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William W. Menzies and Wonsuk Ma

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BOOK REVIEW

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[*AJPS* 5:1 (2002), pp. 1-4]

INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON NON-WESTERN PENTECOSTALISM[1]

Mathew Clark

On May 28, 2001 Pentecostal history was made at Bethesda Christian University in Anaheim, California, USA. Pentecostal scholars from Asia, Latin America, and Africa met to discuss issues that are relevant to Pentecostalism and Pentecostal theology in these non-western parts of the world. This was the first time that non-western Pentecostal scholars have met for the express purpose of discussing non-western issues that pertain specifically to the rapidly growing Pentecostal movement in the so-called Two-Thirds World.

The notion for this meeting and for its timing grew from the conference arranged by Asian scholars in 1998 to coincide with the Pentecostal World Conference (PWC) held in Seoul, Korea that year. This conference was held the day before the PWC began, and was hosted by the International Theological Institute of the Yoido Full Gospel Church, with Drs. Young-hoon Lee and Wonsuk Ma as organizers, while Lee also served as the host. The success of this conference led not only to the formation of the Asian Pentecostal Society, but also to the notion of a follow-up. The obvious enthusiasm of the Asian scholars in organizing and presenting their own conference affected the international visitors, and

[1] This is an informal report circulated after the Conference, and the editors (including the guest editor) deemed it fitting to serve as the editorial introduction. The formal title of the meeting was "Theological Symposium on Non-western Pentecostalism." The editors would like to express their gratitude to the participants for graciously agreeing to (substantially, in several cases) revise and have their studies published in this and next volumes of the *Journal*. For different reasons, however, several presentations are not included in this publication. The organizers, through these pages, would like to express their indebtedness to the regional organizers and particularly the staff of Bethesda Christian University for generous hosting the conference. Dr. Young-hoon Lee, then president, deserves a special recognition.

in 2000 the idea was mooted by Drs. Miguel Alvarez and Mathew Clark along with Lee and Ma of doing the same at Los Angeles PWC, but broadening the field of interest to include Africa and Latin America. Providentially Lee later became president of Bethesda Christian University in Anaheim near Los Angles, and the ideal host and venue was thus provided.

A final spur to making the conference happen was the Society for Pentecostal Studies (SPS) annual conference in 2000. This prestigious meeting has generally been the annual showcase for developing Pentecostal theology, but over the years has tended more and more to reflect purely North American interests. Even where international interests have figured, the presenters have usually been North American or European. In 2000, with international missions as theme, the SPS meeting fielded scarcely a single non-North American speaker. At the same time, the weight of Pentecostal growth and membership has swung from the North Atlantic region to Asia, Africa and Latin America. (For instance, of the thirty-seven million members of the Assemblies of God church, less than four million are North American.) And these non-North Atlantic regions are currently producing articulate Pentecostal scholars who wish above all to be of service to the movement in their own regions. For this reason it became increasingly urgent to create a forum for the discussion of those issues which were relevant to their regions, and not "imposed" upon them from the more developed North Atlantic world.

At the Asian Pentecostal Society annual meeting in Manila in August 2000 coordinators for each region were chosen, and preparations for the conference went ahead. Paulson Pulikottil, president of Asian Pentecostal Society, coordinated the Asian contributions, Miguel Alvarez the Latin American contingent, and Mathew Clark the African presence. Lee and Ma served as members-at-large of this organizing body.

The following synopsis of the themes of the papers presented gives an indication of the scope and interest of the Conference:

From Asia:

Paulson Pulikottil, "As East and West Met in God's Own Country"

Paul Tsuchido Shew, "A Forgotten History: Correcting the Historical Record of the Roots of Pentecostalism in Japan"

Reuben Louse Gabriel, "Issues for Pentecostal Theology from the Indian Context"

Chin Khua Khai, "Pentecostalism in Myanmar"

John Yesunatha Das, "A Reflection on St Thomas Pentecostals with a Special Reference to the Aboriginal Pentecostals in Kerala, India"

From Africa:

Mathew Clark, "Questioning Every Consensus: A Plea to Return to the Radical Roots of Pentecostalism"

P. J. Grabe, "The Concept of God's Power and Its Reception withint he Pentecostal Tradition, with Special Reference to African Context"

Opoku Onyinah, "Deliverance as a Way of Confronting Witchcraft in Modern Africa: Ghana as a Case."

Emmanuel K. Larbi, "The Nature of Continuity and Discontinuity of Ghanaian Pentecostal Concept of Salvation in African Cosmology"

Ayuk A. Ayuk, "The Pentecostal Transformation of Nigeria Church Life"

From Latin America:

Miguel Alvarez, "The South and the Latin American Paradigm"

M. A. Chvan de Matviuk, "Latin American Pentecostal Growth: Culture, Orality and Power of testimonies"

Sergio Matviuk, "Pentecostal Leadership Development and Church Growth in Latin America"

Virginia Trevino Nolivos, "A Pentecostal Paradigm for the Latin American Family: An Instrument of Transformation"

It was decided that this was the last time the organizers wished to organize such a "specialized" conference, and that the follow-up conference at the next PWC should be truly global in its extent. This will be held in South Africa in 2004, and will be hosted at the Apostolic Faith Mission Theological Seminary now operating as Auckland Park Theological Seminary in Johannesburg. There is still time to refine the details, but at present it appears that the format could be as follows:

> A conference spanning two full days, to accommodate more presenters, and to allow more interaction. Contributions from all five continents, although these could perhaps be regionalized, e.g., Latin America, North America, Europe and Middle East, Asia-Pacific, and Sub-Saharan Africa. At least six contributors per region, all of them will be asked to focus on issues pertinent to their own regions but nevertheless in awareness of the global nature of Pentecostalism.

The Anaheim conference may be an indication that international pentecostal scholarship is coming of age, and that at last pentecostal scholars from the various regions of the world can meet each other in a truly meaningful interaction, on equal footing, and with a common aim—to facilitate the proclamation of the gospel of Jesus Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit.

[*AJPS* 5:1 (2002), pp. 5-22]

AS EAST AND WEST MET IN GOD'S OWN COUNTRY: ENCOUNTER OF WESTERN PENTECOSTALISM WITH NATIVE PENTECOSTALISM IN KERALA

Paulson Pulikottil

1. Introduction

During 1920s in the Southern State of India called Kerala,[1] Pentecostalism from the West had the opportunity to meet the home grown brand of Pentecostalism. This encounter has some significant lessons for Pentecostal churches and missions agencies, particularly in their relationship with native churches and organisations. This case study of the encounter between western Pentecostalism and the indigenous Pentecostalism also illustrate the use of insights from postcolonial theory and historiography.[2]

1.1 Postcolonialism

A postcolonial approach to historiography is different from traditional approaches in its content and as well as its perspective. A postcolonial approach has a distaste for grand narratives instead it believes in locality and historical particularity. Those who use this approach try to construct more limited and specific accounts of particular events and incidents, stressing the fact that each episode has a local and

[1] Because of its scenic beauty, the Indian state of Kerala is described as "God's own country."

[2] Those who are new to Postcolonial theory will find P. Mongia, ed., *Contemporary Postcolonial Theory: A Reader* (London: Arnold, 1996) a useful introduction. Mongia has offered an introduction to the history, various aspects, and critique of postcolonial theory along with selections from the leading scholars.

particular colour. This approach thus ensures a place for those who are not given their due place in history.[3]

A postcolonial approach to history is also different in its perspectives. A postcolonial approach to history is considered as "history from below" or "voices from the edges." It tries to reconstruct history from the perspective of those who are left out by traditional histories or those who were not given their due place in history. This is what qualifies the Subaltern Studies project to be called a postcolonial approach.[4]

Another important dimension is that it provides categories to understand relationships between dominant groups and the subalterns, those who have placed themselves at the centre of history and those who are pushed to the periphery.

1.2 Postcolonialism and Pentecostal Studies

What relevance does the postcolonial approach have to Pentecostal studies?

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[3] A postcolonial critique of traditional historiographic approaches can be found in R. Guha, "On Some Aspects of the Historiography of Colonial India," in *Selected Subaltern Studies*, eds. R. Guha and G. C. Spivak (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), pp. 37-44.

[4] The Subaltern Study Group which began in the 1980s attempts to rewrite the history of India by focusing on those who were on the fringes and by reconstructing specific, local and particular accounts of history. See the series Subaltern Studies and other works listed below: R. Guha, ed., *Subaltern Studies I: Writings on South Asian History and Society*, 10 vols. (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1982); R. Guha, ed., *Subaltern Studies II*, 10 vols. (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1983); R. Guha, ed., *Subaltern Studies III* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1984); R. Guha, ed., *Subaltern Studies IV*, 10 vols. (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1985); R. Guha, ed., *Subaltern Studies V* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1987); R. Guha and G. C. Spivak, eds., *Selected Subaltern Studies* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988); R. Guha, ed., *Subaltern Studies VI* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1989); P. Chatterjee and G. Pandey, eds., *Subaltern Studies VII* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1992); D. Arnold and D. Hardiman, eds., *Subaltern Studies VIII: Essays in Honour of Ranajit Guha*, 10 vols. (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1994); S. Amin and D. Chakrabarty, eds., *Subaltern Studies IX*, 10 vols. (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1996); R. Guha, ed., *Subaltern Reader: 1986-1995* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997); G. Bhadra, G. Prakash, and S. Tharu, eds., *Subaltern Studies X*, 10 vols. (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1999).

First of all, it would help us to recover Pentecostal history which has not found a place in the grand narratives. Pentecostalism is (still) the religion of the subalterns in most parts of the world; they are not the subjects of their history. It remains an undisputed fact that in the grand narratives that the historians belonging to the historical churches created, Pentecostalism has not been given due recognition. The elitist historiography presented by the groups that are dominant either by their place in history or political or economic advantage, Pentecostalism and especially Pentecostalism in the non-western cultures did not get the due place.

Secondly, it promises a deeper appreciation of the work of the Holy Spirit irrespective of the limits of time and space. The work of the Holy Spirit is universal and it is not limited to any place or time. The postcolonial historiography does help us to look at particular historical events from the perspectives of the natives. Pentecostal histories that are Euro-centric in nature describes Pentecostal history beginning with the Topeka revival and gaining momentum at the Azusa Street Mission and spreading all over the world. The following quotation illustrates this attitude. While introducing the article on how Pentecostalism came to city of Calcutta in India, the editor comments:

> Pentecostal church history has revealed that a common thread runs from Azusa Street through contemporary pentecostal denominations and their missionary expansion.[5]

Such a conviction does not allow us to explore the possibilities of the work of the Holy Spirit in the rest of the world and the ways in which people in various parts of the world responded to its manifestation.

Thirdly, it helps us to explore voices from the contact zones of West and East or the intersection of their spaces. Pentecostalism in the present forms made its appearance either in the last phase of European colonialism or at the dawn of the emergence of new nation states. In other words, Pentecostal missionaries entered the territories which had been colonial contact zones for centuries. How did the natives respond, what sort of resistance and acceptance did they receive from these natives who have already been through political, economic and sometimes even ecclesiastical domination? This would help us to learn some useful lessons for enriching relationship between East and West. "As East is far

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[5] Maynard Ketcham and Wayne Warner, "When the Pentecostal Fire Fell in Calcutta," in *Azusa Street and Beyond*, ed. L. Grant McClung, Jr. (South Plainfield: Bridge Publishing, 1986), pp. 26-31 (26).

from the West…" the Psalmist says, but on Pentecost, East and West were made to meet each other through the confession "One God, One Baptism and One Spirit." However, did the confession and experience of the third person of the trinity erase their historical memories? What happens when East and West so far from each other as far as political, economic, social and ecclesiastical spaces meet is for us to explore.

I claim no authority or command over Postcolonial theory and does not endorse it as beyond limitations, but only try to explore its use for Pentecostal studies.

2. Short History of Pentecostalism in Kerala

Indigenous Pentecostalism in India first emerged from the Syrian Christian community in the state of Kerala. Its History is very much tied to the history of Christianity in Kerala. Christianity in Kerala claims its origin in AD 52 when the Apostle Thomas arrived and preached the gospel to Jews and the native high caste Bhramins.[6] In addition, there were evidences of migrations of Christians from Syria in the fourth century and the eighth century to Kerala.[7] However, there was an ancient Christian community in Kerala which claimed its ecclesiastical allegiance to the Syrian Orthodox Patriarch in the Middle East. The community, though now divided into two factions, one in allegiance to the Patriarchate in Damascus and one in India continues in the same ecclesiastical and liturgical traditions.

The three stalwarts of native Pentecostalism in Kerala and host of their leaders and laymen came from this community. Pastor K. E. Abraham co-founder and President of Indian Pentecostal Church until 1974 was raised in order to become an Syrian orthodox priest. Another co-founder, Pastor P. M. Samuel, and the first President of Indian

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[6] Acts of Thomas, written in Syriac and dated in the fourth century A.D., mentions that Saint Thomas, one of the twelve apostles, went to India to preach the gospel. See A. F. J. Klijn, ed., *Acts of St. Thomas* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1962) for an English translation of this work. Also see, A. E. Medlycott, *India and the Apostle St. Thomas* (London: David Nutt, 1905). Though the work is described as apocryphal, scholars see in it a second-century tradition about the Apostle of Thomas.

[7] For a detailed discussion on the various sources regarding the origin of Christianity in Kerala, see A. M. Mundadan, *History of Christianity in India: From the Beginning up to the Middle of the Sixteenth Century (up to 1542)* (Bangalore: Theological Publications in India, 1984), pp. 21-66.

Pentecostal Church of God received training to become an Orthodox priest in their seminary. And another founder, Pastor K. C. Cherian, was a teacher in the church-run school and active in the church activities.

The Syrian Christian community had recorded instances of revivals since the second half of the nineteenth century. Edwin Orr describes how, as a result of these revivals new groups professing evangelical faith emerged from among the Syrian Christian community.[8] The first was the reformed Syrian church called Mar Thoma Church and then a movement called Viyojitha Prasthanam (literally translated as the Separatist Movement) which can be rendered as the Holiness Movement. One stream of the Holiness movement under the leadership of noted Malayalam poet K. V. Simon ended up in the Christian Brethren and the other led by K. E. Abraham in Pentecostalism later.

K. E. Abraham, a leader in the Holiness movement who had been in alliance with Church of God (Anderson) was baptised in the Holy Spirit in April 20, 1923 in a meeting held by some native believers who believed in the baptism of Holy Spirit and tarried for it. This is a turning point in the history of Syrian Christians in Kerala. The following years saw a great number of prominent Syrian Christian leaders embracing Pentecostal faith. K. C. Cherian, another school teacher and a former colleague of K.E. Abraham joined the folds of Pentecostals in November 1924. P. T. Chacko became a Pentecostal believer in 1925 while he was a college student.

Pastor K. E. Abraham was leading a denomination called Independent Separatist (Holiness) Church since 1918 but was deserted by most of his followers for his doctrinal position on the Holy Spirit. He founded the South India Pentecostal Church of God with the "faithful remnant" of his group who stood with him. In 1924 the Syrian Christian leaders who have been working independent of each other formed what was known as the South India Pentecostal Church of God (SIPCG). This can be considered as the first indigenous Pentecostal denomination in India, now known as the Indian Pentecostal Church of God.

2.1 Arrival of Western Pentecostalism

The Pentecostal message from the West arrived in Kerala in 1909 through the visit of George Berg. This American missionary of German descent arrived in Banglore in 1909 and preached in a Brethren

[8] J. E. Orr, *Evangelical Awakenings in Southern Asia* (Minneapolis: Bethany Fellowship, 1975), pp. 134-39.

convention in Kerala.[9] Berg visited Kerala again in 1910 but he had to confront tremendous opposition from the Brethren missionaries forcing him to organise meeting on his own. Berg's third visit to Kerala was in 1911 in the company of an Indian missionary called Charles Cummins, and two Brethren expatriate missionaries Aldwinkle, Bouncil, et. al who received the baptism in the Holy Spirit in the meetings of Thomas Barrett. However, the first Pentecostal congregation was formed through the efforts of Berg in Kerala only in 1911. This was among first generation Christians. Berg was the first missionary to reach out to the natives who did not speak English. Otherwise, Pentecostal (foreign) mission was limited to people of foreign origin who spoke English.

The next key player is Robert F. Cook who came to India in 1912 following the trails of Berg. Some of the congregations that Berg had founded joined the mission of R. F. Cook. At this stage, Cook was assisted by the former colleagues of Berg who were expatriate missionaries. Cook was able to establish many churches particularly among the low caste Hindus and Christians in Kerala. During his early days of mission work in India, Cook was an independent. Later R.F. Cook had become a missionary affiliated with the Assemblies of God in U.S.A. Until 1926 R. F. Cook was leading a new Pentecostal denomination by the name South India Full Gospel Church (SIFGC).

Next in the line was Ms. Mary Chapman who came to India as the missionary of Assemblies of God in the US in 1915. However, she was not involved in Kerala actively until 1921 since she stayed in Madras and only did itinerary work in South Kerala.

The work of western missionaries was mainly evangelistic. They reached out the non-Christian (mainly low caste Hindus) and Christians who are the products of western missionary efforts during the colonial period. However, their impact on Syrian Orthodox Christians was very low.

Their influence on the spiritual formation of the leaders of the native movements was also very minimal. Pastor K. E. Abraham co-founder of Indian Pentecostal leaders and the first to receive baptism in the Holy Spirit describes the two leading figures of western Pentecostalism, namely Ms. Chapman and Rev. Cook only after he received Pentecostal experience.[10]

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[9] In a town called Kottarakara in south Kerala.

[10] K. E. Abraham, *Yesukristhuvinte Eliya Dasan* [Humble Servant of Jesus Christ] (Kumbanad: Pentecostal Young Peoples Association, 1965), pp. 86-87 mentions that it was two months after he received the baptism in the Holy Spirit

2.2 The Meeting of East and West

In 1923, there were three important Pentecostal movements in Kerala, the indigenous movement by the name, South India Pentecostal Church of God, Assemblies of God under the leadership of Mary Chapman and South India Full Gospel Church under the leadership of R. F. Cook. In 1926, South India Pentecostal Church of God and South India Full Gospel Church merged to form, Malankara Pentecostal Church with R. F. Cook as President and K. E. Abraham as Vice-President. However, this did not last long; in 1930 January 30, Malankara Pentecostal Church of God was split to SIPCG and SIFCG again.

This split was a rebellion of sort and a very adventurous decision. The native leaders were very much dependent upon the financial support that was extended by the western missionary. Financial and spiritual support from the western missionary was very crucial because as they embraced Pentecostal faith, they were ostracised by their own community and also had to relinquish their own ancestral property. Though, penniless and socially and economically vulnerable the native leaders did take a decision to part ways with the western missionary.

The native leaders' version of the conflict is reflected in various articles, leaflets and the autobiography of Pastor. K. E. Abraham. The native leaders described their experience of the western missionaries as "being under the yoke of slavery," and "surrendering the freedom," and their work as "building for money" in the manner of "those who are employed by the state." Their denial of financial support was described as refusing to drink "the milk of the white cow." In clarifying their position expressions like "autonomy of native churches" and "independence" etc were common.

3. Response of Indigenous Pentecostalism

I would like to examine three important sources that reflect the relationship and attitude of the native Pentecostal leaders towards the western Pentecostal missionary. The first is a speech made by Pastor K. E. Abraham in 1938 to a meeting of the representative of IPC Congregations. The second is a short history of Pentecostalism titled,

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that he met pastor Cook and this too was at the initiative of Cook. It was after three months that he met Ms. Chapman. He devoted a section on how he met the "western missionaries."

"Early Years of I. P. C." and the third is the autobiography written by K. E. Abraham.

The "Early Years of I. P. C." was written by K. E. Abraham in 1955. Whether he realised it or not it was published on the 25th anniversary of the native Pentecostal leaders parting way with the missionaries from Azusa street! The purpose of this narrative is very clearly stated in the introduction as:

> The purpose of the publication of this book is that, those who have come to the Pentecostal fellowship recently and those youngsters who belong to the second generation of Pentecost must know about the details of early days Pentecostal ministry.[11]

K. E. Abraham, the co-founder of the Indian Pentecostal Church of God, was the first to come up with an autobiography as well. Published in 1965 and entitled *Humble Servant of Jesus Christ*, it gives useful insights into how the native perceives himself and the alien.[12] Though it is an autobiography, he claims that it is the history of the denomination that he headed: "My history, it is also the history of India Pentecostal Church of God."[13]

There are three important aspects of the natives' response to the western missionary in these narratives.

3.1 Insurgencies and consciousness

I follow the lead of Ranajit Guha in exploring the reasons for such responses. In his studies on peasant insurgencies in India, Guha has pointed out that the reasons for rebellion should not be sought in external factors but in the consciousness of the native.[14] He goes on to say that there are six elementary aspects of this consciousness: negation, ambiguity, modality, solidarity, transmission and territoriality. The fourth of these namely solidarity which I would like to pay special attention to is explained by Chatterjee as,

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[11] K. E. Abraham, *The Early Years of I.P.C. (Malayalam)*, Second Edition (Kumbanad: Abraham Foundation Printers, 1986) p. i.

[12] K. E. Abraham, *Humble Servant of Jesus Christ.*

[13] K. E. Abraham, *Humble Servant of Jesus Christ*, p. ii.

[14] Guha, Ranajit, *Elementary Aspects of Peasant Insurgency in Colonial India* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1983).

> …the self-definition of the insurgent peasant, his awareness of belonging to a collectivity that was separate from and opposed to his enemies, lay in the aspect of solidarity.… Often it was expressed in terms of ethnicity or kinship or some such affinal category. Sometimes one can read in it the awareness of a class.[15]

Chatterjee also suggests that this consciousness must have a history which he describes as,

> Their experience of varying forms of subordination, and of resistance, their attempts to cope with changing forms material and ideological life both in their everyday existence and in those flashes of open rebellion, must leave their imprint on consciousness as a process of learning and development.[16]

It is thus important to explore the history of this consciousness of the native leaders in order to understand this particular historical incident.

3.2 Consciousness of the Pentecostal Leaders

One important aspect of this consciousness of the native is the fact that they are Syrian. This Syrianness is evident in various auto-ethnographic remarks found in these narratives, especially in the autobiography of Pastor K. E. Abraham. It is evident in his description of his birth, education, marriage of his brother and his own. In all these the leaders of native Pentecostalism imaged themselves as Syrian Christians. The Syrian historical consciousness is evident in his comment on this issue where he draws on the analogy of the relationship between the Roman Catholic Church and the Syrian Orthodox Church:

> Everybody knows that the Syrian community in Malankara was absorbed in the Roman Church for about fifty years in the seventeenth century and it came to its former state through the crooked cross resolution by rejecting the relationship to the Roman church. This does not mean that the Malankara church was founded after the resolution of crooked cross. Similarly, Indian Pentecostal Church of God had allied with the movement led by pastor Cook for a period of three years.[17]

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[15] P. Chatterjee, "The Nation and Its Peasants," in *Mapping Subaltern Studies and the Postcolonial*, ed. V. Chaturvedi (London: Verso, 2000), pp. 8-23 (12).

[16] Chatterjee, "The Nation and Its Peasants," p. 21.

[17] Abraham, *The Early Years of I.P.C.*, p. ii.

This Syrian consciousness of the native has influenced their imaging of the missionary; a fact of which the missionaries from the West were totally uninformed.

3.3 Assertion of Syrianness

The Syrian church always had an openness to the brethren from overseas. However, they did not allow the brethren from overseas to invade their cultural, social and ecclesiastical spaces. I would like to illustrate this with two examples from outside the realm of and prior to the advent of Pentecostalism in India.

As India became a British colony, evangelical missionaries from the various European countries entered the scene in Kerala. The Syrian metropolitans did encourage the missionaries to preach in their churches as long as they did not interfere with their own traditions and liturgical practices. However, they did control their activities. The cooperation with western missionaries (mainly Anglican) went on in the area of Bible translation, production of literature and allowing missionaries to hold evangelistic and revival meetings after the regular *Korbana* (liturgical service) in the church. Metropolitan Mar Dionysius sought the help of Claudius Buchanan to get the Bible in Syriac to be printed. In 1806 Buchanan got 100 copies of the Syriac Bible printed. These were the first printed copies of Bible in Syriac that this community had. During this time Mar Dionysius also got the Syriac version translated into the local language, Malayalam, and got it printed by the help of Buchanan. Another metropolitan, Matthews Mar Athanasius encouraged western missionaries to visit and preach in the churches. However, this did not last long since the revival took dimensions that Syrian church could not tolerate. In 1830 the Syrian Metropolitan Chepad Mar Dionysius (1827-1856) prohibited the work of the western missionaries through an encyclical.[18] This did have its repercussions in the Syrian Christian community as a number of enlightened Syrian Christians left the Church and joined the Church Missionary Society. The major break came in about half a century later by the formation of the Mar Thoma Church, a reformed Syrian church in 1876.[19] The effect of this desertion and split is

[18] See, D. Ayroor, *Keralathile Penthacosthu Sabhakal* [Pentecostal Churches of Kerala] (Mavelikkara: Beer Sheba Bible College, 1985), p. 24.

[19] Ayroor, *Keralathile Penthacosthu Sabhakal*, p. 27.

that the Syrian Christian community could distance themselves from the western missionary. What was important for the Syrian Christian is to protect his cultural and ecclesiastical space from invasion than spiritual revival. Spiritual revival at the cost of ethnic and ecclesiastical identity was not negotiable.

Another significant instance is the alienation of the native leaders from the western missionaries in the evangelical domain. The Christian Brethren movement gained momentum in Kerala from 1897. It also commanded a good following and the founding leaders were a German missionary by the name Nagel (originally from Basel Mission) and an Anglican missionary by the name Grayson. Sometime in the early 1920s, the Christian Brethren also faced a split. One of the native leaders P. E. Mammen advocated that the native churches should not be controlled by the foreign missionaries and began a movement for the cause of freedom of native churches. Abraham mentions that he had published a number of leaflets to promote his view that western missionaries should not have control over the native churches. However, this led to a split in the Christian Brethren. The native leaders named their group "Syrian Brethren!"[20]

The above two incidents indicate how the consciousness of being a Syrian Christian superseded all other concerns.

3.4 Formation of the Syrian Consciousness

There are two aspects to the formation of this particular Syrian consciousness and a third historical factor that conditioned their imaging of the West. The first is the autonomy they enjoyed while being Christians belonging to the Syrian Orthodox tradition and the second being the high social status they enjoyed under the Hindu rulers.[21] The third is the affect European colonialism had on Syrian Christian community.

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[20] Abraham, *Humble Servant*, p. 30.

[21] An anthropological study of the Syrian Christians is found in S. Visvanathan, *The Christians of Kerala: History, Belief and Ritual among the Yakoba* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1999). In this study Visvanathan brings out the unique features of the Kerala Syrian Christian life, ritual and beliefs and their relation of the Syrian culture to that of Hindu culture.

3.5 Ecclesiastical Autonomy

The Syrian Christian community in Kerala belongs to the Syrian Orthodox tradition and they still maintain very lively contact with their counterparts in the Middle East, particularly with the Syrian Patriarchate of Damascus. From time immemorial, the Syrian Orthodox See in Antioch has been the spiritual head of the church with administration in the hands of the local metropolitans. The relationship with the Middle East gave them an identity and determined their historical consciousness. However, this contact with the parent church had a set back due to the advance of Islam to the Christian countries of the Middle East in the sixth century but is revived in the modern days.

3.6 Social Status

Historically, the Syrian Christian community in Kerala enjoyed high social status as well. Around the seventh century, the local rulers of Kerala (*rajas*) recognised Christians as a higher caste and awarded certain privileges and rights. This in fact helped Christians in Kerala to develop a sense of dignity and worth. The break up of communication with the parent church in Syria helped in developing a sense of independence promoted by the Hindu rulers. In the Indian society, which is caste-ridden, this social status was crucial and had a great impact of their collective sense of dignity.

Mundadan comments:

> Thus at the arrival of the Portuguese in India towards the close of the 16th century the Christians of St. Thomas were leading a life full of reminiscences of their past, and enjoying a privileged position in society and an amount of social and ecclesiastical autonomy. They had been leading a life at the core of which was an identity consciousness which, if not expressed in clear-cut formulas, was implicit in their attitude towards their traditions, their social, socio-religious and religious customs and practices, and their theological outlook.[22]

3.7 Syrian Christians under European Colonialism

This situation changed with the arrival of Vasco da Gama in Kerala on May 21 1498. With the arrival of the Portuguese, the Syrian

[22] A. M. Mundadan, *Indian Christians: Search for Identity and Struggle for Autonomy* (Bangalore: Dharmaram Publishers, 1984), vol. 4, p. 28.

Christians of Kerala found themselves slipping slowly to the control of the Pope. In the year 1595, Alexis de Menezes the newly appointed Archbishop of Goa, landed in Kerala in order to submit the Church in Kerala to the control of the Roman Catholic Church.

The following statement by Menezes betrays the domination that was planned. In a letter Menezes wrote to Rome in 1597 he said his aim was to:

> …to purify all the churches from the heresy and errors which they hold, giving them the pure doctrine of the Catholic faith, taking from them all the heretical books that they possess.… I humbly suggest that he be instructed to extinguish little by little the Syrian language, which is not natural. His priests should learn the Latin language, because the Syriac language is a channel through which all that heresy flows. A good administrator ought to replace Syriac by Latin.[23]

The Synod of Diamper which Menezes convened on 1599 was successful in forcing the Syrian Christians of Kerala to accept Portuguese domination. Firth points out that after the Synod, Menezes even burnt a large collection of books and documents belonging to the Syrian Church wherever he could.[24]

This was something that the Syrian Christians who have been enjoying freedom and autonomy for more than sixteen centuries could not stand. Revolt against foreign religious domination had already began in 1595. This led to a large scale revolt in January 1653 where a multitude of Christians took an oath to fight for freedom. In the revolt that ensued many Jesuit priests were targeted. This is known as the "crooked cross" resolution where they declared themselves independent of the Roman Catholic Church.[25]

The freedom and the social status that they enjoyed for two thousand years have helped the Christians to achieve dignity and independence. The Syrian Christian community's imaging of the western missionary

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[23] A. A. King, *The Rites of Eastern Christendom* (London: Burns Oates, 1947), vol. 2, pp. 449-50.

[24] C. B. Firth, *An Introduction to Indian Church History* (Madras: Christian Literature Society, 1968), p. 96.

[25] Those who took a solemn oath to depart from the Roman Catholic Church and fight for the independence of the Syrian Church tied a rope to a cross and took the pledge by holding the rope. According to the tradition the cross was bent owing to the force of people trying to hold it, and later known as the crooked cross pledge/resolution.

was conditioned by their experience of ecclesiastical domination under the Portuguese rulers and Catholic church. Theirs was one of ecclesiastical and theological domination from which they have delivered themselves. While the Portuguese were still the political rulers, they made their church ecclesiastically free! They imaged themselves as one who were invaded and who freed themselves from the colonial powers.

There are three important aspects of the native Pentecostal response to the western missionary.

3.8 Refusal to Reinvent the Holy Spirit

The first is their refusal to reinvent the Holy Spirit in their contexts. The native Pentecostal in these narratives makes successful attempts to snatch history from the western historians by guarding against any move to reinvent Holy Spirit in Kerala. This he does by stressing that Pentecostal revivals regularly occurred in Kerala before western Pentecostal missionaries arrived.

In contradiction to what a representative from the West, namely Edwin Orr, has to say about revivals in Kerala is evident. Orr is wrong in concluding that until 1896 there had been no 'Pentecostal outpourings where individuals exhibited a profound conviction of sin.'[26] There are reports of the manifestation of the Holy Spirit in the second half of the nineteenth century (1872 onwards). The revival movement led by Justus Joseph (his English Christian name), a Brahmin convert to Christianity, was one of that sort. The non-Pentecostal native historian K. V. Simon has noted that in the services of this Christian movement there was revelation, dancing in the spirit etc, though he is critical of it.[27]

Abraham begins his history of Pentecostalism in Kerala by insisting that the revivals that took place in Kerala in 1873, 1895 and 1908 have to be taken as Pentecostal revivals.

> There were three powerful revivals has happened in the Malayalam speaking land during M.E. 1048, 1070, 1083 (A.D. 1873, 1895, 1908).[28] In all these three revivals people were filled with the Holy

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[26] Orr, *Evangelical Awakenings in Southern Asia,* p. 109.

[27] K. V. Simon, *Malankarayile Verpadu Sabhakalude Charithram* [History of Holiness Churches in Malankara] (Idayaranmula, Kerala: n.p., 1938), p. 99 quoted by Ayroor, *Keralathile Penthacosthu Sabhakal*, p. 29.

[28] M.E. stands for Malayalam Era, the calendar used in Kerala. A.D. 2001 is M.E. 1176-1177.

> Spirit and spoke in other tongues. However, those who had these experiences in those days did not realise that they were speaking in tongues as they were endowed with the Holy Spirit; they did not have sufficient knowledge of scripture in this matter.[29]

Abraham snatches history again from the West by emphasising the Pentecostal revival had reached Kerala before the first Pentecostal missionary from the West came. This he does by an indirect reference that he had witnessed revivals before the advent of Pentecostalism in Kerala:

> I too was a participant in the spiritual revival that took place among the Christians of Kerala in 1908. I was only nine then.... I witnessed the power of God being poured out on many people and as a result of this their bodies being shaken, and they speaking with stammering lips. But I did not know what it was. However, only after been obtained the Pentecostal blessing I came to know what it really was.[30]

We have seen earlier that he had attempted to exile the western missionary from his own person experience of the Holy Spirit by clarifying that it is after his Pentecostal experience that he met the two Pentecostal missionaries from America.

3.9 Objection to Eurocentrism

The second aspect of their response is objecting to Eurocentrism. Reaction against the Eurocentric presentation of Pentecostal history can be dated as early as 1955 in India. This is twenty years after the foundation of the Indian Pentecostal Church. In his work *The Early Years of IPC*, Pastor K. E. Abraham, one of the founders of Indian Pentecostal Church (IPC), struggles to clarify that his denomination existed before the Pentecostal missionaries from the Azusa street established Pentecostal churches in India. In describing the purpose of the book, he says:

> Many people think that India Pentecostal Church of God is formed after the break with Pastor Cook. This is because of their ignorance of the early history of this movement. Readers of this book will realise that this movement (Indian Pentecostal Church) has been in existence under

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[29] Abraham, *The Early Years of I.P.C.*, pp. 5-6.

[30] Abraham, *Humble Servant*, p. 60.

> the name "South India Pentecostal Church" and for over three years worked in co-operation with the movement that was under the leadership of Pastor Cook and since the beginning of 1930 has been de-affiliated from this alliance.[31]

Earlier in his presidential address to the meeting of the representatives of IPC congregations in 1938 (eight years after the split) he asserted that:

> Those who joined this fellowship recently may be surprised to know that it has been fifteen years since this movement started. Many think that this movement began after we left the relationship with Pastor Cook. It is not so! This movement was founded fifteen years ago by those ministers and congregations who accepted Pentecostal truth and decided to minister independently in central Travancore.[32]

He went on to assert that:

> Since Mr. Cook had convinced us that he is willing to work within the framework of independence of native congregations, we associated our movement then called 'South India Pentecostal Church of God' with his movement along with the local congregations and ministers.[33]

He lists the number of congregations of South India Pentecostal Church of God that they brought to this alliance and goes on to conclude his speech saying that,

> From this it may be clear now that those who allege that Abraham and others ran away with Mr. Cook's people have not understood the reality of the matter. It may be now clear that it has been fifteen years since Indian Pentecostal Church began and has worked in association with the ministry of Cook for three and a half years.[34]

This illustrates that the native who already had experienced the West insist on being subjects of their own history. This important aspect of the

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[31] Abraham, *The Early Years of I.P.C.*, p. i.

[32] T. S. Abraham, ed., *The Sermons of Pastor K. E. Abraham* (Kumbanad, Kerala: K. E. Abraham Foundation, 1985), p. 1.

[33] Abraham, *The Sermons of Pastor K. E. Abraham*, p. 2.

[34] Abraham, *The Sermons of Pastor K. E. Abraham*, p. 4.

native is something that needs to be taken seriously in considering relationships between West and the East.

3.10 Rejection of Colonial Mimicry

The third aspect of this response I would call the rejection of colonial mimicry. Postcolonial scholars have shown that colonialism has produced a class of interpreters between the coloniser and the colonised. This is a class of people who are natives by birth and physical features but in taste, opinions, morals and intellect are the colonisers. Frantz Fanon uses the phrase, "black skin/white masks," to describe them and V.S.Naipaul calls them "mimic men." This concept has been developed by Homi Bhabha and others as "colonial mimicry." In colonial mimicry, the colonised pretend to have become one like those who have colonised them. V. S. Naipaul has described it as:

> We pretend to be real, to be learning, to be preparing ourselves for life, we mimic men of the New World, one unknown corner of it, with all its reminders of the corruption that came so quickly to the new.[35]

For the part of the coloniser, they want to produce men who would resemble them in their tastes and morals, while for the part of the native there is an attempt to wear the colonial mask, to be one like the coloniser. Whatever direction this process takes in producing mimic men, the coloniser is constant and the change is towards that constant centre.

Menezes has tried to produce such mimic men in the Syrian Christian community in Kerala who would speak Latin instead of Syriac and would become Roman Catholic in every way. The Crooked Cross resolution has to be understood as a refusal by a certain section of the Syrian community to become such mimic men. In this line of those who refused to do colonial mimicry stand the Syrian metropolitans and the leaders of the Syrian Brethren movement to be joined by the native Pentecostal leaders.

4. Conclusion

In conclusion I should add that Pentecostal scholars from the non-western countries need to explore ways in which they can write the

[35] V. S. Naipaul, *The Mimic Men* (London: Penguin, 1967), p. 146 cited by H. K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (London & New York: Routledge, 1994), p. 88.

natives back into history and give them their due place. I must also say that even in the West, where historiography is mainly the venture of historians belonging to historical churches, Pentecostal historians need to engage in reconstructing the history of the Christian church from the edges.

In the light of the present study, I submit that there is a great need to understand the historical consciousness of the native. We need to ask what sort of historical memories do they carry and form their consciousness of themselves and the other.

Pentecostal historians need also to understand the language of domination and control in the contact zones of Pentecostalism. There are already rhetoric and discourse in place in almost all countries which are developed as a results of their experience of colonialism. In trying to communicate the gospel, it is important to understand how the native looks at the Other. In India at least, Christianity and colonialism are considered synonymous by those who advocate the Hindutva Ideology. Hindutva reasons that Christianity was brought to India by the colonial powers beginning with Roman Catholic missionaries who followed the trails of the Portuguese and finally the Anglican missionaries during the British Raj in India. They allege that the message and method of missionary work of the native Indian church is in continuity with that of the colonial missionaries. For them, the native missionary is just another mimic man of the colonialism.[36]

The Holy Spirit has been in work all over the world. We need to continue to do research on non-western Christian traditions to understand how they understood the work of the Holy Spirit and how this would help us to better communicate the full gospel truth. I hope scholars from other countries and cultures would find in this example from India, though preliminary in nature, a stimulus for similar explorations.

[36] See A. Shourie, *Missionaries in India: Continuities, Changes, Dilemmas* (New Delhi: ASA Publications, 1995).

[*AJPS* 5:1 (2002), pp. 23-49]

A FORGOTTEN HISTORY: CORRECTING THE HISTORICAL RECORD OF THE ROOTS OF PENTECOSTALISM IN JAPAN[1]

Paul Tsuchido Shew

1. Introduction

Pentecostalism was the fastest growing religious movement of the twentieth century and continues to be one of the largest, if not *the* largest, Christian movement in the world today. It has impacted Japan, but the history of the movement in this country is almost entirely unknown to the scholarly world and even to Pentecostals themselves. In the two most relevant active fields of research, the history of Christianity in Japan and the worldwide history of Pentecostalism, the scholarly literature offers little information about the Pentecostal movement in Japan. My research has shown that the existing secondary literature about Pentecostals in Japan offers nothing more than a pale glimpse into the reality of this robust and multifaceted movement, and unfortunately appears to be based on unreliable secondary accounts and personal recollections recounted decades after the events took place. Modern sources, including official histories of the denominations themselves, tend to get facts incorrect and have omitted many key actors and events. Archival research utilizing primary historical documents reveals a vibrant Pentecostal movement in Japan dating from the time of the Azusa Street Revival, and involving dozens of missionaries, scores of Japanese "native workers" and thousands of Japanese believers.

To set the parameters for this research, I begin with the question, "Who are the Pentecostals?" Both broad and narrow definitions exist, for example: Barrett and Johnson's *statistics of global mission* versus the Assemblies of God's *statement of faith*. For this research, I have

[1] An earlier version was presented at the International Conference on Non-Western Pentecostalism, Anaheim, California on May 28, 2001.

developed criteria identifying Pentecostals on a global scale that is also specifically relevant to historical research.

Pentecostalism as a global Christian movement is characterized by an emphasis on speaking in tongues and by the practice of "signs and wonders" (miracles and spiritual manifestations). Pentecostals today are most clearly recognized by their direct and personal *experience* of the Holy Spirit. M*anifestations* of the Holy Spirit such as miracles, healings and other "signs and wonders," and *practicing* the gifts of the Holy Spirit including speaking in tongues, prophecy and healing are included in this experience. However, theological aspects are also essential to the continuation and propagation of this movement as an ongoing phenomenon. A definition of the term Pentecostal needs to include 1) a positive theological interpretation of present-day "signs and wonders" including speaking in tongues, 2) evidence of manifestations of the Holy Spirit, and 3) a heritage that connects it with the larger movement expanding from the Azusa Street revivals from 1906 or the earlier ministry of Charles Fox Parham. Furthermore, weight must be given to Japan's connection to the larger Pentecostal community through Pentecostal publications, conferences, revivals and individuals such as itinerating evangelists. These characteristics are phenomenological, theological and connectional and encompass more than those who simply use the title of "Pentecostal". For denominations to be considered such they need to have an official theology, that supports the above definition. Other unrelated meanings of the name, "Pentecostal" exist, especially noted in the late-nineteenth through early-twentieth centuries, so care has been given to ensure that the movement described in this paper matches the stated criteria.

2. Literature Review: Myths in the Making

The challenge of researching Pentecostalism in Japan is that virtually no one has examined it before---the field is wide open for research---but it presents difficulties in locating data. The history and current status of the Pentecostal movement in Japan is almost entirely without scholarly research. The field of the history of Pentecostalism has made great strides in recent years recording the worldwide spread of Pentecostalism and the development of Pentecostal roots in the West, but little attention has been paid to Japan.

Unlike the mission societies and boards of established denominations, early Pentecostals in Japan were independent and lacked

clearly defined organization. Their mainline denomination colleagues submitted annual reports, often to multiple agencies, but early Pentecostals were not required to submit mission reports nor did the early Japanese pastors. Maintaining a thoroughly independent spirit, the early movement also avoided Christian organizations such as the National Council of Churches of Japan and other ecumenical fellowships that gathered information on constituents. Although much of this has changed in the post-war period, these barriers provide significant challenges for gathering data on the earlier periods.

Studies in the history of Christianity in Japan have been neglected recently in general, and Japanese Pentecostalism is no exception. The number of scholarly books and articles relevant to Pentecostalism in Japan can be counted with the fingers on one hand. Mark Mullins, professor of sociology of religions at Meiji Gakuin, published *Christianity Made in Japan*, which deals with some indigenous Pentecostal groups.[2] While this is one of the only recent works that touches on Pentecostals in Japan, it does not systematically treat Pentecostalism itself nor is it historical research in nature. Standard works about the history of Christianity in Japan either ignore Pentecostalism entirely or mention it merely as an aside. For example, the editors of *Christianity in Japan, 1971-90* include numerous articles about the status of Christian denominations and movements in Japan from many different perspectives, but never mention Pentecostals.[3] This, despite the fact that their own statistical charts show that while the Nihon Kirisuto Kyodan (the United Church of Christ in Japan, the largest Protestant denomination which received the bulk of attention in the book) declined in membership from 1970 to 1990, the Assemblies of God (AG) increased by over 40%. Extensive searches for dissertations and articles in English yield virtually nothing relevant to Pentecostalism in Japan.

Research in the Japanese language reveals the same deficiency of scholarly sources. Libraries and research institutes of major Japanese universities contain virtually no direct sources, either secondary or primary. Japanese scholars of the history of Christianity in Japan and Pentecostal church leaders repeatedly informed me that nothing was being published in that area and the only way to do the research was to

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[2] Mullins, Mark, *Christianity Made in Japan: A Study of Indigenous Movements*, Nanzan Library of Asian Religion and Culture (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1998).

