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Beyond White Normativity: Creating Brave Spaces

“Afro-Latino Paleo-Orthodoxy and its Colorful Contributions to Religious Education”

Abstract

This paper introduces the Religious Education Association to the Protestant Paleo-Orthodox Movement. Specifically, it will explore the impact forms of religious white normativity have had on the perception of Afro-Latino Pentecostal groups within Paleo-Orthodoxy, who are recovering a classical consensual Christian faith, believed to belong solely to “White” Christians. It will argue that these Afro-Latino Pentecostals groups aided by historical African Christian resources in conjunction with experiential religious educational philosophies are in engaging in “Colorful” or varied fresh expressions of worship which contribute to the Religious Education Association’s quest to go “Beyond White Normativity.”

Summary: The term Paleo-Orthodoxy or “ancient correct belief,” refers to the late twentieth and early twenty-first-century Protestant theological movement which sees the essentials of Christian theology in the consensual understanding of the faith among the Ecumenical Councils and writings of the Church Fathers before the Great Schism. Although mainly situated within the field of theology, within a Religious Educational framework, Paleo-Orthodoxy becomes an ecclesiological and sociological movement that focuses on how ecclesial forms within the movement religiously educate their adherents towards classical consensual Christian faith.

In postmodernity, this sociological orthodoxy is now most visible within the Charismatic and Pentecostal revivalist traditions. Although these traditions have been thought to be ahistorical, there has been a shift in recent years, specifically among Afro-Latino Pentecostals, towards the recovery of a classical consensual Christianity. The shift comes even though cultural and racial suspicions often accompany classical consensual Christianity.

This paper examines how suspicion of classical consensual Christianity by many black and brown postmodern Pentecostals,¹ derives from the effects of the colonization of Native Americans and the enslavement of Africans by white Europeans. It will also examine how postmodern Pentecostal Afro-Latino Paleo-Orthodox adherents have been able to overcome the

¹ When utilizing the terms “Pentecostal” and “Pentecostalism” (capitalized), Yong is seemingly referring to the classical expression that focused on speaking in tongues. In contrast, he uses the terms “pentecostal” and “pentecostalism” (uncapitalized) to refer to the historical movement in general, inclusive of the three types of Pentecostalism described by the NIDPCM above.¹ This paper will follow Yong’s methodology utilizing the terms pentecostal or pentecostalism (uncapitalized) as referring to the broader pentecostal movement, which encapsulates the presence of spiritual gifts as practiced both biblically as well as historically within the life of the Christian church. These terms will be inclusive of the neo-charismatic groups as well as the classical and mid-nineteenth century Pentecostals.

stigmas associated with this form of white normativity through exposure to African Christian resources in conjunction with experiential religious educational philosophies.

The research presented is qualitative and will adopt a historical-critical methodology in conjunction with literature-based reviews and insights from the practice of Afro-Latino Paleo-Orthodox communities.

INTRODUCTION

In his widely celebrated book *The Household of God: Lectures on The Nature of The Church* (1953), Leslie Newbigin in responding to the question “by what is the Church constituted?”² argues that the church’s nature is inherently Protestant, Catholic, and Pentecostal. Since its publication, *The Household of God* has been hailed by many within Protestantism as one of the pioneering works responsible for the various theological shifts leading to the development of the Paleo-Orthodox Movement. Paleo-Orthodoxy or “ancient correct belief,”³ refers to the late twentieth and early twenty-first-century Protestant theological movement which sees the essentials of Christian theology in the consensual understanding of the faith among the Ecumenical Councils and writings of the Church Fathers before the Great Schism.

Because it holds fast to classic consensual faith, Paleo-Orthodoxy should never be confused with “neo-orthodoxy”⁴ the twentieth-century Protestant theological movement also known as “Crisis” or “Dialectical theology.”⁵ Neither should it be identified totally with the term “Protestant-Orthodoxy,” a “phase of orthodoxy that characterized both Lutheran and Reformed theology after the sixteenth-century Reformation,”⁶ and beyond. At its core, the Paleo-orthodox Movement emphasizes a communitarian approach towards canonical theology, inclusive of St. Vincent of Lerin’s *Commonitorium* as its extra-canonical normative interpretive arbiter. To this end, postmodern Protestants looking to recover classic consensual orthodoxy problematize the modern historical-critical method of biblical interpretation, providing as its corrective, a classical consensual approach to biblical exegesis.

