, as civilized or barbaric, as saved or unsaved, as savage or peaceful however overtly those views are held shapes the response to the question "*what* are the forms of violence we oppose and favor?" (Sexton 2018, 81). The answer to this is located in the understanding that acceptable violence is formed and shaped by affective and interdependent bounds in relation to the standards set by perception based in cultural decay/moral decline and authority. In turn, Girard argues that violence can serve in the role of a "rite…which selects a certain form of violence as "good" as necessary to the unity of the community, and sets up in opposition to it another sort of violence that is deemed "bad", because it is affiliated to violent reciprocity." (Girard and Gregory 1977, 115) Civilizer theology uses this understanding to generate an understanding of violence as distinct and separate rather than structurally connected and interdependent in defense of absolutist claims to power and control. For example, and as discussed in the previous chapter, segregation was seen as necessary to maintain control for the unity of the community, characterizing the efforts to integrate as bad and the violence that was generated in response to integration efforts was reciprocal in defense of community.

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[68] See https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2014/dec/20/i-can-breathe-thanks-to-the-nypd-shirts-flood-pro-/

Slavery

      Kendi argues that racism should be understood as "racial discrimination→racist ideas→ignorance/hate…[as] the causal relationship driving America's history of race relations." (Kendi 2017, 9) Likewise Tommie Shelby writes that we must "…consider the role of racist *beliefs* in an adequate account of racism." (Shelby 2002, 413) Within this history violence is a constant presence against black people so that an understanding of the struggle of black people in America cannot be seen as ending in emancipation. Because emancipation while a necessary step it did not establish equality; "the goal was never just emancipation but equality. Black people wanted liberty from both slavery and racism." (K. C. Jackson 2019, 158) Kendi and Jackson's comments, along with the other examples examined up to this point, offer significant examples when the drive towards equality came into conflict with racism, functioning as an affective control or standard resulting in violence.

      As Kendi, Hartman and numerous other scholars have pointed out, the violence of slavery is well known, not only in its physical violence against black bodies but also slavery's representation of Black people as a people less than civilized sanctioned through theological arguments which served a justification for violence. This can be seen in the supposed "curse of Ham" and more general uses of the Bible; i.e. using "…the Old Testament to prove that God had sanctioned slavery and quoted the New to prove that Jesus had reaffirmed the sanction." (Eugene Dominick Genovese 1985, 7) However as Kendi notes, previously quoted in chapter three, black people have been in a double-bind in regards to violence: "If Blacks did not violently resist, they were cast as naturally servile. And yet, whenever they did fight, reactionary commentators, in both North and South, classified them as barbaric animals who needed to be caged in slavery." (Kendi 2017, 173) Also quoted in chapter three, of this paper if choosing to fight, in the context of the American Revolution, "patriotic Whigs…characterized other revolutions as dangerous or anarchic or as threats to society while describing the American Revolution as the fulfillment of prophecy or the unfolding of a divine plan." (Glaude 2007, 47) Kendi and Glaude are re-quoted here to show the flexibility of application between authority and violence as well as the interdependence of the three dispositions. Jackson writes in support "…no issues pushed white leadership to the edges of their beliefs more than equality and violence." (K. C. Jackson 2019, 156)

There are many detailed texts dealing with the violence of slavery.[69] Abolitionists and others regularly referenced the violence of slavery, to make an argument from empathy and pity in efforts to humanize and make real for Northern whites the violence of slavery. "Abolitionists relied on appeals to both perfectionist strands in nineteenth-century American Protestantism and sentiment to soften the hearts of white Americans to the long-tolerated cruelty of slavery…the antislavery campaign in general, placed a premium on the most lurid and horrid example of slavery's evils." (Brundage 2018, 93) Brundage draws from the historical record to show the abolitionists' emphasis on the visual in attempts to elicit sympathy for the abolitionist's desired audience.[70] The societal constraints that recognized slavery as a part of life had to be able to justify its violence; namely, "…slavery was not only accepted as an economic fact of life, but defended as a positive good sanctified by Scripture and capable of producing a Christian social order based on observance of mutual duty, slave to master and master to slave." (Raboteau 152 Slave Religion) The violence of slavery, what Glaude calls "the economics of violence" did indeed bring economic benefit to the entire nation as well as persevering what was argued to be the God-given, social order; "The economies of violence surrounding black subjugation in the nineteenth century affected all persons marked as black, slave or free." (Glaude 2012, 130) Likewise in her scholarship, Hartman "…examines the forms of violence and domination enabled by the recognition of humanity licensed by the invocation of rights, and justified on the grounds of liberty and freedom." (Hartman 2010, 6) The violent response to slave uprisings was not only that white people feared for their lives or the destruction of their property but that they would conceivably be forced to recognize the blacks equally as human beings. Hartman also notes the fragility of legal decisions to restrain violence when the social affect does not recognize or abide the authority of that legal decision and when the legal decision is not supported by adequate state protection.

> "…the majority opinion of *Plessy v. Ferguson* attests to the longevity of antebellum attitudes towards black and neglects the changes instituted by emancipation, it similarly confirms the impermanence or fragility of the law as compared to the durability of sentiment and the peculiar fashion in which the law established its autonomy-that is, the authorizing and ambivalent gesture in which the law affirmed and seceded to sentiment." (Hartman 2010, 192)

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[69] See, briefly, *Slave Patrols, They Made Great Marks on Me, The Half Has Never Been Told*.

[70] This practice has a distinctly darker parallel seventy-five to eighty-five years later when images of lynchings were circulated as souvenir postcards and newspaper images.

In Hartman's words, Elias echoes. The legal affirmation of sentiment, as Hartman phrases it, continued to find its way into the 20th century across the United States particularly in the manner which "…the levers of policy law and bureaucracy [were employed] to maintain segregation and racial privilege." (Purnell, Theoharis, and Woodard 2019, 6) Hartman notes in turn that "the codification of race in the law secured the subjugation of blacks, regulated social interaction, and prescribed the terms of interracial conduct and association…" (Hartman 2010, 194) Elias' tracing of the establishing of certain manners through the writing of books of etiquette becomes more than a mundane example as its points to a larger practice of taking affective practices or what Hartman calls sentiment and encoding them; the codification practice serving to confirm in law what is already being practiced. To confirm through law strengthens the link between who or what is "legal" or "illegal", barbaric or uncivilized and permits the deployment of state violence as well as the sanctioning of individual or citizen violence against collectively perceived violations of social interactions, such as interracial interactions and interracial marriage, which in turn reinforced the affective ties and strengthened the legal precedents developed in response to those affective ties.[71] Myrdal in his Tocqeuville-esque study published in 1944 captures an ongoing cultural belief in regards to black reception of violence, that "…if a Negro is the victim of a sudden outburst of violence, "he must have done something to deserve it." (Myrdal 1996, 350) Kendi astutely points out that while there is much to commend of Myrdal's work including "…the devastating assault on the rationales of segregationists, the encyclopedic analyses of racial discrimination, and the fallacy of southerners' separate-but-equal brand" Myrdal's argument is strongly arguing that the one of the primary "…solutions to White racism was still Black assimilation." (Kendi 350-351) Assimilation and uplift suasion are two sides of the same coin; as neither will ensure equality as these two approaches are characterized by constantly moving goal lines. The abolishment of slavery did not establish equality through law and in not establishing legal equality implicitly reinforced the legality of nationwide segregation. The laws that were supposed to protect black freedoms were regularly ignored at state and local levels necessitating "illegal" protests and other activism to bring attention to these issues and eventually change.