[3] Kumazawa, Yoshinobu and David Swain, *Christianity in Japan, 1971-1990: Successor to the Japan Christian Yearbook* (Tokyo: Kyobunkwan, 1991).

contact churches and denominations directly. Fortunately, the Japan Assemblies of God (JAG) recently published a helpful reference, *Mikotoba ni Tachi, Mitama ni Michibikarete*, its fifty-year history,[4] which is an update of their thirty year history, *Mitama ni Michibikarete*.[5] However, it focuses almost entirely on the "official" history of the JAG in the post-war period, and the short pre-war section is little more than a brief summary listing personal recollections and the names and places of ministry. It also lacks any scholarly apparatus calling into question the integrity of its presentation and leading nowhere for further research. Furthermore, preliminary research revealed that the official list of missionaries was woefully incomplete. Nonetheless, it is one of the only secondary sources for studying the history of JAG and an invaluable aid.[6]

A key primary source for investigating Christianity in Japan is the *Kirisutokyo Nenkan* [Christian Yearbook], a massive, annual publication that attempts to list every church, every denomination, every pastor and every Christian group and organization in Japan, complete with descriptions. Published by the Kirisuto Shimbun-sha (Christian Newspaper Company), it also catalogues important Christian events every year and includes articles of interest, being originally modeled after the missionary publication *The Japan Christian Yearbook* (*JCY*).[7] The 1999 edition of the *Kirisutokyo Nenkan* contains a statistical supplement analyzing the relative growth of Protestant denominational traditions in post-war Japan, and indicates that there were no Pentecostals

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[4] Japan Assemblies of God, *Mikotoba ni Tachi, Mitama ni Michibekarete: Nihon Assemburizu ob Goddo Kyodan Soritsu Goju Nenshi* [Standing on the Word, Guided by the Spirit: The 50 Year History of the Japan Assemblies of God] (Tokyo: Japan Assemblies of God, 1999).

[5] Japan Assemblies of God, *Mitama ni Michibikarete: Soritu Sanju Nenshi* [Guided by the Spirit: The Thirty Year History] (Tokyo: Japan Assemblies of God, 1979).

[6] After I did the initial research in the summer of 1999, I reported to the faculty at JAG Central Bible College that the missionary listings in their fifty-year history were missing numerous names. A thirty-year history was also published in 1979 and the short pre-war sections of both books are very similar.

[7] *Kirisutokyo Nenkan* (1916-present) and *Japan Christian Yearbook* (1903-1969) changed publishers and titles throughout the years. A reprint of the pre-war volumes of *Kirisutokyo Nenkan* was published in 1994 by the Nihon Tosho Center (Tokyo, 1994), and the entire run of the *Japan Christian Yearbook* is available in microfilm through the libraries of Columbia University and Yale University.

in Japan in 1947.[8] This was expressed as a percentage of the total Christian church in Japan and in the number of individual believers: zero Pentecostal believers in 1947. With even a small effort to research the facts, this kind of error should have been easily avoided. The JAG is proud of officially dating its roots back to 1913, and this information is readily available from numerous sources, including every edition of the *Kirisutokyo Nenkan* since 1949. With virtually no secondary sources from which to draw data, a scarcity of primary sources and no easy access to extant materials, this is an unfortunately common impression. However these blatant errors also demonstrate the need for scholarly research into the origins of Pentecostalism in Japan.

Another significant factor impeding research into the history of Pentecostalism in Japan is the pervasive prejudice against Pentecostals. The common understanding of the Pentecostal movement in Japan that I encounter among mainline Protestants is that it is a fundamentalist sect introduced from America in the 1950s. Japanese scholars that I asked for assistance in this research have told me that Pentecostalism is a "post-war" phenomenon in Japan. Furthermore, other Christian scholars have cautioned me to avoid this research because Pentecostalism is "strange." I have been encouraged to pursue other fields of research and warned that publishing about Pentecostals will lead people to believe I am one too—which was implied to be the last thing I would want to do. The prejudice against Pentecostals lingers in Japan in the Christian community and seriously hinders research in this field.

It is hard to overstate the deplorable state of the field concerning the history of the Pentecostal movement in Japan. "Official" histories, based on personal recollections and the limited facts that happened to be at their disposal when compiled, tend to take on the character of myth. "Authoritative" sources for the study of Christianity in Japan have long ignored the movement, and when they do mention it, their inaccuracies are obvious to the alert reader. "Established" scholars in the field are by and large disinterested and ignorant either by choice or prejudice. The history of the Pentecostal movement in Japan as it is known today is scarcely more than myth and rumor.

Pentecostals have a rich heritage in Japan, and perhaps by recounting their history with detail and accuracy, some of the misconceptions can be broken down. It is time to tell the story of the roots of Pentecostalism in Japan, not just so that Japanese Pentecostals will understand themselves better but also because the wider Christian community needs to know

[8] *Kirisutokyo Nenkan* (1999), vol. 3, p. 13.

their brothers and sisters. This paper seeks to present a basic outline of the roots of the Pentecostal movement in Japan focusing on the founding missionaries. Rather than attempting a comprehensive account of all Pentecostal activity in the early period, this discourse engages the existing secondary accounts such as the denominational histories in an attempt to set the historical record straight from primary documents.

3. Pioneer Pentecostal Missionaries in Japan

While much is still undiscovered about the early Pentecostal missionaries to Japan, this much is known for certain: they were independent, faith missionaries. The first Pentecostal missionaries entered Japan well before most Pentecostal denominations were organized. But the early Pentecostal movement was intrinsically a mission movement that motivated people to spread the good news immediately. The first Pentecostal missionaries to Japan responded out of such urgency. So when did the Pentecostal movement enter Japan, who were the first missionaries and how did the movement develop?

Typical accounts of the origins of the Pentecostal movement in Japan usually answer the question as follows:

> According to the *Kirisutokyo Nenkan*, the Japan Assemblies of God represents the oldest Pentecostal tradition in Japan, which started with the arrival of C. F. Juergensen and family on August 11, 1913. Mr. and Mrs. Barney Moore followed the next year, and these families became the first officially appointed Assembly of God missionaries, shortly after its formation in 1914. The first outpouring of the Holy Spirit among Japanese occurred in 1918, and by 1929 their efforts finally bore fruit in the organization of the first Japanese Pentecostal denomination (AG-related) called the Japan Bible Church.

This is my summary of the standard accounts of the history and in accord with numerous standard accounts of Pentecostalism in Japan, including *Kirisutokyo Nenkan* (1998-2001), *Kurisuchan Joho Bukku* (2001),[9] the official fifty-year and thirty-year histories of JAG (1979, 1999), a feature article about the fiftieth anniversary founding of the JAG in *Kurisuchan Shimbun*,[10] studies by McLean (1978)[11] and Marie

[9] Kurisuchan Shimbun, ed., *Kurisuchan Joho Bukku* [Christian Information Book] (Tokyo: Kurisuchan Shimbun, 2001).

[10] JAG, "Nihon Assemburizu obu Goddo Kyodan 50 Shunen" [The 50th Anniversary of the Japan Assemblies of God], *Kurisuchan Shimbun* [The

Juergensen.[12] In truth, however, C. F. Juergensen was not the first Pentecostal missionary in Japan, neither his family nor the Moores were the first missionaries in Japan to associate with the Assemblies of God. Allow me to start from the beginning.

The Pentecostal movement entered Japan in at least three ways. First, it entered through the M.L. Ryan group of the Apostolic Faith Movement, Spokane, Washington. They had no previous experience in mission work, and understood the baptism of the Holy Spirit, and especially speaking in tongues to be *for mission outreach.* Second, the movement entered Japan through missionaries with previous experience in Japan who were Pentecostalized, such as William and Mary Taylor. Third, Pentecostalism entered Japan through several waves of independent, faith missionaries like Estella Bernauer, the Moores and the Juergensens.

3.1 M. L. Ryan (1907): Apostolic Faith Movement

The first known Pentecostals to arrive in Japan were from a group in 1907 led by Martin L. Ryan from Spokane, Washington. In 1906, Ryan had traveled to the Azusa Street Mission and experienced the baptism of the Holy Spirit. He then returned to Oregon and moved to Spokane where he opened a mission. The congregation soon experienced the baptism of the Holy Spirit and about fifteen of them felt led into missions in East Asia.[13] They departed early in September 1907 and arrived in

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Christian Newspaper] (July 25, 1999), p. 3. This full-page feature including several articles and charts was sponsored by the JAG as a *zenmen kokoku* (full page advertisement). The bottom of the page also included JAG-related advertisements, mostly for churches.

[11] D. G. McLean, "Precise History of the Japan Assembly of God" (Unpublished manuscript, Springfield, MO: Assemblies of God World Mission, 1978).

[12] Marie Juergensen, "Inception of Assemblies of God Work in Japan, Missionary Profiles Collection" (Unpublished manuscript, Springfield, MO: Assemblies of God World Mission, Nov. 1951). It is also in accord with the draft of David Hymes, "Pentecostal-Charismatic Movement in Japan," in the forthcoming *New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, but I expect it to be corrected in the published version since I have personally contacted both the author and Stanley Burgess, the editor, about it.

[13] Daneil Bays, "The Protestant Missionary Establishment and the Pentecostal Movement," in *Pentecostal Currents in American Protestantism*, eds. R. P. Spittler, G. A. Wacker and E. L. Blumhofer (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1999), pp. 50-68.

Yokohama, Japan September 27, 1907. According to the *Post-Intelligencer*, a Washington newspaper, the party consisted of the following members: M. L. Ryan, wife and three children, H. L. Lawler, wife and their two children, A. W. MacDonald and his wife, W. A. Colyar, his wife and two children, Miss Mae Law, Miss Lillian Callahan, and E. Riley.[14] Another member of their group was Cora Fritsch who wrote frequent letters home that were preserved and published in a collection in 1987.[15] Others mentioned as a part of the group in Fritsch's letters are Bertha Milligan, Ms. Daniels, Mr. and Mrs. Garr, and Rosa Pittman. The group split up after arriving in Japan with some going on to Hong Kong and others later following to China. Records from 1907 indicate eleven members of their group in Japan that they called Apostolic Light.[16] Records in the *JCY* refer to them as Apostolic Light and, later, the Apostolic Faith Movement.

However, it soon became clear that their Pentecostal message was not welcomed either by the Japanese or other missionaries In October 1907, shortly after arriving, Fritsch wrote, "Just a few come to our meetings the same as in America." In December she wrote,

> The devil is at his old job the same as in America and we are known as holy rollers, hypnotists and the missionaries as a band will not receive us here in Japan. So our work has mainly been to pray and tarry for God's best for Japan.[17]

Some missionaries, however, did welcome them and prayed to receive the same baptism of the Holy Spirit. Fritsch worked closely with Mrs. Taylor, a missionary from England whose husband had returned home temporarily. Apparently Mrs. Taylor was eager for their message and prayed earnestly for the baptism of the Holy Spirit. In any case, the Apostolic Light group made an impact upon the mission community, and missionaries in Japan were aware of the Pentecostal message and the Apostolic Faith Movement by 1907.

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[14] *Post-Intelligencer* (Aug 29, 1907). This article was written shortly before they sailed, so it is only the expected members. The article was discovered in a missionary scrapbook in the AG Archives, Springfield, MO.

[15] Cora Fritsch, *Letters from Cora: Cora Fritsh, 1907-1912*, eds. Homer Fritsch and Alice Fritsch (Privately published, 1987).

[16] Otis Cary, *A History of Christianity in Japan*, vol. 1, *Protestant Missions* (New York: F. H. Revell, c. 1909), statistical charts.

[17] Fritsch, *Letters*, Dec. 2, 1907.

After initially settling in Tokyo, the group soon moved to a coastal community in the Yokohama bay area and acquired a crude sail boat (a thirty-foot, two masted, life boat) with which to navigate about the Tokyo bay to share the gospel in fishing villages.[18] Although this may have presented unique opportunities for evangelization, Ryan also notes that they were attracted by the cheap rent available in this rural location. Apparently, financial shortcomings were a significant challenge for these faith missionaries. But within a year, they abandoned this fishing village strategy and turned to English language ministry in Tokyo. Most of their group also moved on to China, and left only four adults (Mr. & Mrs. Ryan, Cora Fritsch and Betha Millagan). Fritsch and Millagan worked at learning the language and assisting other missionaries, such as Mrs. Taylor. However, they also spent considerable effort and conducted outreach to the Japanese through English lessons. In October 1908, Fritsch describes one of the first outpourings of the Holy Spirit in Japan.

> Last Sunday we had a glorious meeting the power of God came and the Japanese boys cried unto God for more grace and power. One boy who was going past our door where we were holding meetings heard us singing and came in. After Sis. MacDonald gave a powerful talk and pleaded with the boys to seek Christ, this boy said, he was a backslider and had been for three years. He felt it was God who led him to come to this meeting. He said, he wanted to come back to God, as he could find no enjoyment in the world. We then prayed and he cried like a child (a thing the Japanese hardly ever do) till he felt God had forgiven him. He left our meeting rejoicing because he had found peace with God. Praise his name.
>
> I didn't finish my letter as I had to go to the office. We have had some glorious times since I last wrote. Last Sunday we had a glorious meeting, the power of God fell on everyone in the room and the boys just cried out for mercy. One boy fell under the power and shook. I believe he received his Pentecost. Only did he speak in tongues, but God is working and He will finish what He has begun. Beloved, his face shone like an angel. If you could only have seen him. Was so quiet, he could hardly speak but just a look at his face was enough to convince you. He testified and said, when the Holy Spirit came on him it was like a something cold came all over him and he was (unconscious) taken away in the spirit.[19]

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[18] M. L. Ryan, "Yokohama, Japan, August 3, 1908 [letter]," *The Apostolic Faith* (Huston, TX, Oct. 1908), p. 2.

[19] Fritsch, *Letters*, Oct. 22, 1908.

Ryan also reports multiple occasions of Japanese receiving the baptism of the Holy Spirit.[20] Fritsch left for China in late 1908 and mission reports from the "Apostolic Light" were only published in the *JCY* in 1909, however statistics for it are listed until 1911. Correspondence from M. L. Ryan in Japan extends through 1910, and publication of the Apostolic Light continued through approximately the same period.[21] In any case, they were the first Pentecostal missionaries to Japan and made a significant impact on at least the missionary community. The 1911 *JCY* records a total of nine missionaries (three couples, one single man, two single women), one Japanese pastor, four preaching stations and 150 members of the preaching stations.[22] That is the last known record of their association in Japan.

However, their legacy was continued through Mrs. Taylor, the missionary with whom Cora Fritsch worked. Mrs. Taylor did receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit and with her husband opened another pioneer Pentecostal mission in Japan.

3.2 The Taylors (1905-1913): Pentecostal Missionary Union

Mr. William T. and Mrs. Mary Taylor arrived for mission work in Japan in 1905 from Scotland and were originally sponsored by the Japan Evangelistic Band. Among other work, they organized an evangelistic ministry among the police.[23] According to missionary directories in the *JCY* and correspondence from Fritsch, Mr. Taylor returned to England in 1907 leaving Mrs. Taylor and their two children in Yokohama. During his absence, she requested Cora Fritsch's help to teach classes and maintain the mission work. From Fritsch's letters, it appears that she and Mrs. Taylor became quite close and Mrs. Taylor was actively seeking the baptism of the Holy Spirit (April 1908). Later records from the archives

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[20] M. L. Ryan, letter, *The Pentecost* (April 1909), p. 5.

[21] No known copies of his publication from Tokyo are in existence today. If one were discovered it would greatly expand our knowledge about these early missionaries, since they tended to write less frequently to other Pentecostal periodicals after establishing their own.

[22] It is important to note that according to the statistical chart in the 1911 *JCY*, this total *included missionaries on furlough*. Although I have records of financial offerings sent to Ryan in Japan as late as spring of 1911, the last correspondence I have found from him in Japan dates from early fall of 1910. It is likely that he was the last of his original group to leave Japan, departing in the fall of 1910.

[23] *Confidence* (June 1912), p. 142.

of the Assemblies of God World Missions (AGWM) indicate that she received baptism in the Holy Spirit in 1911, after she had returned to England to join her husband.[24] Her husband was also filled with the Spirit, so they decided to cut ties with the Japan Evangelistic Band, and instead associate with the newly formed Pentecostal Missionary Union (PMU) based in Sunderland, Great Britain.

They returned to Japan together in the fall of 1913 and settled in the south, Nagasaki, which was stipulated by the PMU mission board so they would not have contact with their former association with the Japan Evangelistic Band.[25] But by winter of 1914, their address was back in Kobe where they had previously worked when they first arrived in Japan. It appears that from 1915 they also began to have close connections with the Assemblies of God and AG cooperating missionaries because they identify themselves as AG missionaries in the *JCY* from 1915 to 1918, although the alphabetical listing of mission boards continues to note them as PMU. By August 1916 this connection is confirmed when the PMU deletes the Taylors from their published missionary list,[26] and it appears that they had some sort of falling out. All references to the Taylors in *Confidence* (which published missionary reports of the PMU) suddenly end in the summer of 1916. Mr. Taylor soon applied for official support with the AG, and on Nov. 22, 1917, he was certified as the second official AG missionary to Japan.[27] Records from the Japan Assembly of God never mention either of the Taylors, and they are missing from their official missionary lists.

Although I have few records about them in comparison with other missionaries of the period, the Taylors' story must be an interesting one. According to the *JCY*, in 1921 they listed themselves as independent again, calling themselves the Door of Hope Mission, and in 1923 William Taylor was dismissed by the AG with a small note on the bottom of his certification card noting "Dropped May 31/23 [because of] account immorality." In 1923 he disappeared from the *JCY* missionary directory along with his Door of Hope Mission, but his wife appeared on the AG missionary list. I discovered her ministerial credentialing application to the AG, and although she filled in all of the appropriate

[24] M. Taylor, "Credentialing Application" (Springfield, MO: AGWM, September 21, 1921).

[25] *Confidence* (February 1913), p. 42.

[26] *Confidence* (August 1916), p. 137.

[27] William Taylor's Certification Card (Springfield, MO: AGWM, 1921). Bernauer was the first.

information, she left blank several "domestic relations" questions such as "Are you living together (with you spouse)?"[28] Although I can find no direct references that discuss this, it appears that the Taylors may have lived and worked separately from about 1921 to the mid-1930. Notes on records in the archives of the AGWM indicate that later catalogers of the archive were unable to determine if the two Taylors were even a married couple or not. But Mary Taylor consistently refers to herself in all correspondence as "Mrs. Taylor," and there is no evidence of a divorce. Records from the late 1930s and 40s show them together again. From 1923 through 1935 Mrs. Mary Taylor was listed in the *JCY* as an AG missionary in Kobe, and this corresponds with her credentialing card on file at the AGWM, which shows her serving terms from 1921-24, 1928-30 and 1934-35. Her reports and articles, as well as records of financial support, in the *Pentecostal Evangel* (the official AG periodical) were continuous throughout this whole period, which is probably the best indication that she was an AG missionary from 1921 through the mid-1930s. But then in the mid-1930s she separated from the AG to become independent again. In 1938 Mr. Taylor reappeared in the *JCY* missionary directory again, still in Kobe and Mr. & Mrs. Taylor were listed together as independent missionaries in Kobe from 1938 through 1941. Mrs. Taylor, however, did not sever all connection with AG, as is evident from a 1941 letter in which she solicited financial assistance for her husband from the AG because of wartime hardships.[29] During their long ministry in Japan it appears that they never submitted any reports to the *JCY* except name, address and affiliation.

The Taylor's thirty-five year ministry in Japan and their affiliation with the Assemblies of God made a significant impact on the early Pentecostal community in Japan. The AG missionary community clearly included Mrs. Taylor during this entire early period and she wrote dozens of articles for the Pentecostal Evangel and other Pentecostal periodicals. Other missionaries regularly mention them both in their correspondence, and the Taylors were both instrumental in the conversion (both to Evangelical Christianity and to Pentecostal faith) of Leonard Coote, a very active pioneer Pentecostal missionary who started the Japan Apostolic Mission (Japan Pentecost Church). Mrs. Taylor is also an irrefutable link between M. L. Ryan's Apostolic Faith group and the later burgeoning Pentecostal community that centered on the AG.

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[28] M. Taylor Credentialing Application, 21 September 1921 (AGWM).

[29] Letter from M. Taylor to AGWM, September 1941 (AGWM).

Noted church historian Antei Hiyane describes Mrs. Taylor's importance. Hiyane records the founding of Nihon Seisho Kyokai (Japan Bible Church, forerunner of the JAG) as follows: "The Japan Bible Church, which was previously called the Pentecostal Church, was started in 1911 through the police evangelism of Mrs. Taylor in Kanda, Tokyo."[30] Although we cannot treat Hiyane's statement as a primary historical source, it is significant to note that in the 1940s, Mrs. Taylor was recognized as central to the founding of the AG mission in Japan.

3.3 Estella A. Bernauer and Tanimoto Yoshio (1910)

Another forgotten missionary is Estella Bernauer, who first arrived in Japan in April 1910 with Miss Hattie L. Schoonover. Like the Taylors, she is missing from official records and little information is available about her life and work in Japan. Nonetheless, a rough account of her work in Japan can be pieced together from her letters published in Pentecostal circulars.[31] Bernauer was a part of the Pentecostal fellowship in Indianapolis in the early years of the Pentecostal movement there circa 1907-1910. She attended the church led by Zella H. Reynolds and J. Roswell Flowers, and felt a call to foreign missions. She became a Christian in 1898 and said she always had a passion for evangelizing the lost but never for foreign missions until she heard Anna Prosser speak on the subject. She began praying for God's work in the mission field expecting she would help support missionaries through prayer and financial offerings. Then in early 1910 Yoshio Tanimoto, a Japanese Christian came to Indianapolis, spoke at her church and shared with her his passion for Japan. This relationship with a Japanese evangelist changed her perspective on mission and her own life calling.

Tanimoto was passing through Indianapolis in early 1910 on his way west to sail for Japan as an evangelist. Originally, he had come to the United States to obtain an education in business and attended the Normal College of Marion, Indiana. He then went to study at the Seventh Day Adventist College in Berrien Springs, Michigan and on October 16, 1907

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[30] Antei Hiyane, *Nihon Kirisutokyou Shi* [The History of Christianity in Japan] (Tokyo: Kyobunkwan, 1949), p. 352.

[31] The narrative described in the following paragraphs is pieced together from a variety of sources including the testimonies of Tanimoto and Bernauer, from their letters appeared in *The Bridegroom's Messenger*, *The Pentecost*, *The Good Report* and *The Latter Rain Evangel*, and from Reynolds and Flower's report on the Pentecostal work in Indianapolis in 1910 (*Latter Rain Evangel* [May 1910], pp. 22-23).

was baptized as a Christian. American denomination divisions, however, troubled him and he noted, "I found good people in all denominations, but very few are typical of the Bible. So I began to search for true people of God."[32] His first encounter with the Pentecostal movement occurred in a mission hall in Louisville, Kentucky where he was invited to share his testimony as a native missionary to Japan. He wrote,

> I still remember my first impression of how strange it was and did not know what to make of it. At first I was afraid to take a seat, and not in front of course, where I was invited, but soon took courage to do so. While in my seat I was all the while watching the people so that I could run if they came to me, seeing them in so peculiar body motions. I thought to myself it cannot be the work of the Lord.[33]

About a month later he was in Indianapolis when he found another church where the same strange phenomena occurred, but after visiting several times and being invited to speak he was impressed with how they treated him and each other. He noted, "For the first time all prejudice and fear disappeared."[34] He became convinced of the biblical authenticity of this movement and began attending regularly, praying both for the conversion of Japan and for his own baptism in the Holy Spirit.

Estella Bernauer, one of the members of this fellowship, was impressed by Tanimoto's testimony and his passion for the Japanese. She writes, "As I heard him cry, 'Oh Father, Thou must give me this power or I can never touch their hearts,' somehow his pleading took hold of my very soul and I began to be enthusiastic about the work in Japan."[35] Soon the pastor affirmed Bernauer's call to foreign missions when he felt led by God to give her $500 to send her as a missionary. An older woman, Ms. Hattie L. Schoonover agreed to accompany her, and they left Indianapolis in early spring 1910 (probably March), arriving in Japan in late April 1910.[36]

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[32] *The Good Report* (December 1, 1913), p. 2.

[33] *The Good Report* (December 1, 1913), p. 2.

[34] *The Good Report* (December 1, 1913), p. 2.

[35] *Latter Rain Evangel* (April 1913), p. 8.

[36] While it is clear that Bernauer and Schoonover left together for Japan and that one of them was "an experienced woman companion" for the younger missionary, it is unclear which is which. I believe that Bernauer was the younger missionary and Schoonover was the older companion for the following reasons: 1) I cannot find any reports or letters from Schoonover, 2) Bernauer demonstrated a clear calling to Japan and the $500 was specifically given to her, 3) once in

With the help of another missionary, Bernauer originally rented a room in Yokohama at the Home of American Missionaries. It is clear that she knew neither the language nor much about Japan at all, so this was a time of settling in and learning about the country and the people. For the first six months it appears that most of her fellowship was with other missionaries. She spent the summer of 1910 at Karuizawa, a mountain resort area frequented by foreigners during that period. After returning to Yokohama in the fall, a missionary approached her and asked her to take over his mission house in Tokyo because he was returning home. She agreed to rent it, and soon opened an English language ministry among university students. On December 1, 1910, she writes,

> I am sure all the saints in the homeland will praise God with us that He has enabled us… to plant an "Apostolic Faith Mission"..… Over our gate we have hung a sign, four feet in length, which reads: "The Apostolic Faith'."… We have organized a Sunday school with forty-five scholars.[37]

Apparently she engaged in English language ministry with older students, and ran a Sunday school with younger children as well. Because her grasp of the Japanese language was so limited any preaching had to be done either in English or through an interpreter. Nonetheless, her English-language ministry still produced some results. One of her students, who came to Tokyo to study and originally attended her meetings just for the English lessons, was converted and became a devout believer. When he returned home, his family turned against him, but he opened an independent mission and wrote to her that he had twenty-four converts.[38]

Sometime in the spring of 1911 her interpreter, a young man she hired when she was in Yokohama, became very ill with pneumonia. Since he had been with her for some time, she had hoped that he would be able to start a mission of his own, but within a few weeks, he died. Then she became very ill herself throughout the summer of 1911 and

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Japan Bernauer was listed as the "superintendent" and Schoonover as the "assistant," and 4) Schoonover soon left Japan while Bernauer stayed on long-term. All of these suggest that Bernauer was the primary missionary and that Schoonover was the "experienced woman companion" sent to help her safely arrive and get the mission started.

[37] *Bridegroom's Messenger* (January 1, 1911), p. 2.

[38] *Bridegroom's Messenger* (April 1913), p. 10.

thought she would die, but her mother sent her money to return home. In the fall of 1911 (probably November, because she wrote a letter dated Oct. 24, 1911 from Yokohama) she sailed for the United States, and apparently recovered greatly during the voyage. But within a few weeks of returning home, she felt called to Japan again and began speaking in various churches and mission halls about mission work in Japan. By November 1912, she was back in Japan and continued her English language ministry in Tokyo. In November 1913 she also secured a native evangelist, "Brother Ichitaro Takigawa" who helped both in preaching and translating.

Meanwhile, Tanimoto had also returned to Japan and begun a mission. He arrived in Japan in September 1910, and started work in the Hiroshima area. Bernauer suffered from lack of funds from time to time, but it is clear that Tanimoto received even less. In his published letters, he states repeatedly that his mission is suffering from lack of support, and he has to work six days a week as an English teacher to support himself. Nonetheless, his evangelistic efforts produce results, and in September 1913 he reports twenty-five members of his mission.[39] Tanimoto worked on establishing a fellowship in his home area of Hiroshima, but he also engaged in tract ministry, distributing thousands of tracts by bicycle over large areas of southern Japan. However, the lack of support and exhaustion from working six days a week to support himself appear to have taken a toll on his ministry. In July 1914 he wrote to *Word and Witness* that he would like to visit the United States to better acquaint the churches there of his work, and for "spiritual refreshing."[40] He requested funds for his passage.

Unfortunately for Tanimoto, in the early 1910s, there were calls in Pentecostal circulars for an end to direct support of native missionaries. By the mid-1910s, Pentecostal denominations and circulars were providing greater structure and accountability of missionary funding. Part of this process was the cession of direct support of native missionaries. Natives could be employed, but only through western missionaries on the field, because direct support was considered too susceptible to fraud and mismanagement. The last correspondence from Tanimoto is in July 1914. It appears that he never received funds to visit the United States.

When Bernauer returned to Japan in late 1912, she writes that she was alone as a Pentecostal in Tokyo. But this soon changed with the arrival of the Juergensens in 1913 and the Moores in 1914. Bernauer's

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[39] *Word and Witness* (September 1913), p. 8.

[40] *Word and Witness* (July 1914), p. 4.

Apostolic Mission in Tokyo became the center for this early Pentecostal community. She was the senior missionary on the field when they arrived, and they would naturally turn to her for advice and assistance. While the Jurgensen's may not have known anyone personally when they arrived, they must have known about Estella Bernauer through her letters published in the *Bridegroom's Messenger*, *Word and Witness* and the *Pentecostal Evangel*. In fact, a letter by Bernauer published in the *Bridegroom's Messenger*[41] confirms that the Juergensens met Bernauer soon after arriving in Japan. When the Moores arrived in 1914, Bernauer's Apostolic Mission became their first stop for fellowship. Multiple letters from the Moores, the Juergensens and Bernauer report a meeting for fellowship and worship of all of the active Pentecostal missionaries in Tokyo occurring at Bernauer's mission.[42]

Bernauer worked in Japan from 1910 to at least 1923 or 1924, with furloughs in 1912, 1917 and 1921-22.[43] One of the major challenges of her earlier years in Japan was the lack of financial support. She wrote repeatedly about the problems of financial support and the hardships she and other missionaries suffered. Edward C. Downing was another Pentecostal missionary in Japan briefly from mid-1911 through spring 1912, who barely received enough support to survive. An editorial in the *Bridegroom's Messenger* describing the hardships of missionaries noted:

> A brother in Japan wrote of hardships and of almost facing starvation at one time, not being able to get work in a strange land, with a strange language.... Another missionary in Japan received so little support that for some time she could afford but one meal a day.[44]

Based on the missionaries that corresponded with *The Bridegroom's Messenger*, the people noted in the editorial are correctly identified as Edward Downing and Estella Bernauer. Bernauer wrote to the *Latter Rain Evangel* of the types of hardships that she and other missionaries suffered because of discrepancies of financial support:

> I do not think the dear saints in the home-land would rest easy if they knew what some missionaries suffer…and when they have money to give it is easy to send it to send it to those who are well known; so,

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[41] *Bridegroom's Messenger* (November 1913), p. 2.

[42] *Word and Witness* (August 1914), p. 4.

[43] The last record I have of her ministry in Japan is her entry in the 1924 *JCY* as an AG missionary working in rural Toyama.

[44] *Bridegroom's Messenger* (May 15, 1912), p. 1.

> while some receive thousands of dollars and expend much money in erecting buildings, etc., other missionaries equally consecrated, but comparatively unknown, suffer for the common necessities of life and either die or are rendered unfit for work because of the hardships they endure. I have felt for some time that there ought to be some system whereby the money would be more equally divided.[45]

Bernauer was among the lesser-known missionaries, and I think this explains to a large degree why she was quick to officially associate with the Assemblies of God after it organized. She is among those who called herself AG by 1914.[46] Then in 1917 the AG officially credentialed her. In the List of Ministers published in the April 14, 1917 edition of the *Pentecostal Evangel*, Bernauer is listed as the only credentialed missionary to Japan. This predates her furlough in 1917, which was not until late spring. Bernauer's hardships illustrate why mission boards and credentialing agencies were established. But it is also important to note that this same organizational structure that helped balance financial support among missionaries, also contributed to the cession for support for native missionaries like Tanimoto Yoshio.

The "official" accunts by the Japan Assemblies of God never mention either of the Taylors, Estella Bernauer or any of these earlier missionaries, but rather attributes their founding to the C. F. Juergensen family. Examining the legacy of the Juergensens helps to explain why the JAG places such importance on them.

3.4 The Juergensens (1913): Assemblies of God

The C. F. Juergensen missionary family is credited as the first Assemblies of God missionaries to Japan arriving in 1913, a year before the AG denomination was formed in the United States. They came as independent, faith missionaries and received support through a variety of Pentecostal circulars and organizations.

Although the Juergensens came to Japan from America, they were originally from Schlewig-Holsten, Germany. Carl Frederick Juergensen was born on December 4, 1862, married Fredrike Martin in 1888, and moved to America at age 34 in 1896 and settled in Cleveland, Ohio.[47]

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[45] *Latter Rain Evangel* (May 1913), p. 24.

[46] *Japan Christian Yearbook* (1915), Missionary Directory.

[47] Gilber Bowles, "Missionary Obituaries: Carl F. Juergensen," in *The Japan Christian Year Book 1941*, ed. Darley Downs (Tokyo: Kyobunkwan, 1941), pp.

They became active in a Pentecostal church in 1909 after their youngest daughter, Agnes, was healed of a serious illness through the prayers of the pastor and both Juergensens received the baptism of the Holy Spirit, first Frederick and later Carl.[48] The Juergensens soon felt a calling to foreign mission and Japan specifically. Although they initially expressed reluctance because of their advanced age and the challenge of learning the language, both Juergensens felt a clear calling specifically to Japan and headed for the West Coast in 1912. They left their eldest son John (age 20) in Ohio and took their two younger daughters Marie (age 12) and Agnes (age 8). After staying in Los Angeles for six months, they traveled to Japan arriving in Yokohama August 11, 1913.[49]

The Juergensens knew no one in Japan and did not speak the language, but they poured themselves into the work. In a short time they established a preaching station at Hongo near Tokyo Imperial University. Later others were established at Kamifujimae and at other places. Carl Juergensen's was a preacher at heart and his method centered on itinerating between small gospel halls and preaching in public. His obituary in 1941 captures his mission method well:

> Mr. Juergensen was not a teacher or an organizer, but a flaming evangel. A passion to lead men to Christ always burned in his heart. During the early years of his ministry he walked far and wide over the city of Tokyo, holding four and five street services a day.[50]

Carl Juergensen did not learn the language well, and originally hired translators to help him communicate and preach. However, by 1915, Marie Juergensen at age 14 began translating for him,[51] and she served as his mouthpiece for the rest of his ministry. Their daughter Agnes attended the normal Japanese schools, and also became completely fluent in Japanese. As independent missionaries, the Juergensens wrote letters to numerous Pentecostal periodicals including the AG *Pentecostal Evangel*, and in 1918 officially associated with the AG. According to the

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320-21. *Mikotoba ni Tachi, Mitama ni Michibikare* (1999) records that he came at age 30 (1892).

[48] *Mikotoba ni Tachi, Mitama ni Michibikare*, pp. 64-65.

[49] Marie Juergensen, "Inception of Assemblies of God Work in Japan" (1951).

[50] Gilber Bowles, "Missionary Obituaries: Carl F. Juergensen," in *The Japan Chistian Year Book 1941*, edited by Darley Downs (Tokyo: Kyobunkwan, 1941), p. 320-321.

[51] *Pentecostal Evangel* (June 27, 1931), p. 1.

listing of missionary appointments by the AGWM, C. F. Juergensen was officially appointed an AG missionary on May 23, 1918, the year following the appointments of Estella Bernauer and William Taylor. Their first official report on file with the AGWM is from 1919, the year following their appointment, after they had been on the field for six years.

Their son John joined them in 1919 after attending Bible school and took over during their only furlough from 1922-24. With all three of their children serving as career missionaries in Japan (Marie and Agnes never married), the Juergensen family was soon simultaneously serving in numerous mission stations, and the name "Juergensen" began to dominate mission reports. The family was also instrumental in helping other missionaries and naturally became leading members of the Pentecostal community in Japan.

Shortly after their return from furlough, in the mid-1920s they began building Takinogawa Church, one of the first Pentecostal churches in Japan. Carl Juergensen was the first field representative for the AG mission board in Japan, and the Juergensen family dominated AG leadership in Japan in the prewar era. Carl was also a founding member of *Nihon Seisho Kyokai* (Japan Bible Church), a forerunner to the JAG. They were key members of the pre-war AG mission in Japan, and highly influential in the early Pentecostal community in Japan.

Carl Juergensen passed away in Japan on August 29, 1940. Fredrike continued serving after the war until 1956 when she retired to California. John Juergensen served until his death in 1938, and his wife Nettie Juergensen served through 1963. Agnes Juergensen retired in 1952, and Marie Juergensen continued to serve until 1991.[52] All together, the Juergensen family contributed well over 200 years of missionary service to Japan.

The Juergensens were clearly not the first Pentecostal missionaries in Japan. Nor were they the "first" AG missionaries in the field, but the importance of their work is beyond question. They each possessed a passion for the kingdom of God and a passion for the Japanese people that resulted in a legacy of dedication and self-sacrifice spanning most of the key events in the foundation of the JAG and the initial growth of the Pentecostal movement in Japan. I believe that it was because of the obvious impact the Juergensen family made in the mid-twentieth century

[52] John Juergensen's first wife served with him from 1919 until her death in 1928, and he remarried the following year. One of the earliest descriptions of the Juergensen family's lives is a lengthy article in the *Pentecostal Evangel* featuring them in the June 27, 1931 issue, written by Marie Juergensen.

that those remembering the history of the Pentecostal movement in Japan focused on them as the "first missionaries" and initiators of the Pentecostal movement in Japan. When Marie Juergensen wrote "Inception of Assemblies of God Work in Japan" for the AGWM in 1951, she started with her parents because *in retrospect that is what was significant to her*. She revised this same work in 1953 in a document entitled "History of the Assemblies of God Work in Japan." And when D. C. McLean in 1978 wrote "Precise History of the Japan Assemblies of God," he obviously had a copy of Marie Juergensen's earlier histories in hand, because his work is an adaptation and expansion of her text. This version of the pioneer missionaries also seems to have been adopted by the official thirty-year and fifty-year histories of the JAG, and forms the basis for the "official" or standard interpretation offered in other sources such as the *Kirisutokyo Nenkan*.

We should not view this particular interpretation of history as an intentional misrepresentation of the facts, but rather a result of the deep influence and significance of the Juergensen family—in addition to the obvious problems of relying on fading memories and secondary materials to write history. Previous events are understood through the lens of our current situation; this is a natural historiographical phenomenon, which is why history is best written from primary source materials instead of fading memories. The later importance of the Juergensens served as a lens to exaggerate their role in the introduction of Pentecostalism to Japan. The Juergensens are not significant because they were the first, but because of the outstanding contributions they made as an extended family throughout most of the twentieth century.

4. The Burgeoning Pioneer Pentecostal Community

The impression from the secondary literature about early Pentecostals in Japan is that they were few and far between. The fifty-year history of the JAG lists only sixteen missionary appointments in the entire prewar period, and only five appointments by 1921.[53] The Church of God (Cleveland, Tenn.) had no missionaries in the pre-war period. An historical statement of the Japan Church of God in the *Kirisutokyo Nenkan* dates their history from the arrival of the first missionary in

[53] Marie and Agnus are present from 1913, but were not appointed until 1923 and 1924, respectively. A total of eight names are listed by 1921, including the Juergensen children.

1953. But my research has uncovered a burgeoning Pentecostal community with vibrancy and continuity from at least 1913-14.

Tracing the early history of the Pentecostal community in Japan is complicated by the fact that in the early years the missionaries were all independent. It is indicative of larger trends that the first missionaries sent to Japan with the support and endorsement of a Pentecostal mission board, the Taylors, were staunchly independent, soon switching to other means of support and eventually ending their careers as independents. Even Barney Moore, who is credited as being one of the first "official" AG missionaries, indicated his status as independent when he wrote in an official report in 1918 (AGWM) that his station was the "Japan Pentecostal Mission, cooperating with 'Assemblies of God.'" Nonetheless, their independence from institutional structures should not be taken as an indication of lack of community. There is evidence of significant fellowship and cooperation among the Pentecostal missionaries regardless of institutional affiliation. Pentecostal periodicals such as *The Pentecostal Evangel*, *Confidence* and *The Bridegroom's Messenger* were sources of community because the pioneer missionaries sent in regular letters to them, received financial support through them (from multiple agencies), and read them, thus learning what other Pentecostal missionaries in Japan were doing. The Assemblies of God mission also became a center of community in the pre-war period because it was overwhelmingly the largest single Pentecostal group in Japan, especially in the early period. There is evidence that from the late 1920s on, the increasing organizational structure of the AG encouraged community through missionary conferences and district meetings. (Japan was one of several countries designated as its own territorial district within the AG.)

By 1915 at least fourteen Pentecostal missionaries were active in Japan, including nine who identified themselves as Assemblies of God (Mrs. Estella Bernauer, Mr. & Mrs. F. H. Gray, Mr. & Mrs. C. F. Juergensen, Mr. & Mrs. William T. Taylor and Mr. & Mrs. B. S. Moore), one with the Pentecostal Bands of the World in Yokohama since 1913 (the Abels)[54] and least three other independent Pentecostal missionaries (Miss Shepherd and Mr. & Mrs. Robert Atchison).[55] By 1918 two more couples associated with the Pentecostal Bands of the World joined

[54] *Japan Christian Yearbook* (1915), statistical tables.

[55] Although older statistics tend to exclude missionary wives, I have included them in missionary counts throughout this paper. The official fifty-year history of the JAG shows only the Juergensens and the Moores by this time.

them,[56] as well as Leonard Coote. Coote actually arrived in Japan in 1913 from England as a businessman, was converted to Evangelical Christianity in 1914 and then received the baptism of the Holy Spirit under the influence of Pentecostal missionaries in the Osaka area. He began dedicating a great deal of his time to Christian ministry by the mid-1910s, and shifted to full time ministry in 1918.

These early years were times of learning the language, adjusting to life in Japan and establishing the first preaching stations. An early picture of the Juergensens in 1913 in front of their mission hall shows how rather traditional style, single-story buildings in the city were converted for mission use, with a large sign in front which reads "Full Gospel Mission –Zembin Fukuin Dendo Kan" [Full Gospel Mission Hall].[57] The language was naturally a great obstacle for the first missionaries and translators were regularly used for preaching. The early missionaries found this to be problematic because at times the non-Pentecostal or even non-Christian translators did not agree with the message and were reluctant to assist. Translators frequently quit or failed to appear at the last moment, making work impossible until another translator could be secured. This obviously provided the missionaries with a strong motivation to learn the language themselves. While some missionaries established itinerate preaching stations, such as the Juergensens and the Atchinsons, other missionaries focused on planting regular churches, such as the Moores in Yokohama, and training Japanese Christians. Most of the early missionaries were located in the greater Tokyo area, except for the Taylors who were stationed first in Nagasaki and then in Kobe, and the Atchinsons in Osaka.

By 1920 the Pentecostal movement in Japan had gained momentum. There were at least 20 missionaries who identified themselves as AG including John Juergensen and his wife Ester who arrived in 1919,[58] plus a number of independents. The first missionary associated with the Church of God, Gussie Booth, arrived in 1921, and located in the Kobe area where she reports working and fellowshipping with other missionaries including Mrs. Taylor.[59]

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[56] *Japan Christian Yearbook* (1918), Missionary Directory.

[57] AGWM Archive, Japan Photos (1913).

[58] In addition to the 18 listed in the 1920 *JCY* (including six couples), this number also counts Ms. Ruth Johnson who arrived in 1919 (*JYC* 1921) and Marie Juergensen who was 18 by this time. There were of course many children as well. From 1921 on the Agnes and Marie were listed independently in the *JCY.*

[59] *Church of God Evangel* (Sept. 1, 1921), p. 2.

On September 1, 1923 the Great Tokyo Earthquake struck, leveling the city of Yokohama and destroying much of the Tokyo area, with over 100,000 people killed. The church that the Moores had planted in Yokohama was destroyed and the Japanese co-pastor and his wife were trapped in the rubble of their house and died in the subsequent fire that swept through the city. Mrs. Moore was injured and they immediately returned to the United States, having lost everything but their lives.[60] Numerous missionaries left after the earthquake and there were only 12 AG missionaries registered in the 1924 *JCY*, along with only two from the Pentecostal Bands of the World.

