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I. ARTICLES

British Assemblies of God in the 1930s

by

William K. KAY

In this article I propose to look briefly at the social and economic background which existed in Britain in the 1930s and then to discuss the reaction of British Assemblies of God to the situation which faced it. The first end note gives further information on the raw material behind this article. As a basic preparation for research I read through all the backnumbers of Redemption Tidings for the 1930s. What contemporary accounts fail to highlight are: (a) "behind the scenes" quarrels between leading personalities and (b) the influence of the social and economic situation on the development of British Pentecostalism. This article attempts to rectify these omissions.

Introduction

John Nelson PARR called together the leaders who formed the original members of Assemblies of God in 1923. PARR combined a passionate evangelistic intensity with a clear organizational ability. His vision of AoG was of a series of self-governing congregations linked by a common doctrinal position and divided into districts loosely supervised by a local presbytery. This vision simply developed, but it has never altered fundamentally.

Assemblies of God in Britain came into being in 1924 and by 1929 numbered about 200 assemblies, the largest proportion of which (31%) was concentrated in Wales. Estimates of the number of people who were members of AoG assemblies in 1929 cannot claim great accuracy, but these three indicators (a) the circulation of the magazine Redemption Tidings, (b) the probable average size of each assembly and (c) the attendance at the big London conventions, all point to roughly the same sort of figure: about 10,000 people. The rapid growth in 1925–1930 was spearheaded by Stephen JEFFREYS' revival campaigns which resulted in the formation of several new congregations each year. JEFFREYS sailed to the USA in the summer of 1926 and no one of comparable maturity or stature was ever found to replace him.

Social and Economic Conditions

Although British society was stratified in the 1930s, and although wealth was very unequally distributed, several changes took place which laid the foundations for the modern era. Contraception, broadcasting, cinemas and building societies (that is, charitable institutions which would lend money for the purchasing of houses at relatively low rates of interest) became fairly common. Unemployment was chronic and severe and about a third of the population lived on the border of extreme poverty. In Wales and Scotland unemployment was worst, but those who had a job saw a gradual improvement in their standard of living as real wages rose by 11% between 1929–1933 and by a further 5% up till 1937.

Politically Britain avoided extreme solutions. The Communist Party never totalled more than 18,000 members and the right wing views of Sir Oswald MOSLEY were soon discredited. The threat of war from 1933 onwards led to a rising pacifist movement and, when war did eventually break out in 1939, there were 59,000 conscientious objectors.

In the late 1920s the Church of England engaged in a long debate over the Prayer Book, a debate which was essentially irrelevant to the condition of the nation. The struggle between anglo-catholics and modernists was largely ignored by the man in the street and, though William TEMPLE (who became Archbishop of Canterbury in...
1942) attempted to inject some reality into the church's agenda, there was little of spiritual benefit to be derived from the overall programme of the largest Christian body in the country. (5) Spiritualism, incidentally, had increased as a consequence of the bereavements of the 1914-18 war and the Church of England was feeble in its denunciation of such activity. (6) Evangelicals were only a small proportion of active members of the Church of England. (7)

Methodists and Baptists (8) began to lose their raison d'être. Methodism had offered evening classes and education for its people, but the same opportunities could now be gained elsewhere, and the fact that nonconformist scholars began to be treated with respect by Anglicans made it less important for nonconformists to retain a separate identity.

It is against this background of bitter poverty for the unemployed, gradually improving living standards for those in work, proliferating entertainment and a weakening of nonconformity, that the life of the penta-costal churches must be seen.

The most obvious distinction between the Elim and AoG Pentecostals lay in their mode of church government. Elim were much more centrally organized than AoG and this had two results: first, their ministers were probably better paid than AoG ministers because their salaries were centrally fixed; and secondly, when a dispute arose between George JEFFREYS and the Elim headquarters around 1937/8, it sent shudders through the whole Elim movement.