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[71] Not to take this too far afield, but other examples of affective ties leading to legislative change can be found in a breadth of examples from women's suffrage to legalization of gay marriage to the steady legalization of marijuana in the United States. That each of these examples achieved affective support necessary to weakened the previous social ties of the majority opinion providing support for legal or judicial decision to make real/legal the affective ties.

The violence enabled by slavery's structures against black bodies was not limited to slavery. The presence of violence inside and outside of the slave-owning South sets precedent for the white violence in response to segregation. In connecting to Elias' understanding of violence as entrenched in the civilizing process because of affective perception is confirmed here, understanding "the social pattern of subduing the Negroes by means of physical force was inherent in the slavery system." (Myrdal 1996, 558)

This is America.

In 1834, in New York City, during the "July Days celebration…a mob of angry merchants" burned Chatham Street Church to the ground because of the church's integration of worshippers in its pews. The mob then proceeded to raze St. Philip's African Episcopal Church, whose pastor had been accused of "…officiating an interracial marriage." The mob then carried their violence into the surrounding neighborhoods. Eddie Glaude in his retelling of this history pointedly observes "…the violence and hatred were fueled by deeper concerns about who was fit to be an American and what it would mean to incorporate into the young nation racial and religious identities deemed incompatible with a racialized conception of citizenship…for [many]…only white Protestant men could be Americans." (Glaude 2012, 128) There are several items to note in Glaude's account. The first is the accusation of officiating an interracial marriage is sufficient evidence for the subsequent acts of burning the church and taking mob violence the surrounding area. The spuriousness of the account inciting to violence is an echoing prophetic call of the similar accusations that would result in acts of lynching eighty to ninety years later. The violence of lynching is prefigured, is of a piece with the 1800's; these are legacies of violence that form functional, and affective, social chains. Secondly Glaude's account bears out Elias' observation that violence is not separate from being civilized or antithetical to it but is instead incorporated into the social fabric as set and constrained by that society's functional chains. In this context, those chains specifically being grounded in racism served to justify extrajudicial acts of violence. This instance also connects to a general characterization of American violence which "…has taken the form of action by one group of citizens against another group, rather than by citizens against the state"; and the violence of citizen against citizen "…has usually brought the power of authority into play as a third party…" (Hofstadter and Wallace 1970, 10) Hofstadter, supporting Glaude, provides a perspective of looking at the

violence that followed the Civil War in Reconstruction and into the early 1900's as "…used ostensibly to protect the American…the white Protestant, or simply the established middle-class way of life and morals." (Hofstadter and Wallace 1970, 11) It is worth noting the middle class nature of this riot as located in the merchants participating as depicted in Glaude's account. This linking of middle-class and violence will inform the discussion below of the Ku Klux Klan (KKK). As the KKK was largely populated by the middle-class this links Glaude's historical account with historic practice to see the links in a history of violence deployed in the defense of a particular social order.

Hofstadter and Wallace gather primary text accounts of significant moments of violence in American history which does not have direct theological or religious motivations for the violence. Specifically these primary sources provide first-hand accounts of significant episodes of violence against black people in areas outside of the American South in the years leading up to the Civil War. When perpetrators or witnesses are interviewed, there is not a sense communicated in those moments these were explicitly religiously motivated. While not explicitly linked, James Cone argued for connections between the violence and theology writing "The claim that whites had the right to control the black population through lynching and other extralegal forms of mob violence was grounded in the religious belief that America is a white nation called by God to bear witness to the superiority of "white over black." (Cone 1969, 7) As discussed in chapter three, race in America has not been seen as a spiritual issue and evangelicals have tended not to discuss or engage issues of violence and race in their public writing and thinking, instead arguing race is a political issue and not a moral one.

Church and Public Space

The violence of slavery, employed against black bodies, was set loose to roam nationwide in the national embrace of segregation following the Civil War. However the brief Reconstruction period offered black people the most significant degree of access to all aspects of public life up to that time. The tension over having black people in white spaces as free equals became apparent in the violence that undergirded the national Jim Crow enforcement. Kendi writes that "in 1866 black urbanites, new and old, were resisting decimation and building schools, churches and associations, achieving a modicum of economic security. And yet, their uplift did not improve race relations…[it] only fueled the violence…" (Kendi 2017, 240)

Building from Kendi, there are two particular places where the shift from slavery to segregation can be traced, church and recreational or public spaces. Bennett's *Religion and the Rise of Jim Crow in New Orleans* and Wolcott's *Race, Riots and Roller Coasters* examine how theology reinforced segregation practices and how those practices were made real and reinforced in public spaces where violence and legal actions were combined as a means to prevent black people from equally and freely entering white space. This violence was not limited to the American South but as Wolcott demonstrates, was nationwide; "many social scientist, activists and politicians viewed race as a national problem, not one limited to a backward South steeped in traditions of Jim Crow." (Wolcott 2012, 48) As demonstrated in both Bennett's and Wolcott's accounts, segregation was maintained in public spaces like roller rinks and public beaches as well as sacred places such as church. Reading Bennett and Wolcott's accounts together emphasize the fact that segregation was embedded not just in education but was part of the warp and woof of the national social fabric. And as Glaude and Holfstadter argue, segregation was supported by regular and significant instances of white violence against black people. Bennett and Wolcott collectively provide a framing device for how decisions made at the individual church level in regards to segregation reflected national views against racial equality, rather than reflecting in church practice the role of racial equality. To be sure, correlation is not causation, but I hope to prove the overlap between these two texts demonstrates a meaningful connection. Bennett writes that "whites had to deliberately impose segregation. It did not emerge smoothly or inevitably as a pattern of religious or racial organization." (Bennett 2016, 13) This is distinctly born out in Wolcott's account where the violence against integration is consistently the response of those white individuals responding to black people attempting to integrate public places.

Bennett's book focuses on the late 1800's into the early 1900's and Wolcott begins her account in the early 1900's. The continuity between the two texts provides one means of recognizing that the ending slavery did not end racism. What Bennett describes in late 1800's in church life parallels the same lengths taken to maintain segregation in public spaces that Wolcott describes in the early to mid-1900s. There is certainly violence against the churches; as "Northern Presbyterians lost schoolhouse and churches in Tennessee to arson, while their teachers in Mississippi were victims of mob violence." (Bennett 2016, 26) While there is not bodily violence deployed within the ecclesiastical structures of the churches Bennett examines, Bennett argues that the example set by regional churches to maintain segregation served as a

local and national example, arguing "…that segregation within religious institutions encouraged and justified segregation in every other aspect of American society." (Bennett 2016, 1) Wolcott's account of the 1940's provides evidence of some white ministers working to desegregate outside of their church as a means of demonstrating a more equitable theology at work.