The number of Pentecostal missionaries rose again significantly in the late 1920s after L. W. Coote joined the Pentecostal Bands of the World and reorganizing it under his leadership with several new missionaries.[61] Based in Osaka, Coote decided to build a Bible school for the training of native leaders, and purchased land in Ikoma near the city of Nara in early 1925.[62] In 1929 he went on a preaching touring through though the United States and Canada to raise the $5000 necessary to build the school and brought back several new missionaries with him. From records in the 1932 *JCY*, it appears that shortly after this, the union between the Cootes and the Abels was unsatisfactory because Coote reorganizes his organization as the Japan Apostolic Mission ("Japan Pentecost Church" in Japanese). Eleven missionaries identified themselves as a part of this organization in 1932, while the Abels renamed their organization the "Missionary Bands of the World" and it includes only themselves and their daughter. The Japan Apostolic Mission with its spacious bible school in Ikoma became another center of Pentecostal community in these early years.

It is clear that the early Pentecostal missionaries enjoyed a true sense of community and fellowship with each other. The missionaries met together for worship, prayer and fellowship, and often mentioned each other in their correspondence. This was instrumental in building community among themselves, and in including others into their fellowship, such as Coote. It is also clear that the early Pentecostal mission movement in Japan was far broader and more extensive than has been recognized up to now.

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[60] *Pentecostal Evangel* (Sept. 6, 1923 and Sept. 22, 1923).

[61] *Japan Christian Yearbook* (1928), Missionary Directory.

[62] Leonard W. Coote, *Impossibilities Become Challenges* (San Antonio, TX: Church Alive!, c. 1965, 1991 reprint), pp. 126-30.

5. Conclusions

The results of this research are still preliminary, so before stating my conclusions, I would like to mention some important limitations. First, this paper deals primarily with the missionaries by design, without giving equal attention to the contributions of Japanese Pentecostals. No account of early Pentecostals in Japan can be considered complete without a full presentation of the enormous contributions of the Japanese Pentecostals. The introduction of Pentecostalism to Japan was a joint venture between missionaries and Japanese believers and ministers, and this paper presents only one side of that work. Second, this account attempts to give only the barest outlines of the inception of the Pentecostal movement in Japan, primarily in an effort to correct the problems of the current secondary literature. I will present a more comprehensive account of this topic in my forthcoming doctoral dissertation.

At present we may draw several conclusions from this preliminary research. First and foremost among them is the need to revise the general understanding of the history of Pentecostals in Japan. This study has shown that the introduction of Pentecostalism to Japan was from multiple sources very early after the Azusa Street revival began, with direct connections to that revival. This is an important correction to the literature in this field, and it demonstrates that much more work must be done to get a comprehensive picture of the early development of Pentecostalism in Japan. The various missionaries and denominations involved indicate that Pentecostalism was a multifaceted movement not limited to a single denomination, strand or source. Furthermore, within Japan there was significant interaction among Pentecostals. Independent churches were started only to join with other groups, and missionaries and ministers alike frequently passed in and out of multiple denominations (for example, Leonard Coote and Mary Taylor). Even within the organized denominations, there existed a great of deal of diversity.

Second is the problem of recording all of the history, regardless of whether it supports a particular interpretation or is edifying to the sponsoring organizations. There seems to be an unfortunate tendency to sanitize history. Perhaps this is why the Taylors' files at the AGWM are conspicuously empty while the Juergensens files are filled with multiple reports and letters. Were the Taylors an embarrassment because William was dismissed for immorality, and they were separated for many years? The same can be asked of the Moores. During their furlough in 1921-23

charges were brought against him, which he refused to answer. When he returned to Japan in 1923, he did so independently without the support or endorsement of the AG mission board.[63] So 1921 was actually the end of his service in Japan under AG appointment, despite the fact that the JAG missionary lists today show him serving through 1923.[64] This information is completely absent from the secondary literature and the archives of the AGWM has virtually no information about the Moores—even less than the Taylors. The only way one could discover this information is by reading the archives of the Pentecostal Evangel. While I do not believe that there was any intentional effort to hide the facts, there is a natural tendency to accentuate the good and minimize the unflattering. Unfortunately, if you do this with history, you are left with partial truths.

Third, the early movement was plagued by problems related to unequal missionary support. The earliest missionaries to Japan including M. L. Ryan's Apostolic Light group, Estella Bernauer and Edward Downing all experienced great hardships because of lack of financial support. A report in *Confidence* about the Southerland Conference noted a discussion that questioned whether or not the first Apostolic Faith missionaries, such as M. L. Ryan, were really sent by God or not because of the financial difficulties and debts they incurred:

> Bro. M.L. Ryan heard God talking to him about Japan for six months before he sailed.… He certainly has had a tremendous financial test.… The send-off on the Pacific coast to Bro. Ryan and his party was a wonderful time. People shouted "Hallelujah," and spoke in Tongues, and even got their Baptism, but the "Hooroar" soon died out of their Hallelujahs, and they forgot to send on help [*sic*].[65]

Pentecostal denominations and mission boards were established to help solve some of these problems, and it is clear that this made a significant impact on the mission work in Japan. While some missionaries remained independent, as the movement matured, most cooperated with a denominational for financial support.

Finally, the missionaries left an incredible legacy of dedication, commitment and sacrifice that stands as a witness to the glory of God and an encouragement to the whole body of Christ. The earliest missionaries, including the Juergensens and the Apostolic Light Band,

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[63] *Pentecostal Evangel* (March 17, 1923).

[64] *Mikotoba ni Tachi, Mitama ni Michibikarete* (1999), Appendix.

[65] *Confidence* (June 1908), p. 24.

left everything, and with no visible means of support, they went to an alien land where they knew neither the language nor a single person. The church in Japan was built by their intense dedication to Christ and an earnest love of the Japanese people. Marie Juergensen characterized these early missionaries best, when she wrote in 1931:

> Today as I look at our work in that island kingdom I want to say softly, "It has been built on sacrifice—sacrifice such as it cannot be written on paper."[66]

[66] *Pentecostal Evangel* (June 27, 1931), p. 4.

[*AJPS* 5:1 (2002), pp. 51-71]

PENTECOSTALISM IN MYANMAR: AN OVERVIEW[1]

Chin Khua Khai

Myanmar, known as Burma before 1989, is a country in mainland Southeast Asia that shares its borders with China on the northeast, Laos on the east, Thailand on the southeast, Bangladesh on the west and India on the northwest. The estimated population by the year 2000 was 51,539,000 comprised of 135 ethnic groups in which 89.8% are Buddhist, 4.9% Christian, 3.9% Islam, 0.5% Hindu and 1.2% primal religions. [2] Catholic Christianity was introduced to the people in Myanmar around 1554, Protestant Christianity in 1807, [3] and Pentecostalism in the 1920s.

1. The Contribution of Missionaries

Modern Pentecostalism asserted a rediscovery of the New Testament phenomenon of baptism in the Holy Spirit evidenced with speaking in tongue (*glossolalia*). As in many parts of the world, it is the most dynamic Christian movement in Myanmar today. Three church

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[1] An earlier version of this article was presented at Non-Western Pentecostal Symposium, Anaheim, California, USA in May 2001. I would like to express my appreciation to the following friends: Dr. Wonsuk Ma for his kind invitation to the conference; Dr. Phil Hilliard, the senior pastor of Bethany Church of Alhambra under whom I am working, and Dr. Cecil M. Robeck, Professor of Church History and Ecumenics at Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena for their good advice and encouragement.

[2] Sein Tin, *Central Statistical Year Book of Myanmar 1995* (Yangon: Central Statistic Organization, 1995), p. 398.

[3] Chin Khua Khai, "Myanmar Mission Board and Agencies," in *Evangelical Dictionary of World Missions*, ed. A. Scott Moreau (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2000), pp. 667-68.

organizations—the Assemblies of God, the United Pentecostal Church[4] (Oneness), the Foursquare Church[5]—and a host of individual charismatic believers[6] scattered in various churches represent this vital Christian movement that encounters nominal Christian practices as well as the non-Christian world. Both missionaries and national leaders and believers share in the great work of spreading Pentecostalism in Myanmar.

1.1 Hector and Sigrid McClean

Perhaps Hector and Sigrid McClean were the first resident Pentecostal missionaries to Myanmar beginning their work in the 1920s. They wrote about their work among the Melee people in upper Myanmar which resulted in the whole tribe turning to the Lord from idol worship.[7] Also their work among Loheh tribe at Ming-tz-shan resulted in a revival where approximately 60 received the baptism of the Spirit according to Acts 2:4 and numbers at the altar sought repentance and made confession to Christ.[8] Nothing further is known of their work.

The third largest single denomination in the country, the Assemblies of God of Myanmar is the oldest and largest Pentecostal organization established in 1931. It reported a total membership of 84,158 by the year 2000.[9] The history of the mission began among the Lisu and Rawang people in the northern country where half the members belong today.

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[4] J. Ral Buai organized the United Pentecostal Church in 1973. Their belief of modalism (oneness), speaking in tongue as evidence of salvation, practices such as baptism in the name of Jesus, and dancing and rolling and excessive drum beating during the worship are not accepted in the rest of the Pentecostal groups, however.

[5] Philip Ahone has founded the Full Gospel Foursquare Church in 1989. Formerly he was a minister in the Assemblies of God and a well-known evangelistic preacher in the early renewal movement. With a few daughter churches, he organized the Foursquare Church.

[6] The charismatic movement in Myanmar so far is a practice among individual believers rather than the church as a whole. It is seen among some local churches and para-church movements.

[7] Hector McLean, "A Thousand Families Turn to the Lord," *The Pentecostal Evangel* (March 20, 1926), p. 6.

[8] H. McLean, "Pentecostal Revival in Burma," *The Pentecostal Evangel* (September 11, 1926), pp. 10-11 (11).

[9] Suak Za Go, "Statistics of the Assemblies of God of Myanmar" (A letter to the author, Jan. 25, 2001).

1.2 China Missionaries

Initially, the Assemblies of God of Myanmar began through the extension ministry of missionaries in southwest China, in the Salwin and Mekong river valleys. Ada Buchwater was an English missionary who arrived at Wheisi in the Mekong valley in 1919. In 1921, Ada made contact and shared the gospel with some Lisus from Myanmar, which was believed to be the first Pentecostal witness to Myanmar nationals. Leonard and Olive Bolton from England joined the field in 1924. Their work on the China side had great impact upon the people in Myanmar too. Also, G. Clifford and Lavada Morrison from America came to Wheisi for language study in 1926 but fled to Putao, Myanmar when a communist insurrection began in 1927. They came back to Shang Pah, in the Salwin river valley of southwest China and opened mission work in 1931. Lavada described the hazardous trip of their exile as the means God used to bring them to ministry among the tribes in Myanmar.

> Then one day God spoke to our hearts and revealed His purpose in it all, saying, "where there is no vision, the people perish!" I had to lead you out this way by this route to give you an eye vision of a people sitting in darkness and the shadow of death. A people so isolated from the rest of the world, and so secluded in the depth of these mountains that they are in a particularly unknown region, and none had ever taken to them the gospel light. I have chosen you to be my messenger to this people. Will you obey my call?[10]

1.3 Clifford Morrison

The actual ministry to the Myanmar interior started in 1931[11] when two Rawang tribesmen from Myanmar asked the Morrisons to visit them. The story goes as follows.

> Two Rawang tribesmen from Burma traveled over high mountain passes into Salwin Valley carrying packs of Burmese goat wool to trade for Chinese rock salt. They came to Shang Pah, where the Clifford Morrisons were living, and "happened" on a Pentecostal

[10] Glenn D. Stafford, "A Brief Story of the Assemblies of God of Burma" (A class paper for The Overseas Church and Missions, Central Bible College, Springfield, MO, 1977), p. 2.

[11] This date has been probably taken as the beginning of the Assemblies of God ministry in Myanmar.

> convention. There they heard for the first time of Jesus who could wash away their sins. One of the men, tears streaming down his face, waved his hand toward the west and exclaimed, "My people live beyond those mountains.... They have never heard the story you tell of the one True God, and know not the 'Way of Life'.... Won't you send someone to my people to tell them about Jesus?"[12]

The Morrisons responded to the call by sending Lisu evangelists. After three months of the evangelists' hard work, thirty-seven Lisu and Rawang families came to Christ. They put away their spirit-altars and committed to serve the living God alone.[13] Also, Bolton sent native preachers to Lisus in Myanmar. Thus the work of the Assemblies of God in Southwest China was extended to Myanmar.

Pentecostal mission became more concrete when believers were gathered into a church and became a worshipping community. The first Assemblies of God churches in Myanmar were planted in the Lisu land of Kachin State in 1933.[14] Morrison visited the churches and helped set them in order by electing deacons to oversee the local services. He taught them to tithe and develop spiritual and physical responsibilities to be self-reliant. The believers erected church buildings by their own efforts, using local materials such as bamboo.

Lay ministries incredibly extended the ministry throughout the pioneering period of the mission. Many notable events took place through the prayers and simple faith of believers. They gathered in the home of a sick person, prayed all night long—sometimes even two and three days—until the sick person was healed. Signs and miracles proved the preaching of gospel and drew people to the Lord. Morrison noted a case of healing saying:

> One of our preachers was telling me how a Baptist family in Burma was led into a deeper experience with the Lord through a case of healing in the family. This man was the headman of the village and his daughter was very sick. They had tried every kind of medicine from the hospital, but to no avail. One of our Lisu workers was present, and under the power of the Spirit he began to sing a hymn in their own tongue, a language he did not know. The people were amazed. The

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[12] Leonard Bolton, *China Call* (Springfield: Gospel Publishing House, 1984), p. 213.

[13] Bolton, *China Call*, pp. 213-14.

[14] David, "The Assemblies of God in Burma" (unpublished manuscript, n.d.), p. 4. The author is known only as David.

> song was so worded that they listened with awe, and so moved that they asked him to pray for the girl. He did, and the girl was instantly healed.[15]

The gospel spread fast through people movements. The Lisu brought the gospel to the Rawang, and the Rawang in turn brought to the gospel to the Lhao-vo. Entire villages turned to Christ and dropped their heathen practices. Their social and religious lives in bamboo churches were Christ-centered lives. Herman Tegenfeldt, a Baptist missionary to Kachin land, noted large numbers of people turned to Christ and the participation of the Assemblies of God.[16]

The Morrisons revisited the work in Myanmar in 1940 and convened a two-week revival meeting. They wrote about the revival:

> Words will never be able to express our joy.... During the first or second service in their midst, the Holy Spirit fell over the whole vast assembly, and over half of the congregation was praising God and singing in an unknown tongue while many were dancing in the Spirit.[17]

The church kept progressing through the self-propagating, self-supporting and self-governing of indigenous workers. The Japanese war left the people persecuted, tortured and bereft of institutions. In spite of these hardships, the church grew. By the time they convened for a silver Jubilee in 1956, the church numbered 7,000 members.

1.4 Post-war Era

In spite of the developing Pentecostal work in Myanmar, there had not been a permanent resident missionary until the end of World War II. Pentecostal missionaries from Sweden, Finland, the "Go Ye Fellowship," and the Open Bible Standard Church labored for a short time prior to World War II, but none of these groups returned to Myanmar after the war, and thus there was no continuing work.[18]

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[15] Clifford Morrison, "Speaking in Known Tongues," *The Pentecostal Evangel* (April 3, 1948), p. 7.

[16] Herman Tegenfeldt, *The Kachin Baptist Church of Burma* (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 1974), p. 94.

[17] Lavada Morrison, "Developing Indigenous Lisu Churches," *Missionary Challenge* (April, 1949), pp. 12-13 (13).

[18] Stafford, "A Brief History," p. 3

Nevertheless, the years following World War II witnessed the greatest advancement for the Assemblies of God in various areas of Myanmar as resident missionaries came to work. The Morrisons came to the Lisu land in Myanmar in 1947. They started two schools in 1954 in order to prepare workers. Walter and Lucille Erola from America came in 1951. Walter had worked under the Finish Salem Mission in 1937 but returned as a liaison officer with the conquering British and American forces during the closing days of the war in 1942. He came back with his wife Lucille Kathryn as an Assemblies of God missionary and developed a church at Mogok in central Myanmar with outreach to other villages nearby. Lucille mentioned a result of their labor, saying "Tun Gaun and Ma Tin were a Burmese Buddhist couple who turned to Christ by seeing in their dream the cross of Christ higher than pagodas. They accepted Jesus and were both filled with the Holy Spirit."[19]

The Leonard Bolton came to Yangon, the capital city of Myanmar from Chitagong of East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) as missionary transfers in 1956. They noticed that everything had changed since they had landed there thirty years ago except the spiritual darkness. The city was still full of Buddhist monasteries, temples and shrines. They began a meeting at an Indian family's home, a rented house on Windamere Road, with a few people who were interested in the Pentecostal messages. Bolton noted, "Church planting here meant rock-bottom pioneering."[20] The Boltons labored for a short period but were unable to renew their residence permit, so they left the country in 1957.

Glenn and Kathleen Stafford came to Yangon and oversaw the urban mission work in 1957. Their special meetings featuring visiting evangelists from abroad always attracted crowds. An outstanding occasion was the full gospel message of evangelist Harvey McAlister, where the gospel message attracted people from all corners of the city; the sick were healed and believers experienced the baptism of the Holy Spirit. A remarkable revival accompanied the ministry of evangelist Mabel Willetts in 1961. Her powerful messages drew people to repentance of sins and confession of Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. The Holy Spirit fell on a group of people in the congregation, which then developed into a veritable deluge.[21] This event was a hallmark for the

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[19] Walter Erola, "The Cross above the Pagoda," *The Pentecostal Evangel* (December 4, 1955), pp. 8-9.

[20] Bolton, *China Call*, p. 199.

[21] Stafford, "A Brief History," p. 7.

church as a future leader came forth through the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

Myo Chit, the present General Superintendent of the AG, commented on the result of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. He said, "Several of us former anti-Pentecostals received the Holy Spirit as a result of their ministry." [22] Coming from a Plymouth Brethren background, he was strongly anti-Pentecostal, criticizing the Pentecostal mission in Yangon as a "crazy church." He also confessed that his pride was broken as God baptized him in the Holy Spirit with an evidence of speaking in tongues (*glossolalia*) in 1961. He then became affiliated with the Staffords and the Pentecostal church. In 1965, knowing without doubt that the Staffords' invitation to a full-time ministry was the call of God, he quit his job and assisted the Staffords in the church. In March 1966, he succeeded the missionaries as the pastor of Yangon Evangel Church, when the government sent all missionaries home.

Ray and Bethany Trask were the last missionaries to arrive in 1961, continuing the urban ministry at Yangon as the Staffords took a furlough. Ray Trask made several gospel tours, preaching to near by villages and was able to bring some Buddhists and Hindus to Christ. They moved to Mogok until the government forced them to leave the country in 1965.

Stafford reminisced about the revival in a biennial convention celebrated in 1961. More than 3000 national believers from all parts of the country attended the convention. Each meeting ended with an altar call at about 11:00 p.m., yet people were praying and worshipping the Lord until midnight. He said,

> These were Pentecostal Christians and we had a "real" Pentecostal convention.... Some repented and confessed sins of long standing; some were convicted of carrying firewood on Sunday, or maybe it was killing a chicken on the Lord's day. You might smile at this, but to these sincere Christians they had transgressed their standard and wanted to repent. Others were guilty of greater things and we knew God was working.[23]

The missionaries had always struggled for their entrance as well as their resident visas since independence in 1948. The Morrisons returned to the U.S.A. for retirement in 1959. The Walters left the country for the

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[22] Myo Chit, "Even the Buddhist Monks are Listening," *Pentecostal Evangel* (February 10, 1980), pp. 18-19 (18).

[23] Glenn D. Stafford, "Convention Time in Burma," *The Pentecostal Evangel* (July 23, 1961), pp. 10-11 (11).

last time in 1962, not able to obtain a renewed visa. He wrote, "No new visa nor any re-entry visas were issued to missionaries since late 1962."[24]

1.5 The Era with No Missionaries (After 1966)

It became much harder to evangelize when the military coup took place in 1962, and especially when Myanmar became a closed country in 1964. In March 1966, the Socialist government declared that all foreign missionaries had to leave the country within a month. Maynard Ketcham cited a phrase from the Guardian, a local newspaper about the government order, saying, "By April 30th, 1966, all Christian missionaries must leave Burma." [25] No missionary has worked in Myanmar since then.

However, God did not leave the country when the missionaries had to leave. By 1970, Pentecostals everywhere in Myanmar grew steadily. In Yangon, the capital city, Myo Chit was left alone in full charge of the Evangel Church since 1966. Attendance dropped so that ten to fifteen people in the Sunday worship services was considered a large crowd. But the church soon overcame as God met their needs. A woman unknown to the pastor before was touched by the message. As she learned the church was in debt, she wrote a check to the pastor that completely canceled the debt. Another family felt led to donate land that was their family inheritance. The site became a center for short-term Bible training for young people from all over Myanmar, and later became the Evangel Bible College. The Pentecostal message and worship drew more people from all corners of the city and foreign visitors during the 1970s. It had grown to four to five hundred regular attendants by 1980. Healing and miracles often occurred as the pastor put forth his Pentecostal ministry.

2. Renewal Movement and Pentecostalism

The Pentecostal movement has become more visible as a great renewal has swept churches among the Chins since 1970s. The renewal started in some local Baptist churches and spread across the country. Many Pentecostal churches have also been planted as a result. The Assemblies of God has added up half of its total membership since the

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[24] Stafford, "A Brief History," p. 10.

[25] Maynard Ketcham, "A New Day Dawns in Missions," *The Pentecostal Evangel* (July 17, 1966), pp. 12-13 (12).

renewal. The United Pentecostal Church and the Four Square Church have also sprung up during this time.

The Chins have been converted to the Christian faith from primal religion with a great people movement since the 1900s. Christianity has helped to bring great transformational change in society and culture. By 1970, many educated Chins held and served in government offices all over the country. Also, many Chin soldiers served in the government army. Unfortunately, the second- and third-generation Christians not only among the Chins but also everywhere in the country were nominal in faith and practice. They had no knowledge about the salvation of God given by His grace and received by faith. To make matters worse, liberalism slowly influenced and eroded the teachings in Bible schools in Myanmar since 1960s.[26] The ministries of trained pastors became have become more liberal concerning the authority of the scripture.

Early in the 1970s, a burden for renewal fell on a small group in the Tedim Baptist Church. On January 27, 1973, the pastor Hau Lian Kham[27] with a small group started praying to the Lord for a renewal in the church. After much intense prayer, they conducted an open-air crusade starting on April 30, 1973 that lasted for a week. Such an evangelistic open-air crusade was never conducted before in this region. The gospel message presented the love and grace of God and his forgiveness to repentant sinners, and redemption from condemnation to eternal salvation. The work of the Holy Spirit was so strong that many people responded to the call to commitment with repentance and confessing Christ.

Eventually, the crusade became a launch pad for the renewal movement. Renewal and conversion spread every day through the witness of born again believers. Being born again was an issue of discussion in offices, schools, market places and on the streets. Thirst for the study of the word of God, a burden for prayer, zeal for witnessing and love and burden for lost souls increased in born again believers.

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[26] Myanmar Institute of Theology (formerly known as Burma Institute of Theology), Insein, Yangon is the largest theological school in Myanmar. It has been largely influenced by the teachings of theological liberalism since the 1960s. See "The Church in Myanmar," in *Church in Asia Today: Challenges and Opportunities Today*, ed. Saphir Arthyal (Singapore: Asia Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization, 1996), pp. 349-60.

[27] For a more detailed treatment, see my article "Legacy of Hau Lian Kham (1944-1995)," *Asian Journal of Pentecostal Studies* 4:1 (January 2001), pp. 99-107.

The renewal movement brought nominal Christians and non-Christians to conversion. Throughout the years, the renewal continued to spread to many Chin individuals on the periphery of the ecclesiastical structure. The lay believers, emphatically who worked in the government services, provided essential service in spreading the renewal throughout the country. They penetrated society with the gospel and carried out priestly ministry as they offered praise to God, prayed and interceded, preached and taught the Word of God as McGavran has stated:

> Revival implants Christ's Spirit in believers and forthwith they, like their master, make bringing salvation to the world a chief purpose of their lives. A holy anxiety that their neighbors and loved ones share the redeeming power of the gospel seizes the revived. Like those in-dwelt at Pentecost, they go everywhere preaching the word. They seek to win men and women to Christ. The good life they now enjoy they ardently wish others to experience.[28]

Since the renewal, the Assemblies of God has become the third largest denomination in the country. [29] Experiencing the special empowerment of the Holy Spirit and looking for a broader mission perspective, Hau Lian Kham, a key leader of the renewal movement, gradually shifted his belief and practice from fundamental-evangelicalism to Pentecostalism. In 1977, he became a member of the Assemblies of God of Myanmar and influenced many believers and local churches to turn to the Pentecostal fervor that has added great growth to the Assemblies of God.

Miracles often follow Pentecostal witness. Many people testified of healing from cancer, high blood pressure, tonsillitis, skin disease and other maladies. Vision and hearing were restored. Deliverance from the bondage of evil spirits occurred from time to time. I select and describe a few miraculous events that would help better understand the phenomena.[30]

As the answer to believers' intense prayer, a water-spring broke out in the middle of Tungzang village in 1980. The Tedim AG section

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[28] Donald A. McGavran, *Understanding Church Growth* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1990), p. 138.

[29] Khai, "Myanmar Mission Board and Agencies," in *Evangelical Dictionary of World Missions*, pp. 667-68.

[30] Chin K. Khai, "Dynamics of Renewal: A Historical Movement Among the Zomi (Chin) in Myanmar" (Ph.D. Dissertation, Fuller Theological Seminary, 1999), pp. 269-75.

celebrated an annual convention at Tungzang. Situated on a mountain, the villagers always have problems not having enough water. Not knowing what to do for a great occasion where 3000 people would gather, believers prayed for rain and water supply. Miraculously, a water spring broke out in the middle of the village on the day the convention began that supplied enough water. The spring still exists today.

Miracles often followed the ministry of evangelist Tamki. He was an animist convert from Mindat in southern Chin State in Myanmar. Dominated mainly by animism and Buddhism, the people there are greatly attracted by supernatural manifestations. Power encounters thus have often led people to Christ in people movements. He often challenged his own people with the name of Jesus. One day, a group of people plotted to shoot and kill him while he was witnessing. To their astonishment, the guns would not fire the bullets. Because of this miracle and God's powerful protection, many came to believe his witness and sought to receive Christian faith. He testified to many more miracles in his ministry.

An angel protected evangelist Khai Khan Suan from being killed. One night, while preaching at a village crusade near Kale, some men from the village tried to kill him. But they could not, for they saw an angel hovering over and protecting the preacher and the crusade. They were afraid to do any harm to the preacher. Finally, they all turned to Christ.

The ministry of evangelist Kam Cin Hau demonstrated many miraculous events. He started the "Back to the Bible" ministry in 1987 as a response to his experience of ecstasy, a vision in which he was taken to the heavenly abode of Christ and his angels. He reported on some of his noteworthy crusades.

A crusade in Khuasak during April 20-24, 1988 resulted conversions. People were filled with the Holy Spirit evidenced by speaking in tongues. Others were slain in the Spirit, and some received healing from sicknesses. Some of them cried and laughed as they were empowered by the Spirit.

At the crusade in Suangzang during May 4-11, 1988 many in the audience were slain in the Spirit, confessed their sins and accepted Christ as Savior and Lord. A six-year old boy cried aloud while slain, saying that he had a vision of his parents in hell asking for water. The village primal religious priest was sick to the point of death, but he was healed and converted through prayer during the crusade.

At the crusade in Heilei during May 12-18, 1988, people fell slain before the Lord, crying and laughing, being filled with Holy Spirit. They

put away their smoking tobacco, *tuibuk* drug and drinking *zu* (beer). The crusaders broke 200 beer pots in one day. Five to seven thousand attended every meeting at the crusade in Tedim town during July 29-August 7, 1988. The work of the Holy Spirit was so powerful that many people repented and accepted Christ as Savior and Lord, received healing through being slain in the Spirit, and were speaking in tongues. The crusade was celebrated with singing and dancing in the Spirit. Many pre-adolescents were renewed during the crusade and more than thirty of them went out for evangelism to nearby villages.

The work of the Holy Spirit has not been restricted to traditional Pentecostal denominations, however. The ministry of Lang Do Khup is a charismatic movement in the Baptist church. He had a great turning point in his ministry towards the charismatic fervor. One day, a village priest told him how in the primal religion healing the sick comes by worshipping *dawis* (evil spirits), while Christians are powerless to bring such healing. This challenge compelled Khup to pray to God for the power of healing. One day, with some believers, he prayed for a lame girl. Nothing happened, so they returned home. But the Holy Spirit spoke to him to go back and pray for the girl. As he turned back and prayed, the girl stood up and walked with no help. On another occasion, God spoke to him to raise the dead man. He persisted with God. He said that doubts and fear came as he prayed. But the Holy Spirit encouraged him to persist in prayer. Finally, the dead man came alive. During the youth crusade at Suangpi village, a women by the name Khup Dim who had been paralyzed for twenty years was instantly healed and was jumping and praising the Lord with a great joy. Many received the baptism of the Holy Spirit with the manifestation of speaking in tongues.

Another example is of Lian Za Dal, who testified to his ministry among the Buddhists at Yangon. He was a former pastor of the Siyin Baptist church but started a new church to evangelize the neighboring Buddhists in 1991. To his great surprise, Pentecostal power fell on the church during the worship time on the day of Pentecost in 1996. The members started speaking in tongues, prophesying and seeing visions they know nothing of before. The Spirit equipped the members with spiritual gifts. Some of the boys and girls, around ten years old, could see visions of what happened in the spiritual realm. Dal himself was given the authority to heal and to command angels in the name of Jesus. They were equipped with spiritual strength for warfare. Being an educated man and trained in the Baptist Theological Seminary, Dal had a hard time accepting all these phenomena. But by searching for the will of God and

examining everything through the word of God, he became a charismatic preacher in a local Baptist church.

3. Beliefs and Practices

The emphasis on speaking in tongues (*glossolalia*) as a sign of the baptism of the Holy Spirit was a dynamic factor of the Pentecostal renewal. As Pentecostalism developed into a movement in the late 1970s, believers were urged to seek the baptism of the Holy Spirit, also known as being filled with the Holy Spirit, as subsequent to the born-again experience. As Robert P. Menzies articulated, the baptism was taught as subsequent to regeneration and the gateway to receive other spiritual gifts.[31] Therefore, members hungrily sought for the special gift. As they received it, they were renewed with joy, increased desire for the Lord and boldness for witnessing.

The Pentecostals were evangelical in their basic tenant of faith and practice. They strictly emphasized the authority of Scripture, salvation of Christ by faith through grace, the urgency of Christ's coming, and the need for immediate response to the invitation for salvation. Doctrinally, they were distinct from the mainline evangelical bodies only in terms of their emphasis on the charismatic gifts and functions. Gordon D. Fee has observed the following regarding Pentecostals in general which also applies to the Chins:

> Traditionally, they have put their overall theological emphasis precisely where other evangelicals do on the person and work of Christ. Nonetheless, the public expression of tongues, which has so often characterized Pentecostal worship, has also served as much as anything else to distinguish Pentecostals, and very often therefore to separate them, from their other bothers and sisters in Christ.[32]

Moreover, Pentecostals preach and teach subjects on the full gospel message, living a holy life and the imminent return of Christ--messages that have helped many to deeper commitment. Their message of

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[31] Robert P. Menzies, "Spirit-Baptism and Spiritual Gifts," in *Pentecostalism in Context: Essay in Honor of William W. Menzies*, eds. Wonsuk Ma and Robert P. Menzies (Sheffield, England: Sheffield Academic Press Ltd., 1997), pp. 48-59.

[32]Gordon D. Fee, "Toward a Pauline Theology of Glossolalia," in *Pentecostalism in Context:Essay in Honor of William W. Menzies*, eds. Wonsuk Ma and Robert P. Menzies (Sheffield, England: Sheffield Academic Press Ltd., 1997), pp. 24-37.

liberation from poverty and self-lowliness, and toward positive attitude have helped people to improve their low self-images. The subject of holy living emphasizes that believers are the temples of the Holy Spirit, urging them to keep themselves holy, and to be separated from worldly manners. As a result, believers abstained from their old habits of drinking, smoking, singing secular songs, reading novels, watching movies and anything that would affect their spiritual growth.[33] Also believers always look forward to the rapture of the church in their lifetimes.

Pentecostal worship is a great pattern for transformation. Worship is an essential part of being Christians, and corporate worship is a compelling need among believers. Pentecostal worship services are very different from those of the traditional style of worship. The enthusiasm of modern praise and worship choruses and musical instruments in addition to corporate prayer makes worship services exciting and joyful. Praise and worship with choruses and a few hymns, led with musical accompaniment, and clapping hands are seen in most born-again churches. Solos, duets, trios, group singers and action singers attractively and persuasively support the worship. Choruses composed within their own contexts that convey deep relationship with the Lord, developing theological insight that has helped people focus on deeper worship and praise.

The Pentecostals do not despise study and knowledge but emphasize the ministry of the Holy Spirit. The *Khanlawhna Hun* (The Revival Hours) is a newsletter that alludes to a scriptural theme taken from Zechariah 4:6, "Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit, says the Lord Almighty" (NIV). For they acknowledge the Holy Spirit as the only power source, helper and teacher of the things of God. Consequently, the glory of God shown in miracles has always been witnessed and reported.

4. Pentecostalism vs. Excesses and Heresies

In spite of the above phenomena that helped build the body, Pentecostals in Myanmar do face excesses and heresies as well. There have often been prophecies that led believers into falsehood. The prophecies were called *thusuak* or *sawlna*—that is forth-telling, demanding someone to do something. It began with certain people who

[33] Chin K. Khai, *The Cross Amid Pagodas* (Baguio, Philippines: APTS Press, forthcoming).

claimed to receive the audible voice of God that demanded certain things to accomplish. If people would fail to do these things, then calamity would follow. This time, which I call the "prophetic movement,"[34] can be divided into two periods: the early prophetic movement (1977-1980s) and the latter prophetic movement (1990s).

The movement which appeared in 1977 had the phenomena of dancing, crying, rolling on the floor, carrying tables and chairs, and running around the church as a mode of repentance. The followers put on sackcloth, stood in the middle of the village and called for repentance. Furthermore, they claimed to have received prophecies, saying that the Holy Spirit spoke to them audibly. They said the Bible was insufficient, and prophecies today were far more important.

As the heresies spread, a group of them tried to raise a dead body at Phaiza village, claiming that God told them to do so. But the body was not raised. They went around the Tedim town believing that God would give them all the people in the town. Their meetings commonly used excessive drum beating, dancing and repeating one song more than ten times. They planted crosses at open-ground, waited for rapture and abstained from certain food and meats. Miracles sometimes followed as participants acted on prophecies. A group of them prepared a three-foot square piece of ground for the landing of a plane, which was reinterpreted as a spiritual plane that would rapture them. Any prophecy that did not come true was reinterpreted as testing of faith.

The group considered themselves holier than any believer for they prayed and committed themselves seriously. They asserted the name "Jesus" was that of an ancient Greek god, and stressed *Yashua* as the true name. Therefore, water baptism in the name of *Yashua* alone gives salvation. They even declared themselves descendants of the Israelites. They kept the Sabbath and observed rites of circumcision. Finally, the group split into smaller sects, *Khami Pawl* (Spiritual Group), *Nazareth Khuami Yashua Pawl* (Church of Yashua of Nazareth) and those who joined with the United Pentecostal Church (UPC).

John Thang Hum, a pastor at Kalemyo, reported a particular event. A prophetess came to Tahan AG church and prophesied in a prayer of healing for a sick person in the church. The pastor, Lian Zam, with two of his deacons followed the prophetess with no hesitation. They prayed for the sick but nothing happened. The prophetess then suggested the need to kill a chicken and apply the blood to the body of the sick person. The pastor instantly objected the prophecy as false, telling that the death

[34] Khai, "Dynamics of Renewal," pp. 280-88; 350-53.

of Jesus was sufficient for cleansing our sins and healing our sickness. Such prophecies were similarly denied as false elsewhere in the movement.

Another kind of prophetic movement is called the "cleansing movement"[35] that came through prophecy appeared by mid 1990s. Although some think the movement is heresy, only excesses and misuse of the movement constitute heresy. Generally, it has been a positive force in the church. One of the cleansing movements was called "cleansing village." It was done mainly as an expression of unity among the villagers-churches, with youth and adults together. The evil spirits were chased and cast out of the village, spiritually unclean things were destroyed or burned down, and united worship was celebrated. It has similarity to the *Khuado* feast,[36] a time when villagers chase spirits out of the village.

Similar to this movement is "cleansing houses." According to the prophecy, certain houses would need to be cleansed for good health, prosperity and the success of the household members. The prophets in visions saw the unclean things in the house--things that were dedicated to evil spirits, material used for worshipping spirits and things in which spirits dwelt. Those things hindered the household from prosperity and health, and even caused sickness and loss among the family members. The prophet and believers would take and throw them away, or burn them in a fire. After that, they would rededicate the house to God with prayer.

Tual Khaw Mang, a retired civil officer, testified to the cleansing of his house at Saizang in 1995. His parents and grandparents were chiefs of the Saizang village and were primal worshipers until they wholly turned to Christ in 1995. They celebrated the ceremony of dedication and house cleansing, as they received Christ and committed themselves to follow him. To their surprise, dilemmas and sickness came on the family members the following days. A prophecy with a vision was pronounced as they prayed. The prophet saw in the vision that there were unclean things left in the house, things that were used for demonic worship, which thus needed to be destroyed immediately. Accordingly, they found

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[35] Cleansing here means an act of spiritual deliverance.

[36] *Khuado* feast is a harvest (New Year) festival. It is similar to the water (New Year) festival of ethnic Bama. The Chins celebrate it every year after the harvest. The traditional concept of *Khuado* is fighting against evil spirits and chasing them out of the village, as well as cleansing the village in order to welcome the new year after harvest. For detail, see Khai, "Dynamics of Renewal," p. 75.

a sword, a javelin, pots and things dedicated to their household spirits they had not even used for years. As they burned them their problems were resolved and sicknesses were healed.

The prophetic movement gave the church a bad name among the Chin society. Two main reasons underlie this bad name: First, prophecy was misused for personal gain; and second, the prophecy did not come true. Also, the gifts were not practiced with consistent discipline. Much of the unfounded prophecy was not delivered in the church but outside the church where the prophet or prophetess functioned independently. Such a person did not allow himself or herself to be disciplined biblically.

The church, particularly the Assemblies of God, denied the false teachings and practices. In 1978, Hau Lian Kham, Myo Chit, Dam Suan Mung, Suak Za Go and other leaders taught biblical criteria by which true prophets and prophecies could be distinguished from the false. First, a true prophecy must be in accord with, not contradicting, the teachings of Scripture. Second, it must edify believers. Third, it must be fulfilled. Fourth, it must glorify the name of Christ. Again in 1997, churches at Kale organized a prophetic conference in 1997 in order to put the prophetic movement in accord with Biblical teachings. Dam S. Mung, pastor of the Full Gospel Church at Yangon, taught about the nature and characteristic of prophecy in the Bible and how to handle a prophetic movement. It was reported to be very helpful for local churches.

5. Pentecostal Education

In Myanmar, critics often speak of Pentecostals as emotionalists who are not oriented toward intellectual matters. In reality, however, Pentecostals have emphasized Christian education from the very beginning and have educated many workers for the service of the Kingdom. All local churches encourage not only children but also adults to attend their Sunday schools.

As early as the mission began, the missionaries conducted short-term schools in various villages that educated the natives. In 1954, there were two schools[37] among the Lisus and Rawangs. Bible lessons were taught as well as reading, writing and arithmetic. The school at Putao was moved to Myitkyina in 1964 and was named Burma Bible School.[38] The

[37] Tegenfeldt, *The Kachin Baptist Church of Burma*, p. 287.

[38] Stafford, "A Brief History," p. 8.

school offered a three-year diploma course in Bible and theological studies.

Evangel Bible College was opened in Yangon on August 2, 1979 with a resident teacher and 20 students. The college followed the curriculum and materials prepared by the International Correspondence Institute (ICI) of Brussels, Belgium.[39] Maranatha Bible College opened at Kale in the northwestern area of the country in 1988 under the supervision and sponsorship of the District Council No. 3. Bethel Bible College opened at Tedim in 1991. It is also known as the "Decade of Harvest Center." The Apostolic Christian Bible College at Yangon was opened in 1986 and offers a bachelor degree with the UPC doctrine and curriculum. The Full Gospel Bible Training Center at Yangon opened in 1995 and offers a diploma course. School of Gospel Ministry at Yangon also offers a diploma course. Beside these, there are short-term Bible training schools in different towns and cities. Also, the respective districts and general councils conduct conventions and Bible seminars to mobilize and equip their people for service. With all of this training, the Pentecostals are well equipped for the service of the Kingdom.

6. Pentecostal Mission[40]

Pentecostals in Myanmar are committed to evangelism and mission work. Churches send home missionaries both to completely unreached people groups and to where Pentecostal ministry has not yet been started. They believe in church planting as a strategy for growth by gathering converts into worshipping communities and then building viable churches.

Missions have been carried out through self-supporting programs. All Pentecostal churches have developed means to support their home missionaries. *Kyiyudaw Shubu (Lawm Bawm)*, meaning "thanks offering box," is whether believers put coins in thanksgiving to the Lord in addition to their tithes and offerings on Sundays. The believers put coins in the box at home with praise to God for the blessings they have received, and then they bring it to church on a fixed date to support the mission work. *Let tashoh sa (khut pham*) is a handful of rice which the mother of the household keeps aside whenever she prepares a meal. In the same way, a girl keeps aside a stick of firewood (*an sing*) out of that

[39] Khai, *The Cross amid Pagodas.*

[40] Khai, "Dynamics of Renewal," pp. 310-12, 340-42.

which she collects in the forest. After a time, they gather all the things they have put aside, sell them and then hand over the money to the mission department. The Women's Mission provides support for missionaries in this way.

7. Conclusion with Comments

Pentecostals in Myanmar are growing fast compared to all other denominations. Many nominal Christians and non-believers have been brought into right relationship with Christ and are also included. They celebrate worship joyfully. Maynard Ketcham, former field director of Far East Asia for the US Assemblies of God recommended that the Assemblies of God in Myanmar be viewed as a model church with its self-propagating, self-supporting and self-governing methods.[41] I would like to comment on few theological and mission issues.

Preaching on salvation should reemphasize a collective approach to the salvation of God. Renewal preachers often have addressed individual sin, individual repentance and individual salvation—a pattern copied from western individualism. This has provided less impact in Myanmar society because social sin has not been addressed, people with a group identity have not been acknowledged, and social change has been less concentrated. The image of "group above self" slowly disappears as the individual movement takes over the people movement. Perhaps many would-be converts were denied acceptance in the church as a result of their inability to restructure their socially determined selves.

Although encounter with spirits and power was not a new phenomenon among the Pentecostals, the "cleansing-prophetic movement" was a breakthrough theoretically as well as practically in the life of the churches. The main distinction from other spiritual warfare was that it operated through prophecy. It had to do with the culture in which primal religion was practiced before. The prophet or prophetess could see in a vision the spirits and their abiding place in the house, the village, or even in the person and animal. Those spirits brought calamities to the people. The prophet or prophetess together with the followers chased (cast) those spirits out in the name of Jesus. The "cleansing prophetic movement" is a deliverance ministry performed in a collective way.

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[41] Maynard L Ketchem, "Burma Revisited," *The Pentecostal Evangel* (June 16, 1968), p. 8.

Many believers, even within the Pentecostals, regard prophetic ministry as having no grounds for corroboration or validity and is not scriptural. It is the position of this paper that the participants were not telling lies, but rather were recounting real experiences. The prophetic ministry is an act of encountering unseen spirits and supernatural powers which Paul Hiebert terms the "excluded middle."[42] Such events were rampant among people of folk religions, not only in Myanmar but also throughout the whole world. These are realities which science does not explain, but which merit spiritual recognition, observation, discernment and intervention. To the people in Myanmar, the existence of spirit beings, demons and souls is not just a myth but a life encounter. Thus, the prophetic movement has offered a necessary and powerful spiritual dimension. Nevertheless, it calls for credibility and reliability-testing in terms of Scriptural as well as empirical interpretation.