AoG had problems of its own in 1934, however. There was disagreement between PARR and fellow members of the Executive Presbytery. In retrospect, the dispute seems unfortunate and avoidable. PARR had been editor of Redemption Tidings and had been voted an honorarium with which to offset secretarial costs. PARR insisted that he be paid the money which was his due, but the other members of the Executive judged that he was being mercenary, particularly in view of the fact that many ministers and missionaries had to live on very low incomes. The dispute reveals the stress and strain under which many Pentecostal leaders were living. Money was short and at least two prominent Pentecostals — Howard CARTER and Harold HORTON — had suffered temporary nervous breakdowns.

However the dispute also brings the opinions and personality of Howard CARTER into focus. CARTER had been present at the inaugural meeting of AoG in 1924 and he had been imprisoned during the 1914-18 war for conscientious objection. He was the Principal of the Hampstead Bible School and a man of strong character and convictions. He was also a bachelor and he believed in "living by faith." On one level the executive Presbytery's view of PARR's attitude to money was simply a personality clash between CARTER and PARR. And, when PARR left AoG, CARTER became the dominant figure.

Undoubtedly CARTER was a man of faith. He sent students at the Bible School to pastor or pioneer all over the country and it seems probable that the money CARTER raised from student fees was ploughed back into the purchasing of buildings. Thus it is probable that CARTER bought buildings, trained students and then sent students to begin churches in the buildings he had bought. No record of the financial transactions have survived however, and so we cannot be certain that this is how CARTER operated.

The absence of PARR from AoG weakened the movement evangelistically at a national level, and CARTER, rather surprisingly, travelled round the world by faith between 1934-36 and was out of the country again towards the end of the decade. CARTER's absence depleted the teaching strength of the Bible School and left the pioneering activities of its students in other less capable hands for several crucial years. The number of assemblies continued to rise so that there were about 350 by 1940, and CARTER's world-wide dissemination of the Pentecostal message was by no means unnecessary or in vain, but his
absence at home was noticeable. During the war years, however, he was confined to Britain and his pastoral ministry to AoG as a whole was invaluable.

CARTER was no empire-builder and the assemblies his students had begun and the buildings he had bought were all handed over to Assemblies of God, as was the Bible School in 1948. CARTER lived by his principle and travelled light. PARR returned to Assemblies of God, but the pity is that he and CARTER never seem to have been able to work together harmoniously after 1934.

When we look at the social conditions of the 1930s, it is clear that neither AoG nor Elim made much attempt to combat unemployment, nor did they have access to the growing influence of broadcasting. The financial position of both AoG and Elim improved throughout the 1930s, though individual pastors were poor, and to some extent, the dreariness of life in the areas where poverty was worst helped Pentecostalism, because the assemblies could offer a bright and lively alternative to the norm. Some of the choruses used in worship, for example, were based on music hall tunes. In a curious way, too, the menace of the Soviet Union and the fear of Hitlerism were incentives to conversion, because they seemed more evidence that the night was coming and that the return of Christ was near. Moreover, the rise of pacifism during the same period was also beneficial because it made the AoG adherence to conscientious objection less unusual and more acceptable. Finally, as several men testified, it was the lack of snobbery in AoG which was so appealing. (9) The Church of England, with its ecclesiastical factions and its upper class attitudes, seemed to have nothing to offer; Pentecostalism seemed to have everything.

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Endnotes

(A) The classic work on Pentecostalism in Britain is by Donald GEE. He published The Pentecostal Movement in December 1941. The book was printed by the Victory Press in London and published by the Assemblies of God Bookroom; then situated in Luton. Subsequently this book was expanded, though its early chapters were almost unchanged, and republished in 1967 under the title Wind and Flame. The publishers were the Assemblies of God Publishing House, which was the name given to the section of the Assemblies of God which dealt with the commissioning, production and publication of its printed materials, both books and magazines.