Although, Newbigin’s book stands as a modern theological primer for the Paleo-Orthodox Movement, its leading figure, a significant contributor, and the one responsible for coining the term *Paleo-Orthodoxy* has been Thomas C. Oden. Oden, formerly the Henry Anson Buttz Professor of Theology at Drew University, at the time of his death was responsible for writing numerous works about Paleo-Orthodoxy including but not limited to, *The Rebirth of*

² Leslie Newbigin, *The Household of God: Lectures on the Nature of the Church* (Eugene, Oregon: Wipf & Stock Publishers, 1953), 9.

³ Kenneth Tanner and Christopher A. Hall, ed., *Ancient and Postmodern Christianity: Paleo-Orthodoxy in the 21st Century* (Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 2002).

⁴ Thomas C. Oden, *Rebirth of Orthodoxy: Signs of New Life in Christianity* (New York, New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2003), 24.

⁵ *Encyclopedia Britannica*, s.v. “neo-orthodoxy.” Chicago: Encyclopedia Britannica, 2009. <https://www.britannica.com/topic/neoorthodoxy> (accessed October 20, 2017).

⁶ *Encyclopedia Britannica*, s.v. “Protestant-Orthodoxy,” Chicago: Encyclopedia Britannica, 2009. <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Protestant-Orthodoxy> (accessed October 20, 2017).

Orthodoxy (2003), *Classic Christianity: A Systematic Theology* (2009), *How Africa Shaped the Christian Mind* (2009), and *The Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture* (2001).⁷

Theologian Robert C. Webber is another influential voice within the Paleo-Orthodox Movement. Webber, a former Professor of Theology at Wheaton College, contributes to the development of the overall movement not only through theological frameworks but also pastoral perspectives which call for an evangelical appreciation of the historic Christian calendar, liturgical rites of worship, and a sense and an understanding of sacramental theology. Webber once remarked, “The road to the future runs through the past.”⁸ His words are emblematic of a surging Protestant Paleo-Orthodoxy grappling with the socio-religious and socio-political effects of postmodernity. Through an *Ancient Future* approach, Webber expresses the Paleo-Orthodox commitment to looking towards the early Christian church as a guide for addressing issues of faith that arise in our contemporary times. By the time of his death, Webber authored numerous works on the subject including: *Evangelicals on the Canterbury Trail* (1985), *Worship Old and New* (1994), *Ancient-Future Faith* (1999), *Ancient-Future Time* (2004) and *Ancient-Future Worship* (2008). Webber was also the general editor for *The Complete Library of Christian Worship* (1996), an eight-volume series covering topics pertinent to worship.

Aside from its main theological framework, Paleo-Orthodox thinkers and authors have also helped to spark the further development of many pragmatic ecclesiological shifts within Protestantism in the form of national and international ecclesial bodies dedicated to the practice of an amalgamated three-streamed (Evangelical, Charismatic, Sacramental) Christian identity. Churches many times identifying as part of either The Convergence Worship Movement, Three Streamed Movement or Ancient-Future Faith Movement, such as The Charismatic Episcopal Church and The Communion of Evangelical Episcopal Churches, have been either directly or indirectly spiritually influenced by Paleo-Orthodoxy. These organizations (made up mainly of evangelical or Pentecostal/charismatic churches) have recovered historical, ecclesiological orthodoxy, which includes a sense of sacramentality, creedal identity, consensual authoritative teaching, and liturgical worship. For the most part, they tend to follow the church’s liturgical calendar (Western or Eastern), celebrate the Eucharist every Sunday, and utilize some historical prayer book as a guide towards the administration of the sacraments and the ceremonies of the church.

Afro-Latino Pentecostal Orthodoxy

Most recently and surprisingly, revivalist traditions like Pentecostalism and the Charismatic Movement, have demonstrated the most considerable interest in Paleo-Orthodoxy, despite their historical lack of orthodoxy.⁹ In particular, among Afro-Latino Pentecostals and Charismatics in the US, there has been a strong inclination towards a classical consensual recovery. North American Pentecostalism as a twentieth-century movement rooted in Wesleyan

⁷ Unlike the other resources where Oden was the singular author, Oden served as the general editor for *The Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture*.