In their accounts Bennett and Wolcott trace arguments as to how public and sacred spaces reflect the beliefs of the people who are engaged in those spaces as leaders, congregants and practitioners. Bennett traces the Methodist-Episcopal church growth in New Orleans in the mid-1800's and specifically looks at the belief churches should be leading the way in racial equality. Bennett traces a complicated history that is in its progression, as it were, the inverse of what Wolcott is tracing. In her book, Wolcott traces the use of legislation, community pressure and grass-roots activism to actively integrate public spaces across the country. These approaches did not work every time by any means but in moving through the 1940s-1960s as Wolcott traces, there is, speaking broadly, a large national effort towards de-segregating public spaces.[72] The history Bennett traces is one where initially there is some degree of freedom, energy and polity in working towards racial reconciliation and equality, in certain denominations such as AME, ME and Presbyterian. Bennett notes that the 1880s in New Orleans are a time of significant interracial interaction and though as he observes in several places these efforts were not fully aligned. In the 1890's, particularly toward the end of that decade, Bennett traces what he describes as "the decline of interracial Methodism" presenting evidence which shows the deliberate sidelining of black leadership by the denomination; a sidelining which corresponded to greater societal increases and the reinforcement of segregation. Bennett captures the excitement and energy that comes out in the 1860's where there seems to be openness and opportunity for black people to participate and realize change as active members of their denomination and follow up that denominational action with local and political action as well. In the 1880's there is a distinct closing of those opportunities because as Bennett succinctly states, white denominational officials in the "…north as well as south, were simply unwilling to elevate a black man to an office where he would have authority over whites." (Bennett 2016, 77)[73] Racial

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[72] This is not to say that all places are integrated as some of these spaces, particularly public pools, became de-segregated because many white people stopped going when black people were finally allowed in.

[73] This parallels the *Dred Scott* decision where African Americans "had no rights which the white man was bound to respect." (Purnell, Theoharis, and Woodard 2019, 236) There is also precedent set, though the connections are hard to prove between the segregationist America and apartheid South Africa. Steve Biko's essay "The Church as seen by a Young Layman" covers much

equality in the church by the late 1880's and 1890s had become, in three short decades, unthinkable and the idea of black authority over white was inconceivable. In a phrasing that has been discussed through this paper, "white people did not see race as a moral issue but rather as a political issue (Bennett 2016, 68) or stated perhaps another way that "changing racial practices were merely social and pragmatic, not religious." (Bennett 2016, 78) This becomes a functional reworking of the pro-slavery argument that Hammond makes against Jefferson's "all men are created equal." By moving to a social and pragmatic stance on race and refusing to acknowledge the extent to which religious/theological understanding inform these stances, further serves to underscore Hammond's point. Additionally "scientifically-based" eugenics and the theory of evolution gave convenient excuses to not have to grapple with the role of a bi-racial church by denying the role of the African-American leadership in those areas.[74]

With the rise of the Moral Majority approximately 100 years from this point (late 1970s' into the 1980s) show a distinct change in the approach of evangelical, specifically to merging morality, politics and religion. Because there is a distinct shift where evangelical churches argues segregation is social not religious but with issues of abortion and gender shift to argue that these are religious and social issues. In the 1870's there was a sense of energy and hope that the collective action of the church coming together as a body could engender social change; "…the struggle for an integrated society remained inextricably intertwined with religious practice. Church members insisted that the examples and efforts of religious institutions could turn back the rising tide of Jim Crow and thereby transform the South's racial future." (Bennett 2016, 2) However, as Bennett documents the church did not respect the equality of black believers,

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of the same ground that Bennett does in his observations. Biko argued that churches were not "relevant to the black man's situation" (Biko and Stubbs 2004, 59) rather that they were "modelled on Western lines which white people know best." (Biko and Stubbs 2004, 59) Biko sought to a church model which he and his fellow black South Africans could "cherish…love…understand, and one that is relevant to us." (Biko and Stubbs 2004, 59) Biko argues that Christianity "…in its *introduction* was corrupted by the inclusion of aspects which made it the ideal religion for the *colonization* of people, …in its *interpretation* it is the ideal religion for the maintenance of the *subjugation* of the same people." (Biko and Stubbs 2004, 57) Biko is wrestling with the anatomy of the process as Thurman and Kendi. Nicholas Grant's book, *Winning our Freedoms Together: African Americans and Apartheid 1945-1960* provides an excellent account of the interconnectedness of the United States white supremacy and racial inequities that influenced South African apartheid structures. There is opportunity here for additional work in tracing how similarly theology and church played a role in both systems, perhaps even to apply the civilizer theological framework as discussed in this paper.

[74] Paul Harvey's article on Reverend Richard Boyd as a successful businessman, organizer and newspaper publisher in Nashville, Tennessee provides a biographical overview of Boyd's life that provides additional support for the same ground that Bennett is covering. Harvey's article is worth reading alongside of Bennett for the parallel and specific account it provides helping to demonstrate that the history Bennett recounts was experienced in other denominations and Southern cities. See Paul Harvey. 1996. "'The Holy Spirit Come to Us and Forbid the Negro Taking a Second Place': Richard H. Boyd and Black Religious Activism in Nashville, Tennessee." *Tennessee Historical Quarterly* 55 (3): 190–201.

particularly in leadership roles and thus failed to restrain segregation. The decision made to keep black leaders out of power was in fact a reinforcement of segregation in an embodiment of civilizer theology. Thus, this move further entrenched a nationwide segregation of public spaces which Wolcott chronicles and the resultant violence against black people in defending the segregation of those spaces. This is not to say that the inaction of churches in the 1800's is directly causal rather to borrow a phrase, inaction "fostered and legitimized violent actions by individuals…" (Dittmer 2006, 58) The violence experienced in working to end segregation is directly linked to "…the longstanding failure among many white Christians to acknowledge ongoing discrimination embedded in systems and structures…" (Tisby 2019, 184)

As Wolcott demonstrates through multiple examples, following legal challenges to de-segregate a particular public space, such as a pool, country club or beach, the attempts of black people to enter those spaces was met with significant violence from white people. This had a catch-22 like effect in that multiple cities across the country rather seeing the violence as emanating from maintaining a white social order, argued that "…riot prevention became the primary justification for maintaining Jim Crow." (Wolcott 2012, 77)[75] [76] As Wolcott points out that public spaces were important to the equality and liberty of black people, and thus were sites of violence. Wolcott's writing helps to understand how violence was directed at the grass-roots level activists who did not receive police or judicial protection in attempting to enter or participate in public spaces. There is the violence enacted against the activists (both black and white (at times)) by what Wolcott calls "white hoodlums" who were both allowed and encouraged to fight against integration efforts by the institution's proprietors.

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[75] Note how this recalls Gillespie's and Jones' arguments for segregation as an ordering force, essentially as a civilizing force that is keeping order, indeed the order as they understood it, established by God.