GEE's writing about pentecostal history is almost unparalleled in the sense that GEE himself was a participant in the events he described. He was a preacher, teacher and editor, and, even from an early stage, he possessed a historical sense which enabled him to see the Pentecostal revival with a greater sense of proportion than his contemporaries. There are however, three shortcomings in GEE's work. First, and appropriately, he was modest about his own contribution; and this means that he was simply unable to assess how much influence his own example and his own balanced doctrinal position added to Pentecostalism in Britain and across the world. Secondly, GEE failed to give an account of his own sources and primary documents. It is simply impossible to find out what GEE had read or with whom he had talked with doing his research. The probability, of course, is that GEE knew most of the main pentecostal protagonists personally and had, over many years, discussed what they felt, thought and knew about the origins and development of the Pentecostal movement. Thirdly, GEE fails to paint his picture of the Pentecostal movement against the social and economic background of its own day. This is very understandable. People take societal changes for granted and forget that later generations may have difficulty in imagining what it was like to be a Pentecostal at the time when horses and cabs were common in the streets of London or when there were no telephones.

Other accounts of Pentecostalism in Britain are indebted to GEE and even Walter J. HOLLENGEGER, who later wrote The Pentecostals (London: SCM Press, 1972) which gives an account of Pentecostalism worldwide, knew and was influenced by GEE and, in fact, as a young man
interpreted for him when he preached. HOLLWEGGER's personal portrait of Gee is given in Learning for Living 12.2 (November 1972). Learning for Living in now called The British Journal of Religious Education.

The main printed primary sources for British Pentecostalism are to be found in the pages of Redemption Tidings, founded in 1924 and published without a break until the present day, although in November 1984 Redemption Tidings was renamed Redemption. Frequency of publication has varied from once a week to once a month; from 1930-1934, it was monthly, and from January 1934 fortnightly.

There are also archival materials: letters, old yearbooks, scanty records of financial accounts, prayer sheets, photographs, newspaper cuttings, articles from defunct magazines, minute books, and so on, at various places. Some are held by local churches, the majority were held at the Assemblies of God General Offices at 106-114 Talbot Street, Nottingham NG1 5CH, England, but are in the process of being transferred to Mattersey Hall, the Assemblies of God Bible College at Mattersey, near Doncaster DN10 5HD, England.

(1) These are taken from figures prepared by Basil VARNHAM, the General Administrator of Assemblies of God in Britain.


(3) This was George ORWELL's assessment in The Road to Wigan Pier, first published by Penguin in 1937, and to be found on page 203 of the 1983 edition in The Penguin Complete Non-Fiction of George Orwell.


(5) This is obviously a harsh judgment and a personal opinion.

(6) See W.R. INGE, Lay Thoughts of a Dean (London: Putnam's Sons, 1928), p. 304; and Redemption Tidings (22nd March 1940).


(8) The Baptists dropped from 416,665 in 1926 to 396,531 in 1936, a fall of 5% - which is effectively greater if one compares it with the rising total population of the country. By 1946 the Baptists had lost a further 41,631. Furthermore, Baptist Sunday schools, like those of other nonconformists, continued to decline, though figures for the decline are harder to obtain. See Adrian HASTINGS, A History of English Christianity: 1920-1985 (London: Collins, 1986), p. 265.

(9) See Donald GEE in Redemption Tidings (17th August 1945) and Tom WOODS Redemption Tidings (24th March 1947).

Pentecôtisme et évangélicalisme: Prolégomènes à une analyse sémantique et implications relationnelles

de
Raymond PFISTER

Dans mes recherches sur l'évolution des mouvements évangéliques et fondamentalistes en Europe j'ai constaté - à ma grande surprise - que certains incluent les pentecôtistes au nombre des mouvements évangéliques, alors que d'autres les écartent volontairement. Le présent essai a pour objectif de procéder à une courte analyse sémantique des termes "pentecôtisme" et "évangélicalisme"(1) et d'en tirer les implications relationnelles. Il ne sera certes possible que d'esquisser les problèmes posés par une définition de ces concepts.