Beside the theological issues, the Church in Myanmar always struggles to overcome some mission roadblocks. The Buddhist world still remains unshaken with the witness of the gospel of Christ and is a major challenge to the Christians in Myanmar. Christians feel uneasy when nationalism and Buddhism are coined together, "A good Bama (Burmese) is a good Buddhist." Consequently, restriction and discrimination from the government follow many Christian activities. Worship in house churches has been prohibited. Crosses on the top of mountains and churches were pulled down and burned. Christian publication and distribution are restricted. Even promotion to higher position both in civil and military offices has been stopped for Christians. Christians as a minority group have no voice in this social landscape.

Poverty is another roadblock to growth. The country economy has fallen to rock bottom, a shortage of major products has occurred for years, and inflation has rocketed higher every day. Many small churches cannot promote activities due to a lack of resources. New churches cannot raise their own buildings. Ministers do not get enough support, so they struggle for survival. They need both spiritual and moral support.

In spite of the roadblocks, Pentecostal witness always will have a major prospect of success in the Kingdom mission. Serving with the power of the Holy Spirit followed by miracles, healing, signs and wonders is a great challenge to the Buddhist and Animistic practices. Also, lay believers have been effectively instrumental in spreading the gospel since the beginning of the mission. Therefore, mobilizing and

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[42] Paul G. Hiebert, "The Flaw of the Excluded Middle," *Missiology: An International Review* 10:1 (January 1982), pp. 35-47.

equipping them with deeper theological knowledge and then commissioning them to carry forth the task will bring great advancement for the mission of the kingdom of God in Myanmar.

[*AJPS* 5:1 (2002), pp. 73-86]

QUESTIONING EVERY CONSENSUS: A PLEA FOR A RETURN TO THE RADICAL ROOTS OF PENTECOSTALISM

Mathew Clark

1. Introduction

> I believe that courage is the most important virtue, the foundation that underlies and gives reality to all other virtues and personal values. Without courage we become conformists. Conformity is not the fibre good and courageous leaders are made of.… Do not be frightened by the aloneness that may come with your holding unpopular positions. It is in aloneness that wisdom will visit you and smile upon you.

These are not, as a theologian might be entitled to expect, the words of Elijah or Jeremiah. They are quoted from a speech given in 1999 by Mamphela Ramphele, vice chancellor of the University of Cape Town.[1] Her context was the silence that has so often fallen on African societies once liberation has taken place. It is just such silent acquiescence, she insists, that allows former "heroes of the struggle" to become despots and dictators.

Her words are challenging to Pentecostal theologians for at least two reasons. The first, and more mundane, is that Pentecostalism is most vibrant today in precisely those countries which can be termed "postcolonial." The second, and to my mind most relevant to the movement, is that Pentecostalism was at its beginning a powerful spiritual force because it inherited an ethos of radical difference and because its proponents were unflinching in refusing to be co-opted into any other agenda than the one for which they knew they had been

[1] M. Ramphele, "Our Democracy Is at Risk," *Readers Digest* (April 2000), pp. 95-97 (97).

empowered by the Spirit of Jesus Christ. In this sense it was a prophetic religion, a religion similar to that of Elijah and Jeremiah.[2]

In this paper I would like to plead for a passionate commitment to Pentecostal theology as a radical alternative to the many conforming theologies and value systems that permeate our globalizing society. I am convinced that African, Asian and Latin American Pentecostals are in an excellent position to articulate this alternative, and that in so doing they may challenge the established western Pentecostal groups.

2. Radical Alternatives in Pentecostal Antecedents

Whether one detects a coherent line of Pentecostal antecedents from Pentecost until 1902,[3] or is satisfied with investigating no further than the Methodist-Holiness roots of the movement,[4] the prevalent ethos that one finds will be of an unashamed alternative to the prevailing consensus of the day. This was true of the Montanists, especially as articulated by Tertullian; of the early Reformers such as Wyecliffe and Huss; most certainly of the Anabaptists, and even of the early Luther. John Wesley was an enigmatic figure in his age, showing that to make a difference it is essential to be different. The Holiness movement and its attendant revivals in the nineteenth century showed a splendid disregard for the forces of secularism and religious liberalism that were rampant at that time. And when the Pentecostal revival came, the first pioneers cared not a whit for slanders and accusations thrown against them, whether they came from secular scoffers or from the outraged church world.

As the movement spread to the continent of Africa the same disdain for tags and epithets—indeed, even for overt persecution—was displayed. First, the Afrikaner (Dutch) converts in South Africa for decades suffered the slander of their peers of being co-opted into hated Britishness by accepting believers' baptism by immersion. By so doing they had implicitly rejected the "covenant seal" baptism of the Reformed

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[2] I have reservations about too casually referring to confrontational religion as "prophetic," since prophecy is normally a charismatic event initiated by the Holy Spirit. However, the term has become so established in this broader sense that I am employing it thus in this paper.

[3] E.g., F. D. Bruner, *A Theology of the Holy Spirit* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1970), p. 35.

[4] E.g., D. W. Dayton, *Theological Roots of Pentecostalism* (Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow Press, 1987).

churches, thereby alienating themselves from a nation which saw itself as the covenant people of God bringing civilization to darkest Africa. The African converts to Pentecostalism were equally courageous, rejecting the trappings of ancestor veneration while at the same time drawing the scorn of the "mission" churches for their acceptance of the emotional and spiritual phenomena of Pentecostalism.[5]

The flood of converts that has taken place in Latin America and Asia since the Second World War contains further evidence of the potency of this radical difference. In societies that are dominated by entrenched literary religions such as Catholicism, Islam, Hinduism and Buddhism, the courage that it takes to opt for the Pentecostal Christian alternative should not be underestimated. For the oldest son in a Buddhist family to convert to Christianity demands a level of fortitude with which many of us in western churches have never been challenged. To witness to Jesus in a Hindu village on a sub-continent where religious strife has always been endemic is to live dangerously every day. To be a Christian (normally a Pentecostal Christian) in an Indonesian nation, where the Muslim majority is seeking scapegoats for political and economic setbacks, takes courage indeed. To consistently flout the wishes of the Communist Party in China, by witnessing to Christ, attending prayer meetings and holding Bible studies, is to "not count the cost" in a most remarkably courageous way.

The basis for this lack of concern for, and obeisance to, the consensus of their cultures and societies is the personal experience by the Pentecostal convert of the power of God in Jesus Christ. The shattering effect of the Holy Spirit on the individual led to an apocalyptic re-evaluation of everything that till then had been taken for granted. The convert found that what had been established—perhaps even precious—in their pre-Pentecostal life no longer exerted the same influence. A new goal, a new set of values, a new community, had replaced that which existed before. The impact of the experience of the saving, healing, baptising, returning Christ was such that the old mould was shattered totally and a new entity came into being. And this new person challenged every "given" of their culture and religion by modelling a radical

[5] A. Anderson, *Bazalwane: African Pentecostals in South Africa* (Pretoria: University of South Africa, 1992), p. 76.

alternative—Pentecostal discipleship.[6] Without necessarily always becoming dissenters, they certainly became questioners.

3. Which Consensus Should Be Questioned?

If Pentecostal theology accepts the premise that Pentecostal discipleship implies a criticism of prevailing consensus, it may not do so purely on the basis of its own historical antecedents. While such antecedents are valuable in indicating just how Pentecostal discipleship comes to expression in a number of secular and religious contexts, they cannot be normative in themselves. For a normative indication of how to relate to social and religious consensus Pentecostal theology must search the scriptures. The Pentecostal notion that we are living in the ongoing history of God is a fitting indicator in this regard. Obviously the example of Jesus himself, as well as of the apostles and the first church community, provides relevant data here. In the interests of an holistic approach to the scriptures, the examples of the Old Testament charismatic personalities can also be used to provide a key to understanding the nature of the difference that marks those who are called and empowered by God.

Most evident in all of these lives is the undoubted sense of commitment and surrender to a personal God whom they had encountered. The stories of these encounters are offered as simple narrative, and generally lack the mystical elements that might otherwise somehow have elevated the subject to divinity, or to the rank of "holy man/woman." The encounters took place in history, in a social and cultural context, and their results were lived out in a non-mythical world, in an everyday existence where normal, everyday men and women lived everyday lives. And yet the encounters left the individual somehow changed, seeing their environment through totally different eyes to their peers. This change of perception led to a change of attitude, which came to expression in a change of conduct. And a most significant element in this change was that their contemporaries could not easily categorize it. It was not that they became rebellious citizens, or religious apostates, or subversive activists, or anti-social elements. Whenever these tags were

[6] I find the term "discipleship" attractive in describing the Pentecostal way of living, since it denotes a greater similarity with revival and discipleship movements than with classical Protestantism or even Evangelicalism.

attributed to them, they were almost immediately proved to be either inadequate or inaccurate.[7]

The Old Testament prophets, while remaining Israelites indeed, and while not overtly attempting the overthrow of monarchs or priests (unless specifically so commanded by God), nor the destruction of the temple, nevertheless related to both monarchy and cultus in a radically different way. They themselves would claim that they now saw these things from the same viewpoint as God. At the same time their own personal destiny and sense of self-worth was no longer linked to the trappings of daily life in Israel or Judah. They were therefore radically free to express the values and plans of God in and to their contemporary culture. Their fellow Israelites perceived immediately that these people, while perhaps not overtly fomenting revolution or rebellion, were making pronouncements and expressing values and perspectives that were inherently subversive. Eichrodt notes:

> The whole prophetic movement, which on principle subjected all political and national considerations to the sovereign will of the nation's God, inevitably acted as a vociferous protest against any subordination of religion to the programme of the civil power.[8]

The ambivalence of such a situation is best expressed in the ministry of Jeremiah, who wept for the very nation over which he proclaimed the doom of God's judgement. In the New Testament there is a powerful parallel to this as Jesus weeps over the city of Jerusalem in Matt 23.

Eichrodt's comments on the nature of the classical prophet in Old Testament Israel clearly describes the basis of their alternative perception, values and message as their personal encounter with the power of God:

> In their own personal life the prophets experienced this power terrifyingly as the radical overthrow of everything that had held good for them hitherto, an experience to which the accounts of their calling bear eloquent testimony. There is not one of them who did not receive

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[7] This attributing of tags to Bible characters on the basis of one's own ideology or convictions was not limited to their contemporaries. In the last half-century we have encountered Jesus the AK47-wielding revolutionary, Jesus the pot-smoking Hippie, Jesus the liberal do-gooder, and Jesus the Black Messiah, to mention just a few.

[8] W. Eichrodt, *Theology of the Old Testament*, trans. J. A. Baker (London: SCM, 1961), vol. 1, p. 331.

> this new certainty of God in such a way that the whole previous pattern of his life, the thoughts and plans by which he had till now regulated his relationship with the world, was not smashed, and replaced by a mighty divine imperative obliging him to undertake something which hitherto he had not even considered as a possibility. And the same revolutionary forces which they saw in their own lives they saw realized also in the life of the nation by this terrible divine fact, driving with irresistible impetus against the totally differently constituted reality of the empirical world, and hurling it out of its path.… For these men all descriptive phrases which sought to imprison God in the Here and Now, or to portray his sovereignty over the world as a static and inherently stable situation, were bound to appear palpably inadequate.[9]

The life of Jesus reveals this radical difference and "un-tag-ability" most forcefully. While on the face of it he appeared anti-imperial, antinomian, antireligious and indeed even antisocial, he was all and none of these things. This does not imply that his life needs to be dialectically understood, as though in himself he reconciled opposite and contradictory attributes. It simply indicates that the life and utterances of Jesus turned the searchlight of enquiry and criticism back upon the presuppositions and consensus that questioned him. When his contemporaries wanted to show him as either a subversive against the empire, or as a collaborator against his own nation, his answer to their question about paying tax to Rome left his interrogators with the uncomfortable suspicion that it was their attitude toward God, emperor and nation which was under question. Here walked and spoke a man whose presence and mode of life could not be classed according to the categories that the prevailing social and religious consensus presupposed. In effect he forced his contemporaries to contemplate an alternative category, a category that had not occurred to them, a category which judged every category they had previously adopted or spurned—the category of the Spirit-filled son of God.

Hengel's comments on the tax-question and the Jewish struggle for freedom show a remarkable parallel to Eichrodt's quote above:

> The nearness of the reign of God relativizes even the power of Rome. The political religion of the all-powerful empire is—in total contrast to the Zealot protest—pushed aside as devoid of power; indeed, it is not even taken into account. By the power of His word Jesus battles to have his people really acknowledge God's will.[10]

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[9] Eichrodt, *Theology of the Old Testament*, vol. 1, p. 345.

[10] M. Hengel, *Christ and Power* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1977), pp. 19-20.

Hengel can thus comment elsewhere, "one can quite correctly call Jesus a revolutionary, and this could be underscored with superlatives."[11] What was revolutionary about the man from Galilee was not his fervor for the liberation of Israel, nor for the prosperity of the people, not even of the law: it was his personal commitment to the God who had sent him, who had anointed him with the power of his Spirit. Says Hengel:

> People have wanted to see him as a political revolutionary as well as an apolitical fanatic, indeed even as an agent of the occupation forces. Those kind of tendentious interpretations refute themselves. One could put as a heading over his entire work the passage from Zechariah… "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, says the Lord of hosts." The Spirit of God manifested itself [*sic*] in Jesus' outwardly simple style of preaching, whose effectiveness lay solely in the content of his message, and in his deeds of kindness.[12]

The apostles showed that their revolutionary approach to the social and religious consensus of the day, based as it was on the intervention of God's power in their lives by the Holy Spirit, was both extremely popular and intensely hated. Its very difference from the fossilized sterility of Jewish religion, and from the superficiality and confusion of pagan rites, lent it an appeal and satisfaction particularly to the disinherited. However, though they themselves could not always put their finger on just where the threat lay, those whose personal integration lay in the religious, social and political establishment of the day tended to respond with hostility to its challenge. That not all Christians, or even Christian leaders, could always totally resist the force of this hostility is evident in Paul's confrontation with Peter at Antioch (Gal 2:11-14). This being the Peter who had been radically challenged by God to break the mould of his own prejudices and take the gospel to a gentile household—the same Peter who courageously defended his compliance before the Jewish believers with the powerful words: The Spirit commanded me to go (Acts 11:12)!

While obviously militarily, politically and economically harmless, the first Christians soon drew the wrath of the established powers and consensus upon themselves. For their new sense of identity and purpose led them to treat casually (if not with contempt) the many literal and figurative altars at which the contemporary consensus demanded all

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[11] M. Hengel, *Was Jesus a Revolutionist?* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1971), p. 34.

[12] Hengel, *Christ and Power*, pp. 15-16.

should bow. When one of these altars was the altar of Caesar, these radical disciples were faced with the sternest challenge the church has ever faced—and the passive and accepting way in which they went to their deaths indicated just how deeply they had been co-opted into an alternative way of thinking and living. The scope of that unrelenting persecution was repeated again in the days of the Anabaptists, where Protestant and Roman Catholic both attempted to totally exterminate a group of Christians who would not bow at the altars of their respective state-church syntheses. In more recent times many Pentecostals have similarly been treated, particularly in Marxist, Islamic or recently "liberated" countries where the ruling elite claim to represent the source and content of the nation's destiny and self-image.

It is clear that the issues most subverted by the Christian witness were the issues of power. The threats and promises of military, social and religious power were peripheralized in the Christian context, since the new perception of the disciple was based upon an encounter with an all-surpassing power—the power of the one true God as revealed to them and in them by the Spirit of his Son. Fear and veneration of those powers which everyone else believed to be ultimate in the contemporary context, were replaced by love for (and also fear of—referring to Acts 5 and 9 which reveal the terrible power of God) the living God. Mass or majority opinion or consensus was relegated to a minor position, the most pressing demand upon their time, resources and energy being how to walk and witness as worthy disciples of the Master.

In answer to the question "Which consensus should be questioned or opposed?" the Pentecostal answer must be "Whichever consensus exalts itself and demands allegiance above the Master himself." Perhaps in reviewing the perils of failing to question a prevailing consensus one can identify specific contemporary presuppositions and consensus that challenge Pentecostal theology by demanding allegiance.

4. Failing to Question—Seduced by Conformity

What perils lie in wait for a Pentecostal theology that fails to question the surrounding consensus at the beginning of the twenty-first century? While it would be an oversimplification to claim that there is such a thing as a single emerging social consensus today, it is not paranoid to imagine that there are significant and intensively propagated opinions that demand that all "relevant" schools or philosophies acknowledge their tenets. Most have both protagonists and antagonists,

but this is not the issue for Pentecostal theology. For us it is not a question of taking sides (another form of conformity) but of representing the position of our Master in every issue.

This is made clear in the conflict between the ideologies of the right and the left that took place from the 1960s until the 1990s. (Some would maintain that this conflict is still not resolved, that it merely continues under the guise of the many forms of "correctness" that prevail in our societies.) At the time it soon became clear that a "relevant" theologian could not hope to opt out of this ideological struggle. Either one bore the labels "progressive" or "radical" or "sensitive," and basked in the approval of the proponents of the left; or one was tagged "conservative," and found approval from the churchly right. There was nowhere to lay the head for the one who cared for neither option, who opted out, or who took a radically alternative stance. No invitations to ecumenical conferences, no heralding as a champion of the Christian fundamentals. To arrive, to be accepted, to be heard demanded partisanship in the cause of one side or the other. For the Pentecostal theologian seduced into this conformity lay the small satisfaction of acceptance into a wider circle—and the peril of total irrelevance in and to a community of radical disciples.

This period presented a number of severe disappointments for Christianity as an alternative perspective, as many theologians threw their weight into the political and ideological struggles of the day. Perhaps the most depressing was the co-option of Moltmann into a single camp, the camp of socialism and the left. This is depressing because his early theology offered real hope of an alternative way—particularly since he sought meaningfully historical antecedents for a relevant theology among the Anabaptists. Despite his extremely cogent pleas for the "critical freedom of the gospel," based on an exciting, free-church-type approach to the stories of the Jesus and the prophets, Moltmann eventually capitulated by insisting that the Messianic task of Christians could only be carried out in partnership with other "messianic" movements—every one of them from the left![13]

In the twenty-first century the lines are perhaps no longer as clear-cut as they were in the old east-west, left-right days. Now the divide seems to be between the advocates of a globalized consumer culture (the

[13] My own evaluation of the significance of Moltmann's theology for Pentecostals facing political issues can be found in M. S. Clark, "The Relationship Christianity-Society: A Study in Jürgen Moltmann from a Pentecostal Perspective" (D.Th. thesis, University of South Africa, Pretoria, 1989).

old right?) and those who advocate anything from its overthrow to its radical amendment (the old left?). In a truly postmodern way the burning issues include such matters as cultural imperialism, or ecological correctness, or economical domination—the extent and variety of the various battlefields almost evokes nostalgia for the simplisticism of the old left-right struggle. However, the temptation to conformity is no less than it was, since the issues that by often unspoken consensus come to dominate the agenda may not be the issues that are encountered in powerful Pentecostal witness to Christ. Indeed, so many of them come to express the interest of very specific or local agendas—feminist concerns, anti-racist issues, pro-life versus pro-choice campaigns, etc. At the end of the day, the choice for the Pentecostal theologian is to be leader or a follower—either to set the agenda or to submit to another's. However, one can be sure that if he or her refuses to conform to the agenda dictated by the contemporary consensus, there will be a penalty in it for the non-conformist.

In the context of Pentecostal theology, particularly in the context of the so-called two-thirds world, the great debate at present is about contextualization of the gospel as opposed to syncretism. This is not a debate that can be dealt with simplistically, since there are no clear guidelines in Christian history or in the scripture that make it easy to decide what, for example, a Buddhist should retain of his or her culture when converting to Christianity, nor what they should abandon. However, once again this area offers seductive choices to the Pentecostal theologian. Should one join the more culturally sensitive group who would diminish the boundaries between the Christian religion and other religions? Or should one make a home for oneself with those who draw such absolute distinctions between Christianity and non-western cultures that the convert is expected to westernize completely or else lose their salvation? Make no mistake, both sides would love to have the support of Pentecostal voices and scholarship, since it is the Pentecostal movement that is at the cutting edge of Christian witness in these regions. And the consensus implies that, unless one takes sides on these issues, one's theology will be done in the wilderness, irrelevant and unheard. If the Pentecostal theologian succumbs to this temptation, can he or she retain enough credibility in the Pentecostal environment to deal with the issues that are burning in the movement, and not those that the surrounding consensus insists are the burning issues?

However, the challenges of contextualization and of a radical alternative Pentecostal approach to it, are not limited to the world of missions. The recent secularization of the West, to the extent that some

would claim it is now a pagan culture, makes demands of the Pentecostal movement that are as challenging as any other transcultural interface. Many seem to feel that to become relevant to the new post-modern generation the movement must adopt post-modern categories in the entire spectrum of its existence and ministry. To do so may deprive the Pentecostal movement, which has the greatest chance of successfully reaching Generations X/Y/Z, of its strongest weapon—its radical difference and its alternative approach and value system.

Another area that demands attention by Pentecostal theology is the siren voice of "correctness." This is an all-pervading notion that affects almost every area of academic pursuit in the human and social sciences. The very term "correct" implies a consensus—somewhere, somehow, someone's point of view and sense of values has taken on the nature of a canon. It is presupposed that this canon cannot be questioned. The most savage labels that can be applied to those who fail to heed this stricture include terms such as "insensitive," "cultural imperialist," "chauvinist," "supremacist"—and the even more damning "racist" and "sexist." Once applied to an academic, those epithets spell his or her intellectual doom. Such a one is then consigned to the ranks of the untouchables, in some instances even considered to defile and pollute those they would debate or instruct.

It is obvious that such a powerful consensus bears with it all the marks of a religion or spirituality. There is an all-accepting relativism underlying it that refuses to accept anything that is labelled by the consensus as "incorrect." This contradiction demands allegiance, and sanguine is the Pentecostal scholar who believes it will never demand his or her obeisance.[14]

Since most of the tenets that are held to be "correct" by this establishment are the tenets of the left and of the liberals of the 1950s and 1960s, there is a well-established anti-correctness consensus among conservatives of every stripe. The temptation for the Pentecostal scholar is therefore not just to submit to the demands of the "correctness" brigade, but also to perhaps follow the opposite course. Neither destination offers particularly attractive bed-fellows to the person who has encountered the calling and power of God in their lives.

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[14] W. D. Watkins, *The New Absolutes: How They Are Being Imposed on Us, and How They Are Eroding the Moral Landscape* (Minneapolis: Bethany House, 1996) offers a cogent description and Christian refutation of contemporary "correctness" as encountered in North America.

Those who have followed this argument up to this point are entitled to now ask the question: where does this fellow want to go? Is he holding out the option of being different purely for the sake of being different? (That of course was the old Hippie ideal—don't tag me, man!) Perhaps he is suffering from an extensive ego, believing that he alone has the right or insight to set a Pentecostal agenda? The aim of this paper is not to specify any particular agenda for Pentecostal theology, but rather to prevent it bleeding to death as it plays with the notions of adopting the agendas of other interest groups for the sake of a spurious relevance or recognition. However, if the point of view set out above is not totally specious, then it hints at an implication for Pentecostal theology. Namely, that Christian discipleship, and Pentecostal discipleship in particular, demands the convictions and courage of an inner-directed individual.

5. Individuality as a Key Foundation Stone for Pentecostal Scholarship

I have chosen the term individuality as opposed to individualism to specify what I intend in this paragraph. This is due to the influence of my Philosophy 1 lecturer, who informed me that "-ism" means "disease"! Ramphele admonishes the graduates of Cape Town University in 1999 not to fear the aloneness that comes from holding alternative and unpopular positions to the prevailing consensus. This does not mean that the collective nature of African relationships and processes must be usurped by a selfish individualism. Individuality *per se* is not automatically subversive to tradition, nor to respect for one's elders. It merely implies having the courage to find within yourself your values and directions, and not to simply inherit them from your milieu.

If ever there is a theologian who needs this courage, it is the Pentecostal theologian. In the halls of Academe we are newcomers, not always welcome, not always liked. Our movement has often been brashly anti-intellectual, our spokesmen rarely renowned for their diplomacy. Simply because the movement is burgeoning, we are in danger of sounding triumphalist or arrogant. At the same time we may exhibit signs of an intellectual inferiority complex as we are confronted with the sophistication of the theological and philosophical edifices that preceded our own call to academic pursuits.

However, even our own Pentecostal milieu may be as unwelcoming of Pentecostal theology. Sometimes when we recognize that we are truly alien in the wider circles of Christian theology we may be tempted to

seek affirmation from the more vocal (and often less thoughtful) circle of the Pentecostal community. To acquiesce in this would be a tragedy, since it would imply losing our critical freedom to confront our own peers with the challenges of God, his Spirit and his word. A Pentecostal theology that seeks solely to mediate Pentecostalism to non-Pentecostals will be fruitless in addressing the many challenges and seductions to which the movement itself is continuously exposed. Therefore one may at times need to be as lonely within the movement as without.

At the same time a large portion of Pentecostal theology has been developed in the western milieu, where the movement is at best moribund and the challenges completely different to those found in what was known as the "mission field." Both north and south are producing young Pentecostal theologians in large quantities, and unless both produce individuals of outstanding courage and conviction, the process of developing a viable Pentecostal theology that will be a spur to the dynamic of the movement may become irrevocably divided, perhaps even lost. To provide a viable framework of understanding within which Pentecostal ministry can be promoted, Pentecostal disciples trained, and Pentecostal research meaningfully and adequately carried out, calls for men and women who have the courage to be different. They may often have to operate alone and unheard, while those who succumb to the seductions of partisanship for one of the many "causes" in the realm of theology may be seen to flourish. Such loneliness often came upon the prophets and the apostles, indeed upon the Carpenter himself. Eichrodt sums up this challenge in terms of the classical prophets of Israel:

> …the prophets had no strong organizational backing, nor were they armed with solid political power to give emphasis to their words. If they were to make themselves heard in this situation they needed a spiritual power and inner conviction which would raise the individual above the mass, and give him complete independence. Here among the prophets we meet men who…are capable of moving through life in majestic solitude.… It is their strongly marked individuality, indeed, which makes them for us the most clearly defined personalities of ancient Israel, and gives all their preaching the stamp of genuineness and inimitable originality. Even where traditional patterns and systems of concepts are employed, everything is molten in the fire of a personal experience of God, and emerges freshly minted.… It is in their own submission to the existential demands of God that they are made free from all human ties.[15]

[15] Eichrodt, *Old Testament Theology*, vol. 1, pp. 342-43.

If Pentecostal theology is to achieve a truly prophetic impact, then Pentecostal theologians will have to be as involved in Pentecostal ministry as they are in scholarship. I find numerous examples of such scholars in Asia and Africa—men and women who have felt the call to Academe, but have not forsaken their commitment to powerful and radical Pentecostal ministry. In keeping current in both worlds perhaps we may avoid the pitfalls of tailoring our theological viewpoints and findings so as to gain recognition among the theological establishment. We may keep our hearts and minds singly devoted to pleasing the Master who radically confronted and changed us, so that we might serve his people, promote his witness and do everything we can to promote and maintain the powerful dynamic of the Pentecostal movement.

5. Conclusion

A cloud of witnesses who were prepared to challenge the prevailing consensus of their own age surrounds us. Our Master reminds us that the way to which he called is narrow "and few there are that find it." The apostle to the gentiles challenges us to be transformed rather than be conformed to this age. None of this biblical witness is intended to drive us to anti-social isolationism, or to the life of an intellectual world-avoiding hermit. The corresponding demands of Christian agape love do not allow us such a self-centred, perhaps self-pitying, luxury.

However, as Pentecostal theologians we are more likely to make a difference if we are different, to be relevant if we operate critically of every consensus rather than be co-opted in the consensus itself. However, our relevance will lie, as it did for Stephen, in the power and the wisdom of the Spirit in which we speak, research and minister.

[*AJPS* 5:1 (2002), pp. 87-106]

THE NATURE OF CONTINUITY AND DISCONTINUITY OF GHANAIAN PENTECOSTAL CONCEPT OF SALVATION IN AFRICAN COSMOLOGY[1]

Emmanuel Kingsley Larbi

1. Introduction

Though the mainline historic churches have been operating in Ghana since the beginning of the nineteenth century, it was only at the beginning of the twentieth century that Evangelical Pentecostalism began to register its presence. In spite of this late arrival, it is now by far the most important religious trend in Ghana today. The Pentecostals form the bulk of the Christian population of 62% in Ghana. It is also noteworthy that the largest Protestant church in the country is a Pentecostal denomination: the Church of Pentecost. Why has the growth of the Pentecostal churches outstripped the mainline denominations, which have been operating in the country for over two hundred years? This article attempts to address this and other related issues.

From the human perspective, the single significant factor that has given rise to a boom in Pentecostal activities in Ghana is that Pentecostalism has found a fertile ground in the all-pervasive primal religious traditions, especially in its cosmology and in its concept of salvation.

Field has underscored the irrepressible nature of the ideas underpinning the primal religion, when she said that:

> Though it is not difficult by warfare, foreign administration, modern industry and other means, to smash up an ancient religious organisation, the ideas which sustained it are not easily destroyed. They

[1] An earlier version of this study was presented at the Theological Symposium on Non-Western Pentecostalism, Anaheim, CA, USA in May 2001. The present version has been substantially revised.

> are only disbanded, vagrant and unattached. But given sufficient sense of need, they will mobilise again.[2]

Field's observation, among other things, underscores the resilient nature of the traditional religious ideas of the people which the European colonizers and the Christianization agencies encountered. These ideas have continued to influence the people's perception and understanding of salvation.

The Akan people of Ghana form the largest ethnic group in the country. The core of the religious ideas of the Akan people could be equally applicable to the various ethnic groups in Ghana, and indeed the fundamentals of the traditional African perception of reality as a whole. I will therefore use their traditional religious ideas as a springboard in our attempt to examine the primal understanding of salvation of the people of Ghana.[3]

2. The Akan Search for Salvation

2.1 The Roots of Primal Conception of Salvation

The primal cosmology and the primal view of life are the main factors here. The primal cosmology postulates external hostile agencies more powerful than humans. A person sees him/herself as constantly exposed to the influences of evil supernaturalism. In the terrestrial realm are found men and women who manipulate the spirit force in the celestial realm for evil purposes. The negative perception is further deepened by the activities of religious specialists. The concept of power thus reigns supreme in this spirit-filled universe. Every event here on earth is therefore traceable to a supernatural power in the spirit realm. From the same source, therefore, recourse is made for the ultimate succor of humanity.

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[2] Margaret J. Field, "Some Shrines of the Gold Coast and Their Significance," *Africa* 13:2 (April 1940), pp. 138-49 (138).

[3] The inhabitants of Akim, Akwamu, Akuapem, Assin, Ashanti, Denkyira and Wassaw belong to the Akan group, speaking the Twi language. S. G. Williamson, *Akan Religion and the Christian Faith* (Accra: Ghana Universities Press, 1965), p. x points out that "the Fante people, and such tribes as the Brongs of north Ashanti are also, however, from the point of view of language and tribal custom, political organisation and religious beliefs, Akans."

It is from this background that salvation is defined and experienced. In the religious encounter between Pentecostalism and Akan religion, this perception of reality becomes integral in the proclamation of the gospel. For Pentecostals (including the trained scientist and the illiterate peasant), these forces are real. They are not just the figments of the imaginations of the ignorant. The cosmic struggle is accepted as real because the Bible, they argue, presents the phenomenon as real, not just because the traditional culture admits this to be so.

2.2 The Akan Worldview

What is the Akan primal understanding of the nature of the universe and what do they consider to be the highest good of humans, that is, salvation? How is salvation perceived and appropriated? What is the religious and linguistic meaning of salvation in the traditional Akan worldview? We will attempt to address these questions in the following section.

Central to the Akan religious ideas is the belief in the multiplicity of spirits in the universe. The Akan cosmos, like that of other African peoples, is divided into "two inter-penetrating and inseparable, yet distinguishable, parts,"[4] namely, the world of spirits and the world of human. The Akan understanding of the spirit world conveniently falls within Parrinder's fourfold classification of categories within West African religions, namely, the Supreme God, chief divinities or gods, ancestors, and charms or amulets.[5] The Supreme Being is variously referred to as *Onyankopon*, *Onyame* (also spelled, *Nyame*), or *Odomankoma*.[6] *Onyame* implies the basic idea of deity as understood in Christian theology. *Onyankopon* denotes the supremacy of God, the One Greater *Nyame*. *Odomankoma*, denotes the infiniteness of *Nyame*. Next to *Onyame* is *Asase Yaa*, the earth goddess, who is responsible for fertility. *Asase Yaa*, in some sense, is also the "custodian of morality and social decorum, the traditional ethical code."[7] In addition to *Asase Yaa*,

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[4] Cyrill C. Okorocha, *The Meaning of Religious Conversion in Africa* (Aldershot: Avebury, 1987), p. 52.

[5] E. G. Parrinder, *West African Religion* (London: Epworth, 1961), p. 12.

[6] The Akan designate the Supreme Being by three distinctive names, *Onyame* (also often called *Nyame*), *Onyankopon* (this like the *Nyame*, has other ways of spelling or pronouncing), and *Odomankoma*. See J. B. Danquah, *The Akan Doctrine of God* (London: White Friars, 1968), pp. 30-31, 43.

[7] Okorocha, *The Meaning of Religious Conversion*, p. 52.

there is a host of divinities or gods (*abosom*), capricious spirit entities, believed to be the children of God. These nature spirits are of three categories: state gods, family or clan gods, and gods of the medicine man. Some of the most famous gods are associated with lakes, rivers, rocks, mountains and forests. The continued featuring of a particular god (*obosom*) in the religious pantheon of the Akan largely depends upon the ability of that *obosom* to function to the satisfaction of supplicants. The Akan esteem the Supreme Being and the ancestors far above the *abosom* (gods) and amulets. Attitudes to the latter depend upon their success, and vary from healthy respect to sneering contempt and rejection.

The Akan never confuse the identity of *Onyame* and the identity of the *abosom*. The *abosom* can be discarded, whereas *Onyame* cannot. Johannes Christaller, who devoted a considerable amount of effort to study the Akan language, had to conclude that the Akan, presumed by outsiders to be polytheists, were "to a great extent rather monotheist [since] they apply the term for God only to one Supreme Being."[8] Patrick Ryan makes the same important observation in his article on the distinction of God from gods by the Yoruba and the Akan. He concluded that before the advent of the European missionaries, the Akan and Yoruba held to the absolute uniqueness of the Supreme God. He writes:

> Finally, it should be noted, in the process of dismantling the category of "God and the gods" in West Africa, that both the Yoruba and Akan populations of West Africa are better equipped linguistically than are Semites, Greeks, Romans and their inheritors to press the absolute uniqueness of God. There is no need for Olodumare (Olorun) or Onyame (Onyankopon) to arise above the "other gods," as Psalm 82 bids Him. It would seem, in fact, that even before Muslims and Christians arrived in the West African forest zone...speakers of Yoruba and Akan were assured of supremacy of the One Whom a modern theologian calls "the incomprehensible term of human transcendence.[9]

The ancestral cult is one of the strongholds within the religious universe of the Akan. This has been made possible because of the Akan understanding of humans and the community. Since survival of humans and their community is dependent upon the help given by the ancestors

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[8] Christaller, *A Dictionary of the Asante and Fante Language* (1881), pp. 342-43, quoted by Kwame Bediako, *Theology and Identity* (Oxford: Regnum Press, 1992), pp. 291-92.

[9] Patrick J. Ryan, "'Arise, O God!' The Problem of 'Gods' in West Africa," *Journal of Religion in Africa* 11:3 (1980), pp.161-171 (169).

and the divinities, how humans relate to the spirit force is crucial to their well-being.

The idea of the cosmic struggle is strong in the Akan understanding of the nature of the universe. For one to be able to fulfill his or her aspirations in life requires the "balance of power" in favor of the supplicant. This "tilting of cosmic power" for one's own benefit or for the benefit of his or her community is what I have referred to as "maintaining the cosmological balance."

2.3 Maintaining the Cosmological Balance

Within the world of humans are found men and women who manipulate the spirit force for evil purposes. These are the *akaberekyerefo* and *adutofo* (charmers, enchanters and sorcerers) and *abayifo* (witches). The activities of these forces are directed against humankind. It is within this context that charms and amulets play their role. The forces of evil are always at work against human beings in order to prevent them from enjoying abundant life, or fulfilling their *nkrabea* (destiny). The central focus of the religious exercises of these religious specialists is therefore the harnessing of power inherent in the spirit force for their own advantage. To the Akan, just like other African peoples, whatever happens to the human being has a religious interpretation. To them, behind the physical is the spiritual; behind the seen is the unseen. From the spiritual source, therefore, lies the ultimate succor.

It is the foregoing picture that colors the perception and appropriation of salvation by the Akan. Herein lies the ultimate goal of their religious pursuits.

2.4 The Akan Primal Religion and the Search for Salvation

As one critically examines the prayers of the Akan in the traditional religious setting, he or she cannot help but come to the conclusion that the overriding concern is the enjoyment of *nkwa* (life). This is not life in abstraction but rather life in its concrete and fullest manifestations. It means the enjoyment of long life, vitality, vigor and health; it means life of happiness and felicity.[10] *Nkwa* also includes the enjoyment of *ahonyade* (possessions, prosperity), that is, wealth, riches and

[10] J. G. Christaller, *Dictionary of the Asante and Fante Language Called Tshi (Twi) Based on Akuapem Dialects*, 2nd ed. (Basel: Evangelical Missionary Society, 1933), p. 277.

substance,[11] including children. *Nkwa* also embodies *asomdwei*, that is, a life of peace and tranquility, and life free from disturbance.[12]

The religious people are well aware that as much as they work hard to experience *nkwa* in its full manifestations, there comes an overwhelming realization of the fact that there are powerful forces fighting against individuals and their community. Abundant life can only become available to them through the mediation of the spirit beings—divinities and the ancestors. Unto these beings, therefore, the supplicant constantly lifts up their eyes in an expectation of divine aid. The following sample of a traditional prayer, normally said by the head of family during important festivals, is illustrative of this motif.

> Almighty God here is drink; Earth god here is drink; Great ancestors come and have a drink.... We are not calling you because of some evil tidings. The year has come again and you did not allow any evil to befall us. We are offering you drink; beseeching that the coming year will be prosperous. Don't allow any evil to come near our habitation. Bless us with rain, food, children, health and prosperity.[13]

Rattray gives us another example from the prayers of an Ashanti king at an annual festival:

> The edges of the years have met, I pray for life.
> May the nation prosper.
> May the women bear children.
> May the hunters kill meat.
> We who dig for gold, let us get gold to dig, and grant that I get some for the upkeep of my kingship.[14]

These prayers, like many other prayers found among the various ethnic groups of Ghana, illustrate the concerns of the Akan and the need for vital power which subsists in the Supreme Being and the non-human spirit entities.

Beckmann, commenting on the Ashanti king's prayer cited above, states:

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[11] Christaller, *Dictionary of the Asante and Fante Language* (1933), p. 186.

[12] Christaller, *Dictionary of the Asante and Fante Language* (1933), p. 468.

[13] My personal observation.

[14] R. Sutherland Rattray, *Religion and Art in Ashanti* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1927), p. 138.

> There was no self-abnegation in the king's prayer. He called for power, life, prosperity, fertility, success, and wealth. The vitality of West African religion may have been one reason why Afro-American slaves were able to survive capture, brutal transport to the Americas, slavery—and still keep dancing.[15]

The ultimate end of human existence is the enjoyment of multifaceted *nkwa*. But it is also clear from one's experience that, if left to the individual alone, it will only remain an illusory dream for the obvious fact that there are some forces, fighting hard to remove *nkwa* from one's reach.

The uncertainties and anxieties one faces range from those which originate from the day to day problems of life to those which are born of the fear of evil spirits and malicious persons, such as witches and sorcerers. To maintain and reactivate the protective presence of the benevolent divine force, the individuals and their community must of necessity maintain the cosmological balance through protective and preventive rites. These rites are designed to cleanse the tribe, the clan, the family and the individual, and to secure the much-needed protection from the spirit force. Protective rites immunize potential victims from *abayifo* (witches), *akaberekyerefo* and *asumantufo* (sorcerers, charmers and bad medicine men) and evil spirits on the one hand; and, on the other, purificatory rites remove the danger-radiating pollution, which would ordinarily destroy the personhood of the individual concerned, and thus prevent him or her from fully participating in *nkwa*. The ancestral rites seem to fulfill both protective and purificatory categories. The ancestors are both appeased in case they are offended, and petitioned to support as well as protect their descendants.

The societal equilibrium is thus maintained and preserved through the purificatory and protective rites and the observance of certain prescribed taboos. Violations of these demands may cause serious consequences to the individual, his or her family or an entire community. The individual realizes that, in spite of the constant efforts one makes in order to bring meaning into their life, things do go wrong. When this happens, those involved go to *abisa* (consultation with the shrine priest). The intention is to contact the spirit force in the spirit realm to find out what might have caused the problem. It is through the *abisa*[16] that one is

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[15] D. M. Beckmann, *Eden Revival* (London: Concordia, 1975), p. 17.

[16] *Abisa* is a religious term, implying "asking" or obtaining or seeking information on a particular issue, from the diviner, medicine man, or traditional

able to remove what would likely prevent the person from enjoying *nkwa*, which embodies *ahonya* (wealth) and *asomdwei* (peace and tranquility). It is to the religious specialist, the diviner, that one goes for *abisa*. One needs to know the forces behind the problems or the factors that might have occasioned his or her woes. This information is relevant to the individual in order to be able to arrest the situation. The information one obtains from the diviner may require that he or she performs some protective rites to secure protection against one's enemies. It may also require that some purificatory rites be performed in order to appease the ancestors or the divinities for some particular reason.

Some of these rites may be very elaborate and expensive. These expensive cases particularly involve matters that have been taken to the court of the gods in seeking for vengeance or vindication. The more powerful the particular deities are, the more expensive and elaborate the processes for disentanglement. In spite of the costs, victims do everything possible to raise the required money for it. If, for one reason or the other, one fails to do this, the "curse," it is believed, will still be hanging over the upcoming generations of the family. This ancestral yoke will remain in the family until a relative eventually removes it. It is only then that *nkwa* could become theirs.

2.5 The Akan Terms for Salvation

The main Twi term for salvation is *nkwagye*. It is made up of two words: *nkwa* and *gye*. *Nkwa*, as we indicated above, means vital life, vitality, vigor, health, happiness and felicity. In short, *nkwa* means abundant life, that is, "life in all its fullness." *Gye* has several meanings.[17] But when used in the salvific sense, it means "to rescue," "to retake," "to recapture," "to redeem," "to ransom," "to buy out of servitude or penalty"; it also means "to release," "to free," "to deliver," "to liberate," and "to save." It could also mean "to lead," "to conduct," "to guide," "to take along with," "to protect," "to defend," or "to preserve."[18] The term *nkwa-gye*, therefore, is pregnant with rich meaning. Among other things, it means the "liberation or preservation of abundant life" or the "saving of abundant life." It is the liberation and preservation of life and all that goes with it.

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priests. "Go to *abisa*," therefore, means consulting the diviner in order to obtain information on a particular issue(s).

[17] Chistaller, *Dictionary of the Asante and Fante Language* (1933), p. 156.

[18] Chistaller, *Dictionary of the Asante and Fante Language* (1933), p. 156.

The *nkwagyefo* (the one who saves), therefore, is the one who saves and preserves one's life. The related terms are synonymous nouns *agyenkwa* and *ogyefo*. They mean the "rescuer," "savior," "redeemer" and "deliverer." Whether used in reference to a deity or to a human being, it conveys the same meaning of deliverance. For example, in a situation where the timely intervention of a person prevented a catastrophe or something unfavorable from happening, that person could be said to have become *ogyefo* or *agyenkwa* in that particular instance.

The term *agyenkwa* and its cognates, therefore, convey concrete realities. The *agyenkwa* is a powerful one, otherwise he cannot rescue and protect one from the powerful malevolent spirit beings such as the *abayifo, akaberekyerefo, adutofo* and the *awudifo* (wicked ones). He saves from danger and all perilous conditions. The *agyenkwa* places one in the "realm of the protected ones" and offers *banbo* (security). The *agyenkwa* rescues one out from situations considered inimical, injurious, or life threatening. The *agyenkwa* saves, protects and preserves life.