[76] Wiegand's and Wiegand's *The Desegregation of Public Libraries in the Jim Crow South* supports Wolcott's argument. While focusing on the American south, the efforts to maintain segregation of public libraries closely mirrored that of the efforts that Wolcott documents. Wiegand and Wiegand point out that while librarians "expressed righteous indignation about the manifestation of segregated libraries…few librarians were ready to put their lives on the line…few had suffered Jim Crow humiliations as a routine way of life…" (Wiegand and Wiegand 2018, 202) As a particular example pertinent to this paper, black patrons, from teenagers to adults actively took it upon themselves to integrate these spaces. In the 1965 Supreme Court case Brown V. Louisiana, which stemmed from the attempt of four black teenagers to integrate the West Feliciana Public Library. This library actually closed its three branches for a time rather than integrate. Additionally those trying to integrate were threatened with physical harm and vocal threats of death (see p. 178-179) The dissenting Judge Black wrote in his opinion that "order and tranquility" were essential to libraries and by allowing black people in who had, in their integration "tak[en] the law into its own hands…" threatened to become violent in the future: "the crowd moved by noble ideals today can become the mob ruled by hate and passion and greed and violence tomorrow." (Wiegand and Wiegand 2018, 184) The dispositions are present and active in the absence of theological justification. See Wiegand, Wayne A., and Shirley A. Wiegand. 2018. *The Desegregation of Public Libraries in the Jim Crow South: Civil Rights and Local Activism.* Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press.

Andrew Kahrl presents a supporting history to Wolcott focused specifically on the beaches and real estate of Connecticut and New York City. As though quoting Margaret McCulloch's 1950 report on segregation, Kahrl traces the visible and invisible systems supported by the formal and informal measures active in preventing black people from accessing public beaches, purchasing home in particular neighborhoods, and receiving protection against unjust housing practices. Kahrl's account focuses on a specific geographic area in America's north to better understand the consistent and specific role of "federal housing policies, local ordinances and real industry practices ensured that the "better life"…would be unavailable to people of color, except in a service capacity." (Kahrl 2018, 29) Kahrl similarly documents what Wolcott also observes that changes to segregation happened because of grass-roots activism as well as carefully picked legal battles. The active maintenance of exclusion of black people from public spaces and from specific neighborhoods Wolcott and Kahrl document, serve to broadly underscore the observations of the Kerner Report published in 1968, which echoed Tocqueville, America was "…moving toward two societies, one black, one white--separate and unequal." (United States and National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders 1988, 1, 204-205) Both Wolcott and Kahrl's accounts serve as extended examples and glosses on the Kerner Report's findings as the deliberate and ongoing exclusion of black people from American public life and spaces through legal and extra-legal means, regularly employing violence as reinforcement.

As Elias argues it is the actions and practices that characterized the form and shape of what is considered civilized. Elias's account of using the spoon at table only emerges after practices are established at table to be codified and sifted. Elias elides with Foucault here in what Elias calls a "circulation of constraints" to which "people submit…because they [the constraints] accord with tradition, because this tradition guarantees their own privileged positions and reflects the ideals and value with which they have grown up." (Elias 1984, 266, 274) The narrative of the American Revolution as a tradition did not validate the revolution of enslaved people. Similarly, the sense of tradition in theological practice as linked to slavery was a move of power and presented as truth, particularly in the interpretive acts taken from the Bible. As Foucault writes ""Truth" is linked in a circular relation with systems of power that produce and sustain it, and to effect of power which it induces and which extend it-a "regime of truth." (Chomsky and Foucault 2006, 170) For Oltman and Glaude, even Tocqueville, the spirit of American democracy has particularly been at odds with the actions and practices of that democracy. As

Irons points out, and discussed in chapter one, the violence of any non-white revolution was seen as inherently lawless even in the immediate aftermath of the American Revolution. Kendi quotes Garrison writing in the aftermath of Nat Turner's death of Garrison's concern that "…in America's "fury against the revolters" who would remember the "wrongs" of slavery?" (Kendi 2017, 173) Glaude points out that the Exodus narrative motivated or supported the belief that it was "…God's will that African American slaves should rise up violently against their oppressors." (Glaude 2012, 132) The lunch counter protests are particularly a good example of work required to change a tradition that is supported by a "truth" (black people not served) which required effectively the creation of a new tradition through the deployment of personal power against state and power of tradition. Lebron is drawing from the same well as Elias when he writes "The problem of social value indicates that our social practices, as embedded within a liberal democratic framework, are outwardly regulated by rules and principles meant to preempt categorical inequalities, but fail…in the face of race." (Lebron 2015, 139)

Burgin supports this in his account of the New Bethel shoot-in where two police officers opened fire on a RNA meeting at New Bethel Church. The meeting members returned fire and one of the officers was killed. The officers called for backup and an immense force descended on the church firing scores of rounds into it. The entire group meeting in New Bethel was summarily arrested and held without charges having brought or phones calls allowed but were being processed for fingerprints and nitrate tests. Judge Crockett improvised a courtroom and prosecutor to begin habeas corpus hearings in the police station to ensure those arrested received the appropriate treatment. This decision results in a significant conservative backlash against Crockett that called for his impeachment, ran stories and editorial cartoons against him and called for his removal from the bench. (Purnell, Theoharis, and Woodard 2019, 246) These threats were so intense that he was put under police protection for months. (Purnell, Theoharis, and Woodard 2019, 248) "That the police might have acted illegally, that they fired so many rounds at innocent people (and into a place of worship), and that black Detroiters had constitutional rights that could have been violated…" were not considered as plausible or possible. Rather Crockett was seen as having a vendetta against the police and justice. Crockett released a brilliant statement "reminding his audience of the double standard by which constitutional rights were applied: "Can you imagine the Detroit Police invading an all-white church and rounding up everyone in sight to be bussed to a wholesale lockup in a police

garage?...Can anyone explain in other than racist terms the shooting by police into a closed and surrounded church? If the killing had occurred in a white neighborhood, I believe the sequence of events would have been far different." (Purnell, Theoharis, and Woodard 2019, 249) It is worth noting that Crockett did receive both black and white support even as he was embattled and threatened. Two largely white faith groups also produced a television program/movie that was aired in Crockett's, and the defendants support. Crockett was eventually vindicated for his actions and was officially declared to have done the right thing.

Lynching

Like slavery, the scholarship of the violence of lynching are numerous.[77] Lynching's violence directly fits into Elias' framework as a piece of the social interdependencies where violence is used to maintain a desired social order. What resonates here is the distinct organized silence of white evangelicalism to respond in supportive ways to stop lynching as a practice or to organize against further racially-motivated violence. This same silence has been largely present in response to the Civil Rights Movement and the Black Lives Matter movement. While there is not a direct "cause-and-effect" between white Protestantism and lynching, white Protestantism most certainly "…establish[ed] a cultural predisposition that normalized lynching." (Evans 2010, 152) The presence of silence in addition to the support of segregation deliberately contributed to this cultural predisposition as "…religious discourse played a crucial role in shoring up claims that whites were superior to blacks." (Evans 2010, 124)

Just as the theologies of slavery and segregation are linked, the violence of lynching, particularly the castration and mutilation of black bodies has its roots in violence against slaves rendering the act of lynching doubly dehumanizing, if such a thing was possible. In Brundage's account, the listing of punishments for slaves as cataloged by slave accounts is notable for its abuses but of note, was the "cutting off of ears…castration, hanging, hanging then burning, castration then hanging, and hanging then decapitation." (Brundage 2018, 102) These practices find themselves revitalized and reused in the practice of lynching as an affective reminder that black people were not equal with white people.