I. Pentecôtisme et évangélicalisme: analyse sémantique

A. Concepts génériques et attitude globalisante

On semble considérer comme acquis le fait d'utiliser les termes "pentecôtisme" et "évangélicalisme" comme concepts génériques se référant à certains groupements religieux définis qui ont entre eux des propriétés communes. Ainsi Daniel ALEXANDER (et d'autres avec lui) parle d'un "noyau dur" pour décrire ce qu'il considère être les aspects les plus marquants de l'identité...
évangelique (autorité absolue de la Bible, nécessité d'une conversion personnelle, puissance du Saint-Esprit pour le témoignage et la vie chrétienne). Une telle démarche présumée, en fait, que nous sommes en présence de concepts suffisamment univoques pour assimiler différentes expressions d'un même courant. Mais quand on prend, par exemple la taxonomie de Robert WEBBER(2) sur l'évangélicalisme américain (qui mentionne jusqu'à quatorze différentes composantes avec chacune son aspect marquant), on est en droit de s'interroger sur les possibilités réelles de catégorisation.

Que soit pour le "pentecôtisme" ou l'"évangelicalisme," nous ne pouvons ignorer l'importance des pluralités confessionnelles et théologiques qui les composent et, par voie de conséquence, la difficulté de définir les concepts. Pour l'un comme pour l'autre on retrouve au cœur des débats les deux mêmes sujets de controverse: a) la question écclesiologique quant à la nature de l'église (église de multitude ou église de professants?); (3) b) la question théologique quant à la nature herméneutique (fondamentalisme ou modernisme). Il conviendrait probablement de les considérer sous forme de continuums (allant d'une gauche libéralisante à une droite conservatrice)(4) plutôt que sous forme de simple antithèses. Ces remarques me semblent en tout cas être suffisantes pour affirmer que l'utilisation des termes "pentecôtisme" et "évangélicalisme" aboutit nécessairement à une attitude globalisante, c'est-à-dire qui cherche à réunir en tout des éléments qui peuvent être extrêmement dispersés (voire même disparates); celle-ci peut faciliter une assimilation commode d'expressions pluralistes, mais ne sera-t-elle pas aussi une barrière à la compréhension du concept?(5)

B. Enoncés de faits et inférences

Un autre aspect du problème semble provenir du fait que nous n'ayons de distinguer suffisamment entre les énoncés de faits et les inférences que nous faisons à propos des sous-groupes du "pentecôtisme" et de l'"évangelicalisme." En effet, quand nous observons l'orthodoxie et l'orthopraxie de chacun d'entre eux, nous pouvons énoncer certains faits qui sont propres à chaque groupe. Nous pouvons ensuite estimer que sur la base de la présence (ou de l'absence) de certains critères, nous possédons un ensemble de paramètres et d'indicateurs suffisants pour tirer certaines conclusions au sujet du concept étudié. Au risque de se méprendre profondément, il est pourtant indispensable de se rappeler que le caractère relatif (et subjectif) de ces inférences peut nous induire en erreur au lieu de nous éclairer sur le problème. En voulant absolument chercher un certain nombre de dénominateurs communs - un noyau "dur" - on risque de minimiser les marques distinctives des groupes qu'on veut réunir sous un même concept, et de les forcer dans un moule qui peut les faire sentir trop à l'étroit (ou le contraire!).

C. Evaluation figées et réalité évolution

Un mouvement religieux, par définition, n'est jamais une réalité statique. Ne pas tenir compte de l'évolution historique des concepts c'est immanquablement se cantonner dans des évaluations figées et des définitions révolues. C'est le cas, me semble-t-il, de bon nombre d'études sur le "pentecôtisme" et sur l'"évangelicalisme" qui ignorent ou minimisent les rapports entre les divers sens des mots ainsi que les conditions internes ou externes qui expliquent leur évolution.