The savior rescues both from danger and continues to protect the "rescued one" from danger, and makes it possible for one to experience *nkwa*, that is, life in all its fullness, which embodies *ahonyade* and *asomdwei*. It is in this vein that Mercy Oduyoye could state:

> The Agyenkwa means the one who rescues, who holds your life in safety, takes you out of a life-denying situation and places you in a life affirming one. The Rescuer plucks you from a dehumanising ambience and places you in a position where you can grow toward authentic humanity. The Agyenkwa gives you back your life in all its fullness.[19]

In the foregoing considerations of the Akan concept of salvation, I have stated that salvation has to do with concrete realities, things one can identify within the day-to-day life. It has to do with physical and immediate dangers that militate against individual or communal survival and enjoyment of *nkwa*. It embodies *ahonyade* (good health, general prosperity and safety and security); it also embodies *asomdwei* (the state of being which radiates peace and tranquility). This is the general context within which salvation is perceived and appropriated. It is this worldview that Christianity encountered.

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[19] Mercy Oduyoye, *Hearing and Knowing* (Maryknoll: Orbis, 1986), p. 98.

3. Pentecostal Response

3.1 Pentecostal Understanding of Salvation

What then is the understanding of the concept of salvation in the religious consciousness of Pentecostals? It may be stated that though when the Pentecostals talk of "salvation," they are talking primarily in terms of the atonement, forgiveness of sin and reconciliation with God. Yet by their practices, they are reaching out to things that go beyond the "born again" experience, to an experience that permeates their life here and now life and promises them of a better tomorrow in the hereafter.[20] Evidence available indicates that suppliants attend Pentecostal prayer camps primarily in search of salvation that relate to the here and now. Supplicants' concerns include the need for healing; financial and economic problems; problems related to marriages, children, employment and family needs. Some go there because of lawsuits; others go there because they are struggling with drunkenness and they want to overcome it. Some go there because of educational issues; they go there because of accommodation needs: a place to lay their heads. Some go there because of the problem of bad or frightful dreams; some have problems with demonic and witchcraft attacks. Others go there because of social expectations, particularly the need to provide for their families. But this is not all. Some supplicants, in addition to their material needs, seek "spiritual upliftment." This category of suppliants seeks prayer so that they can move beyond the experience of nominal Christianity to a devoted and committed Christian life.

These are the day-to-day needs of real people, men and women, old and young, rich and poor, literate and illiterate. When these people pray or ask for prayers, they are reaching out to God, in search of "salvation." Through these Pentecostal churches and their healing centers many claim to have received salvation to otherwise hopeless situations. For these

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[20] A study of the contents of prayers at Pentecostal prayer sessions amply demonstrate this. See E. K. Larbi, "The Development of Ghanaian Pentecostalism: A Study in the Appropriation of the Christian Gospel in Twentieth Century Ghana Setting with Special Reference to the Christ Apostolic Church, the Church of Pentecost and the International Central Gospel Church" (Ph.D. thesis, University of Edinburgh, 1995). Though Owusu Tabiri, the foremost healing evangelist in contemporary Ghana, spent most of his time praying for the physical needs of supplicants, the issue of "accepting Christ as Lord and personal Saviour" appears to be his key starting point, since it is believed that this is the door to God's blessings.

people, the concept of salvation cannot be divorced from their existential needs. The "Savior" in this sense, is not only the one that saves them from the curse and the blight of sin (though this is their starting point), he is also the one who supremely helps them in their day-to-day existential needs.

Since it appears that the overriding concern of majority of suppliants is mainly for things related to the existential here and now, one may be tempted to conclude that African Christians are not conscious of redemption from sin. Valid as this position may be in certain segments of African Christianity, it does not fully account for the African experience, or at least the evidence I have with the Church of Pentecost (COP), the International Central Gospel Church (ICGC), and the prayer groups I studied in Ghana. It may be said that because of the African's holistic orientation to reality, and more so because of economic, social and political upheavals that perennially plague the continent of Africa, material concerns play a very important role in his religious consciousness, and in African perceptions of the role of the "savior" in this regard. However, to assert that Africans are not conscious of redemption from sin may seem rather incongruous. Mbiti's observation may be relevant for us here:

> [W]hile some African Christians, including many in the independent churches, put great emphasis on the physical saving acts of Jesus, such as those recorded in the gospels, we must not limit the African understanding to the physical level of life. There are many who also put great emphasis on the Cross of Jesus and its saving grace. Perhaps the best example of this is the East African Revival Movement.... Nobody can deny that through the channels of the Revival Movement, people are appropriating biblical salvation, which makes sense to their lives and satisfies their yearnings. The concentration here is more on Jesus and his Cross, and less on his other activities prior to the Cross. The revival also takes up the life of the believer after death, so that it holds firmly that the Christian goes immediately to be with the Lord in heaven.[21]

The interviews we conducted and the questionnaires we administered to several church members and church leaders within the COP, ICGC and others suggested that the biblical concept of the original sin is very clear among the classic Pentecostals and also among those

[21] John S. Mbiti, *Bible and Theology in African Christianity* (Nairobi: Oxford University Press, 1986), pp. 166, 168.

neo-Pentecostal leaders who have their roots in classic Pentecostalism, or the Scripture Union. When we asked our respondents the question: What is your understanding of terms like "Jesus saves," "there is salvation in Jesus," or "you need salvation," almost all of them suggested as the first point the issue of original sin, the depravity of the human nature, and reconciliation that comes through the atonement of Jesus Christ. The material and physical aspects of "salvation" were most invariably suggested as secondary. In fact, Bishop Owusu Tabiri (one of the contemporary healing evangelists in Ghana), for instance, in spite of his concern with the health and the economic and social well being of his suppliants, necessarily anchors the suppliants in the doctrine of sin and the atonement. This may be due to the fact that Owusu Tabiri came from classic Pentecostalism.

My investigations revealed that some, when they heard the gospel preached to them, understood the issue of original sin and the need for forgiveness and reconciliation with God. However, because of their life experiences, what really attracted them to join the church was the concrete and material help that Jesus provides in the here and now. It was later on that they fully appreciated and embraced teachings on the original sin and the atonement.

Mbiti's observation is relevant for us here:

> Often in the New Testament, individuals are physically saved first by Jesus and through the acts of the apostles. Only later does the spiritual dimension of their salvation surface and grow. But this need not be the order of sequence since God's grace is not confined to one method, and the experience of Paul on the road to Damascus is a clear illustration of the reversal of this sequence. Indeed many African Christians came to the Christian message of salvation, which speaks first about spiritual matters and only later, or not at all, about physical welfare in their lives.... What is important here is to consider salvation in holistic terms…. Only when one is expressed at the expense of the other, a distortion of biblical salvation ensues and one part of man is virtually excluded and starved out.[22]

3.2 The Roots of Pentecostal Concept of Salvation

The two main sources of influence for the Pentecostals' concept of salvation are the Bible and the primal worldview. The cornerstone of Pentecostal theological self-understanding is the Bible. Pentecostals

[22] Mbiti, *Bible and Theology*, pp. 158, 159.

believe the Bible to be God's word and therefore inerrant. "The Bible is infallible in its declarations, final in its authority, all sufficient in its provisions and comprehensive in its sufficiency."[23] The Pentecostals believe "the whole Bible, both Old and New Testaments, is the pure word that cannot be changed, added to, or taken away from, without terrific consequences."[24] Though the Pentecostals believe that the word of God was first given in particular historical contexts, they are resolute in insisting on its eternal relevance. Old Testament and New Testament promises to the Jews and the early Christians for their material well being (e.g., Deut 28:1-15; 30:9-10); Malachi 3:8ff; and Luke 6:38; 3 John 2; Mark 16) are thus literally appropriated by Pentecostals. For them, the gap between the original receptors of the divine self-disclosure and contemporary readers is bridged through the agency of the Holy Spirit, the supreme biblical teacher.[25]

The Pentecostal presupposition of biblical infallibility and biblical literalism finds its logical conclusion in what may be considered as a dualistic world view: a spiritual universe in which the devil and his fallen angels are constantly at enmity with God and his holy angels. Human beings are grouped into two in this cosmic arena: those who belong to God and those who belong to the devil. Pentecostals do not see any "demilitarized zone." You either belong to the "kingdom of light" or the "kingdom of darkness."

Spirit-filled believers, thus, are God's army in the terrestrial realm. The redemption of the rest of humankind is entrusted into their hands. They are to take the message to the unsaved, set the captives free, cast out demons from their human tenements, take dominion over the principalities, authorities and powers, heal the sick and raise the dead. Signs and wonders should necessarily follow the preaching of the gospel, thus confirming the veracity of the Bible. The signs that followed the early disciples are believed to be as valid now as then. Signs and wonders must of necessity follow believers today as they obediently testify to Christ. It is in this encounter that the gifts of the Holy Spirit become more significant.

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[23] *Ministers' Manual* of Church of Pentecost (Accra, n.d.), p. 4.

[24] *Constitution* of Christ Apostolic Church (Accra, 1989), p. 6.

[25] The belief in the supernatural aid given by the Holy Spirit is seen as sufficient. Human effort alone in interpreting the text is thus discounted by some. It was this understanding that led some members of the group to discount Bible schools and seminaries.

For Pentecostals, the authority of the word of God does not so much rest in its historicity as in its source, though the former nonetheless is considered important. The word of God is authoritative, or powerful not because of its historical validity, but because it is the very words of the most powerful deity, the God among gods, and Lord among lords. It is because God is "all-powerful," and the "God of miracles," that the Pentecostals believe his word has potential power, for it carries divine authority. Their belief is thus in consonance with the affirmation that:

> The Bible is not simply an historical book about the people of Israel; through a re-reading of this scripture in the social context of our struggle for our humanity, God speaks to us in the midst of our troublesome situation. This divine Word is not an abstract proposition but an event in our lives, empowering us to continue in the fight for our full humanity.[26]

4. Concluding Thoughts

4.1 Akan Worldview and Christianity

In S. G. Williamson's comparative study of Christianity and Akan religion, he argued that the church established by the western missionaries made some considerable gains both in propagating the Christian religion and in acting as a social and cultural force. Yet it was not able to speak directly to the people in religiously convincing terms. It, therefore, failed to meet the spiritual need at the level at which the Akan experiences it. He argues that the western mission-related church, by and large, is still an alien institution. It failed to root itself in the life and institutions of the Akan people in that:

> The Christian church denominationally implanted from the west, has substantially retained its original forms and expressed itself in western modes. Missionaries clearly set out to establish, not an Akan Church, but the Church they represented in the homeland. The polity and organisation, the liturgies and devotional expressions, the discipline and instruction, the total outlook derives directly from the parent Missionary Societies and the Churches supporting them. The

[26] From the Final Communiqué, "Pan African Conference of Third World Theologies, December 17-23, 1977, Accra, Ghana," in *African Theology en Route*, eds. Kofi Appiah-Kubi and Sergio Torres (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1979), pp. 189-95 (192-93).

> Christianity of the Akan area proves to be the denominational Christianity of the west.[27]

Williamson continues that:

> [B]y the assault of the missionary enterprise on traditional beliefs and practices, and by the nature and method of its approach, the implanted Christian faith denied the Akan outlook in fierce and abrupt terms, and thus failed to meet the Akan in his personally experienced religious need. The Akan became a Christian by cleaving to the new order introduced by the missionary rather than by working out his salvation within the traditional religious milieu.[28]

Williamson's critique, like that of many other writers, raises several significant issues. The heart of it all is the issue of the relationship between Christianity and culture. At the heart of every culture lies the worldview: how people perceive, understand and interpret reality. Every culture has within its religious system certain practices directed towards the achievement of what is considered the highest good.

The missionaries came from a continent with a history of slave trade and colonial imperial expansion and domination. Christianity, dubbed the "white man's religion," was associated with a superior culture. The term "Christian" became synonymous with civilization and development. The agents of the proselytization process were conscious at that time of its developing technology and of its cultural achievements. Baeta rightly observes that:

> The fact that the evangelists and their hearers belonged to such glaringly racial types; the fact that their cultural backgrounds were so different; the unfortunate associations of the colour black in European superstition; the Slave Trade, with Europeans being always owners and Africans always the owned…the fact that the majority of missionaries to our parts were connected with the movement known as Pietism; these and such-like factors determined the policy, which was adopted by all missions practically without exception, of non-amalgamation with, and aloofness from African culture.[29]

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[27] S. G. Williamson, *Akan Religion and the Christian Faith*, ed., Kwesi Dickson (Accra: Ghana Universities Press, 1965), p. 165.

[28] Williamson, *Akan Religion and the Christian Faith*, pp. 170-71.

[29] See Noel Smith, *The Presbyterian Church of Ghana 1835-1960* (Accra: Ghana Universities Press, 1966), p. 87.

The western mission agencies coming from post-enlightenment and rationalistic background approached the missionary task from this ideological frame of mind. For many in the receptor culture, Christianity was not accepted for its religious value. Rather, it was seen as:

> … a religion which offered material blessings. To learn to read, to learn something of the ability of the European to control his environment and to evolve a superior material culture, factors, which to the African were bound with the white man's worship of Christ, operated as strong motives for announcing oneself as a baptismal candidate.[30]

The attitude of the missionaries and their African disciples towards the Akan primal worldview and the Akan culture was one of negation, a denial of the validity of supernatural powers. For example, the Gold Coast Christian Council pamphlet on witchcraft postulated a position that the phenomenon of witchcraft was not a reality but a psychological delusion. The Council also relegated Tigare cult to the realm of trickery.[31]

The denial of the existence of the spirit-force (witches, sorcerers, fetishes, magic, charms and the local deities) in the missionary enterprise radically undermined the work of the missions. In the process, they ended up producing "two-world" Christians with double allegiance, as Asamoah observes:

> Anybody who knows African Christians intimately will know that no amount of denial on the part of the Church will expel belief in supernatural powers from the minds of the Christian, and he becomes a hypocrite who in official church circles pretends to give the impression that he does not believe in these things, while in his own private life he resorts to practices which are the results of such beliefs.[32]

Recognition of the malevolent spirit-entities, while at the same time proclaiming the supremacy of the all-powerful benevolent Christ, might have produced Christians of dual allegiance. While accepting the existence of several evil forces and the effects of their activities on the well-being of a human being, these Christians would set the whole

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[30] Noel Smith, *Presbyterian Church of Ghana,* p. 101.

[31] E. A. Asamoah, "The Christian Church and African Heritage," *International Review of Mission* 175, XLIV (July 1955), pp. 292-301 (297).

[32] Asamoah, "The Christian Church and African Heritage," p. 297.

cosmic struggle in the context of the supremacy of Christ. This approach would have affected the worldview of the Akan "from the center," thereby influencing his entire religious outlook.

Religion, by its nature and purpose, should be holistic: addressing the total needs of the total person: spiritual, physical and emotional, providing authentic answers for the person's everyday quests, fears and anxieties. If a particular religious system fails to address what the people feel that their whole existence and survival hinge on, that system is bound to be jettisoned when the people are confronted with the real issues of life. For example we read, as far back as 1632, that the European priest at Elmina lamented that:

> Edina [Elmina] had its own pagan priest to whom the people gave full confidence...he was even consulted by many so-called Christians, in secret of course...placing more confidence in him than in their Catholic priests.[33]

> The situation described above did not change during subsequent centuries. For example, we are told that Tigare caused "serious headaches to the Churches—often more than half of the congregation following the new cult.[34]

4.2 Pentecostal Message among Akans

In the Pentecostal proclamation, therefore Jesus is placed at the center of the cosmic struggle. The Son of God is presented as the *Osahene* ("Field Marshal") who "has disarmed principalities, and powers," and has "made public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross" (Col 2:15). The Champion of the cosmos has enabled the redeemed to be "seated with Him in the heavenly places far above the principalities, authorities and powers" (Eph 2:6).

The success of the Pentecostals, therefore, lies in their ability to place the traditional understanding of the cosmic struggle in the realm of Christian belief. The stand taken by the Pentecostals is thus the antithesis of the stand, which was taken by the emissaries of the historic churches who assumed the position that these forces were non-existent, much to the dismay of the majority of their followers. Although Pentecostals "have an uncompromising attitude towards traditional religion, which

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[33] H. W. Debrunner, *A History of Christianity in Ghana* (Accra: Waterville, 1967), p. 32.

[34] Debrunner, *A History of Christianity in Ghana*, p. 32.

they depict as...diabolical,"[35] yet the traditional concept of salvation appears to have been a *praeparatio evangelica* to the Pentecostal conception of salvation. Pentecostals have taken the issue of material prosperity to the realm of divine blessings. The traditional African understanding of salvation and the biblical motif about God's desire to intervene to rescue people in desperation, has continued to form much of the background of the way Pentecostals in particular and African Christians in general, perceive, appropriate and experience the concept of "salvation." As the history of the church in Ghana has well illustrated, the need for healing, security and economic well-being continue to occupy the minds of African Christians. For them this is part and parcel of what they consider as salvation. Unless these are fully addressed, church members will inevitably seek succor from other realms. These sources, however, may not necessarily be Christian.

4.3 Continuity and Discontinuity between Pentecostal and the Primal Understanding of Salvation

My consideration of the issue of salvation in this paper has been based on my conviction that Pentecostalism, like every religion, is about salvation, no matter how this term is understood in various religious communities. My findings support the thesis that in the primal religion the followers are reaching out to a form of salvation that relates to the existential here and now. Their concept of salvation embodies the enjoyment of life in its fullness. The concept of salvation in the primal world is single-faceted, relating solely to the here and now. There is no concept of heaven tomorrow.

With regard to the Pentecostals, I have indicated that they have a dual faceted conception of salvation, incorporating "this-worldliness" and "other-worldliness." In spite of this dual concept of salvation, the salvation of soul plays a central role in their scheme of salvation. The experience of "soul salvation" not only prepares the "redeemed ones" for the "celestial city" in the hereafter, but also, it is perceived as the key to abundant life or salvation today.

The Pentecostals' concept of salvation (both classical and neo-Pentecostal) today embodies the enjoyment of prosperity, which includes wealth, health and fertility. Herein lies the continuity between the primal concept of salvation and that of the Pentecostals. Though the neo-

[35] Birgit Meyer, "'Delivered from the Powers of Darkness': Confessed of Satanic Riches in Christian Ghana," *Africa* 65:2 (1995), pp. 236-55 (237).

Pentecostal movement is largely an offshoot of classic Pentecostalism, in spite of differing emphases, there is no essential difference between the two groups' conception of salvation, whether in the here and now or in the hereafter. It must, however, be noted that, though the primal understanding of salvation today is the same as the Pentecostals' conception of salvation, the way salvation is sought in the two realms is different. In the primal world salvation is sought through traditional forms of supernatural succor, which include the divinities, the mediatorial role of the ancestors, and the use of charms and amulets. But the Pentecostals are uncompromisingly hostile to these traditional forms of succor. They look to the Christian God as the only and ultimate supernatural succor. What cannot be found through the traditional forms of supernatural succor is now available to them in Christ. By virtue of the superior power of Christ in salvific encounters, he is perceived as the matchless and incomparable one. He is thus considered as superior to the traditional pantheon: the local divinities, the ancestral cult, witches, charms and amulets, and all other forms of magical power. He is not one among many; rather, he is the one above all. He is thus the central focus of the Pentecostal spirituality, not the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit, among other things is perceived as the enabler. Through him the saints are able to fully fulfill their witness to Christ both in word and in deed. The Holy Spirit is thus not the central focus of Ghanaian Pentecostal spirituality. At least among the classic Pentecostals, and those groups whose leaders had their upbringing within the context of classic Pentecostalism, and the Scripture Union. The evidence may be different among some of the newly emerged fringe groups within the neo-Pentecostal movement.

Pentecostals see a sharp distinction between all forms of traditional spirit possession and "Holy Spirit possession." The former includes ancestral spirit possession and possession by the local divinities which is normally accompanied by the supernatural ability to speak a language that is not normally spoken by the possessed. These are categorically condemned as demonic power by the Pentecostals. Their concern for biblical truth causes them to reject outright all forms of association, which appear to be an antithetical to biblical orthodoxy. It is for this reason that the exorcising of the traditional past becomes central to the evangelistic activities of the deliverance apostles within neo-Pentecostalism.

The Pentecostals' critical and condemnatory stand against the spiritual churches and those within the historic churches, who patronize the secret societies like the Free Masons, is influenced by the sharp

distinction they draw between the Holy Spirit and "familiar spirits." They see the name and the blood of Christ and the word of God as efficient and sufficient for salvation. Hence they insist, "There shall be no burning of candles and incense for prayer; no special fire; no incantations, nor the use of special names of angels, except the name of the Lord Jesus Christ."[36]

The charge was made by Oosthuizen that "the most difficult theological problem in Africa is the confusion that exists with regard to the ancestral spirits and the Holy Spirit." [37] However, this could not be sustained in the Ghanaian situation in so far as the Pentecostals are concerned. Neither can they be charged that the "traditional beliefs about possession by an ancestral spirit...have been transferred to the idea of being filled with the Holy Spirit."[38]

The story of the incarnation is thus their good news of salvation from fear of evil spirits, from sickness and disease, from economic and social deprivation, from ignorance of who they are, and, above all, salvation from total and complete alienation from the Father of all flesh: God. In this understanding, they see themselves in an exalted position in Christ.[39]

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[36] *Constitution* of Christ Apostolic Church (1989), p. 58.

[37] G. C. Oosthuizen, *Post Christianity in Africa* (London: C. Hurst, 1968), p. 120, quoted by Allan Anderson, *Moya: The Holy Spirit in an African Context* (Pretoria: University of South Africa, 1991), p. 85.

[38] B. A. Pauw, *Religion in a Tswana Chiefdom* (London: Oxford University Press, 1960), p. 207, quoted by Anderson, *Moya*, p. 85.

[39] Ephesians 1:17-2:6.

[*AJPS* 5:1 (2002), pp. 107-134]

DELIVERANCE AS A WAY OF CONFRONTING WITCHCRAFT IN MODERN AFRICA: GHANA AS A CASE HISTORY

Opoku Onyinah

1. Introduction

Some scholars have rightly observed that the center of gravity of Christianity is shifting from the West to "the two-third world," that is Asia, South America and Africa.[1] The reasons for this shift are varied and complex. However, the reasons for the growth of Christianity in Africa significantly include the way the Africans have attempted to deal with their threatening fears, especially witchcraft. Witchcraft has been a prevailing belief in African cultures and has continually posed problems for the African people groups**.**

Following Evans-Pritchard's research in witchcraft among the Azande of Congo and his advancement of the misfortune or the explanation theory**,** the African phenomena of witchcraft have become prominent on the agenda of anthropologists. Significant are the works of J. Clyde Mitchell, Middleton and Winter, Max Marwick, Mary Douglas and others who theorized the function of witchcraft as a release of tension within certain types of African social structure.[2] The studies of S.

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[1] Kwame Bediako, *Jesus in Africa* (Oxford: Regnum Africa, 2000); Johnson Asamoah-Gyadu, "The Church in the State: The Pentecostal/Charismatic Experience in Ghana," *Journal of African Christian Thought* 2:1 (1998), pp. 51-57; David M. Beckmann, *Eden Revival: Spiritual Churches in Ghana* (London: Concordia Publishing House, 1975), pp. 9-10; David Barrett, "AD 2000: 350 Million Christians in Africa," *International Review of Mission* 59 (1970), pp. 39-54 (39-40).

[2] J. Clyde Mitchell, *The Yao Village: A Study in the Social Structure a Nyanssaland Tribe* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1956); John Middleton and E. H. Winter, eds., *Witchcraft and Sorcery in East Africa* (London: Regan Paul, 1963); Max G. Marwick, *Sorcery in Its Social Setting: A Study of the Northern Rhodesian Cewa* (Manchester: Manchester University

F. Nadel, M. Gluckman and Debrunner also demonstrate that witchcraft belief is the outcome of social instability such as famine, rapid change, oppression, and economic distress.[3] Other works, such as Margaret Field's case studies and analysis of so-called witches in Ghana, reveal how witchcraft is rooted in the psychological reactions of those suffering from ill health, misfortunes, and inability to control their destinies.[4]

These interpretations led some anthropologists and missionaries to think witchcraft belief was only superstition to be dispelled with modernity. Thus Parrinder argues, "an enlightened religion, education, medicine and better social and racial conditions will help to dispel witchcraft beliefs."[5] Unfortunately Parrinder lived to become "a false prophet" in the sense that, although an enlightened religion, that is, Christianity, has grown in African, belief in witchcraft has survived and even been revived.

The current studies on witchcraft in Africa such as those of Peter Geschiere, Birgit Meyer, Jean and John Comaroff show that the concept is no longer "traditional" but operates as a very important aspect of "modernity."[6] In some of these presentations witchcraft provides images

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Press, 1965); Mary Douglas, ed., *Witchcraft Confession and Accusations* (London: Tavistock, 1970).

[3] S. F. Nadel, "Witchcraft in Four African Societies: An Essay in Comparison," in *Witchcraft and Sorcery*, ed. Max G. Marwick (London: Penguin Books, 1952), pp. 286-99 (286); M. Gluckman, *Customs and Conflicts in Africa* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1959), p. 101; Hans W. Debrunner, *Witchcraft in Ghana: A Study on the Belief in Destructive Witches and Its Effects on the Akan Tribes* (Accra: Presbyterian Book Depot, 1959).

[4] Margaret J. Field, *Religion and Medicine of the Ga People* (London: Oxford University Press, 1937); Margaret J. Field, *Search for Security: An Ethno-Psychiatric Study of Rural Ghana* (London: Faber and Faber, 1960).

[5] George Parrinder, *Witchcraft: A Critical Study of the Belief in Witchcraft from the Records of Witch Hunting in Europe Yesterday and Africa Today* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1958), pp. 202-203.

[6] Peter Geschiere, *The Modernity of Witchcraft: Politics and the Occult in Postcolonial Africa* (London: University Press of Virginia, 1997); Birgit Meyer, *Translating the Devil: Religion and Modernity among the Ewe in Ghana* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1999); Birgit Meyer, "Make a Complete Break with the Past: Memory and Post-Colonial Modernity in Ghanaian Pentecostalist Discourse," *Journal of Religion in Africa* 27:3 (1998), pp. 316-49; Birgit Meyer, "Commodities and Power of Prayer: Pentecostalist Attitudes toward Consumption in Contemporary Ghana," *Development and Change* 29 (1998), pp. 751-76; Jean Comaroff and John Comaroff, eds., *Modernity and Its*

of defining modernity through the local consumption of global commodities,[7] they show how witchcraft is domesticated in personal violence[8] and also how the phenomenon is involved in politics.[9] For the African, such images are real and deadly. For example, Geschiere has shown how in Maka area in Cameroon the state courts have started to convict so-called witches.[10] Furthermore, in her work among the Tonga speakers in Gwembe Valley in southern province in Zambia, where fathers are often accused of witchcraft, Elisabeth Colson has demonstrated how the accused do suffer and in one case a man had to hang himself to avoid such suffering.[11] In a recent election in Ghana, George Ayittey reported that one parliamentary candidate, professor Philip Kofi Amoah, complained after he had been hit in the face by a crow that some people were out to fight him spiritually because of the inroad to success he was making.[12] He continued that soon the professor complained of dizziness and died on his way to the hospital.

As was done in the past, protection from witchcraft activities has become a common concern. Formerly, such protection was sought from the priests of the gods or from sorcerers and medicine men. From the early part of the twentieth century, however, a variety of exorcistic activities (anti-witchcraft shrine) have dominated African states. Even when the colonial regimes suppressed witchcraft activities because they thought they hampered progress, they re-emerged within the Ingenious African Churches and later in a form of movement within the classical

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Malcontents: Ritual and Power in Postcolonial Africa (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993).

[7] Parish Jane, "The Dynamics of Witchcraft and Indigenous Shrines among the Akan," *Africa* 69:3 (1999), pp. 427-47; Elizabeth Colson, "The Father as Witch," *Africa* 70:3 (2000), pp. 333-58.

[8] Peter Geschiere and Cyprian Fisiy, "Domesticating Personal Violence: Witchcraft, Courts and Confessions in Cameroon," *Africa* 64:2 (1994), pp. 323-41; Comaroff & Comaroff, *Modernity and Its Malcontents.*

[9] Geschiere, *The Modernity of Witchcraft*; Birgit Meyer, "Money, Power and Morality in Popular Ghanaian Cinema" (a paper presented at the consultation, Religion and Media, Accra, May 21-27, 2000).

[10] Geschiere and Fisiy, "Domesticating Personal Violence," p. 323.

[11] Colson, "The Father as Witch," pp. 333-58.

[12] George Ayittey, "How Ghana Was Saved," *Ghana Review International* 77 (February 2001), pp. 17-19.

Pentecostal churches.[13] As soon as one of these movements expends itself, another of a similar nature springs up with a larger following. As a result, at present, almost all churches include exorcistic activities, referred to as "deliverance"[14] in their programs, since failure to do so amounts to losing members to churches that include such activities. Thus some scholars now observe the "Pentecostalization" of Christianity in Africa.[15]

The main agenda of this sort of Pentecostalization is deliverance, which is based on the fear of spirit forces, especially witchcraft. Jane Paris struggles with the right terminology for describing such a deliverance center at Dorman in Ghana. She calls it *aduruyefo* (medicine maker), but her presentation, including the warding off of evil spirit from so-called contaminated Bibles, involvement of intensive prayers and invocation of the Holy Spirit, indicates that she was talking about a Christian prayer center. She mistakenly thought that it was an anti-witchcraft shrine.[16]

This study will attempt to explore how deliverance ministry has replaced the anti-witchcraft shrines and the exorcistic activities of the African indigenous churches. Using Ghana as a case history, I shall evaluate this ministry to find out its positive and negative effects. Most of the research on which this paper is based was carried out among Ghanaian Christians between 1997 and 1999. These include interviews I conducted with pastors, exorcists, traditional priests, so-called witches and delivered witches. The data also includes a survey I conducted in 1999 among 1201 participants across Ghana concerning the belief in the traditional spirit-world. The survey showed relatively even distribution across educational, occupational categories and age. However, many people who filled out the forms were male from Pentecostal denominations. My prior experience as a Ghanaian Pentecostal pastor for more than twenty-four years also provides an access to such experiences.

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[13] By classical Pentecostal churches this paper refers to Pentecostals who put stress on speaking in tongues and may have either direct or remote relations with the Azusa Street revival.

[14] Basically the term deliverance is used to include all the rituals involved in setting people free from demonic activities.

[15] See Emmanuel Owusu Bediako, "Pentecostalism: A Solution to Africa's Spiritual Needs?" (M.Th. thesis, Christian Bible College, Rocky Mount, NC, USA, 1999); Allan Anderson, *African Reformation: African Initiated Christianity in the Twentieth Century* (Lawrenceville, NJ: Africa World Press, 2001).

[16] Parish Jane, "The Dynamics of Witchcraft," pp. 432-33.

2. Christianity in Ghana

Although the initial attempt to evangelize Ghana by the Roman Catholic Mission in the fifteen century had been a failure, Christianity had firmly been established in the mid 1800s through the enterprising missionary activities of the Basel Mission (1845), the Bremen Mission (1847), the Wesleyan Methodist (1840), and the Catholic Mission (second attempt in 1880).[17] A recent survey conducted by Operation World and published in 1993 shows that 64% of Ghanaians were Christians.[18]

As an effort to evangelize and civilize the indigenous people, on the one hand, the missionary taught that the belief in the spirit–forces such as the gods, fetishism, dwarfs, and witchcraft was superstitious. Yet, on the other hand, they also presented the devil and demons as the power behind these spirit-forces.[19] By the introduction of a personalized devil and the association of the gods with demons, the missionaries strengthened the belief in witchcraft, yet they failed to provide for the holistic needs of the people. For the Ghanaian, these images were real life-threatening forces.[20] Many people held that the power of the gods and the other spirit

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[17] Ralph M. Wiltgen, *Gold Coast Mission History 1471-1880* (Techny: Divine Word Publication, 1956); Hans W. Debrunner, *A History of Christianity in Ghana* (Accra: Waterville Publishing House, 1967), pp. 7-100; J. Kofi Agbeti, *West Africa Church History: Christian Missions and Church Foundations 1482-1919* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1986), pp. 3-112; Peter Bernard Clarke, *West Africa and Christianity: A Study of Religious Development from the 15th to 20th Century* (London: Edward Arnold, 1986), pp. 7-26, 41-42, 57-62.

[18] Patrick Johnstone, *Operation World*, 5th ed. (Carlisle: OMS Publishing, 1993), p. 241.

[19] The evidence points that whenever the missionaries went, they opposed, often successfully, almost all features of Ghana customs and religion without having given much consideration to them. For discussing on the missionaries' encounter with the Ghanaian people, see F. L. Bartels, *The Roots of Ghana Methodism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1965); Noel Smith, *The Presbyterian Church of Ghana, 1835-1960: A Younger Church in a Changing Society* (Accra: Ghana Universities Press, 1966); Harris W. Mobley, *The Ghanaian's Image of the Missionary: An Analysis of the Published Critiques of Christian Missionaries by Ghanaians 1897-1965* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1970).

[20] Hans W. Debrunner, *Witchcraft in Ghana: A Study on the Belief in Destructive Witches and Its Effects on the Akan Tribes* (Accra: Presbyterian Book Depot,

forces, which could be used either for good or evil purposes, operate through human intermediaries, namely, traditional priests. Yet the human intermediaries often allied themselves with witches. Witches were thought to feed on human flesh and drink human blood, inflict material losses on people, infest diseases on people, and make people ignoble through their misdeeds. Consequently, all misfortunes were thought to be the work of witches.[21] Therefore people became preoccupied with finding out from the traditional priests the supernatural causes of misfortunes if initial attempts to find a cure failed. Tutelage under the gods was thought to be the best way of protection. Thus as Kalu says of the logic of Igbo of Nigeria's covenant making[22] and as Meyer observes about the images of evil among the Ewes of Ghana, these life-threatening forces can be considered representations of particular fears that, in turn, are centered around the Ghanaian cultural hermeneutics.

Since the missionaries were unable to do deal with the situation satisfactorily, there emerged a prophetic ministry in Ghana which announced a new dawn of Christianity whose fulfilment was seen in the African indigenous churches, called spiritual churches in Ghana.[23] Healing and exorcism were central in their services. Although these churches attracted a lot of adherence, there were weaknesses, such as lack of theological framework and accountability from the ministers, which led some to become involved in some questionable practices such as exploitation and immorality.[24] They caused a decline and paved a way for the popularity of the classical Pentecostal churches.

1959); Wolf Bleek, *Marriage, Inheritance and Witchcraft: A Case Study of a Rural Ghanaian Family* (Leiden: Africa-Studiecentrum, 1975); Margaret J. Field, *Search for Security: An Ethno-Psychiatric Study of Rural Ghana* (London: Faber and Faber, 1960); T. C. McCaskie, "Anti-Witchcraft Cult in Asante: An Essay in the Social History of an African People," *History of Africa* 8 (1981), pp. 137, 125-54. T. C. McCaskie, *State and Society in Pre-Colonial Asante* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), pp. 133-34.

[21] But good witches could turn all the destructive acts reported above into good deeds for those they love.

[22] U. Ogbu Kalu, *The Embattled God: Christianization of Igboland, 1841-1991* (Lagos: Minaj Publishers, 1996), pp. 29-49.

[23] This paper will use the term spiritual churches in reference to these churches.

[24] For instance, see Albert Watson, "Menace of Spiritual Churches," *Daily Graphic* (Accra, May 1976), p. 5; Jessie Jones, "Don't Condemn the Power of the Spiritual Churches," *Christian Messenger* (Accra, November 1971), p. 5; Peter P. Dery, "Traditional Healing and Spiritual Healing in Ghana," *Ghana Bulletin of Theology* 4:4 (1973), pp. 53-64 (53-54); David M. Beckmann, *Eden Revival:*

2.1 Pentecostalization of Christianity in Ghana

The origins of classical Pentecostal churches[25] in Ghana can be traced back to apostle Anim, who upon receipt of a magazine called *Sword of the Spirit* from the Faith Tabernacle Church[26] in 1917, began preaching healing in Christ. Consequently, a new movement began. His desire to know more about the baptism of the Holy Spirit finally linked him with the Apostolic Church of Bradford, England, which sent James McKeown to assist him in 1937.[27]

Anim's stance on medicine later caused a split between him and McKeown. Whereas McKeown believed in the use of medicine in addition to prayer, Anim rejected all types of aids including medicine.[28] Eventually, Anim named his group "Christ Apostolic Church," while McKeown's group remained as the "Apostolic Church." McKeown's church, the Apostolic Church grew faster. But this was later split in 1953 and again in 1962. The churches established by Anim and McKeown, the Apostolic Church and the Church of Pentecost, the Christ Apostolic

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Spiritual Churches in Ghana (London: Concordia Publishing House, 1975), p. 55. Paul S. Breidenbach, "Maame Harris Grace Tani and Papa Kwesi Nackabah: Independent Church Leaders in the Gold Coast, 1914-1958," *The International Journal of African Historical Studies* 12:4 (1979), pp. 581-14 (599). "Beware of These Gospel Mercenaries," *Christian Messenger* (Accra, September 1981), p. 2.

[25] By classical Pentecostal churches this study refers to Pentecostals which put stress on speaking in tongues and have their origin either in Britain or USA.

[26] Faith Tabernacle Church was not a Pentecostal movement in the strictest sense, but combined an emphasis on healing with its primary aim of cultivating and protecting the inner holiness of the sect as a distinctive community. For further reading, see Turner and Peel who give a good background of this sect. Harold W. Turner, *History of an African Independent Church I: The Church of the Lord (Aladura)* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1967), pp. 10-26; J. D. Y. Peel, *Aladura: A Religious Movement among the Yoruba* (London: Oxford University Press, 1968), pp. 63-71.

[27] Peter Anim, *The History of How Full Gospel Church Was Founded in Ghana* (Accra: CAC, n.d.), p. 8; Christine Leonard, *A Giant in Ghana: 3000 Churches in 50 Years: The Story of James McKeown and the Church of Pentecost* (Chichester: New Wine Press, 1989.), p. 27; Thomas N. Turnbull, *What God Hath Wrought: A Short History of the Apostolic Church* (Bradford: Puritan Press, 1959), p. 85.

[28] Leonard, *A Giant in Ghana*, p. 34.

Church, and the Assemblies of God,[29] were the main Pentecostal churches in Ghana until the 1970s.[30] The Pentecostal practices of deliverance have been developing gradually since 1937.

These developments have been necessary, since originally classical Pentecostalism had not been encouraging deliverance ministry, which has been a very important issue of African traditional religions. Although, the British sociologist Stephen Hunts observes, "the growth and appeal of deliverance has come with the expansion of the 'classical' Pentecostal movement at the beginning of the twentieth century,"[31] at this period the emphasis was on speaking in tongues as an initial evidence of the baptism of the Holy Spirit and also as a powerful weapon for evangelism. Healing and exorcism were to accompany the Holy Spirit baptism.[32] From this perspective, some early Pentecostals opposed those

[29] The Assemblies of God entered Ghana as early as 1931, but their impact was not felt until 1980. The reasons, which Leonard gives for this failure, include their inability to adopt the Ghanaian culture and their use of western style of life. Leonard, *A Giant in Ghana*, p. 125.

[30] For works on the origin of Pentecostalism in Ghana, see Robert W. Wyllie, "Pioneers of Ghanaian Pentecostalism: Peter Anim and James McKeown," *Journal of Religion in Africa* 6:2 (1974), pp. 109-22; Leonard, *A Giant in Ghana*; Kingsley Larbi, "The Development of Ghanaian Pentecostalism: A Study in the Appropriation of the Christian Gospel in the 20th Century Ghana Setting with Special Reference to the Christ Apostolic Church, the Church of Pentecost Etc" (Ph.D. Diss., Centre for the Study of Christianity in Non-Western World, University of Edinburgh, 1995).

[31] Stephen Hunt, "Managing the Demonic: Some Aspects of the Neo-Pentecostal Deliverance Ministry," *Journal of Contemporary Religion* 13:2 (1998), pp. 215-30 (216).

[32] For example, see Warren Newberry, "Signs and Miracles in Twenty-First Century Pentecostal Missiology: Continuation, Domestication or Abdication" in *The 30 Annual Meeting of the Society for Pentecostal Studies* (2001), pp. 656-74; Allan Anderson, "Signs and Blunders: Pentecostal Mission Issues at Home and Abroad in the Twentieth Century," *Journal of Asian Mission* 2:2 (2000), pp. 193-210; Walter J. Hollenweger, *Pentecostalism: Origins and Developments Worldwide* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1997), pp. 18-24; Benny C. Aker, "The Gospel in Action," in *Signs and Wonders in Ministry Today*, eds. Benny C. Aker and Gary S. McGee (Springfield: Gospel Publishing House, 1996), pp. 35-45; Robert Mapes Anderson, *Vision of the Disinherited: The Making of American Pentecostalism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979), pp. 79-80; Charles W. Conn, *Like a Mighty Army: A History of the Church of God* (Cleveland: Pathway Press, 1977), p. 92; Frederick Dale Bruner, *A Theology of the Holy Spirit: The Pentecostal Experience and the New Testament Witness* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1970), pp. 47-55.

who attempted to make deliverance a specialty.[33] The Ghanaian Pentecostal churches held a similar position until the visit of the Latter Rain team from the USA to Ghana (and Nigeria) in 1953. The Latter Rain movement bore many similarities to the early Pentecostal movement that originated at the Azusa Street revival, yet it emerged with the aim to revitalize Pentecostalism, since they felt that Pentecostalism was experiencing a current dryness of faith.[34] Among other things, the Latter Rain laid emphasis on deliverance and was opposed to the establishment of human organization.[35] After their visit, lay prophets and prophetesses emerged who began to exorcize people from afflicted spirits. But some misunderstanding between them and the leadership made their ministry short-lived. By the end of 1958, all those lay exorcists had left the classical Pentecostal churches to establish their own ministries. They led the exorcistic activities in Ghana in the 1960s.[36]

Two trends developed within Ghanaian Christianity during the 1970s and 1980s, which eventually led to the formation of a "distinct theology." First, the books and cassettes from some western preachers, especially Americans, including Oral Roberts,[37] Kenneth Hagin, Kenneth Copeland, Reinhard Bonke, and later Benny Hinn, were used to enhance the preaching of many ministers. Often sermons by the pastors in Ghana and other parts of Africa were derived from materials drawn from these ministers, especially Roberts' seed faith principle, which is centered on

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[33] Hunt, "Managing the Demonic," p. 217; Carter, "Demon Possession and the Christian," p. 19.

[34] M. Richard Riss, "Latter Rain Movement," *Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, eds. Stanley Burgess and Gary B. McGee (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1988), pp. 532-34 (532).

[35] For further reading on the movement, see M. Richard Riss, "Latter Rain Movement of 1948," *Pneuma* 4 (1982), pp. 32-45; M. Richard Riss, *A Survey of Twentieth Century Revival Movements in North America* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1988), pp. 105-24; Riss, "Latter Rain Movement," pp. 532-34; Peter Hocken, *Streams of Renewal: Origins and Early Development of the Charismatic Movement in Great Britain* (Exeter: Paternoster, 1986), pp. 25-29; James E. Worsfold, *The Origins of the Apostolic Church in Great Britain: With a Breviate of Its Early Missionary Endeavours* (Thorndon: Julian Literature Trust, 1991), pp. 210-310.

[36] These churches include the Church of Christ, Spiritual Movement and Divine Healing Church, see George De Wilson, *Biography of Prophet John Mensah* (Cape Coast, n.d); Larbi, "The Development of Ghanaian Pentecostalism," pp. 329-42.

[37] He visited Ghana in 1987.

prosperity and Hagin's faith healing. The second trend (during the later part of 1980s) flowed from an interest in books and cassettes (both video and audio) which seek to increase people's awareness of demons and how to exorcize them.[38] Prominent among these materials are the books and cassettes of Derek Prince,[39] who visited Ghana in 1987 on the ticket of the Ghana Pentecostal Council.[40]

Prince asserts that a person can be a Christian, baptized in the Holy Spirit and speak in tongues, yet still have demons, ancestral and other curses in one's life, until the Holy Spirit reveals them to be dealt with.[41] He offers reasons for this theory.[42] Dwelling heavily on Matthew 11:12, among other quotations, Prince argues that casting out a demon or renouncing a curse can be a lengthy process, and it is only forceful men who can lay hold of it.[43] Prince's stance is similar to some ministers like Basham, [44] Dickason, [45] Kraft, [46] Koch, [47] Bubeck, [48] Wimber, [49] and

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[38] These include Kenneth Hagin, *Demons and How to Deal with Them* (Tulsa: Kenneth Hagin Evangelistic Association, 1976); Morris Cerullo, *The Miracle Book* (San Diego: Morris Cerullo World Evangelism, 1984); Rebecca Brown, *He Came to Set the Captives Free* (Springdale: Solid Rock Family Enterprises, 1991) and Emmanuel Eni, *Delivered from Powers of Darkness* (Ibadan: Scripture Union, 1987).