⁸ Robert E. Webber, *Ancient-Future Time: Forming Spirituality Through the Christian Year* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Books, 2004), 11.

⁹ Oden, in *Rebirth of Orthodoxy* states

and Holiness spirituality has undergone significant theological shifts over the last two decades. These theological shifts have been the by-product of cultural/racial integration and engagement with various twenty-first century social, theological, scientific, and educational developments. The consequence of such integration by Pentecostals contributes to what James K. Smith identifies as a “Pentecostal Philosophy.”¹⁰ For Smith, the task of a Pentecostal philosophy “is to work at articulating the worldview that is implicit in Pentecostal spirituality.”¹¹

This type of philosophical “Pentecostalization”¹² as referenced by J. Kameron Carter, sees the finished work of Christ on the cross as disrupting the “linguistics of cultural and political nationalism, including the nationalism at work in how identity is conceived and performed.”¹³ Here, the recovery of classical consensual orthodoxy on the part of Afro-Latino Pentecostals becomes part of a broader and developing Pentecostal philosophy, in that it re-assess the effects colonialism, and slavery has had on identity politics in the Pentecostal tradition in general and the Afro-Latino Pentecostal church in particular. As a practical consequence, Afro-Latino Pentecostal Paleo-Orthodoxy can be closely identified with what Amos Yong calls a “catch-all, neo-charismatic” category within Pentecostalism that “comprises 18,810 independent, indigenous, post-denominational groups.”¹⁴ These neo-Pentecostals or neo-charismatics, as identified by the *New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements* (NIDPCM) are distinct from the classical Pentecostal movement (connected to the Azusa Street revival in the early 1900’s) and from the charismatic renewal movement, which began within Protestantism and Roman Catholicism in the mid-1960’s.¹⁵

From an Afro-Latino classical Pentecostal perspective, Christian consensual orthodoxy is suspiciously colonialist, Catholic, and ultimately White. Here, the perception of a Eurocentric *white normativity* as “the defining of cultural practices, attitudes, assumptions, and ideologies in the wider society and culture using the white culture as the standard, the norm,”¹⁶ is still very much interconnected to the history between the rise of the African American church and the American system of slavery.

In his book, *Becoming an Anti-Racist Church* (2011), Joseph Barndt addresses the same concerns. In it, he states that in America “White slave masters taught slaves a twisted and distorted version of the bible as part of their strategy of dehumanization and pacification. They misinterpreted and distorted scriptural passages, such as the one from Paul’s letter to Titus that says slaves should obey their masters. They supported theological perspectives that encourage

¹⁰ James K. Smith, *Thinking in Tongues: Pentecostal Contributions to Christian Philosophy* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans Publishing, 2010), xvii

¹¹ *Ibid.*, xviii

¹² J. Kameron Carter, *Race: A Theological Account* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2008), 309.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 309

¹⁴ Amos Yong, *The Spirit Poured Out On All Flesh: Pentecostalism and the Possibility of Global Theology* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Publishing, 2005), 18.

¹⁵ Stanley M. Burgess and Eduard M. Van Der Mass, eds., *The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing, 2002), xx.

¹⁶ Kathy Winings, *The Challenges in Addressing White Normativity* (Unification Theological Seminary Blog: 2017), <https://appliedunificationism.com/2017/11/27/the-challenges-in-addressing-white-normativity/>

submission and obedience as a virtue. And they portrayed the biblical church as a white church with a white God who favors white people as a superior race.”¹⁷