En soulevant la question "évangelicalisme ou fondamentalisme," D. ALEXANDER fait remarquer que ce dernier terme "est prédestiné à une carrière sociologique"(6) du fait de son caractère plus univoque et plus commode et - j'ajoutais - plus figé pour les besoins du chercheur. Il n'est pas bien difficile de se rendre compte que la réalité est toute autre, et que l'histoire remet continuellement en cause le contenu d'un concept quel qu'il soit. Si l'on peut parler successive-
ment de fondamentalisme et de néo-fondamentalisme, d'évangélicalisme et de néo-évangelicalisme, cela signifie tout au moins que la réalité évolue, que les données changent, et que donc les termes utilisés doivent être reconsidérés. D'ailleurs en parlant de "mouvement évangélique" ne faut-il pas reconnaître là le caractère changeant (voire instable) de tout mouvement religieux qui ne peut être que "mouvement"?

Pour ce qui est du "pentecôtisme" le problème se pose exactement de la même manière. Walter J. HOLLENWEGER vient encore de nous rappeler que l'histoire élargit les concepts, et notre façon de les comprendre doit en tenir compte. C'est ce qu'il fait, pour sa part, en définissant le "pentecôtisme" comme étant bien sûr:

1. les dénominations pentécôtistes classiques issues d'un réveil spirituel au début du XXe siècle (incluant leurs églises missionnaires); mais aussi
2. le mouvement charismatique touchant toutes les églises traditionnelles ayant assimilé le réveil spirituel des années soixante et soixante-dix (incluant leurs églises missionnaires); sans oublier pour autant
3. les églises pentécôtistes du Tiers Monde d'origine autochtone qui ont vu plus récemment le jour sans apport d'œuvres missionnaires d'origine occidentale et qui rassemblent des populations non blanches.

Il va sans dire qu'une définition ne fait pas et ne fera jamais l'unanimité. Pour certains elle sera trop étroite, pour la plupart certainement trop large. Il y a ceux qui penseront avoir le monopole du "pentecôtisme," et il y a ceux qui n'en voudront pas pour diverses raisons (par exemple: l'impossibilité pratique de contester un monopole, le besoin d'affirmer une identité propre, ...). Les définitions conçues habituellement peuvent être l'assurance assurante alors que la réalité est devenue tout autre.

En conclusion, il paraît assez évident que "pentecôtisme" et "évangelicalisme" souffrent tous deux d'un manque de rigueur dans l'utilisation des termes et du contenu qui leur est attribué.

II. Pentecôtisme et évangélicalisme: implications relationnelles

Envisager de parler des rapports entre "pentecôtisme" et "évangelicalisme" soulève un certain nombre de questions pertinentes que nous pourrions formuler de la façon suivante:

1. Quels sont les facteurs déterminants dans l'établissement d'une telle relation?
2. Quels sont les différents cas de figure possibles et/ou envisageables?
3. Quels sont les types de rapport effectivement souhaités par les deux groupes en présence?

A. Les facteurs déterminants

Sans pour autant prétendre établir une liste exhaustive, ni même faire une énumération d'éléments par ordre d'importance, il nous faut - à ce stade de notre investigation - chercher à relever les indices ou variables susceptibles d'intervenir dans l'établissement ou dans la modification d'un certain type de relation:

1. Evolution historique (antécédents) des deux groupes dans un contexte socio-géographique déterminé;
2. Préjugés et attitudes des deux groupes issus de ce contexte;
3. Importance et croissance numériques des deux groupes;
4. Démographie des deux groupes (catégories socio-professionnelles représentées);
5. Degré d'élaboration d'une théologie (orale et/ou écrite);
6. Degré de consolidation des groupes (conception de l'autorité);
7. Degré d'institutionnalisation des groupes;
8. Apport des intellectuels;
9. Mise en avant d'une ou plusieurs spécificités théologiques ou ecclésiologiques;

Une telle esquisse, qui mériterait plus ample développement, nous met en garde contre toute tentative de généralisations simplistes qui se voudraient être à vocation universelle, et nous invite à définir premièrement notre champ d'investigation en des termes suffisamment cohérents et spécifiques. C'est ainsi que ma propre recherche sur le "Mouvement de Pentecôte" se limite à un contexte géographique et culturel bien défini - l'Alsace - et aux communautés pentécôtistes (et pentécôtistes (10)) de type confessant.