[39] Derek Prince is British and was educated at Eton and Cambridge. He held a fellowship in Philosophy at Cambridge from 1940 to 1949. His books that will be examined include: D. Prince, *Blessings or Cursing* (Milton Keynes: Word Publishing (1990); *From Cursing to Blessing* (Lauderdale: Derek Prince Ministries, 1986); *They Shall Expel Demons: What You Need to Know about Demons: Your Invisible Enemies* (Harpenden: Derek Prince Ministries, 1998).

[40] The Ghana Pentecostal Council comprises most of the Pentecostal and Charismatic churches in Ghana.

[41] Prince, *Blessings or Cursing*, pp. 9-10, *From Cursing to Blessing*, pp. 8, 28, 36-37; *They Shall Expel Demons*, pp. 155-69.

[42] For example, on demons, Prince states that demons might be in a person before one became a Christian. Moreover, demons might enter a person after he/she has become a Christian. He uses such passages as 1 Peter 5:8-9; 2 Cor 11:3; Luke 19:27 to support this claim (e.g., *They Shall Expel Demons*, pp. 158, 162-63). On ancestral curses, Prince bases his assumption on Exodus 20:5 (*Blessing or Cursing*, pp. 16-25). Prince quotes lots of scriptural passages to support his view on other curses; these include Deut 27:15-26; Jer 17:5-6 and Zech 5:1-4 (e.g., *From Cursing to Blessing*, pp. 22-26).

[43] Prince, *Blessings or Cursing*, pp. 190-98; *They Shall Expel Demons*, p. 235.

[44] D. Basham, *Can a Christian Have a Demon?* (Monroeville: Whitaker House, 1971) argues why he believes a Christian can have a demon.

MacNutt. [50] This view is significantly different from classical Pentecostals' who had refused to accept the possibility of a Christian being possessed by a demon.[51] However, since Prince's theory appeals to the Ghanaian worldview, some Pentecostal as well as some other Christians have accepted it. Consequently, some Christians, both intellectuals, and non-intellectuals began to reinterpret these teachings in culturally relevant ways and put them into practice. What was going on in Ghana was also taking place in other parts of Africa.[52] The outcome of this reformulation is what this paper refers to as "witchdemology."

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[45] C. Fred Dickason, *Demon Possession and the Christian* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1987), p. 175 clearly states, "I have encountered from 1974 to 1987 at least 400 cases of those who were genuine Christians who were also demonized."

[46] C. H. Kraft, *Defeating Dark Angels* (Kent: Sovereign World, 1993), p. 66 declares, "the evidence that Christians can be (and frequently are) demonized is so conclusive that we can be dogmatic about asserting it."

[47] K. Koch, *Occult Bondage and Deliverance* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1970); *Demonology Past and Present* (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 1973).

[48] M. Bubeck, *The Adversary* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1987).

[49] Cf. J. Wimber and K. Springer, *Power Evangelism*, new ed. (London; Hodder and Stoughton, 1992), pp. 168-69, 176-77; see also *Power Healing* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1987).

[50] Francis MacNutt, *Deliverance from Evil Spirit: A Practical Manual* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1995), p. 76 argues, "if sin lives within me [a Christian] and robs me of my freedom of action, is it inconceivable that an evil spirit might not also be infesting that corner of my being?"

[51] W. K. Kay, *Inside Story: A History of British Assemblies of God* (Mattersey: Mattersey Hall, 1990), p. 337; K. Warrington, "Healing and Exorcism: The Path to Wholeness," in *Pentecostal Perspectives*, ed. K. Warrington (Carlisle: Paternoster Press, 1998), pp. 147-76 (173).

[52] Symons Onyango, *Set Free from Demons: A Testimony to the Power of God to Deliver the Demon Possessed* (Nairobi: Evangel, 1979); Heaven U. Heaven, *How to Cast Out Demons or Evil Spirit* (Lagos: Heaven and Blessing Books, 1985); Kaniaki and Mukendi, *Snatched from Satan's Claws: An Amazing Deliverance by Christ* (Nairobi: Enkei Media Service, 1991); Iyke Nathan Uzora, *Occult Grand Master Now in Christ* (Benin City: Osabu, 1993); Sunday Adekola, *Understanding Demonology* (Ibadan: Scripture Union, 1993); Leonard Umunna, *Victory over Temptation*, Part 1, *Origin of Temptation and the Way out* (Lagos: WordPower Communication, 1999); Zacharias Tanee, *Delivered from Demons* (Yaounde: IGH, n.d.); E. O. Omoobajesu, *My Experience in the Power of This World before Jesus Saved Me* (Lagos: Omoobajesu, n.d.).

The paper uses the term "witchdemology" instead of the usual western terms "demonology" and "witchcraft," because first, the traditional definitions of the terms "demonology" and "witchcraft" do not fit into the Ghanaian situation.[53] Second, the understanding and practices in the Ghanaian context, as will soon be presented, is a synthesis of both the western and the Ghanaian concepts, especially that of the Ghanaian traditional religions where the witch is always the focus.[54] Thus the term "witchdemology" is used in this paper to describe the beliefs and practices of deliverance ministries in Ghana. These include witchcraft, demonology, ancestral curses, and exorcism.

The theology of "witchdemology" is strongly based on the Ghanaian cosmology. To throw more light on this, I shall call on data from the survey I conducted in 1999 of 1201 participants. For the question, "Is witchcraft real?" 91.7% said yes, 7.7% said no, and 0.7% were not sure.[55] Of educational background, 100 % of all those who held a first degree said yes, while 85% of those who did not have any official schooling said yes and 15% said no.

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[53] For example, as stated elsewhere, in the West the definition of witchcraft includes the worship of Satan and the practice of magic and sorcery: Jeffrey Burton Russell, *A History of Witchcraft* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1980), p. 8; H. E. Wedeck and W. Baskin, "Witchcraft," *A Dictionary of Spiritualism* (New York: Bonanza Books, 1971), p. 364; Hans Holzer, "Introduction" to *Encyclopedia of Witchcraft and Demonology: An Illustrated Encyclopedia of Witches, Demons, Sorcerers, and Their Present Day Counter Parts*, ed. Rossell Hope Robbins (London: Cathay Books, 1974), pp. 12-27 (18). The definition of demonology also includes "malevolent spirits having supernatural powers and dedicated to destruction," "Demonology," *Encyclopedia of Witchcraft and Demonology*, pp. 195-96 (195). See also A. Merriam-Webster, *Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary*, eds. Federick C. Mish and others Based on *Webster's Third New International Dictionary* (1898 ed.; Springfield, MA: Merriam-Webster, 1984), p. 338.

[54] Ghanaian terms usually used is witchcraft: *bayie* (Akan), *aye* (Ga), *adze* (Ewe), and *anyen* (Fanti). Meyer, "'Delivered from the Powers of Darkness'," p. 237. Cf. T. C. McCaskie, "Anti-Witchcraft Cult in Asante: An Essay in the Social History of an African People," *History of Africa* 8 (1981), pp. 125-54. Steve Brouwer, Paul Gifford, and Susan D. Rose, *Exporting the America Gospel: Global Christian Fundamentalism* (London: Routledge, 1996), p. 178.

[55] For the male respondent 91.3% said yes, 8% said no and 0.7% were not sure. With the female respondent 92.1% said yes, 7.2% said no and 0.7% were not sure.

The terms "witch" and "witchcraft" are used synonymously with the terms "demon," "demonology," and "evil spirit." Demon possession is described as when a demon comes to live in a person without consent. It is considered a covenant of soul and spirit without his or her permission. Witchcraft is taken as an advanced form of spirit possession. From this background, it is assumed that almost all traditional priests are witches.

Based on some of the writings of Pentecostals, such as Dickason, Kraft, and Hagin, the origin of demons is linked with the fallen angels.[56] It is held that these beings (fallen angels) with disembodied spirits, found themselves in rivers, seas, mountains, rocks, trees, and in humans, and that these have become the gods of the Africans. All Africans are therefore under a curse, because their ancestors worshipped the gods.

Ancestral curse is a new "doctrine" which has emerged with the theology of "witchdemology." Although this concept has its basis in traditional beliefs, the emphasis was not based on curses, but on blessings.[57] Yet, the Pentecostal concept of the ancestral curse is the belief that the consequences of the sins committed by the progenitors are recurrent in their family lines. The effects of these curses in a person's life include chronic diseases or hereditary diseases, mental breakdowns, emotional excesses, allergies, repeated miscarriages, repeated unnatural deaths such as in suicides and accidents, continuing financial

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[56] Aaron K. Vuha, *The Package: Salvation, Healing and Deliverance* (Accra: EP Church of Ghana, 1993), p. 36; Opoku Onyinah, *Overcoming Demons* (Accra: Pentecost Press, 1995), pp. 7-10. Cf. Dickason, *Demon Possession and the Christian*, p. 24; Kraft, *Defeating the Dark Angels*, p. 19; Hagin, *Demons*; Merrill F. Unger, *Biblical Demonology: A Study of Spiritual Forces at Work Today*, 5th ed. (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1994), p. 42.

[57] People who were venerated as ancestors, the living dead, were those who led a prospering and meaningful lives; these people, thought to be closer to *Onyankopong* (the Supreme Being), were to intercede for the living. For people who broke taboos, offended the ancestors, or committed specific sins could bring curses upon the state, but sacrifices were offered to appease the responsible gods and thereby retract the curse forever. See Peter Sarpong, *Ghana in Retrospect* (Tema: Asempa, 1976), p. 34; J. S. Pobee, *Towards an African Theology* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1979), p. 44. Bolaji Idowu, *African Traditional Religion: A Definition* (London: SCM, 1973), pp. 178-88; L. Magesa, *African Religion: The Moral Traditions of Abundant Life* (Maryknoll: Orbis, 1997), pp. 46-57; M. L. Daneel, *Old and New in Southern Shona Independent Churches*, vol. 1 (Hague: Mouton, 1971), p. 100; Allen H. Anderson and Samuel Otwang, *TUMELO: The Faith of Africa Pentecostals in South Africa* (Pretoria: University of South Africa, 1993), pp. 27-39.

insufficiencies, frequent breakdown of marriages, abnormal behavior such as extreme anger tantrums or extreme reservedness.[58]

Linked with the origin of demons/gods and ancestral curses is the strong belief in the territorial spirit, specifically promoted by the "third wave" theologian, Peter Wagner.[59] This is the notion that the demons assume a hierarchy with powers of greater and lesser ranks having specific geographical assignments. The proponents of "witchdemology" have assumed that the real sources of African problems are the controlling powers of various territorial spirits such as poverty and idolatry. This is to say that African's problems do not just depend upon scientific and modern development. Taking a cue from Wagner some African scholars such as Oshun and "evangelist" Nwankpa have stressed the need to wage "spiritual warfare" against these spiritual enemies to break free the African continent.[60]

It is believed that there are signs, which hint that a person is demonized or a witch. One of the surest signs proponents of this ministry offer is that such people are especially uneasy in the presence of "spiritual people."

There are many ways through which demons are said to enter people and be passed on to their families or others. The terms for this process is

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[58] Opoku Onyinah, *Ancestral Curses* (Accra: Pentecostal Press, 1994), p. 2. Cf. Adu-Boahen, *Deliverance from Demons*, p. 111.

[59] C. Peter Wagner, *Warfare Prayer* (Ventura: Regal, 1991); C. Peter Wagner, *Warfare Prayer: How to Seek God's Power and Protection in the Battle to Build His Kingdom* (Ventura: Regal, 1992); C. Peter Wagner, ed., *Engaging the Enemy: How to Fight and Defeat Territorial Spirits* (Ventura: Regal, 1993); C. Peter Wagner, *Confronting the Powers: How the New Testament Church Experienced the Power of Strategic Level Spiritual Warfare* (Ventura: Regal, 1996), Peter Wagner was a former Professor of Church Growth at Fuller Theological Seminary. By its excessive interest in demonic hierarchy, some scholars have rightly pointed out that the popular understanding of the character of contemporary spiritual warfare has been captured by the Peretti's novel, *This Present Darkness*: e.g., Robert A. Guelich, "Spiritual Warfare: Jesus, Paul and Peretti," *Pneuma* 13:1 (1991), pp. 33-64 (34); Harvey Cox, *Fire Heaven: The Rise of Pentecostal Spirituality and the of Reshaping of Religion in the Twenty-First Century* (London: Cassell, 1996), pp. 281-84; Frank Peretti, *This Present Darkness* (Westchester: Crossway Book, 1986), p. 34.

[60] See Emeka Nwankpa, *Redeeming the Land: Interceding for the Nations* (Achimota: African Christian Press, 1994), p. 9; Chris O. Oshun, "Spirits and Healing in a Depressed Economy: The Case of Nigeria," *Mission Studies* 25:1 (1998), pp. 32-52 (33).

demonic "doorway" or "opening."[61] Idolatry of any kind is said to be a major opening.[62] Other demonic doorways which deliverance exponents assume, include: sinful deeds (Luke 22:3);[63] involvement in any other religion apart from the "one prescribed by the Lord," that is Evangelical Christianity; [64] and any type of emotional pressure from childhood experiences (James 3:16).[65] It is also propounded that demons may enter human beings through emotional traumas like the death of a loved one, surviving in a car accident, or murder. Some believe those who watch such incidents on the television are also vulnerable to demon entry.

It is assumed that all evil acts have their demonic counterparts. For example, a demon of fornication enters the one who fornicates while the demon of lust enters the person who watches a pornographic video or pictures. While the Bible reveals the seriousness of sin and the need to

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[61] Vuha, *The Package*, p. 53; cf. Frank D. Hammond and Ida Hammond, *Pigs in the Parlour* (Kirkwood: Impact Books, 1973), p. 23; John Richards, *But Deliver Us from Evil: An Introduction to the Demonic Dimension in Pastoral Care* (London: Darton, 1974), p. 130.

[62] Idolatry includes the worship of the gods (of family, clan, or any type), *abisa* (consultation with a deity), and *wo nom abosom* (coveting with a deity on behalf of the family, clan or people groups), receiving the ministration of traditional medicine from an *okomfo* (priest), participation in a family gathering or a festival where libation is poured and sacrifice offered to the ancestors, having a name that is assigned to *obosom* (a god), such as *Bosompra* and *Bosompim.* Thus all the institutions and activities of the traditional cultures are seen as dangerous to healthy living, for they attract demons which can torture people's lives. Biblical texts used to explain this include Exod 20:3-5; 1 Tim 4:1-2; 1 Cor 10:20-21.

[63] Visits to places considered "worldly" such as the disco and pop concert are classified as examples of these doorways. It can be a single sinful act or the persistent practice of it (habit) that opens the way for demons. For example, while it is held that a single act of adultery, homosexuality, lesbianism, sexual abuse, or a premeditated lie may open the door for demons, it is the repeated acts of masturbation, fornication, pornography, exaggeration in conversation that open the way for demons.

[64] People who are involved in eastern religions, magic, *ouija* boards, and astrology are considered to open themselves to demons. Islam is considered a strong hold of Satan. Where dialogue is never an alternative, the best approach is to convert and deliver them from the "spirit of religiosity." This assumption goes further to include non-Evangelical faiths like spiritual churches and the Roman Catholic Church.

[65] This includes pressures from homes where parents are in conflict with each other, children are rejected, and one or both parents are alcoholic, cruel, or abusive, especially sexually. Prenatal influences also are said to attract demons.

overcome it through Christ (e.g., Eph 4:25-32), this theology claims that all evil acts and experiences come from demons. The logical inference is that demons are at work during times of evil behaviors or sickness in the lives of both Christians and non-Christians.

The discourse so far indicates that anyone including Christians could be a witch, demon possessed, or inherit ancestral curses. It is purported that in addition to salvation, every African Christian needs deliverance from witchcraft, demons, ancestral curses, or diseases, before they will be set free. In my survey, when asked the question, "Considering the Ghanaian background, does every Christian need deliverance?" 55.1% said yes, 41.2% said no, and 3.7% had no idea. It is not uncommon for those who answered "no" and "no idea" to seek explanations in ancestral curses when they are faced with problems that seem to prolong and baffle their minds. Therefore, prayer groups have been formed within the churches to cater to this need. Within some churches, especially the Church of Pentecost, the largest Protestant church in Ghana (with over 920,000 in membership), residential Prayer centers have been established to accommodate the sick. Deliverance becomes a major activity in these churches.[66] In such centers, the leaders prescribe specific days of fasting and prayer to the clients. So-called witches are chained until they are delivered or otherwise.

2.2 Deliverance Session

There are two types of deliverance offered: mass and personal. Mass deliverance, which is our focus, begins like the normal Pentecostal type of service, but the focus is on testimonies and preaching about the works of demons and how God's power can set people free from them.[67]

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[66] For example, see Abamfo Atiemo, "Deliverance in the Charismatic Churches in Ghana," *Trinity Journal of Church and Theology* 2 (1994-95), pp. 39-49 (39-40); Joshua Adjebeng, "Come and See Wonders at Sefwi Asafo," *Pentecost Fire* 89 (1989), pp. 7-8, 17-18; S. A. Arthur, "Deliverance," *Bethel News* 6 (n.d.), pp. 5, 7-10; M. Amuzu, "Witchcraft," *The Mirror* (Accra, October 25, 1997), p. 4; Rosalind I. J. Hackett, "Charismatic/Pentecostal Appropriation of Media Technologies in Nigeria and Ghana," *Journal of Religion in Africa* 27:3 (1998), pp. 258-77 (261); "The Church of Pentecost, Accra" (Report of National Prayer Camp Committee, June 1995).

[67] For example, witches who claim deliverance may speak of the atrocities they supposedly committed, show signs of witchcraft possession, and tell of how they were delivered. Others may speak of the successes in their lives, which, for them, are answers to prayers, divine interventions, or responses of deliverance.

Before the main deliverance session, some clients might have seen the exorcists already in their homes. Often a form with exhaustive questionnaires seeking information about the background of the person is required to be completed, after which an interview is conducted to find out the supernatural causation of problems. People who have seen the exorcists already as well as others who need deliverance are asked to move to the front of the congregation and form queues. The instructions differ from person to person. But often following Evangelist Tabiri's innovation of "breaking,"[68] instructions are given to participants to write names of parents and family members known to them and keep them for the breaking rituals.[69] After the initial instructions, the congregation sings with much expectancy, accompanied by clapping and musical instruments. The leader may then pray and also give instructions on how to pray. Prayer is often said repeatedly with gestures to "break" (*bubu*) "bind" (*kyekyere*), "bomb," "trample" on them (*tiatia wonso*), "whip with canes," "burn with the fire of God,"[70] "strike with the axe of God," "cast out demons" and "break" curses. As these are done with gestures, for example, *bombowon*, *shooto won* (bomb or shoot them) are usually followed by the sound *poo*, *poo*, *pee*, *pee* with the paper in their hands.[71] Some leaders sell special canes at church for the purpose of caning the witches spiritually.[72] The "blood of Jesus" and "the name of Jesus" are used repeatedly to rebuke witches and all evil powers. Meanwhile the team members move among the people and lay hands on them. As the prayer goes on people begin to sob, groan, shout, roar, fall down, and struggle on the ground. The leaders pay special attention to those who show such signs without falling down, by commanding and sometimes pushing them. Unlike the Charismatics, especially the Catholic Charismatics who, according to Csordas, consider falling down as resting in the Spirit,[73] falling down is interpreted here as a manifestation of

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[68] Tabiri was a prayer-center leader who was officially ordained as an evangelist by the Church of Pentecost.

[69] After the rituals, such papers are burnt or destroyed as signs of breaking.

[70] Here *Onyamegya* (God's fire) is called from heaven to burn the witch.

[71] For example, Alfred Owusu, "The Genesis of Bethel Prayer Camp," *Bethel News* 7 (n.d.), pp. 3-5 (4); Tabiri, "What I Mean by Breaking."

[72] Note the action is done in the absence of the witch, which is believed to be the person's enemy. This means that though the action is done physically, none are whipped.

[73] Thomas Csordas, *The Sacred Self: A Cultural Phenomenology of Charismatic Healing* (London: University of California Press, 1994), p. 272.

demons. Therefore, when one struggles or falls down, some of the team members continue to cast, bind, or break the power of evil in that person. When there is resistance, the leader engages in dialogue with the person, asking the name of the demon.

Sometimes people begin to speak in different forms, which indicates that some spirits have taken over. They become points of attraction and the leaders engage in active dialogue with them.[74]

As the process of deliverance goes on, people may cough, vomit, or urinate. Through the teachings of deliverance proponents such as Prince, it has come to be accepted that demons may go out through any one of the orifices in the human body.[75] Thus these acts are considered as signs of successful deliverance.

The process may take two to three hours, until the commotion cools down**.** But this is not the end of the session. The leader may call those with specific needs and pray for groups in turn.[76]

After this, the leader often requests testimonies of deliverance and healing from the members. Thereafter, the leader may instruct the participants to go out delivered. However, since it is claimed that a person needs constant deliverance, the leader may instruct them on how to do self-deliverance.[77]

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[74] For example, during one of the deliverance sessions I witnessed, a male voice spoke through a woman whom I shall call Agnes and said, "I am your father. I have attempted to give you witchcraft, because I love you and want to pass on my inheritance to you, but because you have committed yourself to the Lord, I could not do it." The leaders then commanded the spirit to come out. Although the spirit resisted them, it came out. Agnes finally said, "I am now free." Agnes Kusiwaa, Interview by Author, August 31, 1999, in Nkawkaw, Nigeria.

[75] Prince, *They Shall*, 233.

[76] For example, prayer may be said for traders to receive capital for good business, for farmers to receive rain and good harvest, for government workers to receive promotion and higher salaries, for broken marriages to be restored, for weak marriages to be strengthened, for single people especially women to get married, and for money for those in debt to be able to pay. Sometimes, when prayer is being said for money, people are requested to open their hands, stretch their clothes, or take up their coats to receive.

[77] With the self-deliverance, the person will have to be his/her own exorcist. The process is similar to the mass deliverance. The prayer of deliverance differs from a person to a person. However, often there is personal affirmation of one's faith in Christ; confession of any known sin; repentance of all sins, forgiveness of other people's sin; breaking with satanic contact; and finally a commanding prayer.

Clearly, the methodology for the deliverance session is a mixture of a wide range of practices, including African traditional, spiritual churches and biblical. For example, like the traditional shrines and the spiritual churches, psychology is implied in the confession of witches, the drumming and the repetition of the songs that builds up pressure on the people before deliverance is carried on. Again, like the spiritual churches, "magical methodology" is apparent in the repetition of the "prayer languages" during deliverance. In addition to these, the techniques of hypno-therapy are applied indirectly during the teaching and testimonies around demons and deliverance. The use of psychoanalysis is also evident in the questionnaires and the interviews conducted by the exorcists before and during deliverance. The fasting, prayers, and commands are the re-interpretations of some scripture verses and how Jesus dealt with the demonic.[78]

3. Witchdemology: Emancipation or Servitude

3.1 Interpretation

The discussion so far shows that the theology of "witchdemology" gets its demonization foundation from the missionaries' interpretation of African traditional beliefs and practices and other religions. Yet it departs from the missionaries' interpretation, when it comes to the concept of power and deliverance where it derives its demonization strength from the ministries and materials of the North American deliverance exponents. Gifford observes, "undoubtedly the U.S. charismatic demonology has traditional African beliefs; but the demonology of Africa's contemporary charismatic churches may well be getting its special character through the power of American literature."[79] What comes out here is that in the attempts to appropriate foreign Christian materials for their use, the proponents of "witchdemology" are concerned about demonization, especially of the African traditional practices, and how to exorcize such demonized individuals, which they believe are threats to their successful living. Yet by putting such emphasis on demonization and deliverance, the proponents of this ministry have been too harsh on other religions and rejected their own cultures.

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[78] E.g., Matt 17:21 (AV); Mark 5:1-20.

[79] Brouwer, Gifford, and Rose, *Exporting the America Gospel*, p. 170.

Many scholars such as Gifford,[80] Dijk,[81] Marshall,[82] Hackett,[83] and Schoffeleers[84] have observed this strong position which neo-Pentecostals have taken. Hackett, for example, describes this position as "somewhat merciless toward "traditional and ancestral beliefs" and practices."[85] Meyer feels the scholars have played down the role which demonology played in the spiritual churches. She writes, "they drew a much stricter boundary between non-Christian religion and Christianity than earlier studies of such churches might suggest.[86] But Meyer's point is weak here, since continuously her works appear to communicate the Pentecostals' "rigid stance towards traditional religion"[87] more than the scholars mentioned.[88]

This paper identifies with those scholars who assess that neo-Pentecostals see more demons than the spiritual churches. The reason is, whereas both accepted the African worldview and dealt with it accordingly, the spiritual churches did not promote the issue of the ancestral curses, complete annihilation from festivals, and family

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[80] Paul Gifford, "Ghanaian Charismatic Churches," *Journal of African Religion* 64:3 (1994), pp. 241-65 (241-46); Brouwer, Gifford, and Rose, *Exporting the America Gospel*, pp. 151-78; Paul Gifford, *African Christianity: Its Public Role* (London: Hurst & Company, 1998).

[81] Rijk A. van Dijk, "From Camp to Encompassment: Discourses of Transsubjectivity in the Ghanaian Pentecostal Diaspora," *Journal of Religion in Africa* 26:4 (1992), pp. 1-25; Rijk A. van Dijk, "Young Puritan Preachers in Post-Independent Malawi," *Africa* 62:4 (1992), pp. 1-25.

[82] Ruth Marshall, "'Power in the Name of Jesus': Social Transformation and Pentecostalism in Western Nigeria, Revisited," in *Legitimacy and the State in Twentieth-Century Africa: Essays in Honour of A H. M. Kirk-Greene*, eds. Terence Ranger and Olufemi Vaughan (London: Macmillan in Association with St. Anthony's College, Oxford, 1993), pp. 213-46; Ruth Marshall-Fratani, "Mediating the Global and the Local in Nigeria Pentecostalism," *Journal of Religion in Africa* 28:3 (1998), pp. 278-315.

[83] Hackett, "Charismatic/Pentecostal Appropriation," pp. 258-77.

[84] Matthew Schoffeleers, "Ritual Healing and Political Acquiescence: The Case of Zionist Churches in Southern Africa," *Africa* 1 (1991), pp. 1-25.

[85] Hackett, "Charismatic/Pentecostal Appropriation," p. 261.

[86] Meyer, *Translating the Devil*, p. 174.

[87] Meyer, "'Delivered from the Powers of Darkness'," p. 244.

[88] Meyer, "'Delivered from the Powers of Darkness'"; Meyer, "Make a Complete Break"; Meyer, "Commodities and Power of Prayer"; Meyer, *Translating the Devil*, pp. 153, 173.

gathering. For these spiritual churches, throwing away idols and stopping the worship of them was enough.[89] But neo-Pentecostals or proponents of "witchdemology" do not only advocate complete abstinence from traditional practices, they also see demons associated with them and "impose" deliverance for all its adherents.

From this perspective, that is the neo-Pentecostals' emphasis on ancestral curses and deliverance, Meyer has postulated that, for neo-Pentecostals, to "become modern individuals" means breaking with the past.[90] By this Meyer identifies with many of the current anthropologists such as Comaroff and Comaroff, Geschiere, Colson and Parish whose works in Africa have demonstrated that "witchcraft is a finely calibrated gauge of the impact of global cultural and economic forces on local relations."[91] That this partly holds for the deliverance ministry in Ghana is seen in the fact that 23% of those who expressed the reasons for visiting prayer centers during my survey included those who wanted success at business or prosperity in another area. Yet make no mistake here, the quest for wholeness (e.g., prosperity, dignity, health, fertility, and security) has its basis in the Ghanaian cultures, yet within the cultures, such a desire was to enable one to support the extended family.[92] Thus Meyer, as well as the above-listed anthropologists, does well to unearth the ultimate outcome of the deliverance ministry, that is,

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[89] See, for example, Christian G. Kwami Baëta, *Prophetism in Ghana: A Study of "Spiritual Churches"* (London: SCM, 1962), pp. 29-30; David M. Beckmann, *Eden Revival: Spiritual Churches in Ghana* (London: Concordia Publishing House, 1975); Robert W. Wyllie, *Spiritism in Ghana: A Study of New Religious Movements* (Missoula: Scholars Press, 1980).

[90] Birgit Meyer, "Beyond Syncreticism: Translation and Diabolization in the Appropriation of Protestantism in Africa," in *Syncretism/Anti-Syncretism: The Politics of Religious Synthesis*, eds. Charles Stewart and Shaw Rosalind (London: Routledge, 1994), pp. 45-68; Meyer, "Make a Complete Break," p. 102; Meyer, "'Delivered from the Powers of Darkness'"; Meyer, *Translating the Devil*, pp. 215-16.

[91] Jean Comaroff and John Comaroff, eds., *Modernity and Its Malcontents: Ritual and Power in Postcolonial Africa* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993), p. xxviii; Peter Geschiere, *The Modernity of Witchcraft: Politics and the Occult in Postcolonial Africa* (London: University Press of Virginia, 1997); Elizabeth Colson, "The Father as Witch," *Africa* 70:3 (2000), pp. 333-58; Parish Jane, "The Dynamics of Witchcraft and Indigenous Shrines among the Akan," *Africa* 69:3 (1999), pp. 427-47.

[92] Kwame Gyekye, *African Cultural Values* (Accra: Sankofa Publishing, 1996), pp. 98-105; Sarpong, *Ghana in Retrospect*, pp. 31-44.

promotion of individualism as against the interest of the traditional extended family system. Nevertheless, this assertion does not take into account the main reason why many clients consult exorcists. As discovered through my fieldwork, the rationale behind consultation is often toward *abisa*, that is, the desire to find the cause of one's problems. Deliverance often becomes a remedy after diagnoses had been made.

Beside this point, the scholars mentioned and others including Kamphausen, Asamoah-Gyadu, and Meyer herself elsewhere see deliverance ministry as a response to modernity, where individual riches and foreign commodities are often seen as of demonic origin, which need to be exorcized.[93] Kamphausen, for example, notes, "the hermeneutical key to the decoding of the Pentecostal symbolic system seems to be implied in the concept of western commodities being of strange origin."[94] Thus "[becoming a] modern individual" cannot be the real concern of the deliverance advocates.

Consequently, there is a paradox in the neo-Pentecostal's concept of "witchdemology." On the one hand, they are seen as carrying the message of the missionaries by considering traditional practices as demonic, and on the other hand, they reject the missionary interpretation that belief in witchcraft and demonology is superstitious, and carry on the practices of anti-witchcraft shrines by exorcising anything which gives them cause to doubt their origins and authentication.[95] Thus "witchdemology" cannot be placed under modernity (or mission Christianity), neither can it be identified as pre-modernity (or traditional religion). Clearly it derives its strength from postmodernity, where part of the traditional religion and part of Christianity can peacefully coexist as a coherent theology.[96] "Witchdemology" is a synthesis of both. That

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[93] Erhard Kamphausen, "Pentecostalism and De-Fetishism: A Ghanaian Case Study" (a paper presented at the International Theological Consultation of the Six Member Churches of the Bremen Mission, Ghana Ho, February 23-26, 1999); Comaroff and Comaroff, *Modernity and Its Malcontents*, pp. xii-xiii; Asamoah-Gyadu, "Renewal Within African Christianity," p. 276; Meyer, "Commodities and Power of Prayer."

[94] Kamphausen, "Pentecostalism and De-Fetishism: A Ghanaian Case Study," p. 9.

[95] It should be mentioned here that this notion does not only demonize western commodities, as sometimes such writings assume, but they also involve traditional things such the making of rasta hair. This is clearly demonstrated in the section, which deals with the demonic doorways.

[96] This assertion becomes apparent if various analyses of postmodernity by some scholars are taken into consideration. For examples, Lyotard highlights fantasy as

postmodernity is a possible way of explaining the acceptability of deliverance within the churches in Ghana is that whereas exorcism had been featuring prominent in the history of the churches in Ghana, it had not come into the limelight.[97] But within the postmodern world where "homogeneous plurality within fragmentation of cultures, traditions, ideologies, forms of life, language games, or life worlds"[98] is a key feature, deliverance with all its contradictions is welcomed. With the emphasis on biblical text,[99] therefore, the desire of the Pentecostals cannot be associated with just "[becoming a] modern individual." Rather it can better be associated with what Cox calls '"primal spirituality," which he explains as the "largely unprocessed nucleus of the psyche in which the unending struggles for a sense of purpose and significance goes on."[100] Cox rightly observes that this is found in Pentecostalism worldwide and also underlies original biblical spirituality.[101] A nuance of Cox's assertion, "the sacred self," is what Csordas proposes as the center

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a major feature, and Barnes sees myth as having acceptable place in this concept. Thus, deliverance with its fantasies and mythologies clearly has its strength from post-modern philosophy; Jean-François Lyotard, "What is Postmodernism," in *Art in Theory: An Anthropology of Changing Ideas*, eds. Charles Harrison and Paul Wood (Oxford: Blackwell, 1990), pp. 1009-1015(1009); Roland Barthes, "Myth Today," in *Art in Theory*, pp. 687-93; Furthermore, writing of current anthropologists such as Geschiere, Jean and John Comaroff show that ambiguity, which is neither African or European, features prominent in modern African witchcraft beliefs. See, for example, Peter Geschiere, *The Modernity of Witchcraft: Politics and the Occult in Postcolonial Africa* (London: University Press of Virginia, 1997), p. 5; Comaroff and Comaroff, *Modernity and Its Malcontents*, p. xii; Peter Geschiere and Cyprian Fisiy, "Domesticating Personal Violence: Witchcraft, Courts and Confessions in Cameroon," *Africa* 64:2 (1994), pp. 323-41; Colson, "The Father as Witch," pp. 333-58.

[97] Top personalities who required deliverance before this era went for it underground. Cf. Omenyo, "The Charismatic Renewal," p. 178.

[98] Philip Sampson, "The Rise of Postmodernity," in *Faith and Modernity*, eds. Philip Sampson, Vinay Samuel, and Chris Sugden (Oxford: Regnum, 1994), pp. 29-57 (41).

[99] When the neo-Pentecostals speak about breaking the ancestral curses, they are talking about breaking the power of the gods that the ancestors worshipped, which, they think, is still causing evil in the present world as a result of the traditional practices. They do so by pointing to quotations such as Exodus 20:4-5 and Psalms 96:5.

[100] Cox, *Fire Heaven*, pp. 60-61, 81.

[101] Cox, *Fire Heaven*, pp. 213, 228, 243.

of charismatic healing and deliverance ministry in North America.[102] Thus Csordas sees an inquiring into the sacred and the search for meaning as the underlying factors of charismatic healing and deliverance ministry. Not coincidentally this sort of "primal spirituality" intersects with the African traditional spirituality. For example, in Ghana it goes well with *abisa* (consultation) and the rituals that may follow**.** Therefore, the theology of "witchdemology" has come to stay among Ghanaian and African Christianity.

3.2 Emancipation

The positive aspects of the theology of "witchdemology" are seen in several ways:

First, it offers its adherents the opportunity to oscillate between the traditional and Christian beliefs and practices. Here people are able to express their fears in witchcraft and other life threatening forces and seek protection from them. For those who think that ancestral spirits are hampering their progress in this modern world, they have the opportunity to be "exorcized." Some people see this way of "deliverance" as cheaper than the expenses incurred in counselling that will be offered in the western concept.[103]

Second, it offers women equal access to places of leadership within the classical Pentecostals, who have refused to ordain women into the pastorate. Women who exhibit some charisma can establish prayer centers.

Third, the proliferation of the deliverance ministry has caused the classical Pentecostals and other churches to reconsider their beliefs and practices. The prayer centers are characterized by many reports of miraculous phenomena as against few in the conventional church services.

Fourth, many new people, ranging from top government officials to the very low in society, join the Pentecostal churches and other churches through the "witchdemology" ministry.

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[102] Csordas, *The Sacred Self*, pp. 15-24.

[103] Cf. Kwasi Addo Sarpong, "The Growth of Prayer Centres in Ghanaian Christianity: The Quest for Health and Wholeness" (M.Th. thesis, Regents Theological College, 2000), pp. 116-18.

3.3 Servitude

The positive side of this theology of "witchdemology" does not, however, preclude a negative assessment of it. The negative aspects include the following:

First, accusations of witchcraft relinquish people from acknowledging the responsibility for their wrongdoing, their sins, and their inadequacies, and putting them on someone else, often a poor person, who becomes the enemy of the whole community.[104] Yet the Pentecostals claim to support the oppressive and the poor in society.[105] Thus Shorter rightly sees witchcraft accusation as "auto-salvation or self-justification."[106]

Second, the teachings on witchcraft and demons, coupled with testimonies from "exorcized witches" subject the congregant to pressures quite disproportionate to the phenomena described. Thus people are psychologically led to confess antisocial behaviors and nocturnal issues which baffle their understandings as witchcraft activities. These confessions can attract stigmatization from other members of society, and thus instead of deliverance and healing leading to liberation, the physical and psychological conditions of such people worsened and in extreme cases lead to death.

Third, many of the symptoms taken as witchcraft or spirit possession can be explained away by medical sciences.[107] In such cases repeated deliverances worsen the person's condition.

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[104] For example, although during my fieldwork, male who claimed that they were practicing witchcraft outnumbered female (eight against two), victims of exorcism are often women, children (especially girls) and maids.

[105] See Hanna Stewart-Gambino and Everlet Wilson, "Latin America Pentecostals: In Stereotypes and New Challenges," in *Power, Politics, and Pentecost in Latin America*, eds. Edward L. Cleary and Hanna Steward-Gambino (Oxford: Westview Press, 1998), pp. 227-46 (240); Robert M. Cecil, Jr., "Pentecostals and Social Ethics," *Pneuma* 9 (1987), pp. 103-107; Cheryl Bridges Johns, *Pentecostal Formation: A Pedagogy among the Poor* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993), pp. 46-61, 138-40; Samuel Solivan, *The Spirit, Pathos and Liberation: Toward an Hispanic Pentecostal Theology* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998).

[106] Aylward Shorter, *Jesus and the Witchdoctor: An Approach to Healing and Wholeness* (London: Orbis Books, 1985), p. 96.

[107] For examples, seizures may be symptoms for epilepsy. Personality changes can be psychological malfunctions or mental disorders such as hysteria, schizophrenia, or paranoia. Habitual behaviors, such as sexual desire, anger

Fourth, the socio-economic factor in Africa causes many people to begin prayer centers just as means of financial support.[108] Since there is no training, certification, or formal recognition from a body of Christians required to begin a prayer center, charlatans and the unemployed who have strong personalities can easily claim spiritual encounters and begin centers with a profit motive in mind. Linked with this socio-economic factor are the deliverance teachings at the centers, which consider health and wholeness as the result of obedience to biblical principles on blessing, to the neglect of biblical principle of suffering (e.g., 2 Cor 12:7-12; Luke 13:1-5; Rom 8:35-39).

Fifth, by the demonization of all other faith apart from the Evangelical/Pentecostal's, in this pluralistic world, neo-Pentecostals deter healthy ecumenism and often cause unnecessary tension between Pentecostalism and other faiths.

Sixth, the process of deliverance which often involves breaking links with families eventually divides the traditional extended family system and promotes individualism.

Seventh, the theology of "witchdemology" reinforces the "primitive animistic" belief system that keeps communities in servile fearfulness and hampers progress. During my fieldwork there were many instances where people had stopped building houses in their hometowns for fear of witches.

Eighth, the uncritical approach adopted by both proponents and adherents of this ministry encourage dubious people to deceive others with their exaggerated or fabricated testimonies. People who attempt to challenge some of the testimonies are branded as sceptics. Beside, it is assumed that theologians cannot understand "spiritual things," and by implication cannot teach such people. The major problem with this is that such exorcists can lead genuine people to doom, just like the massacre of over 780 members of the Church of the Ten Commandments in Uganda in the year 2000 and other cult-inspired deaths elsewhere in the world.[109]

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tantrums, and extreme quietness may be temperamental traits or associated with past memories.

[108] This was very evident in my fieldwork as two of the center leaders interviewed claimed their call to the profession after they had lost their jobs.

[109] "Cult Massacre," *Metro* (local paper in Birmingham), July 21, 2000 puts the death toll at 780.

4. Conclusion

Deliverance in contemporary Africa has been shown to be based on the persistent belief in witchcraft and other spirit forces which has culminated in the formation of a theology called "witchdemology." Using Ghanaian situations as an example, it has been demonstrated that the theology of "witchdemology" is based on the synthesis of both African traditional religion and Christianity. Important aspects of this theology were seen as the attempts to identify and exorcize demonic forces in people' lives (whether in an individual's life or at a corporate level) in order for them to succeed in the contemporary world. The complex problems that one encounters in evaluating this theology of "witchdemology" are evident after considering both the positive and the negative effects.[110] On the one hand, it takes the culture of the people into consideration, by dealing with related beliefs and threatening fears in their newly acquired faith, through a synthesis of both old and new patterns. As Meyer concludes, "in contrast to the 'mission-church Christianity'…[it]…offers the possibility of approaching in the safe context of deliverance what people seek to leave behind but still disturbs them."[111] Gifford also concludes that deliverance is relatively harmless.[112] From this positive assessment, then, the theology of "witchdemology" represents a remarkable contribution to a paradigm shift in Christianity in Africa. In a way, it is a further attempt to contextualize the gospel to the African people, in addition to the efforts made by the independent churches and the exponents of African theology.

Nevertheless, assessment of the negative effects makes this ministry quite alarming. Its preoccupation with demons and witches shows that it is an affirmation of the old order. They appear to have fallen into the weaknesses of the anti-witchcraft shrines and some of the African independent churches. Similar to what Sundkler observes about the Bantu prophets in South Africa, their assertions and promises are "more high sounding than they are sound."[113] The approach may fit well into the African cultural milieu, but the emphasis is a threat to the progress of Christianity and modernity in Africa. In spite of rapid growth by their

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[110] Cf. M. L. Daneel, "Exorcism as a Means of Combating Wizardry: Liberation or Enslavement," *Missionalia* (1989), pp. 220-47 (240).

[111] Meyer, *Translating the Devil*, p. 216.

[112] Gifford, *African Christianity*, pp. 107-108.

[113] Bengt G. M. Sundkler, *Bantu Prophets in South Africa*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1961), p. 236.

approach, they cannot bring the African out of the fear of witchcraft and other supernatural powers. This does not mean that this ministry should be suppressed. The discussion so far reveals that this ministry has been progressive among the African peoples. Suppression has never been successful. Rather this is to suggest that it is an incomplete ministry, which needs theological analysis of the spirit-world to complement it. This theological analysis, therefore, needs to be the concern of African Pentecostal theologians.

[*AJPS* 5:1 (2002), pp. 135-153]

THE SOUTH AND THE LATIN AMERICAN PARADIGM OF THE PENTECOSTAL MOVEMENT[1]

Miguel Alvarez

> They are from the South…do not hold them back. They are His witnesses so that others may hear and say, "It is true!"[2]

Introduction

This study represents an attempt to identify some of the new paradigms and opportunities generated recently in the expansion of the Pentecostal movement in Latin America. It also attempts to identify some scholars who have contributed significantly to the definition and identity of Pentecostalism in the area. At the same time, the study proposes a descriptive and reflective analysis of emerging contemporary issues such as church growth and the mobilization and contextualization of the gospel within the Latin American culture. Finally, it explores certain opportunities afforded by some of the newly identified paradigms related to the Pentecostal mission of the church, its theological and ministerial formation and its social concerns.

1. A Researcher's Account

Recent research has generated an earnest reflection upon the role of Pentecostals in the body of Christ in Latin America. A good example of

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[1] An earlier version of this study was presented at the International Symposium on Non-Western Pentecostalism, Anaheim, CA, USA, in May 2001.