The colonial church’s genocide of the Natives and enslavement of Africans in America masked under the guise of missional gospel preaching has had long-lasting effects on how non-white Christians perceive their place within the broader church and society. One of the more prominent adverse effects is how Afro-Latino Christians perceive their social and ecclesial identity in comparison to white Christians. From such social and theological insecurities, undoubtedly rooted in the systemic racism of white normativity, emerges an indiscriminate and superficial assumption of ecclesial elements related to classical consensual Christianity. Thus, the challenge of identity politics and belonging as experienced by Afro-Latino Pentecostals continue to make the recovery of classical consensual Christianity problematic. Presently, the most obvious elements within the classical consensual recovery on the part of Afro-Latino Pentecostals have less to do with ecclesial adherences or allegiances, and more to do with attaining social and racial equity. For the most part, these superficial attempts at recovery are practical in scope, often including ecclesiastical dress, designations of clerical rank (titles), and liturgical rituals. All of these are efforts to gain and convey a sense of ecclesial and social validation. To this end, Afro-Latino Pentecostals must ask themselves the question, will white supremacy as a structural or societal system which privileges whites be allowed to continue to be a driving force for how and why Afro-Latino clerics look to recover classical consensual orthodoxy?

The African American Joint College of Pentecostal Bishops is an example of an Afro-Latino superficial recovery of orthodoxy linked to the effects of white normativity. The Joint College, established in 1993, began when four African American Pentecostal bishops discussed the need for training Pentecostal clergy, specifically for the episcopal office.¹⁸ Ultimately, the Joint College “seeks to accomplish the implementation of [its] core values through a comprehensive program of training college sessions offered twice annually in March and September. The college also offers an Adjutant school, a Helpmeet and Episcopal companions forum, Episcopal Installation Services to Reformations; a Scholarship Program, and an International College event that reconnects the American Episcopacy with the global church.”¹⁹

Archbishop J. Delano Ellis, II, Primate of the Joint College of African American Pentecostal Bishops, helped the college grow into what is considered by many in the African American pentecostal community to be “the premier development center for the Episcopacy in the African American culture specifically and the global Lord’s church generally.”²⁰ Currently, every year the Joint college attracts over 600 clergymen (men & women) to its conferences, which represents over twenty-four million Christian believers over varying denominations around the world.

¹⁷ Joseph Barndt, *Becoming an Anti-Racist Church: Journeying toward Wholeness* (Minneapolis, Minnesota: Fortress Press, 2011). 54

¹⁸ The Joint College of African American Pentecostal Bishops
<https://www.collegeofbishops.org/about> (accessed December 12, 2017)

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Ibid.

As a form of Afro-Latino Pentecostal, Paleo-Orthodoxy, the Joint College is still very much in the early stages of development. Members of the College have adopted Anglican vestments, utilize Anglo-roman clerical designations in order to distinguish clerical ranks, and boast of having both eastern as well as western lines of apostolic succession. To date, however, the understanding and recovery of the more foundational elements of conciliar, or consensual orthodoxy (historical theology, liturgical worship, and sacramentality), remains limited. That being said, there are shifts which are slowly taking place within its ranks. Recently, Bishop David Maldonado a graduate of the Certificate in Convergence Studies Program at New York Theological Seminary, and one of the few Latino Bishops in the Joint College has been entrusted to teach sacramental theology at the College's yearly session. Bishop Maldonado in speaking of the College's process towards a more foundational recovery of classical consensual orthodoxy states that "While our journey as clergymen toward orthodoxy began with a desire both to better organize ourselves within the episcopacy and to recover our own social identity, this Spirit-led journey also is leading us, albeit slowly, into matters of creedal identity along with a recovery of sacramental and patristic appreciation."²¹

Despite the few instances where the recovery of orthodoxy seems superficial, there is a bonafide and genuine yearning towards the recovery of deeper elements of classical consensual orthodoxy on the part of Afro-Latino postmodern Pentecostals. In these instances, the hurdles of identity politics and suspicion have been overcome by in-depth exposure to Christian African oriented resources, contextual formational programs, and religious educational philosophies that validate experience as pneumatologically educational.

Contextual Ministerial Formational Programs

Most recently there have been some contextual ministerial formational programs created, dedicated to providing Afro-Latino Pentecostals with the formation and training needed to practice Paleo-Orthodoxy effectively. These programs such as the Robert Webber Institute of Worship and The Institute for Classical Christian Studies, usually are housed within a theological seminary or university and act as a corrective to the limited superficial recovery of classical consensual orthodoxy on the part of organizations like the Joint College of African American Pentecostal Bishops.