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[77] See Wilkerson *Warmth of Other Suns,* Rushdy *American Lynching*, Evans *Cultures of Violence: Lynching and Racial Killing in South Africa and the American South,* Cone *The Cross and the Lynching Tree* among many others. The Equal Justice Initiative's Lynching in American report, (https://lynchinginamerica.eji.org/report/) provides an encompassing overview of the impact and horrifying number of the lynchings of Black men and women in America.

In the historical intertwining of politics and theology one can find attempts to construct theological support for lynching. "Lynching…is not an aberration from but an organic growth of the theological framework of Southern Protestantism…" this helps to understand "…why racial lynching could proliferate in such a self-consciously Christian social order." (Evans 2010, 123–24) Notably, Judge James M. Shackle argued that "An enlightened public opinion…is the voice of God…" Shackleford continues invoking "…the justice system is inadequate and that the lynching is finally an expression of communal values that are not just revolutionary but divine." (Rushdy 2014, 101) Irons in his comments on evangelical responses to Turner's rebellion, writes a chillingly apt observation that is equally applicable here and serves to tie together the various threads that have been examined up to this point; "…religious commitments…surely condition how whites responded to the insurrection." (Irons 2008, 136)

The tensions between races are then resolved through violence as a means of reinforcing the power imbalances at play in the interdependencies between black and white. "Many whites acted on their racial prejudice because southern states made it safe to do so by minimizing and oftentimes eliminating the repercussions for such violent acts as lynching." (Francis 2014, 57) This can be read in light of Taylor's observation of the conflation of Black "…race, risk and criminality to legitimize close scrutiny of Black communities as well as the consequences of such scrutiny." (K.Y. Taylor 2016, 3) J. Kameron Carter observes that "…the White Man…[is put forth] as the original, national figure, the exemplar of a citizen….one strives to reproduce model citizenry within oneself by imitating the (white) original." (Carter 2012, 87) The failure, as Carter argues, to reproduce whiteness, which is understood as authoritative, (see the argument laid out in chapter two) gives ground for reinforcing the need to more closely surveil non-white communities or in theological realm that theological practices must adhere to the white standard in order to be recognized as legitimate. This is the "the feedback loop between state and society" (Francis 2014, 178) which, in its interdependence with the framework and structures of whiteness as a fundamental part of the make-up of state and society, reinforces that makeup through its continuation.

The violence of lynching challenges both the due process of governmental standards and approaches as well authority of the individual as a citizen and a human being. "…a certain kind of recognition and authority is the proper provenance of …political identity. The citizen is entitled to the protection for the law and in a democracy, of making contract, voting, and

consenting to the distribution of power." (Lebron 2018, 77) This is why Glaude connects violence to citizenship. This is why black men were not described as citizen or human being but as beasts or monsters and is not limited to the 19th century. It re-echoes in Darren Wilson's depiction of Michael Brown as demonic.[78] Lynching as a violent act needs to be understood as part of the civilizing process, as well as to civilizer theology, because the horrific act of lynching of black men and women was the judging act of white people to declare that black people were not equal and could be sentenced to death on the spot, without evidence. One of the regular fears of segregation expressed by white people was sharing the same space with black people as equals. It was a fear of contamination expressed through distaste manifested in violence, in many instances.

Lynching both attracted and required crowds, as "…every act performed in the presence of many people took on prestige value." (Elias 1982a, 139) Following this statement as Elias argues that the exposures of the body is "a distasteful offense…a general offense…" lynching victims were often stripped of their clothes, tortured and emasculated. (Elias 1982a, 140) To return to Latour here it was the constructed narrative of accusations of rape to render black men and women as sub-human or inherently dangerous that justified violence serving to release the violence bearers from the framework of affect. The thousands of people who gathered were able to reduce or even ignore "…the level of habitually, technically and institutionally consolidated self-control…" which would have expected to be in place particularly in a place associated with affect control as the "genteel South". (Elias 1982a, 140) Lynching was the system of violence that could descend at any moment, recalling Thurman's quote earlier, firmly reinforcing societal boundaries, so that "the lynching of blacks…manifest a desire to establish beyond any doubt the point that the caste system of the South could not be challenged." (Hofstadter and Wallace 1970, 21) This system was reinforced by ensuring that "…any violence by blacks against whites was savagely punished, violence against blacks-whether by whites or other blacks-was not." (Mennell 2008, 142)

The Ku Klux Klan: Violent Guardians of Morality

The Ku Klux Klan's use of violence and their courting of middle-class individuals and promoting of middle-class value causes them to of particular interest to this paper. As Baker

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[78] The text of Darren Wilson's testimony is here: https://www.scribd.com/document/248132491/Darren-Wilson-testimony

writes "more recent studies demonstrate that Klansmen were bankers, lawyers, dentists, doctors, ministers, businessmen and teachers. Most of the membership were firmly of the middle class and had access to education." (Baker 2011, 9) It is not a stretch to connect the middle-class membership of the Klan with Glaude's rioting merchants. While the violence of the KKK is amply documented, scholars have also connected this violence to a theological foundation. Not only did the Klan actively court church support but, in some individual cases also linked theological reasoning to their violence. Baker argues in discussing the Klan's second incarnation in the 1920s "Faith was an integral part of that incarnation of the order…The Klan…was a campaign to protect and celebrate Protestantism. It was a *religious* order." (Baker 2011, 5) Additionally there were movements by the clergy to reactivate the Klan "Methodist and Baptist preachers were active in reviving the Ku Klux Klan after the First World War." (Myrdal 1996, 563) It should not come as a surprise that the Klan embraced "Protestant Christianity and a crusade to save America from domestic as well as foreign threats." (Baker 2011, 11) Feldman support this viewpoint that the Klan was "exclusively Protestant organization" and "concern over community morals sprang from the culture of evangelical Christianity." (Feldman 2015, 36) The threats perceived by the Klan included "Roman popery, alien Judaism, and internal moral decay" which would extend to prostitution, supporting Prohibition and maintaining segregation. (Feldman 2015, 36) As Feldman recounts, in Alabama churches "thirty or forty Klansmen in full regalia" would walk into sanctuary in the middle of service, proceed down the center aisle and hand the "…pastor a note of support and an envelope stuffed with an undisclosed amount of cash." (Feldman 2015, 36) The minister would give a prayer of thanksgiving or sometimes even a hymn of praise in response. The Klan portrayed themselves as cultural guardians; "Targeting influential local, Protestant ministers, and members of fraternal organization like the Mason...identified issues of concern in a community and promoted the Klan as a solution to those problems." (Harcourt 2017, 3) They embodied a defense against cultural decay, an authoritative voice who was willing to push back against undesired elements to maintain what they saw as moral principles.