B. Les différents cas de figure

Il n'est peut-être pas inutile de préciser que tous les cas de figure théoriquement possible ne sont pas forcément des types de rapport pratiquement envisageables par tous les intéressés.

1. Séparation totale des deux entités (11)

2. Séparation partielle des deux entités

3. Assimilation partielle de l'une par l'autre

4. Assimilation totale de l'une par l'autre

Il ne sera possible de discuter de la viabilité de ces cas de figure que dans la mesure où l'on analysera les différentes variables (mentionnées précédemment) telles qu'elles s'appliquent à un contexte géographique précis (pays, région, ville, ...) et à des communautés définies.

C. Les types de rapports souhaités par les intéressés

Dans une situation donnée il ne s'agira pas pour le chercheur d'imposer un schéma-type, c'est-à-dire un cadre sociologique prétélémat et fictif, aux résultats de son analyse, mais plutôt de laisser se dégager de sa recherche le type de rapport existant effectivement parce que souhaité par les intéressés.

L'analyse sémantique nous avait déjà montré qu'il y avait pluralité de vues au sein même des deux groupes en question. L'analyse historique du "penticôtisme" et de l'"évangélicalisme" nous montre que le type de rapport ayant existé jusqu'à ce jour témoigne d'une approche à la fois dynamique et évolutive de la part des deux groupes.

Encore une fois il nous faut souligner l'importance de limiter clairement le champ d'investigation afin de cerner le plus près possible la réalité des différences et des ressemblances entre les deux entités. Où se situe vraiment la singularité du groupe? Quelle est la véritable étendue du dénominateur commun? Jusqu'à quel point y a-t-il incompatibilité et irréductibilité des deux groupes?

En Europe, "pentecôtisme" et évangélicalisme" représentent tous les deux une minorité religieuse et, de ce fait, ressentent d'autant plus fortement le besoin de consolider leur identité: ce qui produit à la fois un phénomène de socialisation (= besoin de s'identifier par rapport au monde extérieur) et une recherche herméneutique propre (= besoin de s'identifier par rapport à soi-même).
Pour ces deux mouvements en quête de crédibilité et de légitimité sociales se pose désormais la question suivante: dans quelle mesure ont-ils et/ou pensent-ils avoir suffisamment besoin l'un de l'autre pour se lancer conjointement dans un processus de reconnaissance mutuelle et de reconnaissance sociale commune?

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Notes

(1) Néologisme désignant le courant protestant évangélique et la réalité de ses manifestations.
(2) Robert WEBBER, Common Roots: A Call to Evangelical Maturity (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1978).
(4) Continuum ecclésiologique: multitudinisme strict - multitudinisme conventiculaire - Églises de professants progressistes - Églises de professants régressifs ou séparatistes (ces trois derniers pouvant être pentecôtistes ou non); Continuum théologique: libéraux stricts - libéraux évangéliques - Évangéliques libéraux - néo-évangéliques - néo-fondamentalistes - fondamentalistes dispensionnalistes (ces quatre derniers pouvant être pentecôtistes ou non). Aucun de ces modèles ne prétend être une représentation parfaite ou complète des possibilités existantes.
(5) Pour ce qui est de l'évangelicalisme, l'exemple allemand témoigne de la volonté de surmonter cette barrière en différenciant les Evangelischen (= Églises multitudinistes issues de la Réforme) et les Evangelikalen (= Églises libres confessantes).

(8) Daniel ALEXANDER, ibid.
(10) Par "pentecôtistes" on désigne les groupes et communautés dont la doctrine et/ou la pratique peuvent être définies comme étant pentecôtistes sans que les groupes et communautés en question revendiquent pour autant l'étiquette ou l'appellation "pentecôtiste."

II. BOOK REVIEWS

Norbert BAUMERT, Gaben des Geistes Jesu. Das charismatische in der Kirche (Graz: Austria: Verlag Styria, 1986), pp. 207. Reviewed by Peter HOCKEN, Gaithersburg, Maryland, USA.