Worthy of a more comprehensive analysis for its success within an Afro-Latino context is the Certificate in Convergence Studies program at New York Theological Seminary. This one-year program was designed with Afro-Latino lay and ordained leaders in mind and provides an introduction to the theology and practice of Ancient-Future thought. Classes are provided in three online semesters (six courses) and two 5-day intensive retreats. Subjects covered within the three online semesters include; an introduction to Paleo-Orthodoxy, liturgical and sacramental theology, patristic theology, biblical exegesis, church renewal and missiology and the philosophy and theology of leadership. The two 5-day intensives are divided into a summer and winter course. The Summer intensive "Special Issues in Worship and Theology," introduces students to the three major streams (evangelical, sacramental, charismatic) within the Christian tradition

21. Bishop David Maldonado, Bishop in the Joint College of African American Pentecostal Bishops, interview by phone by author, December 1, 2017.

exploring how they effectively amalgamate within Protestant worship, while the Winter intensive introduces students to the historical rites, rituals, and rubrics of the Christian church. It also examines, compares and contrasts Roman Catholic, Eastern Orthodox and Anglican prayer books and processes of a functional liturgy. The objective is to develop contextual aides for celebrants towards orderly movement during worship.

Since 2015, the Certificate in Convergence Studies program at NYTS has matriculated over 50 students and graduated over 20, all from Afro-Latino backgrounds. Of those 20 who have graduated from the program 7 of them have gone on to complete graduate work at NYTS per the Memorandum of Understanding between the seminary and the certificate program. From a ministerial pastoral perspective, the program has helped to better prepare approximately 18 postulants (men and women) for Holy Orders within their respective churches. Most recently, the certificate program has become a stand-alone institute (The Institute for Paleo-Orthodox Christian Studies) but has remained in partnership with New York Theological Seminary and other theological seminaries and universities, thereby continuing to offer opportunities for higher education to a student population for whom this was once an impossibility.

Early African Christian Resources

For Afro-Latino Pentecostals looking to recovery classical consensual orthodoxy is neither prudent nor practical to look solely to Eurocentric models of Christian orthodoxy. For Oden, to exclude Early African Christian resources from Afro-Latino Paleo-Orthodox formation resembles a wise owl (representing philosophy) with blinders on that can only fly after the day is done (reality).²² The analogy, is that of philosophical inquiry which never took care to fly over Africa. Yet, the current reality is that exposure to early Christian African resources continue to bridge the great chasm between evangelical Protestantism and Paleo-Orthodoxy for Afro-Latino Pentecostals. Such African Christian scholarship has helped debunk far-fetched and false Eurocentric notions of Christian missional efforts embedded within colonialism and slavery. Here, the outrageous claim that slavery as an institution brought Christianity to the heathen from across the ocean (as believed by many Afro-Latino Christians) is problematized by establishing African Christian teaching within the patristic era which predates modern colonialism. This early African orthodoxy according to Oden, is “the form of classic Christian consensual teaching that was first planted in Africa by Africans from Mark to Clement to Tertullian to Cyprian to Augustine to Cyril the Great – All African born, all affirming the same core faith.”²³ Oden through his writings on early African Christianity such as, *Early Libyan Christianity* (2011), *The African Memory of Mark* (2011) and *The Rebirth of African Orthodoxy* (2016) ventures to show that the Western Christian mind benefits from how African thinkers shaped dogma, spiritual formation as well as providing a pattern for the early ecumenical councils.²⁴ Here, while an exaggerated Christian Afro-centrism must be rejected as historically imbalanced, the sometimes

²² Thomas Oden, *The Rebirth of African Orthodoxy: Return to Foundations* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2016), 25.

²³ *Ibid.*, 1.1

²⁴ Thomas C. Oden, *How Africa Shaped the Christian Mind: Rediscovering the African Seedbed of Western Christianity* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2007), 43.

forgotten story of Christian thought as developed in Africa has helped Afro-Latino Pentecostals look beyond white normativity in their recovery of classical consensual orthodoxy.

While Oden's writings concerning Early African Christian thought has been instrumental in re-directing the Afro-Latino Pentecostal mind towards the recovery of classical consensual thinking, the rediscovery of Afro-Latino saints and martyrs have provided incarnational examples of holy living. Here, ascetic monks such as Moses the Black along with Spanish Saints such as St. Martin de Porres have aided Afro-Latino Pentecostals in placing a culture to orthodox practice and belief.