Charles Marsh's account of Sam Bowers, Mississippi's "Imperial Wizard of the White Knights of Ku Klux Klan…from 1964 until…1967", provides a personal account of a theological rationalization for the work of the Klan. Bowers was convicted in 1967 for the "…triple murder of Michael Schwerner, James Chaney, and Andrew Goodman…" (Marsh 2008, 49) Bowers as a

KKK leader and organizer at the highest level believed that "…he was called by God to accomplish the urgent task of eliminating the 'heretics'" which, in consistency with Feldman's research, included Jews, Catholics (Papists), and all non-white people who were not Anglo-Saxon. (Marsh 2008, 49–50) In 1955 Bowers was contemplating suicide and during that time experienced what he described as an ecstatic realization of the presence of God and of God's divine call. Bowers interpreted this call as "…Jesus Christ himself was calling him [Bowers] to the priestly task of preserving the purity of blood and soil." Marsh continues "To his education in the literature of racial superiority and cultural nationalism, Bowers added a disciplined study of the Bible." (Marsh 2008, 55) Bowers in the role of Imperial Wizard deliberately and purposefully engaged in multiple acts of violence including, at the least, the deaths of the three men mentioned above. It is this type of violence as connected to and justified by a particular reading of scripture that is particularly easy to link back to the same support for slavery justified by Scripture. Marsh recounts that Bowers saw himself as a priest who "…searches out the heretic, who cannot be forgiven but only destroyed." (Marsh 2008, 63) Bowers gives an address on Jun 7, 1964 to a group of Klansmen gathered in the Boykin Methodist Church in Raleigh, North Carolina. In Bowers' concluding paragraph of that message he said "…*we*, as Christians, have a responsibility and have taken an oath to preserve Christian civilization…Respect for Christian ideals can not yield to respect for persons nor statutes and procedure which have been twisted by man away from its original Divine design." (Marsh 2008, 64–66) Bowers', like Bob Jones, in their interpretive framework claim access to an interpretive understanding of the Scripture that locates it as original. Bowers reinforces his stance as a priest as one who is uniquely selected to hear the direct word of God and to communicate this to the people. For Bowers violence is not offensive but defensive to preserve the divinely appointed moral order. It is tempting to perhaps see Bowers as an outlier but as shown in the previous chapter in Bob Jones segregation radio address while Bowers commitment to violence is extreme, the sentiment expressed in his address can be located elsewhere. For example, George Wallace's infamous "Segregation Now, Segregation Forever" (1963) speech has several allusions to God, religion and the created order, connecting back to Gillespie and Jones' addresses as discussed in chapter three of this paper. The freedom of race and religion was to maintain separate "racial stations" as Wallace calls them. These stations that were meant to be kept "…within its own framework…" and any "amalgamation" would result in a complete loss of the American way of life. Wallace

argues that "God has placed us here in this crisis…" implying throughout his speech that violence would and could be unfurled against those who would force racial equality. Wallace equates segregation with America's "divinely inspired system of freedom…" Wallace specifically claimed violence as an imminent threat, both in response to attempts to integrate as well as suggesting violence was the natural response from the attempts to integrate what he claimed were separate "racial stations".[79] Wallace's speech ties into a tradition within American politics and religion where "…any means to preserve Anglo-Saxon supremacy was justified on broad religious and moral grounds, including lynching." (Marsh 2008, 94)

Fear and Grief

Bryant argues that "white Americans watched with great fear, the outward expression of black American grief and fury, and flinched and the prospect of experiencing it firsthand" in describing the 1965 Watts Rebellion and 1968 riots after the assassination of Martin Luther King, Junior. (Bryant 2019, 54) This is connected to what Bennett and Marsh describe in their research; the mixture of white fear and race obsession that was able to classify any black response as inherently violent and thus lawless serving as a moment of confirmation bias that black people were indeed morally inferior. "In the sermons and Bible studies delivered zealously from the pulpits and fellowship halls of the white Protestant churches [that]…the cross ought to inspire decent white people towards the preservation of the purity of the social body." (Marsh 88, 90) Bryant notes "fear of "black criminality" and urban outrage led many white Americans to embrace a punitive criminal justice system, considering is necessary that law enforcement was "tough on crime"…these were "law and order" voters…principally white…most fearful of crime." (Bryant 2019, 54–55) This is the point Hinton makes arguing that the social changes of the 1960s were perceived as leading "…to a decline in morality and defiance of traditional authority." (Hinton 2016, 308) Hinton quotes Reagan's 1981 speech "Only our deep moral values and strong institutions can hold back that jungle and restrain the darker impulses of human nature." (Hinton 2016, 308) Reagan's quote embodies Bryant's point of voting against a fear of crime. As pointed out in the first chapter fear ties the civilizer theology dispositions together. Without expressly doing so, Reagan manages through allusion to morality and "strong

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[79] https://www.blackpast.org/african-american-history/speeches-african-american-history/1963-george-wallace-segregation-now-segregation-forever/

institutions" to speak evangelical language who are constantly warning, particularly coming out of the 1960's and 70's of cultural decay/moral decline. Additionally, as hopefully is clear from the research presented, Reagan also present a significantly racially viewed of where that crime was supposedly coming from. Reagan's continued popularity among conservatives should not be understated or missed.[80] Regan's comparison of "our moral values" and "darker impulses" creates the dichotomy that the presence of those moral values implies an absence of darker impulses that any act that would seem like violence could not be so because any policing or such act has the authority of morality behind it. This results, as Hinton thoroughly documents in significant and extensive urban policing of Black men and boys that has continued into the present contributing to the continued deaths of these men and women in the present and custody of police officers. Instead of questions regarding the "jungle" rather the question should be asked "What spiritual and moral obligation do religious communities have in responding to the violence constantly perpetrated against the black body?" (Mitchell and Williams 2017, 11)

Conclusion

This chapter has sought to illustrate how Elias' understanding of the civilizing process demonstrate violence as a part of that process and not divorced from it. Civilizer theology rarely issues a direct call for violence. Instead "contemporary whiteness in America is more institutionalized and less individually perpetrated through physical acts of violence." (Scriven 2013, 258) However, as demonstrated in this chapter, the justification for violence, like the justification for slavery and segregation have been directly and indirectly linked to theological justification. In drawing from a wide range of sources, this chapter has shown that racial violence centers around the desire for equality and liberty. In the discussion of civilizer theology. Bennett's writing particularly helps to demonstrate the regional role that church played in continuing segregation and subsequently acts of violence around that practice.
In the next, and final, chapter, I will conclude the arguments made in this paper, drawing threads together and make some suggestions toward future research and engagement.

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[80] See also Reagan's evil empire speech (https://americanrhetoric.com/speeches/ronaldreaganevilempire.htm) particularly the line "the real crisis we face today is a spiritual one; at root, it is a test of moral will and faith." While this in reference to Communism the implication or application is definitively broader particularly if interpreted through an evangelical filter.