[2] This an approximation of the author to the words of Isaiah 43:5-7, "I will say to the north, 'Give them up!' and to the south, 'Do not hold them back! Bring my sons from afar and my daughters from the ends of the earth'" (NIV).

this is Harvey Cox's "sympathetic" book, *Fire from Heaven: The Rise of Pentecostal Spirituality and the Reshaping of Religion in the Twenty-first Century*,[3] that has made an enormous contribution among respected scholars in the West. This work started a debate on the role of Pentecostalism in the third millennium. His report on Latin American Pentecostalism is significant because it has opened the eyes of those who are especially interested in critical reflection, particularly in the broader Latin American context.

Other scholars have made important contributions, like Juan Sepulveda, Norberto Saracco, Manuel Gaxiola, Luis Segreda and C. René Padilla.[4] In addition, Latin American scholars frequently cite the works of Emilio Willems, Christian Lalive D'Espinay, Francisco Rolim and Jean Pierre Bastian.[5] Willems works include *Followers of the New Faith and* his article, "Protestantism and Cultural Change in Brazil and Chile."[6] These studies contributed to such an open discussion that *Time* even as early as 1962 began to call Latin American Pentecostalism "the fastest growing church in the western hemisphere."[7]

Another scholar who has earned the respect of most Latin American thinkers is Samuel Escobar. He has written many important studies on a large variety of topics ranging from ecumenical organizations, sociological and anthropological studies, and has published them in a broad range of academic publications. However, for Escobar and other scholars the new proscenium for scholarship in Latin America started in

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[3] Harvey Cox, *Fire from Heaven: The Rise of Pentecostal Spirituality and the Reshaping of Religion in the Twenty-first Century* (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1995).

[4] See C. René Padilla, ed., *Bases Bíblicas de la Misión: Perspectivas Latinoamericanas* (Grand Rapids, MI: Nueva Creación, 1998), pp. 5-8.

[5] An extensive survey on Latin American Pentecostalism can be found on Jorge Soneira, "Los Estudios Sociológicos sobre el Pentecostalismo en América Latina," *Sociedad y Religion* 8 (March 1991), pp. 29-47.

[6] See Emilio Willems, *Followers of the New Faith: Culture Change and the Rise of Protestantism in Brazil and Chile* (Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press, 1967). Also see Emilio Willems, "Protestantism and Cultural Change in Brazil and Chile," in *Religion, Revolution, and Reform*, eds. William V. D'Antonio and Frederick B. Pike (New York: Praeger, 1964), pp. 33-38.

[7] "The Fastest Growing Church in the Western Hemisphere," *Time* (November 2, 1962), pp. 55-56. See also "The Pentecostal Breakthrough," *America* (January 31, 1970), p. 42.

1990.[8] Edward L. Cleary, in a recent article, "Latin American Pentecostalism," points out that the first comprehensive studies on Latin American Pentecostalism and politics appeared in 1990.[9] Cleary also implies that these were the first documents that appealed to a wide readership in their nature and content.[10] Among others there are two outstanding works done by David Stoll, *Is Latin American Turning Protestant? The Politics of Evangelical Growth* and David Martin's *Tongues of Fire: The Explosion of Protestantism in Latin America.*[11]

A number of other scholars have contributed to this new discussion and have offered different views and opinions concerning the challenges and opportunities for the Pentecostal church in Latin America.[12]

Bernardo Campos, a young scholar, introduced the concept of "pentecostality,"[13] which he defines as "the universal experience that expresses the Pentecostal event" (*el acontecimiento Pentecostal*)—the key event that characterizes the life of those who identify themselves with the historical Pentecostal revival. Campos also sees the different historical Pentecostal events as only historical and different

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[8] See Samuel Escobar, "The Promise and Precariousness of Latin American Protestantism," in *Coming of Age: Protestantism in Contemporary Latin America*, ed. Daniel R. Miller (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1994), pp. 26-38 (31).

[9] Edward L. Cleary, "Latin American Pentecostalism" in *The Globalization of Pentecostalism: A Religion Made to Travel*, eds. Murray W. Dempster, Byron D. Klaus and Douglas Peterson (Oxford: Regnum Books, 1999) pp. 127-45 (133).

[10] Cleary, "Latin American Pentecostalism," p. 133.

[11] See David Stoll, *Is Latin America Turning Protestant? The Politics of Evangelical Growth* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1990), and David Martin *Tongues of Fire: The Explosion of Protestantism in Latin America* (Cambridge: Basil Blackwell, 1990).

[12] Some noticeable works among Latin American scholars include Virginia Garrard-Burnett and David Stoll, eds., *Rethinking Protestantism in Latin America* (Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 1993), and Cecil M. Robeck, Jr., "Selected Bibliography on Latin American Pentecostalism," *Pneuma* 13:1 (Spring 1991), pp. 193-97. See also Russell P. Spittler, "Are Pentecostals and Charismatics Fundamentalists? A Review of American Uses of These Categories," in *Charismatic Christianity as a Global Culture*, ed. Karla Poewe (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 1994), pp. 103-16.

[13] See Bernardo Campos, *De La Reforma Protestante A La Pentecostalidad de la Iglesia: Debate Sobre el Pentecostalismo en America Latina* (Quito, Ecuador: Ediciones CLAI, 1997), pp. 90-106.

manifestations of that pentecostality.[14] Campos also contends that pentecostality must be understood as "a pluralistic and dispersed movement." Christologically, pentecostality is the "strength of the Spirit" that makes possible the church as the body of Christ and as the people of God in the concrete history of humankind.[15] And in principle, pentecostality transcends any historical Pentecostal event (experience) that would claim to be the unique model of Pentecost, denying to others the uniqueness of their own Pentecostal experience.[16]

Another young Latin American Pentecostal scholar is Darío López. He has introduced an urgent message seeking to make the Pentecostal experience relevant to the marginalized people in their deepest human integrity.[17] He argues that Pentecostals are now facing a new historical and formidable task. The fact that most Pentecostal churches in Latin America are located in marginal areas tends to belie the church's commitment to promote and defend the dignity of all human beings. López pleads for a change of mentality to one that will seek as its final result the spiritual and social transformation of the poor and marginalized.

2. A Look at the Stereotype Portrait of Latin Americans

To understand Latin American Pentecostalism will require the revision of traditional stereotypes that have been established historically, specifically of what most scholars identify as a typical person from Latin America. It is well known that Pentecostals in the region comprise a vast community with different expressions across the continent. Hence, the

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[14] Campos, *De La Reforma Protestante A La Pentecostalidad de La Iglesia*, pp. 90-106.

[15] See also Bernardo Campos, "In the Power of the Spirit: Pentecostalism, Theology and Social Ethics," in *In The Power of the Spirit: The Pentecostal Challenge to Historic Churches in Latin America*, eds. Benjamin F. Gutiérrez and Dennis A. Smith (Guatemala City, Guatemala: CELEP, 1996), pp. 41-50 (50).

[16] Campos, *De La Reforma Protestante A La Pentecostalidad de La Iglesia*, pp. 90-91.

[17] Dario López, *Pentecostalimo y Transformación social: Más allá de los Estereotipos, las Críticas se Enfrentan con los Hechos* (Buenos Aires, Argentina: Ediciones Kairós, 2000), p. 29; also *Los Evangélicos y Los Derechos Humanos: La Experiencia Social del Concilio Nacional Evangélico del Perú 1980-1982* (Lima, Perú: Centro Evangélico de Misiología Andino-Amazónica, 1998), pp. 65-75.

movement has been affected historically by a rich and multicolored tapestry of race, language and geography including history and politics. William D. Taylor described very well the symbolic changes in the basic image of Latin American people in his book *Crisis and Hope in Latin America*.[18] Taylor reflects on this generational transformation saying:

> The traditional image of a man [was] asleep under his sombrero; with that man's guerrilla son, having tensely grasped a machine gun in recent years, but perhaps the grandson today holds a cellular phone to keep contact with his own business.[19]

Moreover, Houtart and Pin remind us that in recent years Latin American Pentecostals lived in the midst of a spawning ground of liberation theology. This approach unsuccessfully sought to combine Marxist ideology and Christian theology in a way that both fascinates and repels, but that now is facing its own crisis, due to the collapse of European Marxism at the end of the so-called "Cold War" at the close of the twentieth century.[20]

In recent years, Latin American Pentecostals have lived in a region in crisis—a continent where political, economic, cultural, social and spiritual factors conspired to create instability, uncontrolled change, violence and chaos. But they have also been participants in a scenario of God's providence; with Pentecostals on the move, evangelizing and establishing new churches mostly in remote and marginalized areas.[21] They have been committed in their own hermeneutics, to obedience to the great commission of Jesus Christ.

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[18] Emilio Antonio A. Núñez and William D. Taylor, *Crisis and Hope in Latin America* (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 1996), p. 3.

[19] Núñez and Taylor, *Crisis and Hope in Latin America*, p. 3.

[20] For a better understanding of the Latin American theology and its impact on the religious circles of the region, see Francois Houtart and Emile Pin, *The Church and the Latin American Revolution*, trans. Gilbert Barth (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1965).

[21] See John J. Considine, M.M. ed., *The Religious Dimension in the New Latin America* (Notre Dame, IN: Fides Publishers, 1966). This work exemplifies the pre-liberation theology analysis of Latin America that favored social transformation through the political process.

3. Pentecostals' Participation in the Expansion of the Church

For a better understanding of the role Pentecostals have played in the development of the Christian faith in Latin America, it is necessary to review those historical facts that eventually may be summarized as an account of historical strengths. The following is intended as a description of some of the key characteristics that the movement has exhibited in recent years.

With the exception of some classical denominations from North America,[22] most indigenous Latin American Pentecostals are large, self-supporting, self-governed and self-multiplying churches.[23] Hence, the church is rooted among the poor masses, while most of the historical Protestant and Evangelical churches are confined to middle-class enclaves.[24]

Moreover, twenty-first century Pentecostals face problems of leadership, education, division and social alienation. It will take the action of the local people as they assume their responsibility to transform

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[22] Some of the most influential classical North American Pentecostal denominations in Latin America are the Assemblies of God and the Church of God. Both denominations have grown numerically, but their constituency eventually has become dependent on the mother church in North America. Very little have they done to develop grass-root leadership committed to the social, political, economic and cultural challenges of the region. Concerning this issue, see Carmelo E. Alvarez, "Historic Panorama of Pentecostalism in Latin America and the Caribbean," in *In The Power of the Spirit. The Pentecostal Challenge to Historic Churches in Latin America*, eds. Benjamin F. Gutiérrez and Dennis A. Smith (Guatemala City, Guatemala: CELEP, 1996), pp. 29-40 (35).

[23] Very similar to the three-self core of values of the Chinese church, but within a different context and methodologies. A couple of works can be found on this subject: Philip Lauri Wickeri, *Seeking the Common Ground: Protestant Christianity, the Three-Self Movement, and China's United Front* **(**Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1988). Raymond Fung, trans. ed., *Households of God on China's Soil* **(**Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1983).

[24] Exact figures on Pentecostal churches for all countries of Latin America do not exist yet. This data comes from different sources, see William R. Read, Víctor M. Monterroso and Harmon A. Johnson, eds., *Latin American Church Growth* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1969, pp. 313-25; Also Patrick Johnston, *Operation World* (Carlisle: OM Publishing, 1993) p. 65; and Emilio A. Núñez and William D. Taylor, *Crisis and Hope in Latin America*, p. 112. Also updated percentages and figures can be found in Population Reference Bureau, *1995 World Population Data sheet* (Washington, DC: US Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, 1995).

themselves and their communities through the living experience of the gospel. There is no doubt that they have a significant place in the future of Christianity in Latin America, but these indicators uncover some of their typical characteristics.

In connection with the above, Berg and Pretiz have offered several indicators that identify the core values of Pentecostals in Latin America,[25] with each one playing its own role in their conversion process and Christian commitment. Notice that these characteristics are typical of the Latin American context, although some similarities may be found in other regions of the world.

3.1 A Background of Christian Knowledge Already Acquired in the Roman Catholic Tradition

Many Latin American Pentecostal believers today converted from nominal Roman Catholicism. One of the reasons Latin American Pentecostals have been very fundamental in their theology is their background of Christian knowledge first acquired in the Catholic tradition.[26] Although some may disagree on this analysis, the truth is that most Pentecostals built their theology upon their previous knowledge of the Christian faith by way of the Roman Catholic Church.

3.2 A Worldview That Accepts the Supernatural and Is Not Over-rationalized

Latin American Pentecostals accept the baptism in the Holy Spirit as an event that unveils a new reality. The believer is radically reoriented to experience a new relationship with God and is empowered for effective service. The different gifts of the Holy Spirit are expected to operate in the life of the faithful, who are enabled either to suffer for the cause of Christ, or simply experience the power of renunciation in order to advance the establishment of the kingdom of God. Most Pentecostals envision a new-world order where justice and peace will be

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[25] Mike Berg and Paul Pretiz, *The Gospel People* (Monrovia, CA: MARC/LAM, 1992), pp. 118-20. See also Stoll, *Is Latin America Turning Protestant?*, p. 22; Martin, *Tongues of Fire*, p. 9; and Guillermo Cook, *Let My People Live: Faith and Struggle in Central America* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1988) p. 65-70

[26] Cf. Enrique Dussel, *A History of the Church in Latin America: Colonialism to Liberation* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1981).

experienced,[27] however they believe this will not occur until the consummation of the work of Christ when he returns.

3.3 Disenchantment with the Roman Catholic Church and Search for Other Alternatives

Latin American Pentecostals identify the Roman Catholic Church as a fallen religious system. Most of them resent the fact that the Catholic Church kept them, for centuries, alienated from the new experience they have now discovered. The Catholic Church also represents, in their mind, an agent of alienation, oppression and compromise with the demonic powers of the world.[28] The spirit of Pentecost is the "new wine" that must be preserved in "new wineskins" in order to keep it sound and effective (Matt 9:17). For Pentecostals in Latin America to witness is to unveil the truth to those who have remained deceived or neglected by an obsolete religious system.[29] Conversion then occurs when the individual understands the gospel as revealed by the scripture and the Holy Spirit, and joins the Pentecostal family followed by the new paradigm of the community of believers and the life in the Spirit.

3.4 Expression of Religious Liberty in a Religious Space Not Used to Pluralism

The twenty-first century has found Pentecostals in Latin America with a great deal of freedom to practice their faith. More than ever people express their respect for Pentecostal teachings and practices. They are now facing the need to explore other fields, as the demand for expansion requires it. Thus a new attitude toward education, Christian service and church life must be developed.[30] The church will now focus on new

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[27] See Dario López, *Pentecostalimo y Transformación Social: Más allá de los Estereotipos, las Críticas se Enfrentan con los Hechos* (Buenos Aires, Argentina: Ediciones Kairós, 2000), p. 29

[28] Cf. David M. Howard, "Great Things to Come," *Christianity Today* (April 6, 1992), p. 39. See also andrés Tapia, "Why is Latin America Turning Protestant?" *Christianity Today* (April 6, 1992), pp. 28-29.

[29] Andrés Tapia, "Why is Latin America Turning Protestant?" *Christianity Today* (April 6, 1992), pp. 28-29.

[30] See Tito Paredes, "The Many Faces of Los Evangélicos," *Christianity Today* (April 6, 1992) pp. 34-35.

possibilities in order to give way to adjustment in a rapidly changing society.

3.5 Poverty and Insecurity about the Future Which Lead to a Search for Ultimate Answers

It is no secret that Pentecostals in Latin America come from the most marginalized segments of their society. The movement was born in the midst of the poor masses and it represents their voice in articulating the revelation and hope that the Holy Spirit has given to those who had no other voice. In Latin America, Pentecostalism is the revolution of the poor. For them there cannot be a dichotomizing between theory and praxis in a world of poverty and insecurity.[31] Here theory arises from the praxis to further praxis that eventually leads to change and to the building of a different society. It is the community of faith that determines the destiny and ultimate answers that both edify the believers and send a prophetic message to the world to find the answers in the incarnated Pentecostal Jesus.

3.6 The Use of Mass Media to Communicate the Gospel

Most Pentecostals in Latin America do not have direct access to the mass media, however some of the most influential indigenous organizations have begun to use it with dramatic results. The media serves as an instrument of both education and mobilization, and the result is the experience of significant numerical church growth.

3.7 A Church Structure Providing Lay Participation at All Levels

One of the primary characteristics of the Pentecostal church in Latin America is its emphasis on lay participation in the structure of the church. This is very unlike the structure of the Catholic Church and some of the North American born Pentecostal denominations in which the hierarchy has relegated the laity to a very low or insignificant participation in the ministry.[32] On the contrary, the indigenous

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[31] For more information on the integration of theory and practice in Pentecostalism, see Cheryl Bridges Johns, "Pentecostals and the Praxis of Liberation: A proposal for Subversive Theological Education," *Transformation* 11:1 (January/March, 1994), pp. 11-15 (14).

[32] Campos, *De la Reforma Protestante a la Pentecostalidad de la Iglesia*, pp. 47-50.

Pentecostal Churches have adopted a different attitude and fully embraced the laity in the structure of the church. On this issue Cheryl Bridges Johns has rightly stated, "the active presence of the Holy Spirit 'in the Pentecostal congregation' calls for a radical balance in ministry of males and females, black and whites, rich and poor."[33]

3.8 Mobilization of All Believers in Obedience to Christ

Pentecostals have sought to fulfil the truth of 1 Peter 2:9. The priesthood of all believers becomes the attitude, the objective and the ultimate goal of Christian service. Most prominent Pentecostal leaders in Latin America are lay people. Some of them are professionals who left their field of expertise to dedicate completely to the ministry. Most of them are practitioners in the ministry and did not attend any formal theological school at all. However their success is evident, they have been able to establishment mega-churches across the continent. This is in itself a phenomenon worthy of further study.

3.9 Faith in God's Power to Perform Miracles and in the Gifts of the Spirit

When supernatural phenomena is experienced, Pentecostals are sure that they are under the leadership of the Holy Spirit. Signs and wonders are portents that confirm the presence and the power of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer.[34] Thus their hearts glow with expectation and conviction that this kind of experience is the revival that leads to the fulfillment of God's promises before Jesus returns. The gifts of the Holy Spirit are both pursued and exercised for the benefit of the community of faith and as a sign for the unbelievers.

3.10 Contextualizing of the Gospel and Church Community

The baptism in the Holy Spirit fills the believer with the love of God for lost humanity, and makes her or him able to leave home, friends and all to share the gospel with his immediate community. When the believer receives the Pentecostal power she or he is enabled to carry the gospel to the hungry, the poor, the needy and the lost. This thrust emerges as a

[33] Johns, "Pentecostals and the Praxis of Liberation," p. 11.

[34] More information of this subject can be found in L. Grant McClung, Jr, "'Try to Get Them Saved': Revisiting the Paradigm of an Urgent Pentecostal Missiology," in *The Globalization of Pentecostalism*, pp. 30-37 (31).

natural consequence of the Pentecostal experience and the message is quit straightforward, "solo Cristo salva."

However, along with their strengths, Latin American Pentecostals have observed their own weaknesses. There are notable shortcomings, some of which most of them acknowledge. The lack of well-trained leadership is noticeable. They also bear the problem of numerical growth without the proper biblical teaching and discipleship. In some areas they also tend to center too much power in authoritarian leaders. Therefore, an artificial spirituality may develop, particularly in the charismatic circles. In addition, their liturgy, if there is one, becomes redundant, and there is also a tendency to develop a spirit of legalism in the Christian life.[35]

At this point, if Pentecostals want to continue to experience a sustained church growth, they will have to deal with the above weaknesses, objectively. A qualified training system of leadership, taking all of these elements into serious consideration, must be developed. The truth of the matter is that this process should have been already underway and strategically planned.

4. Emerging Contemporary Issues

It is estimated that Latin America has about fifty-three million evangelicals out of a population of over 400 million.[36] God's people are on the move, evangelizing, establishing new churches, developing new

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[35] Some characteristics and weaknesses of the Pentecostal faith are observed in two classic studies by Emilio Willems, *Followers of the New Faith: Culture Change and the Rise of Protestantism in Brazil and Chile* (Nashville: Vanderbilt University, 1967) and Christian Lalive D'Espinay, *Haven of the Masses: A Study of the Pentecostal Movement in Chile*, trans. Marjorie Sandle (London: Lutterworth, 1969). An Evangelical perspective comes from the writings of the late Orlando Costas, *Christ Outside the Gate: Mission Beyond Christendom* (Maryknoll: Orbis, 1982); *The Church and its Mission: A Shattering Critique* (Wheaton: Il: Tyndale House, 1974); and *Theology of the Crossroads in Latin America* (Amsterdam: Editions Rodopoi, 1976). For information on Brazil, see William R. Read and Frank A. Ineson, *Brazil 1980: The Protestant Handbook* (Monrovia: CA: MARC, 1973).

[36] Some estimates surge to sixty-five million out of which seventy-five percent are Pentecostals. Samuel Escobar and other trusted observers rated the general Protestant population in Latin America at forty million. Of these, 75-90% are Pentecostals. See Cleary, "Latin American Pentecostalism," p. 134. See also David B. Barrett, ed., *World Christian Encyclopedia* (Nairobi, Kenya: Oxford University Press, 1982), pp. 768-76.

sensitivities to the social implications of the gospel, and increasingly involved in the political arenas (with mixed results). Pentecostals are committed to self-theologizing and are also obedient to their share of a globalized mission vision.[37] Indeed this is an optimistic account of what the Holy Spirit has been doing among Pentecostals in the Latin American continent.

However, the word of God does not guarantee to the church that peace, prosperity, power and privilege are necessary to her growth. On the contrary, Christ promised that his church would be built in spite of the conflictive forces of Hades. Latin American Pentecostals have lived this reality, and from a context of poverty and powerlessness God has blessed them.[38] Ironically, in the near future, due to internal and external factors, they will face a growing secularism and materialism that may shake their attitude and core of values. In recent years Pentecostals have imported attitudes, habits and leadership styles from the mother churches in North America. They are experiencing the current influence of the Charismatic and neo-Charismatic movements in the midst of a fast changing society. These are some of the newly arising questions. Will this context eat up and neutralize their Pentecostal core of values? Are we seeing a new and dangerous triumphalist[39] "Pentecostal subculture?"

What is more significant is that the growth of the Latin American church is taking place on multiple fronts, with congregations of many denominations growing very fast. "I would say that the church has grown more in the last two years than in the last twenty," says Jose Minay, a

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[37] Núñez and Taylor, *Crisis and Hope in Latin America*, p. 4; see also Daniel E. Grey, "Revive, Argentina!" *Eternity* (July-August 1987), pp. 22-26 (24), and Loren Entz, "Challenges to Abou's Jesus," *Evangelical Missions Quarterly* 1:1 (January 1986), pp. 46-50 (46). On emerging contemporary issues in Latin America, see *Paz y Esperanza*, Bulletin of the Peace and Hope Commission of the National Council of Peru (1985), and Stephen Sywulka, "A Latin American Evangelical View of Base Communities," *Transformation* 3:3 (July-September 1986), pp. 20-32 (29).

[38] On the subject of contextualization, one excellent book is by John R. W. Stott and Robert T. Coote, eds., *Gospel and Culture* (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 1979).

[39] I have inserted the word "triumphalist Pentecostal subculture" deliberately. My purpose is to insert a question mark to make Pentecostals think on their attitude towards success and prosperity. The last part of the twentieth century witnessed the development of a dangerous prosperity-oriented mentality, particularly among the emerging prosperity Charismatic geared movement born in prosperous America.

Pentecostal leader whose churches in Chile are growing at forty-five percent at year.

Even the Argentine revival has had its own critics. There are those who are concerned over theology—the validity of supernatural manifestations and practical issues—the desperate shortage of equipped leaders to handle the growth. Yet the hottest and toughest opposition comes from the secular and the Catholic press. Moreover, the false cults are also exploiting the situation, particularly the Mormons who have already sent thousands of new missionaries across the continent. The Jehovah's Witnesses are also quite active.[40] Even spiritism imported from Brazil flourishes in the climate of spiritual hunger and personal emptiness.

Regarding these issues, theologians Samuel Escobar and Guillermo Cook have interacted at length with the broad gamut of matter concerning the social and spiritual life in Latin America that of course includes Pentecostals.[41] Escobar's essays have appeared in a variety of journals and interviews, and his perspective is highly valued in sociological and religious circles. He combines an unusual insight into sociological and religious phenomenology and dynamics, while remaining faithful to the scripture as well as his Latin American roots.[42] Cook, on the other hand, has recently edited *New Face of the Church in Latin America: Between Tradition and Change,* a very profitable series of essays ranging across the ecclesiastical, theological and thematic spectrum of the continent. Cook argues, "the new face of the Church in

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[40] This data can be found in a variety of sources, but primarily from William R. Read, Víctor M. Monterroso, and Harmon A. Johnson, eds., *Latin American Church Growth* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1969) pp. 313-25.

[41] See for instance, Guillermo Cook, "Growing Pains," *Christianity Today* (April 6, 1992), pp. 36-37.

[42] The following are some of the articles written on this subject by Samuel Escobar, "A New Reformation," *Christianity Today* (April 6, 1992), pp. 30-34; Escobar, "Protestantism Explodes," *Christian History* 11:3 (1992), pp. 42-45. This issue of the journal carries a heading, "What Happened When Columbus and Christianity Collided with the Americas?" Also Escobar, "Mission in Latin America: An Evangelical Perspective," *Missiology: An International Review* 20:2 (April 1992), pp. 241-53; Escobar, "Catholicism and National Identity in Latin America," *Transformation* 8:3 (July/September 1991), pp. 22-30; and Escobar, "Latin America," in *Toward the 21st Century in Christian Mission,* eds. James M. Philips and Robert T. Coote (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993), pp. 125-38.

Latin America is also largely a Pentecostal story." However, Cook acknowledges that there is no single face to the Latin American church.[43]

4.1 Rapid Numerical Growth

Pentecostal growth in Latin America comprises 75% of the total evangelical growth rate in the continent. The statistics are clear, and although one may quibble over the figures, the record demonstrates unprecedented church growth.[44] While the general population grows at an annual rate of 2.2%, Pentecostals grow at a rate twice that and in some countries three times as fast. This truly is a movement of the Spirit of God. It is also growth with few financial resources, mostly lay participation, relatively few paid pastors, and the general scarcity of formal preparation of those pastors. However, these elements may not continue to be effective in the future as the Pentecostal faith faces a newly and heavily informed world. Perhaps the top priority of the Pentecostal movement of Latin America today is the right equipping of its leadership for the next generation.

Among the most renowned Latin American scholars, Samuel Escobar has suggested some indicators that have made Latin American Pentecostals grow very fast numerically:[45]

- ? Spiritual facts: the free action of the Spirit,
- ? Anthropological reasons: hunger for God,
- ? Sociological elements: they provide identity, and a sense of shelter, security and community in a hostile world,
- ? Pastoral methodology: lay participation,
- ? Psychological and cultural factions: freedom of worship and emotion, and the use of folk music.[46]

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[43] Guillermo Cook, ed., *New Face of the Church in Latin America: Between Tradition and Change* (Maryknoll: Orbis, 1994), pp. xiii, 268.

[44] All statistics are estimates, plus or minus twenty percent. The total ranges between thirty-seven to forty-five million. We rather err on the side of conservative figures. See Thomas S. Giles, "Forty Million and Counting," *Christianity Today* (April 6, 1992), p. 32.

[45] An account of these elements is found in Samuel Escobar, "Latin America: An Evangelical Perspective," *Missiology: An International Review* 20:2 (April 1992), pp. 241-53 (247); and John Maust, "Revival in Zacatecas," *World Pulse* 29:2 (January 20, 1994), pp. 1, 5.

[46] Escobar, "Latin America: An Evangelical Perspective," p. 247.

These elements have been so successfully observed at Pentecostal congregations, that Protestant, Evangelical and even the Catholic Church have adopted them in their community life and liturgy, particularly in praise and worship. Truly Pentecostals have tremendously influenced the life and ministry of Christianity in Latin America.

4.2 From a Mission Field to a Mission Force

A Pentecostal missionary, Rudy Girón, prophetically stated that the church in Latin America, as well as the church in the two-thirds world has come of age and eventually shifted "from being a mission field to becoming a mission force."[47] The thrust for world evangelization, on account of the end of the second millennium, also mobilized the Latin American Pentecostals. Estimates suggest that at least three thousand Pentecostal missionaries from Latin America became engaged in cross-cultural service.[48] Moreover, their Latin congregations were able to send most of these cross-cultural missionaries. Giron highlighted this action as a new development. Latin America has become a "mission force." Pentecostals knew this, and they mobilized themselves, particularly as cross-cultural missionaries. However, they still lacked the desired formal missionary training, and this is their immediate challenge as they proceed to reach out to other cultures in the new millennium.

[47] This statement was delivered at the Church of God International Conference in Cleveland, TN, in August 1997. Rudy Girón (Guatemala) serves as president of the Eurasian Theological Seminary in Moscow, Russia and he is former president of COMIBAM, the largest missionary organization of Ibero-America born out of the Iberoamerican Missions Congress (COMIBAM), celebrated in Sao Paulo in November 1987. The emphasis of COMIBAM has not been so much evangelism within one's culture—but rather cross-cultural evangelism and church planting both across Latin America's thousands of cultural lines as well as to the entire world. Regarding this issue see, C. René Padilla, "Toward the Globalization and Integrity of Mission," in *Mission in the Nineteen 90's*, eds. Gerald H. Anderson, James B. Phillips, and Robert T. Coote (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1991), pp. 30-32.

[48] Patrick Johnstone, *Operation World* (Carlisle: OM Publishing, 1993), pp. 62, 648. See the continental report on Latin America, as well as those of individual nations in the region.

4.3 Theological Formation

After the Latin American era of revolution and the rise of the Internet information and communication system, Pentecostals are learning to network as individuals and as institutions for the cause of the kingdom. They have also engaged in higher education in their pursuit toward common concerns and the cause of excellence in Christian service. It is also known that some Latin American Pentecostals have developed educational programs and projects of global scope. However the truth of the matter is that Pentecostals are experiencing a shortage of biblically and theologically trained leaders. In the providence of God, however, this picture is changing, due to the participation of more Pentecostal leaders in a number of international forums for Latin American leaders. One is the Fraternidad Teológica Latinoamericana (FTL), a broadly-based fellowship, founded in 1970 and composed of a group of men and women who share a commitment to the word applied in the Latin American context.[49] It must be said that these men and women, participating in many and different educational organizations, offer unusual gifts, leadership and administrative skills, depth of perception and study, pastoral passion and psychological formation.

4.4 Social Concerns

A great deal was said and written over the last quarter of the twentieth century about the isolation that characterized the Latin American Pentecostals *vis-à-vis* the deep socio-economic problems of the area. For example in the analysis of Chilean Pentecostalism in the years 1965-1966, Christian Lalive d'Espinay discovered, among other things, that the majority of pastors believed that the gospel should not be mixed with politics. They also contended that the Protestant church should not concern itself with the socio-political problems of the country, to the point of not even talking about them.[50]

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[49] One of the FTL's major contributions has been in the publication of papers from theological conferences. One of the most recent books is Pablo Alberto Deiros, ed., *Los Evangélicos y El Poder Político en América Latina* (Grand Rapids, MI: Nueva Creación, 1990). Another book is C. René Padilla, ed., *Nuevas Alternativas de Educacion Teológica* (Grand Rapids, MI: Nueva Creación, 1992) dealing with themes of theological education.

[50] Christian Lalive D'Espinay, *El Refugio de las Masas*, trans. Narciso Amanillo (Santiago de Chile: Editorial del Pacifico, 1968), p. 157.

It is well known that Pentecostal thinking reflects a polarization between the spiritual and the material, the church and the world, Christ and society. Traditionally Pentecostals rejected the present world in order to enjoy the anticipation of the future one. In Latin America this dichotomy emerged as a result of the Roman Catholic tradition allied with the upper class in its desire to subdue the lower classes. This was the spark that ignited the desire for liberation among those who longed for a better world where justice and equality would be practiced. Naturally the Pentecostal movement in its early stages was unable to respond to the injustice in the structures of the world and meekly submitted, or was forced to submit to the powers that ruled over them, whether they were political, social or religious. Now that liberation theology is no longer a threat, some Latin American scholars have begun to research and to reflect upon the commitment and participation of the Church in social concerns and the practice of justice.[51]

It is no secret that, because of its extreme apolitical position, the Pentecostal movement in Latin America has not properly questioned the established order. Nevertheless, there are other responses to the question regarding the role Pentecostals may have played in the continent's historical political process. A new generation of Pentecostals is emerging, with a hermeneutic concerned with the holistic needs of man.[52] There are voices also clamoring for social justice and opting for serving and defending the poor and the weak.[53] At this point, awareness and analysis of issues related to social justice and the options for the poor are still incipient, but continue to emerge among the grass-roots leadership. By the same token, theological education, pastoral formation and Christian service are now being challenged and will continue to be

[51] See for instance, Darío López, *La Misión Liberadora de Jesús: Una Lectura Misiológica del Evangelio de Lucas* (Lima, Perú: Ediciones Puma, 1997), pp. 101-109; Benedicta Da Silva, *Benedicta Da Silva: An Afro-Brazilian Woman´s Story of Politics and Love* as told to Medea Benjamin and Maisa Mendoca (Oakland, CA: A Food First Book, 1997), pp. 193-201; Eldin Villafañe, *The Liberating Spirit: Towards an Hispanic American Pentecostal Social Ethic* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1992), pp. 143-62.

[52] López, *La Misión Liberadora de Jesús*, pp. 11-40.

[53] For more information on this subject, see World Evangelical Fellowship, ed., *The Grand Rapids Report on Evangelism and Social Responsibility: An Evangelical Commitment* (Exeter: Paternoster, 1982), pp. 43-44. Also see Peter Kuzmic, "History and Eschatology: Evangelical Views," in *In Word and Deed*, ed. Bruce J. Nicholls (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1986), pp. 130-46 (144).

challenged to adjust to the fullness of the gospel in the context of the church and society.

Conclusion: The Opportunity of the New Paradigms

At the end of the twentieth century Pentecostals were faced with the trends of a postmodern society. Relativism, liberalism, materialism, secularism and individualism became the common denominator of a world in continuous and accelerated change. On the other hand, there is no doubt the world started to experience a major spiritual revival as the millennium ended. Most members of the Christian church were experiencing unusual levels of concern with the natural eschatological implications of the times.

At this point, it is clear that the Pentecostal church finds itself at the crossroads. There will be a segment of the Christian church that will become satisfied, rich and established. This church will continue to emphasize prosperity as the result of a successful faith and practice of the Christian faith, particularly in the western societies. This attitude will eventually permeate the upper class of Latin America and other areas of the world. Pentecostals and Charismatics may embrace this trend, and eventually wind up in a post-Christian society in a postmodern world. Consequently, the Christian movement may experience a worldwide attrition. By that time the spiritual level may reach its lowest ebb, where secularism, supported by the explosion of incredible advances in information and technology, may endanger the health of the church.

On the other hand, there will be a solid and militant constituency of the body of Christ, mostly Pentecostals, that will remain fully committed to the practice and teachings of the Bible, and to the guidance of the Holy Spirit. They will interpret the arrival of the new century as the greatest opportunity ever granted to the church. However, this level of commitment may cost enormous sacrifice on the part of the great-commission committed Christians. Thus persecution may be another element that will require serious consideration in the church. In the last five years, reliable sources estimate a sustained increase of persecuted believers. Paul Marshall reports that some two hundred million Christians in the world are members of persecuted groups in countries where religious persecution includes imprisonment, beatings, torture,

mob violence and death.[54] In addition some four hundred million live in situations of nontrivial discrimination and legal repression, and though this persecution is increasing notably in Asia, it can also be found in Latin America under different forms of discrimination or repression.[55]

Historically, Pentecostals have operated successfully under persecution. In the twenty-first century, however, high levels of spirituality and success will be measured in relationship to the proper use and application of planning, organizing and strategizing in times of crisis or persecution. Pentecostals then will have to evolve into a movement that will operate maturely and in the mind of the Holy Spirit, in a new millennium of unprecedented opportunities facing enormous new paradigms.

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[54] Paul Marshall, "Persecution of Christians in the Contemporary World," *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 22:1 (January 1998), pp. 23-32 (24)

[55] David Barret, ed., *The World Christian Encyclopedia* (Nairobi, Kenya: Oxford University Press, 1982), p. 777 reports that by 1980, 605 million Christians are "living under political restrictions on religious liberty" and some 225 million are "experiencing severe state interference in religion, obstruction or harassment." The latter happened under the former communist countries which regimes eventually collapsed a decade later.

[*AJPS* 5:1 (2002), pp. 155-172]

PENTECOSTAL LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT AND CHURCH GROWTH IN LATIN AMERICA

Sergio Matviuk

1. Introduction

The twentieth century was witness of an important social-religious phenomenon, the growth of Pentecostalism. Even non-Pentecostal authors such as Decker recognize, "no movement has made more of an impact on the church world than Pentecostalism." [1] Even though Pentecostal growth is a global phenomenon, Pentecostalism has particularly impacted Latin America. According to Moreno, "nearly 40 percent of the world's Pentecostals live in Latin America."[2] This fact makes Latin American Pentecostalism an excellent case study for probing how Pentecostal beliefs have been integrated with local cultural dimensions to produce a socio-cultural and spiritual phenomenon without precedents.

Many of the scholarly works on Latin American Pentecostalism affirm that Pentecostal growth in Latin America is related and is a consequence of social phenomena such as people's migration from rural areas to urban areas, poverty and popular religiosity's growth.[3] But there

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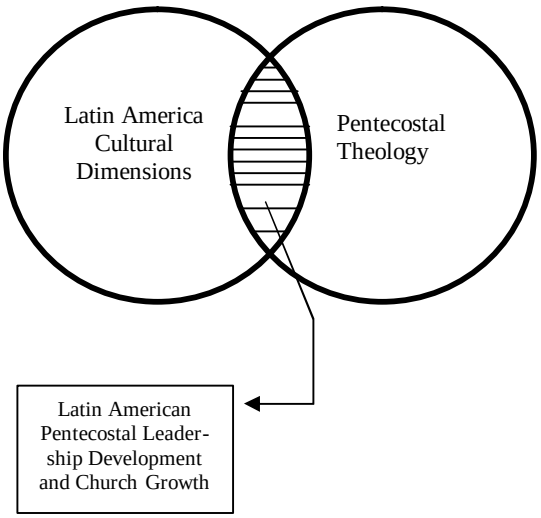
[1] Decker is a non-Pentecostal author that affirms that tongues have ceased. Beyond his anti-tongues theology, Decker cannot avoid the fact of Pentecostal influence on the life and mission of the World Church in twentieth century. For more information about Decker's theology and position about Pentecostalism see R. Decker, "Pentecostalism in the Light of the Word," *Protestant Reformed Churches* (www.prca.org/pamphlets/pamphlet_58.html) (March 2000).

[2] P. Moreno, "Rapture and Renewal in Latin America," *First Things* 74 (June/July 1997), pp. 31-34.

[3] Some of the authors that explain Pentecostalism in these terms are: J. Bastian, *Historia del Protestantismo en America Latina* [History of Protestantism in Latin America] (Mexico City: CUPSA, 1990); R. Blank, *Teología y Misión en América Latina* [Theology and Mission in Latin America] (St. Loius, MO: Concordia

has been almost no theoretical work directed to establish a model of analysis that provides a framework to understand what dimensions of the local culture have been integrated with Pentecostal beliefs to foster the tremendous growth of Latin American Pentecostalism. This paper attempts to offer a tentative model to analyze Latin American Pentecostal leadership development and church growth under the light of the integration of Pentecostal theology and the Latin American cultural dimensions.

The following figure demonstrates the fundamental premise of this paper which hopes to establish a thesis that Latin American Pentecostal leadership development and church growth are shaped by the integration of Latin America's cultural dimensions and Pentecostal theology.



Publishing House, 1996); D. Petersen, *No con Ejército, ni con Fuerza* [Not by Might nor by Power] (Miami: Editorial Vida, 1996); D. Stoll, *Is Latin America Turning Protestant?* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1990); D. Martin, *Tongues of Fire: The Explosion of Protestantism in Latin America* (Cambridge, MA: Basil Blackwell, 1990).

The purpose of this paper is to describe and analyze the characteristics of the Pentecostal movement in Latin America, identifying particularly its leadership development styles and church growth strategies. This analysis also serves to identify the fact that Latin American Pentecostal's leadership development and church growth have been influenced by the integration of some aspects of Pentecostal theology and certain cultural dimensions of Latin America.

This paper does not intend to ignore the Holy Spirit's work in Latin America. As a matter of fact the author firmly believes that the main factor of the Pentecostal success in Latin America is the direct result of God's will and the work of the Holy Spirit in the church. However, the author also recognizes that God, through his sovereign presence in the world, can operate through, and use the social and cultural conditions of society to expand his kingdom. Therefore, the initiative and sovereignty of God are not negated in this work, but it is understood that God operates and uses social and cultural factors to generate the present expansion of Pentecostalism in Latin America.

The first preliminary task to analyze the relationship between Pentecostal theology and Latin American culture and its consequences on leadership development and church growth is to determine the content of Pentecostal theology. This has been a topic that has occupied the minds of some scholars during the last decades. Walter Hollenweger[4] wrote in 1977 an important work on Pentecostalism which included a section about Pentecostal beliefs, but due the variety of doctrinal emphases,[5] it has not been easy to determine a common nucleus of Pentecostal doctrines. Another important work that outlines Pentecostal theology is Steven Land's study on Pentecostal spirituality.[6] Land says that the Pentecostal beliefs are comprised of five theological motifs: 1) Justification by faith in Christ; 2) Sanctification by faith as a second

[4] Walter Hollenweger, *The Pentecostals* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1977) has a section entitled "Beliefs and Practices" in which he attempts to define Pentecostal beliefs such as the Bible and salvation. This work has been critical for further developments of research on Pentecostal theology.

[5] See M. Clark, H. Lederle, et. al., *Pentecostal Theology?* (Pretoria: University of South Africa, 1983) on the methodological difficulties in determining a Pentecostal theology.

[6] S. Land, *Pentecostal Spirituality: A passion for the Kingdom* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993). This book constitutes an intelligent and well-documented source for the study of Pentecostalism, not only about its spirituality, but also for an analysis of the Pentecostal beliefs and practices derived from that spirituality.

definite work of grace; 3) Healing of the body as provided for all in the atonement; 4) The pre-millennial return of Christ; and 5) The baptism in the Holy Spirit evidenced by speaking in tongues.[7]

Other authors have tried to identify a more global definition of Pentecostal core beliefs that include Pentecostalism of the all regions of the world. Such is the case of Clark and Lederle. According to these South African authors, beyond the variety of doctrinal emphases among Pentecostals around the world, "a common nucleus of doctrines exists, held by Pentecostals in North America, South Africa, South-east Asia, Latin America and practically any other region on earth."[8] This common nucleus can be summarized as follows:

1. That Jesus Christ can/should be personally encountered as savior of the sincerely repentant sinner, resulting in regeneration to a transformed life.
2. To every believer there is an experience of God's Spirit available according to the pattern of Spirit baptism found in the history of the first-century church in Acts.
3. The power of God is revealed today in the lives of individuals and communities as it was in the early Christian communities.
4. A sincere attitude of praise and worship should mark the life of the individual believer and the liturgy of the whole group.
5. The regenerate is obligated to reveal a distinctively Christian life-style based on discipleship of Jesus.
6. The goal of the individual believer, of the local church, and the larger Pentecostal community, is to further the mission of Jesus.
7. Jesus is coming again, to judge the world, and to apocalyptically renew creation.[9]

From this common nucleus of beliefs, the availability of the power of the Holy Spirit to all believers, and believers' involvement and commitment to the mission of the church are particularly important topics in understanding leadership development and church planting in Latin American Pentecostalism. The Pentecostal belief in the availability of the Holy Spirit's power to all believers implies that all members of the church, and not only the leaders, have access to spiritual power, anointing and divine wisdom. This doctrine allows Pentecostals to think that any member of the church could become a leader. The implications

[7] Land, *Pentecostal Spirituality*, p. 18.

[8] Clark & Lederle, *Pentecostal Theology*, p. 16.

[9] Clark & Lederle, *Pentecostal Theology*, p. 17.

of this doctrine in leadership development are enormous. For the purposes of this paper this doctrine will be identified as "God's Spirit to all believers." The Pentecostal doctrine on the responsibility of all members to be involved in the mission of the church has also important repercussions in leadership development and church growth in Latin American Pentecostalism. For the purposes of this work this doctrine will be identified as "commitment to evangelize."