Religious Educational Philosophies

The last and most intriguing factor within Afro-Latino Paleo-Orthodoxy seems to be the religious educational philosophies which undergird experiential liturgical and sacramental worship as the more foundational elements of classical consensual recovery. Here, John Dewey's criteria for experiential education which describes the dual movements involving the principles of *interaction* and *continuity* that together provide "the measure of the educative significance and value of an experience,"²⁵ has proved to be invaluable. An experience, or the quality and value thereof according to Dewey, can be deduced from its ability to be educative or mis-educative, but only through the lens of *continuity* which "promotes desirable future experiences."²⁶ This interplay of experiential educational objectives and internal conditions thus forms what for Dewey can be described as a *situation*.²⁷ For Dewey, "The two principles of continuity and interaction are not separate from each other. They intercept and unite. They are, so to speak, the longitude and lateral aspects of experience."²⁸

Similar to Dewey, for Gabriel Moran, "the keyword for beginning a description of education is interaction."²⁹ Interaction is both subjective and objective in that it deals with how an organism and the various forms of life, in interaction, transform each other.³⁰ Central to education as interaction is the concept of a sense of "end," which according to Moran should be envisioned as purpose or meaning but not termination. On the one hand, educational interactions are not random. They are processes that have purpose and meaning. They aim to lead those involved out toward some end, some greater sense of understanding or insight. At the same time, educational interactions should not terminate or come to an end. Rather, if they are to prepare people to engage in the continual unfolding of their lives and human history, they must be ongoing and lifelong. Overall, educational interactions have an end (meaning, purpose, design) but are without end (termination).³¹

25. John Dewey, *Education and Experience* (New York, New York: Touchstone Book, 1983), 45.

26. *Ibid.*, 27.

27. *Ibid.*, 42.

28. *Ibid.*, 44.

29. Gabriel Moran, *Showing How: The Act of Teaching* (Valley Forge, Pennsylvania: Trinity Press International, 1997), 156.

30. *Ibid.*, 150.

31. *Ibid.*

Both Dewey and Morans' principles of experiential education as interaction and continuity with forms of life "with end and without end," play a dual role in the life of Afro-Latino Paleo-Orthodox adherents. First, the principles aid in recovering experiential religious education's proper place against the backdrop of white normativity. Secondly, the principles validate for Afro-Latino Pentecostals the notion of a religious orthopathy as religiously educative and thus vital to the recovery of orthodoxy. A brief treatment of both theories is not only essential to this study, but also deserving.

The concept of education as interaction of forms of life with end but without end (interaction & continuity) when placed in correlation with colonialism and slavery's own catechetical processes reveals a conflictive dilemma. Here, those enslaved were provided with enculturating Christian teachings which espoused Christian values in an attempt to bring them into church membership but without providing them with their freedom.³² To this end education without freedom becomes stagnate in its ability to be either truly religious or educational. Thus, if the educational system which colonialism and slavery operated aimed at providing Christian teaching disconnected from the concept of Christian freedom, ultimately rupturing the end but without end tension of educative interaction, then according to Moran, "education is reduced to being someone's possession, usually what the rich, the powerful, or some elite have control of."³³ Furthermore, for Moran, "When the double meaning of end collapses, that is when education is either a possession or an instrument of control, the education becomes irreligious. In the precise meaning of the term, education becomes an idol. Education then competes with religion which has as central to its meaning the de-idolizing of false gods."³⁴ To this end, Afro-Latino Pentecostals especially within the classical sense, continue to be influenced by a white normative perspective which has caused them for the most part, to shun academic education in lieu of the Holy Spirits experiential leading.

Methodist theologian Theodore Runyon in studying John Wesley's focus on experientialism coined the term *orthopathy* to describe how right affections fuse with right beliefs (orthodoxy) and right practices (orthopraxy) within Wesley's theological framework.³⁵ For Runyon, orthopathy is a religious experience, an event of knowing between the Divine Source (God) and a human participant (believer), providing a necessary but currently missing complement to orthodoxy and orthopraxy.³⁶ Steven Land, a prominent Pentecostal theologian and author of the book *Pentecostal Spirituality* (1993), in sharing Runyon's thought states that "The personal integrating center of orthodoxy and orthopraxy is orthopathy, those distinctive affections which are belief shaped, praxis oriented, and characteristic of a person. Affections are

³² Joseph Barndt, *Becoming an Anti-Racist Church*, 41.