Chapter Five: Towards an Equitable Theology

This paper has presented a brief interrogation of the dual aspects of the term "civilizer theology"; arguing that theological interpretation, application and exegesis, mediated by the three dispositions, are deliberately applied to support socio-economic, cultural and political ends with the goal of maintaining power structures to the benefit of a particular group intertwined with the explanations of being civilized encompassed by and with those theological practices. The dispositions discussed in chapters two, three and four provided a framework for examining the construction of perceptions and practices of being civilized, and the ways in which that constructions creates and negates identities, understanding civilizing practices as a flexible schema that regularly in flux, subtly morphing in response to societal and affective changes. Just as the civilizing process is not a fixed path, neither are perceptions of race. This pushes against the tendency to view humanity's relationship to one another as moving in an upward trajectory or towards a particular fixed point; "we tend to understand race, racism and the formation of racialization as constant rather than as variables." (Emerson and Smith 2001, 8) To think of civilizing processes, which race, racism and the formation of racialization are assuredly a significant part, as fixed, would confirm arguments that these expressions can only occur in particular modes of expression such as the embrace of far-right ideas or clearly expressed hatred of non-whites. But as Elias reminds us "when enquiring into social processes one must look at the web of human relationships, at society itself, to find the compulsions that keep them in motion, and give them their particular form and their particular direction." (Elias 1982b, 32) Racism should then be understood as one compulsion kept in motion through the web of human relationships as an ever-shifting variable. If racism was indeed fixed, if the web of human relationships was not fluidly adjusting in response to affective and societal impulses then it would be possible to educate people out of racism permanently, treating racism as an input/output problem. This is reflected in the belief that "…ignorance and hate lead to racist ideas, which lead to racist policies. In fact self-interest leads to racist policies, which leads to racist ideas leading to all the ignorance and hate." (Kendi 2017, 506) Understanding these policies as ever in-motion within the network of interactions as a morphing constant argues that it is possible to maintain racist and policies in the "web of human relationships" as normal and routine so that "…the racialized society is reproduced in everyday actions and decisions."

(Emerson and Smith 2001, 11) Because this reproduction has been of a piece with American history it is easy to ignore the means by which a racialized society is reproduced since "…racism has persisted at the heart of American society for centuries, our tolerance level for it is very high." (H. J. Young 2019, 133) Recognizing that religious practice has significant impact on the interpretation of everyday actions and decisions as religious traditions and directives can form strong affective ties to its adherents as "religious values are stations of security in a world in which everything else is in flux." (Lincoln 1999, 15).

This paper has sought to demonstrate how the application of the dispositions (cultural decay/moral decline, authority and violence) to the practice of civilizer theology are directly embedded in the broader "web of human relationships" constituted by theological interpretation, mediation and delegating work which subsequently contribute to the creation and maintenance of a racialized society. Theological interpretation, application and exegesis, mediated by the three dispositions, are deliberately applied to support socio-economic, cultural and political ends with the goal of maintaining power structures to the benefit of a particular group. The maintenance of these power structures continues while simultaneously giving significant weight to individual action and agency. Linking the dispositions with the tendency for white evangelical Protestants to see the individual without also seeing the system(s) provides continued perspective that even "after the publication of *Divided by Faith* and more strident activity to eliminate prejudice…white racial attitudes have remained largely the same: an individual's perceived lack of prejudice or an individual's attention to issues of personal race relations *always* trumps the structural. Hearts matter more than bodies and certainly more than systemic problems." (Sinitiere 2013, 130) This is born out in the 2016 Barna study mentioned in chapter two. It is this particular attitude that Latour captures so profoundly in his "we have constructed/we have not constructed" tautology.

As this paper has argued throughout, white racial attitudes, in their relation to civilizer theology, have tended to focus on the individual at the expense of the structural which is the applied result of a particular interpretive practice. This interpretive practice appears to be fixed but what this paper has sought to demonstrate through the presented historical examples is that this practice regularly shifts in its focus. For example, as discussed in chapter two, the examples of pro-slavery arguments for slavery as dependent upon a literal hermeneutic are echoed in segregationists' arguments that God's plan is clearly outlined in the Bible where in both

instances the interpretive layer bending the literal hermeneutic to a particular end is ignored; "because it is open to multiple readings, the Bible has proven readily adaptable to a wide variety of social systems, from the most conservative and hierarchical (such as feudalism and slavery) to the most egalitarian and the capitalists." (Harvey 2005, 220) As one of the motivators for civilizer theology is self-interest the interpretive practice advanced is meant to serve the end goal of a particular group. This is reinforced by Cone's observation that "…the main difficulty which most whites have with Black Power and its relationship to the Christian gospel stems from their own inability to translate traditional theological language into the life situation of black people." (Cone 1969, 55)[81] As discussed throughout this paper the interpreting and mediating application of civilizer theology, and its dispositions, in defending and supporting the practices of slavery, segregation, lynching and the state's relationship to black people.

This being tied together has allowed evangelicals to dismiss the BlackLivesMatter movement out of hand because of "evaluating the tactics of the movement." (Mitchell and Williams 2017, 14) which are seen as antithetical or even anti-Christian because they are seen as disorderly in direct competition to civilized (white) orderliness. Reflecting evangelical thinking from the Civil Rights movement that "…the marches and protests were disorderly or had some hand in lawlessness." (Stephens 2016, 582) In a racialized notion of religion "…Christianity is acculturated and mixed with whiteness but presented in the society as meta-cultural and imperceptibly free from racialized entrapments. Jesus may be able to save a black soul but Jesus may be less effective at saving a black body…" (Sinitiere 2013, 259) As Cone writes "white theologians do not normally turn to the black experience to learn about theology." (Cone 2016, 64) This meta-cultural reading is clear when recalling F. Graham's quote from the end of chapter one as presented free from racialized entrapments ignoring the history of the black experience and instead viewing the past and present through the lens of the white social imaginary. Engaging civilizer theology necessitates questioning the web of human relationships in which

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[81] As a personal recent example, I was in service and the pastor that week was giving an example of leadership during suffering and chose to use the movie Gladiator where Russell Crowe's character unites a group of gladiators to fight together to stay alive and eventually win their freedom. This was particularly confounding as I had just finished reading an account of Fannie Lou Hamer's life who had suffered significantly at the hands of police being beaten so badly that she would have permanent kidney damage but continued to actively recruit and work. Hamer was shot at, her house bombed and she was beaten severely by police officers, more than once. She was regularly verbally and physically harassed. During all of this, Hamer founded the Freedom Farm Cooperative in 1967 which during its time provided significant employment opportunities for over forty residents, two sewing cooperatives, established housing lots for its members, raised pigs and crops so that by 1973 the cooperative supported more than 865 families. (see Monica White's chapter A Pig and a Garden: Fannie Lou Hamer's Freedom Farm Cooperative 65- in *Freedom Farmers: Agricultural Resistance and the Black Freedom Movement*)

Christianity is practiced in order to expand out the interpreting, mediating and delegating means shaping practice and tradition. That is to say this critical questioning is necessary in order to recognize the use of "religion as civil control…its saving efforts and the traditional understanding of religion as a moral guardian." (Washington 1985, 152) However the discussion of civilizer theology should clarify that the idea of "moral guardian" is a subject term that is subject to interpretive practices. As many of the examples provided throughout this paper illustrate "white people did not see race as a moral issue but rather as a political issue (Bennett 2016, 68) and similarly that there must be a divide between issues of race and issues of religion where "changing racial practices were merely social and pragmatic, not religious." (Bennett 2016, 78) Civilizer theology should be recognized for its role as a morally bankrupt guardian as understood in its deployment of the three dispositions toward the self-interest of its practitioners.