The second preliminary task to analyze the relationship between Pentecostal theology and Latin American culture and its consequences on leadership development and church growth is to determine the cultural dimensions that will be taken into account in the analysis. The concepts of Gertz Hoftede[10] on cultural dimensions will be used here for the discussions on Latin American Pentecostalism in relation to its cultural environment.

In his 1980 work, Hofstede presented his pioneering study of close to 88,000 IBM employees in over 60 countries, and proposed four dimensions of cultural value differences: power distance, uncertainty avoidance, individualism-collectivism, and masculinity-femininity. This initial study and subsequent research presented in a 1991 publication suggest the relevance of these cultural dimensions when studying organizations and leadership behavior worldwide.

Hofstede's concept of power distance or power distance index (PDI) is directly related to people's expectations of, and their relationships to authority in a given culture. Hostede defines PDI in terms of the extent to which there is an acceptance of unequal distribution of power within a culture. In low-PDI cultures, the relationships between people in positions of authority and their subordinates are theoretically close and less formal in nature. On the other hand, in high-PDI cultures these relationships are expected to be more distant, hierarchically ordered, and reserved.

Uncertainty avoidance (UAI) is defined by Hofstede as the extent to which members of a given culture prefer certainty and predictability and find ambiguity confusing and uncomfortable. People belonging to high-UAI cultures prefer rules and stable jobs with long-term employers; members of low-UAI cultures may be more willing to take risks, and

[10] The works of G. Hofstede, *Culture's Consequences* (Beverly Hills, CA: Sage, 1980) and *Cultures and Organizations: Software of the Mind* (London: McGraw-Hill, 1991) study national cultures and compared cultural dimensions among them. Hofstede affirms that each country possesses particular cultural dimensions and those dimensions influence people's values and therefore influence the way in which they think and behave.

tolerate organizational ambiguity and change. High-UAI cultures have been called "tight" because norms are clear and people are expected to behave exactly as specified by those norms; "loose" cultures allow more latitude in behavior.[11] According to Jackson & Dutton[12] there is a strong relationship between UAI and leadership behaviors. People in leadership positions from high-UAI cultures will tend to exert and keep control in their work units in order to keep a low level of uncertainty.

Individualism-collectivism (IDV) differentiates between cultures in which individual identity and personal choice are revered and cultures in which a strong collective identity exists, linking individuals to cohesive in-groups over a lifetime. Individualistic cultures emphasize values promoting individual goals, whereas collectivist cultures emphasize the welfare of the in-group.[13] IDV influences in the way in which individuals relate to and form part of groups. For instance in highly individualistic cultures, individuals tend to accomplish things individually based on a greater individual initiative, meanwhile in highly collectivist cultures, individuals will tend to accomplish things through grouping; therefore in these cultures there is a greater emphasis on team building.

Hofstede's masculinity-femininity dimension (MAS) distinguishes between cultures in which assertiveness, challenge, and ambition are highly valued. These are called masculine cultures. This author also posits that there are cultures in which greater emphasis is placed on cooperation and good working relationships. Hofstede categorized these cultures as feminine. In his 1991 work, Hofstede found that across cultures managerial jobs required elements of both assertiveness and nurturance for effectiveness and thus were ranked in the midrange of jobs in terms of masculinity.

Hoftede's cultural dimensions described previously constitute the theoretical basis to analyze Latin American Pentecostal leadership development and church planting in the following sections of this paper. The following two sections of this paper are devoted to describe and analyze Latin American Pentecostalism and to indicate how Pentecostal

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[11] See H. C. Triandis, *Culture and Social Behavior* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1994) about the relationship between cultural dimensions and social behaviours.

[12] S. Jackson and J. Dutton, "Discerning Threats and Opportunities," *Administrative Science Quarterly* 33 (1988), pp. 370-87.

[13] A study devoted to probe individualism and collectivism in cultures is H. C Triandis, C. McCusker, and C. H. Hui, "Multimethod Probes of Individualism and Collectivism," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 59 (1990), pp. 1006-1020.

doctrines on God's Spirit to all believers and the commitment to evangelism are integrated with Latin America's cultural dimensions. Finally, in the conclusion, the present challenges of Latin American Pentecostal leadership development and church planting are presented.

2. Latin American Pentecostalism: An Overview

The fast growth of Latin American Pentecostalism has become a focal point for profuse academic research.[14] The research has shown that a trait of Latin American Pentecostalism is its autochthonous character.[15] The indigenous character of the Latin American Pentecostalism connects this religious movement with the essential aspects of the Latin American culture. Although some social sciences specialists such as Willems[16] and Flora [17] have demonstrated that the advance of Latin American Pentecostalism complies with local factors, still there are some authors that fail in their analysis, attributing Pentecostal growth to foreign resources and leadership.[18] They do not note the local aspects of the Latin

[14] Petersen, *No con Ejército*, p. 15.

[15] L. Margolies, "The Paradoxical Growth of Pentecostalism," in *Perspectives on Pentecostalism: Case Studies from Caribbean and Latin America,* ed. S. Glazier (Lanham, Maryland: University Press of America, 1980), pp. 1-5. In this article Margolies presents evidence about the autochthonous development of Pentecostalism in Latin America.

[16] E. Willems, *Followers of the New Faith: Culture Change and the Rise of Protestantism in Brazil and Chile* (Nashville, TN: Vanderbilt University Press, 1967).

[17] C. Flora, "Pentecostal Women in Colombia: Religious Change and the Status of Working-Class Woman," *Journal of Interamerican Studies and World Affairs* 17 (1975), pp. 411-25.

[18] Much of the contemporary work on Pentecostalism in Latin America shows bias when it affirms that the historical development of Latin American Pentecostalism conforms to foreign factors and influences instead of local effort and work. Some of the authors who affirm that Pentecostal growth in Latin America is the result of foreign influences and resources are, A. Quartanciono, *Sectas en America Latina* [Sects in Latin America] (Guatemala City: Consejo Episcopal Latinoamericano, 1981); J. M. Ganuza, *Las Sectas Nos Invaden* [Sects Are Invading Us] (Caracas: Ediciones Paulinas, 1978) and M. Spain, *And in Samaria: A Story of Fifty Years of Missionary Witness in Central America, 1890-1940* (Dallas, TX: Central American Mission, 1940).

American culture that foster the development of a powerful religious/spiritual local movement.

The importance of the aspects of the Latin American culture that permeate Latin American Pentecostalism demands a closer analysis of those cultural values indicated in Hofstede's[19] work and explained in the introduction of this paper. In his study of Latin American countries, Hofstede[20] determined that the cultures of Latin American countries share two characteristics: they are collectivists and their PDI is high; meanwhile, scores of MAI and UAI vary from country to country. It is logical to infer that, due to the fact that Latin American Pentecostalism is an autochthonous movement, its leadership practices and strategies of church growth have to be integrated with collectivism and high PDI as cultural traits of the Latin American culture. This constitutes the main premise of this work.

3. Latin American Pentecostalism: Background

According to d'Epiney,[21] in 1920, when James Thomson, the first Protestant missionary arrived in Chile, the National Census of this country showed that Protestants numbered only 54,000, which constituted 1.4 percent of the population. Of these 17,000 were foreigners, 10,000 of them were Lutherans who had become naturalized Chilean citizens. Seventy-two years later, the 1992 Chilean National Census showed that Evangelicals and Protestants together had reached 13.2 percent of the population aged 14 years and above. Sepulveda[22] affirms that many observers agree that the higher rate of Protestant growth in the latter period in Chile has to be seen as the result of the dynamic expansion of Chilean Pentecostalism. Sepulveda also says that Pentecostalism was established in Chile as an independent and

[19] Hofstede, "Culture's Consequences," pp. 65-210.

[20] Hofstede, "Culture's Consequences," pp. 77, 122, 158, 189.

[21] The work of L. d'Epinay, *El Refugio de las Masas: Estudio Sociológico del Protestantismo Chileno* (Santiago: Editorial Pacífico, 1969) and later published in English as *Haven of the Masses: A study of the Pentecostal Movement in Chile* (London: Lutterworth Press, 1969) constitutes one of the classics on Latin American Pentecostalism.

[22] J. Sepulveda, "Future Perspectives for Latin American Pentecostalism," *International Review of Mission* 87/345 (1998), pp. 189-95.

indigenous church at the beginning of the second decade of the twentieth century.

According to Sepulveda[23] what has happened in Chile is not unique; it was an early manifestation of a phenomenon that has become characteristic of the Latin American religious landscape. Either Latin American Pentecostalism was born from local revivals within Protestant churches or from the work of foreign Pentecostal missionary individuals or agencies. The net result is that Pentecostal churches are the fastest growing religious movement throughout the continent. Blank illustrates the magnitude of Pentecostal growth in Latin America when he states, "it is almost impossible to work today [in the religious arena] in Latin America without having contact with the Pentecostal movement."[24] Some researchers, such as David Stoll,[25] for instance, have predicted that the present Latin American Pentecostal growth will continue. Stoll predicted that by the year 2010 Latin American Protestants (mainly Pentecostals) would surpass 50% of the total population in countries such as Guatemala, Puerto Rico, El Salvador, Brazil, and Honduras.

The impact of Pentecostalism in Latin America deserves attention to identify the strategies of leadership development and church planting, and to identify the patterns that have fostered the development of this religious socio-cultural-spiritual phenomenon.

4. Latin American Pentecostal Leadership Development and Church Growth

One of the characteristics of the Latin American Pentecostal movement is an early autonomous development as local movements separated from the religious denominations that brought the Pentecostal doctrine to the Latin American lands.[26] Petersen calls this autonomous

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[23] Sepulveda, "Future Perspectives for Latin American Pentecostalism," pp. 189-95.

[24] Blank, *Teología y Misión,* p. 200.

[25] Stoll, *Is Latin America Turning Protestant?,* p. 337.

[26] P. Deiros, *Historia del Cristianismo en America Latina* [History of Christianity in Latin America] (Buenos Aires: Fraternidad Teológica Latinoamericana, 1992), Blank, *Teología y Misión* and Petersen, *No con Ejército* are some of the scholars that support the idea of an autonomous development of the Latin American Pentecostalism.

development, "early *latinization* of Pentecostalism"[27] in Latin America. One of the reasons for this autonomous local development may be related to the fact indicated by the Catholic author Prudencia Damboriena.[28] Damboriena states that during the early stages of Latin American Pentecostal development (after the Second World War), there were a relatively low number of Pentecostal missionaries in Latin America in relation to the number of missionaries of other Protestant denominations. That could have fostered the development of a national Pentecostal leadership. There are also cultural aspects that influenced this *latinization* of Latin American Pentecostalism. The collectivist trait of Latin American culture, which stresses the regard for the in-group/out group values, could have served as a pattern to opt for local practices (in-group values) instead of foreign practices and procedures (out-group values).

As a result of this *latinization* of Latin American Pentecostalism, a particular style of leadership training and development was implemented. This style of leadership formation and development has been named by Blank as "apprentices system."[29] This system is based on the Pentecostal doctrine of God's Spirit to all believers described earlier. Blank also says that, unlike other religious groups that preach about God's Spirit to all believers, Latin American Pentecostalism puts in practice this doctrine through the participation of all members in the work of God's kingdom.[30] William, Monterroso, and Johnson say that due to this belief "any member of the church is potentially a minister."[31] Thus the Pentecostal system of apprenticeship "produces pastors [leaders] from the laity."[32]

This leadership development system allows new members to publicly testify about their faith immediately after their baptism. In this way the prospective leaders develop speech skills and gain the congregation's recognition. Those who demonstrate capability to lead are

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[27] Petersen, *No con Ejército*, p. 19.

[28] P. Damboriena, *El Protestantismo en America Latina* [The Protestantism in Latin America] (Freiburg, Madrid: Oficina Internacional de Investigaciones Sociales de FERES, 1963).

[29] Blank, *Teología y Misión*, p. 211.

[30] Blank, *Teología y Misión*, p. 215 states that a clear mark of Latin American Pentecostalism is the serious involvement of all believers in evangelization tasks, which is consistent with the Pentecostal principle of believers' commitment to evangelism as an expression of the Pentecostal theology.

[31] R. William, V. Monterroso and H. Johnson, *Latin American Church Growth* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1969), p. 295.

[32] Blank, *Teología y Misión*, p. 211.

soon assigned to new tasks, such as the direction of the church's worship and participation in evangelism tasks, in which all members are supposed to participate.[33] In this system of leadership development younger leaders have the opportunity of progressively performing more complex tasks by positively fulfilling growing responsibilities.[34] The next step for prospective leaders is to take leadership responsibilities in the local church, such as teaching in a Sunday school class and preaching in the weekday services. Those members who show loyalty and commitment within the local church and demonstrate leadership skills soon are ready to assume the direction of home Bible studies. Meanwhile they receive some basic instruction from their pastors to help them in the exercise of their leadership. In this way new leadership is formed with a strong practical basis and some basic theoretical instruction. The result is men and women formed from inside the Pentecostal group and who represent in a singular way the social and economic context in which they serve.[35] This means that Latin American Pentecostal leadership is fully contextual and deeply native, which are the requisites to offer a ministry at the popular level.[36]

This strategy for leadership formation and development is fully rooted in the Pentecostal in-group's characteristics and needs. It is influenced by the collectivist trait seen in Latin American culture. As mentioned earlier, collectivism as a cultural value fosters a high regard for the in-group's values and welfare. In this case this in-group leadership formation is consistent with what Hosftede[37] indicates are the

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[33] See Petersen, *No con Ejército*, pp. 140-42 and Blank, *Teología y Misión*, pp. 211-14 comment on how new members in Latin American Pentecostal churches shortly after their conversion have opportunities to participate in church's work and develop in this way their leadership skills.

[34] Blank, *Teología y Misión*, p. 211 describes how new members in Latin American Pentecostal churches assume gradually more complex responsibilities as part of the Latin American Pentecostal system of leadership development

[35] N. Saracco, "Type of Ministry Adopted by Latin American Pentecostal Churches," *International Review of Mission* 66 (January 1997), pp. 64-70 presents arguments about the adaptation of Pentecostal ministry to the social and cultural environment in which it develops.

[36] E. Nida, "The Indigenous Churches in Latin America," *Practical Anthropology* 8 (1961), pp. 97-105 deals with the issues of the ministry of indigenous churches in Latin America and describes the deep native character of those churches and their commitment with their sociocultural context.

[37] Hofstede, "Culture's Consequences," pp. 165-212.

traits of collectivist cultures, this is, the formation of long-lasting groups and the association of individuals to such groups for a lifetime to preserve the welfare of the group. This relationship between Pentecostal leadership development system and collectivism as a cultural dimension shows that Latin American Pentecostalism is culturally relevant and integrated with the local culture. This confirms once again the autochthonous character of the movement and its integration to local culture.

The possibility given by Latin American Pentecostalism to all members to perform leadership tasks in different areas of the church's work, such as outdoor witnessing, preaching on street corners, home Bible studies, and other evangelistic activities produces another phenomenon: a large number of prospective leaders.[38] This fact may produce a contest between younger leaders and the older generation of leaders. As Blank observed, younger leaders are assigned to new territory where they have the possibility of expressing themselves in creative ways using their youthful enthusiasm to work for the Lord and to avoid conflicts between them and older leaders. When these leaders have already established a church, they are older and therefore ready to train and develop new leaders. Thus, the process of leadership development continues with each new leader.

This system of assigning of new territories is consistent with another cultural trait of the Latin American culture, a high PDI. High PDI cultures value authority and hierarchy and the relationships of authority are highly regarded. This cultural dimension promotes the strategy of assigning new leaders to new territories to keep the balance in the authority relationships and to give new leadership the opportunity of increasing authority as well. In this way the Pentecostal strategy of leadership development is consistent and integrated with the cultural values of the Latin American culture. Hofstede states that in high PDI cultures greater power differences between the leader and subordinates creates a greater tendency for the leader to be authoritarian, directive, persuasive, or coercive.[39] However, Latin American Pentecostalism has been able to turn a potential source of conflict into a mechanism of leadership development. From this observation it is possible to understand why some Pentecostal churches or denominations suffer divisions in Latin America when they keep inflexible and pyramidal organizational structures, and are not able to integrate the theological

[38] See Petersen, *No con Ejército*, p. 212.

[39] Hofstede, "Culture's Consequences," p. 94.

principle of God's Spirit to all believers with high PDI as a cultural dimension.

The direct result of this strategy of leadership placement is a fast church planting methodology in Latin American Pentecostalism. Blank says that an apprentice system of leadership development "is only possible where the church is divided in cells [small groups],"[40] because new leaders need to acquire experience before they are in charge of a larger congregation. Petersen argues that small groups are the moving forces of Latin American Pentecostalism.[41] The small groups, which later become a congregation, not only serve as platforms for leadership development, but they also demonstrate another important theological principle of Latin American Pentecostalism, which is commitment to evangelism.[42] Deiros affirms that Latin American Pentecostalism has been successfully appealing to people who came to the cities from the country looking for a better life.[43] In that pursuit these internal immigrants lose their family relationships and social structure; therefore, they need to restructure their relationships within primary groups to find their lost identity. Thus the Pentecostal methodology of church planting through small groups provides for the spiritual, social, and psychological needs of those who d'Epinay calls "the oppressed."[44]

Latin American Pentecostal small groups represent the integration of two factors: commitment to evangelism as a Pentecostal doctrine and collectivism as a cultural dimension. It is hard to imagine that small groups as a strategy for church growth could be effective without the collectivist character of the Latin American culture. Collectivism allows people integration in small groups, and develops people's identity and a strong sense of community.

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[40] Blank, *Teología y Misión*, p. 213.

[41] Petersen, *No con Ejército*, p. 108 affirms that small groups in Latin American Pentecostal church growth play a very important role in church growth and without them could be impossible for Latin American Pentecostals to be successful.

[42] Petersen, *No con Ejército,* p. 141 and Deiros, *Historia del Cristianismo,* pp. 757-63 affirms that evangelism is a remarkable trait of Latin American Pentecostalism and constitutes one the key elements for the Pentecostal expansion in Latin America.

[43] Deiros, *Historia del Cristianismo*, p. 758.

[44] d'Epinay, *El Refugio de las Masas*, p. 31.

Petersen describes how these small groups are established to later become congregations.[45] From the leadership aspect related to the growth of the Pentecostal movement in Latin America, small groups are established in the house of one member of the church.[46] The groups initiate their activities with two or three families. Usually the pastor of the mother church (the church in which the new leader of the small group has been trained) assists the groups in their organization and for some period of time he will oversee the progress of the small group.[47] These "home services"[48] are directed by the leader of the small group, but all members participate by singing, giving testimony, and participating in Bible readings and study. The members also participate by inviting their neighbors and relatives to the meetings of the small group, which prove to be extremely effective in reaching out to the community and to foster the small group's growth. When the small group reaches twelve families the mother church starts a process to organize the group and form a congregation. According to Petersen, there are several requirements that must be fulfilled for a small group to become a church. The small group has to have a pastor, the group must be strong enough to financially support its pastor, some kind of local leadership has to be available to help the pastor, and the group is in the process of buying a piece of land to build a temple.[49]

The importance of these small groups is reflected, for instance, in the number of groups of the Assemblies of God, the largest Pentecostal denomination in Latin America, had in 1992. In that year this denomination had 11,939 organized churches and 98,671 points of preaching, that is, small groups.[50] This means that there were almost nine small groups for every organized church.

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[45] Petersen, *No con Ejército,* p. 108.

[46] E. Wilson, "Dynamics of Latin American Pentecostalism," in *Coming of Age: Protestantism in Contemporary Latin America*, ed. D. Miller (Lantham, MD: University Press of America, 1994) presents an analysis of the role and value of value of small groups in Latin American Pentecostalism.

[47] Bastian, *Historia del Protestantismo*, p. 73.

[48] Petersen, *No con Ejército,* p. 109.

[49] Petersen, *No con Ejército,* p. 108.

[50] *Asambleas de Dios, División de Misiones Foráneas* [Asamblies of God, Foreign Missions Division] (December 31, 1992), cited in Petersen, *No con Ejército,* p. 108.

Small groups are important not only for their strategic value for church growth, but also for the social and cultural role they play in the Pentecostal community. Through the small groups stable associations are established and the whole group works to buy the land on which they will build a temple. Petersen remarks on the importance of buying land and owning property.[51] When the groups own property, members start to build a building with minimal resources, and they construct according to their possibilities, which is an obstacle concluding the construction quickly. As a matter of fact the construction of the church building can take years. The construction work develops a sense of ownership and the members submit themselves to strict rules of behavior, tithe with regularity, systematically support the group's program, show an elevated grade of loyalty, and freely exercise the right of expression on the matter related to the group.[52] These characteristics of the Pentecostal Latin American small groups clearly reflect the integration of Latin American Pentecostalism with the collectivist dimension of Latin American culture. People's commitment, loyalty, participation, and sense of ownership fit Hofstede's descriptions of collectivist cultures.[53] Blank states the work and strategy of Latin American Pentecostalism reflects their "cultural origin and heritage."[54]

5. Conclusion: Challenges for Pentecostal Leadership

This paper has discussed the integration of Latin American Pentecostalism's leadership development system and church growth strategy with collectivism and high PDI as cultural dimensions of the Latin American culture. The integration of the Pentecostal doctrine on God's Spirit to all believers and high PDI as a cultural dimension of the Latin American culture serves as a basis for the system of apprentices, and as a mechanism for leadership development.

On the other hand, the Latin American Pentecostal church growth methodology, which is closely related to the apprentice system of leadership development, is based in the establishment of small groups that, at the same time, manifest the Pentecostal theological principle of

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[51] Petersen, *No con Ejército*, p. 108.

[52] Petersen, *No con Ejército*, p. 108.

[53] Hofstede, "Culture's Consequences," pp. 171, 174.

[54] Blank, *Teología y Misión*, p. 213.

believers' commitment to evangelism. The social and cultural dynamics of these small groups are consistent and fully integrated to collectivism as cultural dimension. Therefore, it is possible to agree with Westmeier when he says that, "Latin American Pentecostalism is an expression of folk religion."[55] Folk religion does not mean a low quality/low standards religion; this means a religion profoundly rooted in the essential aspects of the local culture. This is one of the reasons for the Pentecostal success in Latin America.

This model of theology-culture integration can serve as an example for leadership training and development and church planting in other parts of the world. The integration of Latin American Pentecostalism with Latin American culture, without compromising the fundamental values of the Pentecostal movement, is an example for the global church, which has to carry out its mission using culturally relevant strategies without compromising their core theological principles and beliefs.

Before concluding, I would like to introduce some of the challenges that the Latin American Pentecostal systems of leadership development and church growth are presently facing: 1) the mega-church phenomenon, and 2) the growing formalization of institutions of leadership training and development.

During the last decade many Latin American Pentecostal churches have become 'mega-churches,' this means that their membership has surpassed 1,000 people. This is a relatively new phenomenon in Latin American Pentecostalism because Pentecostal congregations in Latin America usually had less than 100 members.[56] Mega-churches represent a challenge for Latin American Pentecostalism because they modify the communal character of the classic Latin American Pentecostal churches. These large churches do not reflect some of the most distinctive traits of the Pentecostal churches in Latin America such as "personal militancy, community and participation, and discipline."[57] If large churches are not able to develop their ministry using small groups in discipleship,

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[55] K. Westmeier, "Themes of Pentecostal Expansion in Latin America," *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 17:2 (1993), pp. 72-78 (72).

[56] Petersen, *No con Ejército*, p. 109. In a study on the Assemblies of God in Central America, Petersen has found that usually the Pentecostal congregations of that denomination do not surpass 100 members. This fact speaks about the type of interpersonal interactions among the members of the local congregations and is consistent with the Latin American Pentecostal methodology of church growth, which emphasizes the development the more or less small communities.

[57] Petersen, *No con Ejército*, p. 109.

leadership training and evangelism they may confront a crisis at the cultural level. Due the collectivist trait of the Latin American culture, the result of a massive religion could be the detachment of the individuals from their social groups to become uninvolved observers of the mission of the church. In addition, the lack of mechanisms for spiritual and moral accountability in massive churches may also foster a nominal Pentecostalism. This is the opposite of one of the most fundamental theological Pentecostal beliefs which states that Christian believers "are obligated to reveal a distinctively Christian life-style based on discipleship of Jesus."[58] This is not an argument against large churches, but an argument against the implementation of foreign church models. Despite the size of the churches, the ecclesiastical models for Latin American Pentecostal churches have to take into account the collectivist dimension of the Latin American culture. Otherwise those churches will be neither Latin American nor Pentecostal.

The commitment of large Latin American Pentecostal churches should be to keep the communal character of the local church, allowing for the members' involvement in the life and mission of the church. This requires creative organizational structures to integrate the social dynamics of the mega-church with the collectivist character of the local culture.

Another challenge for Latin American Pentecostalism is the growing formalization of leadership training programs and their growing separation from the local church. As Blank states, Latin American Pentecostals recognize that the apprentices system of leadership development needs to be complemented with other models of ministerial training.[59] This need has fostered the establishment of Bible schools to train the emergent leadership. Even more, Latin American Pentecostals send their outstanding leaders to take graduate studies in non-Pentecostal seminaries. Because of this formal training, Latin American Pentecostals presently have personnel to develop their own institutions of ministerial training and leadership development. Therefore, it is not rare today to find Pentecostal Bible schools, colleges and seminaries more or less uniform all over Latin America.

Although this institutional development has constituted an important advance in leadership training and development in Latin American Pentecostalism, some of those training centers have adopted foreign models of training derived from more individualistic societies such as the

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[58] Clark & Lederle, *Pentecostal Theology*, p. 17.

[59] Blank, *Teología y Misión*, p. 212.

European and the US American. As William, Monterroso, and Johnson posit, there is a real risk for Bible colleges to adopt a professional class mentality in which leaders are trained, separated and detached from their local church's to return later to their congregations to function as experts in church's mission.[60] This mentality is particularly dangerous in the high PDI Latin American culture because it opens the door to autocratic styles of leadership based on authoritarianism.

The Pentecostal educational system in Latin America has to continue to grow because of its expanding ministry potential of the Pentecostals to the church at large as well as to the society. But that growth has to be closely related to local church needs and keep in mind the Pentecostal doctrines of God's Spirit to all believers and members' commitment to evangelism.

A Latin American Pentecostal system of leadership development and ministerial training should avoid the formation of a ministerial elite, prepared to rule over others. An effective Pentecostal system of training has to take into account the collectivist dimension of the Latin America culture and its high PDI to form leaders with interpersonal skills, prepared to coordinate the different expressions of spiritual gifts in the local church. This is the only way to keep a fully Pentecostal and fully Latin American system of leadership development and ministerial training.

[60] William, Monterroso & Johnson, *Latin American Church Growth*, p. 310.

French L. Arrington, and Stronstad, Roger, eds., *Full Life Bible Commentary to the New Testament.* Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1999. 1629 pp. ISBN: 0-310-20118-7, US$39.99.

This volume was produced to be a companion volume to the *Full Life Study Bible*. French Arrington and Roger Stronstad, both respected Pentecostal scholars, have brought together the fruit of sixteen New Testament scholars (all card-carrying Pentecostals), in this very useful volume. Although having so many different contributors necessarily results in some variety in form and quality, there is sufficient uniformity in presentation so that the reader is not left with too many bewildering questions.

As one would expect, each writer gives maximum attention to the references to the person and work of the Holy Spirit. For example, in the excellent chapter on First Corinthians, Anthony Palma works through issues related to the gifts of the Spirit (1 Cor 12-14) carefully, employing more than 30 pages to accomplish this.

An interesting divergence from traditional presentation, the editors arrange the Gospels so that John appears first, followed by the Synoptics, so they can be reviewed together. And, the last of the Synoptics, Luke, is coupled with its companion volume, Acts, to form a single entry. This allows French Arrington, the writer of the Luke-Acts commentary, to feature the unique approach of Luke, as both historian and theologian. The result is a strong case for the Pentecostal experience of baptism in the Holy Spirit, as an experience subsequent to the new birth, and accompanied by speaking in other tongues (p. 543).

Jerry Camry-Hoggatt, writing on the Gospel of Mark, adopts a "reader-response" hermeneutic, but disavows a postmodernist commitment. He sees in this approach a resonance with Pentecostal preaching (pp. 257-58). Although he points out the reasons the long ending of Mark is not likely in the original Markan text, Camry-Hoggatt handles this matter with tact and grace, so that Pentecostals who may feel short-changed by the loss of a favorite passage are not left comfortless (pp. 372-73).

Tim Jenney's presentation of the Book of Revelation is a departure from the traditional futuristic pre-millennial interpretations common in many Pentecostal churches. He sees Revelation as written in 68 or 69 AD, long before apostle John's death in the mid-90s. Revelation was written as apocalyptic material for a church having endured the suffering caused by Nero. The message of Revelation is an appeal to hold steady, since the Lord is going to return in triumph. Jenney gives little room for

speculative attempts to hitch various symbols in Revelation to future events. His objective is to focus attention on the central message of the triumphant Lord of history.

Most of the chapters conclude with extensive recommendations for further reading. Elaborate outlines, numerous charts, photographs, and extended notes on special topics, are helpful aids to the reader. I find in the book an excellent blend of serious scholarship (which addresses important issues, including significant textual variants) with strong, uniform commitment to the main theses of the Pentecostal revival. It reads well, being written in straight-forward language. The average layperson will readily profit from examination of any portion, since it serves as a most useful reference work.

Here is indeed a tool that any Pentecostal or Charismatic will find helpful, whether he is looking for help in planning for a sermon or a Bible study, or for personal devotional study.

Steven J. Brooks

Synan, Vinson. *The Century of the Holy Spirit: 100 Years of Pentecostal and Charismatic Renewal*. Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 2001. 492 pp. ISBN: 0-7852-4550-2. US$29.99.

Vinson Synan, dean of the School of Divinity, Regent University, Virginia Beach, Virginia, since 1994, is a recognized Pentecostal scholar and world-renown Renewal statesman. Having grown up within the Pentecostal Holiness denomination, he speaks with insight and understanding from within the Pentecostal tradition. Yet, his broad spectrum of warm relationships within the larger church world give him a sympathetic perspective on the world-wide Charismatic movement.

This, the latest of Synan's several books, compresses an immense amount of material into one volume, furnishing for the serious student a wealth of information approaching the character of an encyclopedia. As the title suggests, the objective of Synan's book is to survey the background, the origins, the development and subsequent history of the modern Pentecostal movement. Included in the 15 chapters are well-documented essays on the various strands of the enormous Charismatic renewal movements. Nine writers have written eight chapters, complementing the seven chapters provided by Synan himself. Robert Owens, Gary McGee, Peter Hocken, Susan Hyatt, David Daniels, Pablo Deiros, Everett Wilson, David Harrell, and David Barrett, each

recognized scholars themselves, add color and depth to the book. Chapters on women in ministry, on African-American Pentecostalism, on Hispanic Pentecostalism, on Pentecostal missions, and on more recent renewal episodes and phenomena are important and useful additions to the book. David Harrell's chapter on "Healers and Televangelists After World War II" is surprisingly restrained and balanced in view of the controversies that swirled around these ministries. Harrell is an interested non-Pentecostal observer of this colorful and controversial phase of the modern revival. He could have been much more critical.

David Barrett, eminent Christian statistician, has provided a study of recent trends related to the modern Pentecostal and Charismatic movement, supplying useful charts and lots of numbers. Particularly helpful is his unraveling of the many complex strands within this burgeoning dimension of modern Christianity. Barrett has supplied an interesting appendix, titled "A Chronology of Renewal in the Holy Spirit." At the conclusion of this historical odyssey he gives a prognosis of future world events, based on his understanding of biblical theology—an unusual exercise in speculation that seems a bit out of place in a volume devoted to history and facts.

The book lends itself to classroom use quite ably. Inset articles, adequate use of photographs (some in color), and even a color fold-out chart, titled "The Pentecostal/Charismatic Genealogy Tree" add vividness to the presentation. Each chapter concludes with suggestions for further reading. End-notes appear at the back of the book, together with a thorough index. There is, however, no comprehensive bibliography.

Many books have been written about the modern Pentecostal revival, with some scholars acknowledging that the rise of Pentecostalism and its accompanying Charismatic associations, is possibly the greatest story within Christianity in the Twentieth Century. In spite of the spate of books, Synan's book adds fresh insights, new detail, and a roadmap through the twists and turns the renewal has taken, especially in recent years. It is an extraordinarily complex story. This book provides a most useful guide through the forest.

This is a descriptive study. One should not expect to glean theological reflection from it. Theological matters are not within the scope of intention. A weakness in the book, from an Asian perspective, will be the very heavy focus on the American scene. McGee's chapter on Pentecostal missions addresses the world-wide outreach of the American and European Pentecostal churches, but apart from this, little attention is given to issues and movements important in Asia. For example, in the

chapter on the renewal within the Catholic Church, the brief references to the Philippines fail to mention the very large Charismatic sub-groups within the Catholic tradition, such as Couples for Christ and El Shaddai.

Synan's book promises to fill an important place as a textbook for the classroom and for the earnest individual wishing to gain current perspective on the amazing work of the Holy Spirit in the world today.

William W. Menzies

Graham H. Twelftree, *Jesus the Miracle Worker*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1998. Paper, 470 pp. ISBN:0-8308-1596-1. US$24.99.

Jesus the Miracle Worker (*JMW* from here on) is in many ways an expansion of the implications laid out in Australian scholar and pastor Graham Twelftree's earlier work, *Jesus the Exorcist*. He here expands his view of Jesus' miracles to get a better grasp of who Jesus was; it may be that this was his intent beginning as early as his work on his thesis at the University of Nottingham. Jesus is an exorcist, but Twelftree proposes that we best understand the historical Jesus as a miracle worker who, in his person, ushered in the kingdom of God:

> He was a most powerful and prolific wonder worker, considering that in his miracles God was powerfully present ushering in the first stage of the longed-for eschaton of the experience of his powerful presence (pp. 358-59).

As this quote demonstrates, Twelftree is after bigger game than a mere thesis; how does *JMW* contribute towards his goal? He begins by treating the possibility of miracles from a philosophical/theological/ experiential standpoint, demonstrating that much of the animus against the possibility of miracles is merely the imposition of the modern worldview upon the old. Twelftree begins by viewing the entire record of miracles in the Gospels, examining each book's miraculous content, and then individual miracles by grouping types. In his examination of all miracle types, Twelftree demonstrates that he fully understands the canons of criticism, subjecting the Gospel accounts to rigorous scrutiny, seeking to ferret out in the reports that which would have been reported by eyewitnesses of the events, that which might be redaction by the writers. Twelftree establishes that the Gospel reports are, on the whole, more accurate than not; yeoman work is done, for example, to establish

the stilling of the storm by a command of Jesus on the sea of Galilee is at least possible, instead of being merely fictitious. Twelftree admits that absolute certainty regarding this miracle cannot be produced; but "*historians* once again have to leave open the question of the origin of this story" (p. 317).

The heart of *JMW* is Part Three, "Jesus and the Miracles." After a substantive discussion of historicity, Twelftree advances the proposition that history is more than the fictive creation of the writers' imagination—particularly if the history is written within the lifetime of those who might be expected to protest sheer fiction. Accordingly, history as story (which he identifies the Gospels as being) does not equal sheer fiction. From this point, he advances to consider Jesus as a miracle worker in his milieu, and finds Jesus to be unique from his background. In the 200 year period on either side of Jesus' lifetime, there are precious few persons recorded to be miracle workers; those who petition God and receive positive answers are many, but Jesus alone seems to work miracles by virtue of who he is. When one considers this in connection with the fact that the coming Messiah was not expected by Jews to be a miracle worker (and yet Jesus is the miracle worker par excellence), one can only come to the conclusion that the vividly described miracles are more than creative backdrop.

Beyond this is Jesus' own understanding of the import of his miracles. Twelftree contends, as he did in his previous work, that Jesus saw his miracles as a part of the casting out of Satan through the expansion of the Kingdom of God; to this he adds that Jesus is unique from all other miracle workers in that:

> He generally expected faith or confidence in him to be the prior condition for a miracle...he would have been conscious of the personal relationship with him that was precondition for experiencing a miracle—as it was also an expected response to his miracles (p. 265).

Accordingly, Twelftree concludes that Jesus would have known that he was the anointed one of God—the Messiah. It cannot then be avoided, that "the miracles of Jesus reveal his identity as God himself at work: indeed, God is encountered in the miracles" (p. 343). Everything from this contention on is summary.

There are a few omissions which cannot be glossed over; one is the lack of interaction with John P. Meier's examination of the historical Jesus' miracles in his *A Marginal Jew*, where Meier adopts the novel position of affirming that Jesus certainly *seemed* to his contemporaries to be a miracle worker while not admitting that Jesus *was* a miracle worker.

On another score, those of a more conservative bent may not take kindly to Twelftree's supposition that the Gospels are "history as story" instead of "newspaper facts" history. But these are relatively minor details. Twelftree has established a Jesus critical to the Pentecostal/Charismatic understanding of what the kingdom of God is about, and we would do well to listen.

Steven J. Brooks

John Thannickal. *The Holy Spirit: An Appeal for Maturity*. Bangalore, India: Neva Jeeva Ashram, n.d. 60 Rupees.

When I first looked at this book, its potential was apparent in that an Indian Assemblies of God minister of forty years had written on the Holy Spirit. He would naturally bring his Indian background and Pentecostal perspective into his discussion of the Holy Spirit. In this book, the author emphasizes the need to reform and reevaluate the Pentecostals understanding and practice concerning the working of the Holy Spirit.

The first few chapters deal with some fundamental elements of pneumatology from his perspective. The middle section of the book is John Thannickal's analysis of the Acts 2, 10, 19 and 1 Corinthians 14 with regards to "tongues." The last few chapters delineate the writer's position on the "initial physical evidence" and his position on the early Classical Pentecostal history.

I have to admit that I had high hopes when I first read this book, but I quickly found several fundamental problems with it. First, one of the major difficulties of this work is the author's suggestion that Luke's usage of speaking in "other tongues" refers to the divinely inspired Hebrew from Greek speakers to a Jewish audience and Greek from Aramaic speakers to a Greek audience. In other words, speaking in other tongues is equated with speaking in any language other than their mother tongue (pp. 52-3, 70, 79 etc.). Related to this is the assumption that Greek/Hebrew (Aramaic) distinction was the reason for the divine gift of tongues, and there is no appreciable group who operated in both languages equally well or comfortably (e.g., p. 70). So, the 120 at Pentecost spoke in many tongues and Peter spoke in the "other tongue" of Greek for his message in Acts 2 (pp. 46-56), Cornelius in Acts 10 spoke in the "other tongue" of Hebrew or Aramaic (pp. 57-66), in Ephesus the ex-disciples of John spoke in Greek (pp. 67-72), and in 1

Corinthians 14 the "other tongue" was Hebrew which the Greeks of Corinth could not understand (pp. 73-88).

For Thannickal, in Acts 2, 10 and 19 "tongues" is referred to only because it was a divinely inspired demonstration to overcome of linguistic (and other) divisions within the church. The author assumes that, everywhere "tongues" is mentioned in Acts, that the audience attending understands it, whereas biblically only Acts 2 specifically mentions this fact. Further, he presupposes that there was a stark Greek/Hebrew division even in language, which only the Holy Spirit through tongues could overcome. There is little doubt that Acts 10 helps overcome the Jew/Gentile separation that the Jewish church carried on from their religious past. The fundamental problem is that aside from the above-mentioned passages there is no real evidence for this position. Neither is Acts 8, the Samaritan conversion, cited as an important Jewish/gentile division due to the fact it does not mention "tongues," and the author assumes that it was because there was no multi-linguistic or multi-racial problem. Thus, Simon was trying to buy the "apostolic authority" not "tongues" (pp. 109, 101). Whereas it is evident that the Day of Pentecost was a clear renunciation of the Tower of Babel divisions (as he notes by a quote from John Stott on p. 49), however, Luke's usage of "tongues" throughout the book (semantically and theologically) is not used in the way this author suggests. Further, the divisions in the church at Corinth were from a very different source than the Hebrew (Aramaic) vs. Greek speaking division that the author suggests. There is little room in his scheme for those that feel comfortable in two very different languages without one being the "other tongue." A careful reading of First Corinthians definitely demonstrates a division in the church, but to conclude that it was a Jewish/gentile division is highly improbable.

Further, to suggest that the "other tongues" of 1 Cor 14 was the Jews speaking Hebrew which the Greek-speakers did not understand, and thus, Paul's statement to not speak without an interpreter present has several problems.

The author also suggests that when Paul says that he thanks God that he spoke in tongues more than the Corinthians, he was referring to the fact that he spoke Greek, Hebrew, Aramaic, Latin, etc. To support his case, he could only site two eighteenth and nineteenth century writers—Adam Clarke and John Lightfoot.

Further, he does not take seriously the standard definitions of "other tongues" in biblical studies or theology, and, in particular, the activity of

the Pentecostal/Charismatic movements, which demonstrate a very different element of the *charismata* than what was presented.

Inherent in the discussions of both the Acts and Corinthian passages is the basic problem of the hermeneutical methods demonstrated. The author's work emphasizes a certain theological position loosely based on the Acts 2 passage where the audience understood the "other tongues," and the Acts 10 passage where there is a clear overcoming of Jewish/gentile division, and applies that understanding to all passages which refer to "tongues." In other words, a theological position determines the reading of the texts (in very much the same way as feminist theologians or dispensationalists do). Further, the author mentions twenty other texts in Acts where being filled with the Spirit is mentioned, but there is no tongues mentioned. His problem is that he reads all these texts the same, and does not distinguish between summary statements and records of salvations from extended texts expressing major theological points. Further, part of his discussion of these points is that they do not mention "tongues" because of the lack of the multi-linguistic division there, thus, there was no need for "tongues." Thus, reading his theological position into the biblical text.

Another difficulty is his portrayal of Pentecostal history. Whereas he states that the main problem was that from Charles Parham on, the Pentecostal experience was declared to be the baptism of the Holy Spirit with the initial physical evidence of speaking in tongues. The author compares the "Topeka tongues" with the "biblical tongues" demonstrating that Topeka and the early Pentecostals, since they taught tongues as a sign of the baptism of the Holy Spirit, were non-biblical and forced the position due to the experience (cf. Acts 2, 10).

However, the author did not take seriously numerous testimonies of those whom when seeking the Lord ended up speaking in "tongues," nor those who actively opposed the Pentecostal stance who later started speaking in "tongues." Also, it seems that he did not know that glossalalia has been found throughout church history finding expression in various groups and individuals. Unfortunately, the author's discussion of Topeka vs. biblical tongues and the corresponding horizontal vs. vertical focus took on a pejorative tone against Pentecostals. Whereas he did have some valid concerns about the way Pentecostal doctrine and practitioners have been presented publicly, sometimes the tone counteracted the possibility for positive interaction.

His interaction with the major Pentecostal/Charismatic thinkers is extremely limited. In fact, he cites more anti-Pentecostal or non-Pentecostal writers than Pentecostal authors. Further, most of the Pentecostal sources cited are from popular works such as articles from the *Pentecostal Evangel* which are meant for the Pentecostal popular audience, and are not major treatises on this field. On the issue of tongues being the "initial evidence" of the baptism of the Holy Spirit, he does not cite any of the major works on the topic such as *Initial Evidence* edited by Gary McGee, or the two special issues of the *Asian Journal of Pentecostal Studies* dedicated to this issue.

He does not seem to be aware of the common distinction between tongues as the initial evidence of the baptism of the Holy Spirit and tongues as one of the *charismata.* Likewise there is little hint that he is familiar with current works on the nature of the tongues as initial evidence and the baptism of the Holy Spirit found in the writings of Frank Macchia, Simon Chan, and others. Nor is there any sign that the author is aware of the major biblical analysis of the Acts 2, 8, 9, 10, and 19 passages and their relation to the issue of initial evidence of tongues as discussed by Harold Hunter, Robert Menzies, Roger Stronstad, and others.

In light of the above discussion, I would suggest that this work be read by those who have a good understanding of the basic issues, rather than by most within the Pentecostal or Charismatic audience. For one whom on the back cover is described as "an ordained minister of the Assemblies of God for 40 years" and having had "Pentecostal ministers" for parents, he does not seem to understand basic theological or biblical positions held by the Pentecostals; and more accurately quoted and promoted anti-Pentecostal positions of the more dispensational/ fundamentalist perspective. Due to this, beginning students will probably become greatly confused by this book, if they do not already know proper hermeneutical methods, Pentecostal history or Pentecostal theology. He does have some fresh perspectives and some good things to say, but, unfortunately, it is lost within these fundamental weaknesses.

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