³³ Gabriel Moran, "Of A Kind and To A Degree: A Roman Catholic Perspective," in *Does the Church Really Want Religious Education*, ed. Marlene Mayr, 15-31 (Birmingham, Alabama: Religious Education Press, 1988), 21.

³⁴ *Ibid*, 21

³⁵ T.H. Runyon, "a New Look at Experience," *Drew Gateway* (Fall 1987): 44-55; Theodore Runyon, *The New Creation: John Wesley's Theology Today* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1998).

³⁶ T.H. Runyon, 'The Importance of Experience for Faith' (Minister's Week Address, Emory University, 1988), 4.

neither episodic, feeling states, nor individualistic sentiments.”³⁷ Affections or orthopathy within pentecostal spirituality unlike everyday feelings are comprised of and determined by the biblical narratives, which evidence the marks of particular communal and historical location.³⁸ Orthopathy as religiously educative not only aides Afro-Latino Pentecostals recover the historic theological understanding of worship as; *lex orandi, lex credenda, lex vivendi*” as we worship, so we believe, so we live but it also speaks of the integration of the Spirit’s leading, initiation, and sustaining, having as their objective, God, the source and objective of all Christian affections.

That segments of pentecostalism are beginning to slowly move away from an isolated theological and ecclesiological primitivism and towards a more consensual and creedal Christianity is becoming more evident especially within postmodern pentecostal scholarship and pastoral practice. Academically, this shift within pentecostal scholarship is taking place under *Renewal Studies*, which for Amos Yong “cannot be understood apart from the emergence of the field of pentecostal studies.”³⁹ The field of renewal studies reconsiders the church’s theological and historical framework through the lens of the renewing work of the Holy Spirit, focusing on understanding better charismatic or pentecostal renewal movements that have either been marginalized or neglected within the life of the church. Pentecostal historians, such as Cecil Robeck, are re-opening the case against Montanism, suspending historical biases to allow for a fresh, informed, and sympathetic perspective of the movements dynamics and characteristics.

Another example of such a shift within pentecostal scholarship is Simon Chan’s *Liturgical Theology* (2006). Chan, a theologian and member of a pentecostal denomination (the Assemblies of God), writes extensively on pentecostal theology and Christian spirituality in hopes of calling evangelicalism and pentecostalism back to an adequate understanding of historic Christian worship. In speaking of the ontological nature of the church as the overarching framework for understanding its existence, Chan recalls Cyprian’s famous expression “He who has not the Church for his mother has not God for his Father.”⁴⁰ For Chan, this suggests that “the church is our nourishing mother and we are entirely dependent on her for our existence as Christians. We are not saved as individuals first and then incorporated into the church; rather, to be a Christian is to be incorporated into the church by baptism and nourished with the spiritual food of the body and blood of Christ in the Eucharist.”⁴¹ Here, Chan departs from the usual suspicion, which pentecostalism often exhibits against orthodox ecclesiology.

Turning next to a consideration of pentecostal pastoral practice, Daniel Tomberlin’s book *Pentecostal Sacraments* (2015) serves as a significant example of how on a pastoral level pentecostalism is inching its way towards historic orthodoxy. Tomberlin, an ordained bishop in the pentecostal denomination, Church of God (Cleveland, TN), challenges the pentecostal idea that baptism and the Lord’s Supper are merely ordinances Christians are commanded to observe,

37. Land, *Pentecostal Spirituality*, 34

38. *Ibid.*

39. Amos Yong, “The Affective Spirit and Historiographical Revitalization in the Christian Theological Tradition,” in *The Spirit, The Affections and the Christian Tradition*. Eds., Dale M. Coulter and Amos Yong. (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 2016), 293.

⁴⁰ Cyprian.