As demonstrated throughout this paper, the dispositions are present in the arguments made in support of slavery and continue to support segregation. These dispositions continue, as this paper has sought to show, as challenges leveled against the Civil Rights Movement in the twentieth century and BlackLivesMatter in the twenty-first. Writing in 1967, Hill recognizing the separation of race from the moral, wrote that

> "…the indifference…towards the current civil rights struggle…is found to be consistent with the general evangelical stance which simply does view responsibility toward God and man in light of a social ethic. The white Christian's duty…[does not]…consider altering the social traditions and arrangements which govern his (and everyone else's life) to so significant a degree." (Hill 1999, lxvi)

It is this challenge to social traditions and arrangement, the web of human relationships, which is thus defended in the deployment of the dispositions that this social arrangement is naturally occurring rather than constructed and maintained through human action and decision. So that in the absence of a robust evangelical response supporting the Civil Rights Movement change, the challenge of the BlackLivesMatter movement was necessary to once again argue for the need to "…construct such a radically inclusive vision…mak[ing] clear that to attend to Black life is to already attend to *all* lives." (Gray 2019, 8) This requires the jettisoning of the dispositions from only being seen through the "white social imaginary" that has served as an interpreting, mediating and delegating framework so as to recognize the work that perspectives outside of the white protestant viewpoint are doing to expand these frameworks to "…become *prophetic*, demanding a radical change in the interlocking structures of this society." (Cone 1969,

2) Instead of a civilizer theology that is bent on "preaching a racist Christianity for submission…" there must instead be holistic theological practice that strives towards "…an antiracist Christianity for liberation." (Kendi 2017, 74)

Getting There

To become prophetic, to preach an antiracist Christianity requires a recognition of the web of human relationships previously constructed by the interpreting, mediating work of civilizer theology as fundamentally enmeshed in self-interest to one which produce prophetic interactions. There are theologians and scholars who are doing this work in their texts for individual readers and their local bodies in order to assist both in the interrogation of how their own practices of interpretation, mediation and delegation serve the propagation of civilizer theology. Some examples include, in addition to those quoted in this paper, Soong-Chan Rah, Jemar Tisby, Mark Charles, Melani McAlister, Shane Claiborne, Austin Channing Brown, Keisha Blain and Lisa Fields. These should be read and heard alongside the history documented by Kendi, Harvey, Hopkins, Glaude and others who are actively connecting history and religious practice. It is necessary to publicly wrestle with the issue of civilizer theology to help evangelical churches move away from this practice and towards a theology that engages race as a spiritual and moral issue. The texts that have been read and quoted in this paper are not only to provide rigorous scholarly support but also to provide readers a way into beginning to interrogate their own thinking. Indeed, the writing of this paper has proven its own process of interrogation for the writer. Neither this writer nor the writers quoted in this paper have arrived but continue to deliberately work towards an anti-racist world. This paper seeks to challenge civilizer theology so that through the challenge there is a means to re-engage theological interpretation, application and exegesis outside of civilizer theology's self-referential, self-fulfilling framework which actively shapes the expectations, behaviors and practices of particular societal norms driving cultural practices.

This paper has only begun to scratch the surface of civilizer theology and its impact. Civilizer theology, as a term, does not exist in the scholarly literature of race, religion or culture.[82] Focusing on this term has two goals. The first that in tracing the historical arc that there

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[82] Gerbner has posited a similar term "Protestant supremacy" as a neologism to discuss Protestant's relationship with "ethnocentric and nationalist dimensions". Gerber' scholarship focuses primarily on "the slavery debates of seventeenth century"

is good reason for adding and continuing to flesh out understanding of "civilizer theology".

Secondly, the engagement with civilizer theology requires an interdisciplinary understanding of

the web of connections, not least those dealing with theology, race and history. As this paper has

sought to demonstrate the effects, presence and dispositions of civilizer theology are visible in

the historical record and in the current discourse provides a significant means to engage the

interdependencies of theology, race and culture. The dispositions discussed in this paper, cultural

decay/moral decline, authority and violence, provide a way in to understand how these actively

serve as interpreting/mediating/delegating agents in the maintenance of power. These are not

limited to theological practice but are observable in other mediums as well. The examples

presented here have sought to show how theological interpretation frames the application and

purpose of violence (state-sponsored or individual), identifies instances or points of cultural

decay/moral decline (the resolution or prevention of which may require violence), and, provides

justification for considering state-sponsored violence or individual violent acts as appropriate or

legal. This paper has sought to prove the posited hypothesis that theological interpretation,

application and exegesis, mediated by the three dispositions through the past and present, are

deliberately applied to support socio-economic, cultural and political ends with the goal of

maintaining power structures to the benefit of a particular group.

While this paper has specifically focused on white Protestant thought in America, there is

certainly the possibility for the application in other religious traditions and countries, i.e.

apartheid and its history in South Africa; Buddhist and Hindu relations in India, etc. In this

paper's endeavor to show how the Bible and theological questions been interpreted, mediated

and received so as to have been subsequently enmeshed rhetorically and substantively within a

larger shared political and social community and thus shape political, social and rhetorical norms

endeavors to deepen an understanding of American history and open up additional avenues for

future study.

This paper has sought to demonstrate and prove the efforts of civilizer theology as a self-

referential, self-fulfilling framework which actively shapes the expectations, behaviors and

practices of societal norms that drive cultural practices has direct historical linking that effects

how white Protestant theological practice is engaged in the present. This paper has sought to

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(780) though her work is also concerned with "...the long, tangled, and deeply complicated relationship between religion and race." (Gerbner 2019, 773, 777, 780)

show as well how this understanding actively shapes, and is shaped by, theological practice, interpretation and justification.

In this final chapter I have sought to bring this short study into the present to emphasize that civilizer theology practices and its employment of the dispositions are not confined to the 19th century but actively continue in the 21st century shaping theological practices and application. Theological practices must avoid, in the attempt to make a home for its adherents "…retreating to a piety that disconnect[s] language from reality…" or attempt to fashion through its practices of mediating and interpreting "…a serene, self-enclosed world, undisturbed by…suffering..." (Marsh 2008, 106) Instead civilizer theology should be countered with the knowledge and practice that "there is within Christianity a breathtakingly powerful way to imagine and enact the social, to imagine and enact connection and belonging." (Jennings 2010, 4)

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