41. Simon Chan, *Liturgical Theology: The Church as Worshipping Community* (Downers Grove, IL: Zondervan, 2006), 24.

arguing instead that because pentecostal spirituality operates within a sacramental framework baptism and the Lord's Supper are truly sacraments that confer grace. For Tomberlin, a sacramental pentecostal spirituality can encourage authentic Christo-Pneumatic encounters, so that over time all sacraments can become "pentecostal sacraments," or "sacraments for all Christian believers."⁴² By pentecostal sacraments, Tomberlin means to suggest that not only are the sacraments themselves for all believers but that they also are moments of sincere affective pentecostal worship where the ecstatic gifts of the Spirit are evident.

Based upon the brief and limited understanding of Moran and Dewey's educational philosophies as outlined above, we can ask: Can we make a connection between these educational philosophies, Afro-Latino Pentecostal spirituality and features of Paleo-Orthodoxy? We can begin to answer this question by noting that Moran's and Dewey's educational outlooks provide a framework for envisioning pentecostal spirituality as a religiously, experiential educative form that operates mainly within the practice of worship. Moran argues that there are countless and innumerable social forms of education, and that schooling is not the only form of education. For Moran, the central characteristics of such social educational forms are: an individual must be transformed by an encounter with the form, the form itself is also changed, and the form's influence must be life-wide as well as lifelong.⁴³ In considering Moran's view of educational forms, we should also keep in mind Dewey's analysis of the formation of educational purpose as the claim that in order to be truly educative, an experience must lead a person to develop a greater sense of how they can reflectively and intelligently direct their actions and their lives with a sense of meaning and purpose. As a religiously, experiential educative form, pentecostal spirituality, transforms Afro-Latino Pentecostals through religious experiences and has the potential to be a lifelong and life-wide influence on their lives.

As already stated, in developing an experiential spirituality as religiously educative, Afro-Latino Paleo-Orthodox adherents see the opportunity for the recovery of classical consensual Christian truths to be apprehended by way of experiential pneumatological interactions and experiences instead of just propositional truths. William James's in speaking of rationality and reality of religious things unseen suggests that rationalism "is the part that has the prestige undoubtedly, for it has the loquacity, it can challenge you for proofs, and chop logic, and put you down with words. But it will fail to convince or convert you all the same if your dumb intuitions are opposed to its conclusions. If you have intuitions at all they come from a deeper level of your nature than the loquacious lever which rationalism inhabits."⁴⁴ James's remarks concerning religion, rationalism, and mysticism confirm and qualify experientialism's ability to become religiously educative within the mystical or spiritual, providing for Afro-Latino Paleo-Orthodox adherents in particular modes of liturgical/sacramental/spirituality that can be effectively recovered.

Most classical Pentecostals remain suspicious of institutional religious education due to a white normative perception, stemming from the effects of colonialism and slavery's educational

42. Daniel Tomberlin, *Pentecostal Sacraments: Encountering God at the Altar* (CreateSpace Independent Publishing, 2015), Preface xviii.

43. Moran, *Showing How*, 156-157.

44. Ibid.

system, and are thus unable to effectively recover foundational elements of classical consensual orthodoxy. Neo-Afro-Latino pentecostals however, have embraced the experiential and educational leading of the Holy Spirit within their liturgical and sacramental worship effectively recovering the more foundational elements of classical consensual orthodoxy. Here, Dewey's concept of interaction along with Moran's definition of education as end but without end, continue to meet at Eucharistic celebrations filled with celebratory and exuberant worship, charismatic preaching and, ecstatic manifestations such as prophecy and speaking in tongues.

Conclusion

The examples of the shift taking place within pentecostal scholarship as well as its practice are emblematic of a greater grassroots movement within segments of a neo-pentecostalism yearning for the recovery of orthodox belief and worship. As a result, pentecostal worship retains its distinctive pentecostal features and characteristics while aligning itself with orthodox beliefs, in a concerted effort to move towards an integrated orthodoxy, orthopraxy, and orthopathy. This movement can be aided greatly by the development of pentecostal spirituality as an educational form that aids both the broader protestant movement as well as Pentecostalism in recovering elements of orthodoxy through a teaching-learning dynamic. If a Pentecostal Orthodoxy is to contribute to the Protestant Paleo-Orthodox Movement, it will be due to its religious educational engagement with the various forms of life, both human and divine.

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