Norbert BAUMERT has been Professor of New Testament Theology in the Jesuit Faculty in Frankfurt, West Germany since 1982, and been a leader and teacher in the Charismatic movement for somewhat longer. This book is
not simply about the spiritual gifts, but about the
Charismatic movement as a whole; thus the sub-title
interprets the title. It has three sections: 1) Er-
fahrenungen und Grundhaltung charismatischer Erneuerung
(pp. 52); 2) Die Christuserfahrung des Apostels Paulus:
Ein biblisches Zeugnis und heutige Glaubenserfassung
(pp. 62); 3) Theologische Einordnung (pp. 70). The author's
method can be seen from this structure. Part I examines
different aspects of contemporary charismatic Christian
experience, and here BAUMERT gives more space to the
spiritual gifts than later in the book. Part II examines
Paul's charismatic experience of Jesus Christ, using
exegetical expertise, and then demonstrates by use of
contemporary witnesses that people today are experiencing
what Paul experienced. BAUMERT here spells out his
charismatic hermeneutic: "Der Christ lernt sich selbst
verstehen im Hinnieren auf die Heilige Schrift, und er
versteht die Schrift im Wiedererkennen seiner eigenen
Erfahrung mit Gott. So deutet die Schrift sein Leben, und
sein Erleben erschliesst die Schrift. Im Pulsschlag
dieses hermeneutischen Zirkels geschieht geistiges
Wachstum, das voller Spannung und Leben ist." (p. 63)
Section II applies this methodology to different aspects
of Christian life: God speaks clearly; dying and rising
with Christ; living with God; the incarnate bodily
working of God's grace; Christ's Lordship; the growth of
the body of Christ. In Part III, BAUMERT addresses more
theologically such issues as Christian experience of the
Holy Spirit, what is essential and what may vary, the
meaning of charism and charismatic, and the specificity
for the Charismatic movement.

BAUMERT's book is significant in that a scholar-
leader has attempted an integration of the exegetical and
the theological with the spiritual and the pastoral. This
genre is not to be confused with popularization, a
mediating of scholarship to the less scholarly. It is a
different form of writing that combines the truly
scholarly in terms of exegesis and theology with a
careful attention to contemporary Christian experience.

In this reviewer's judgment, the most valuable parts of
the book are where this integration is most effectively
realized, as for example in Part I dealing with the
life-giving character of Christian testimony. However,
there are elements in this book that more properly belong
to a pastoral handbook for prayer-group leaders. Thus
BAUMERT often documents charismatic excesses and
imbalance, adding recommendations for wisdom and balance.
Most of this is sensible enough, but this reviewer
experienced this dimension as a distraction from the
book's central inspiration.

From BAUMERT's theological reflections, it is
particularly worthwhile to comment on charismata and the
specificity of the Charismatic movement. He recognizes
that Paul uses the term "charism" in a variety of
senses, but most often in the more specific sense
corresponding to the modern charismatic usage which he
defines as "eine von Gott frei gewährte gnadenhafte
Befähigung zum Dienst am Heil anderer" (p. 146). He is
critical of BITTLINGER's review of the Holy Spirit in
charisms "working in and through, but going beyond, the
believer's natural ability." BAUMERT denies such a basis
in human nature, while recognizing that charisms always
bring human qualities into play: "aber Grund und Zentrum
solcher Aktivitäten ist doch nicht diese menschliche
Fähigkeit, sondern eben die 'Einwirkung des Geistes,' so
dass der Träger eines Charismas bei deutlicher Offen-
barung es Geistes manchmal als geradezu wahrnimmt: 'Nicht
mehr ich lebe, Christus lebt in mir'" (p. 161). So he
rhetorically asks what natural capacity lies beneath a
raising from the dead (p. 160).

BAUMERT's position on the specificity of the
Charismatic movement needs to be understood in the light
of his differences over the years with the position of
his fellow German Catholic theologian, Heribert MUEHLEN
of Paderborn. While MUEHLEN has sought to integrate this
work of the Spirit into Catholic structures with concepts
of Taufferneuerung, Firmenerneuerung and Weiherneuerung,
seeing this renewal as well, BAUMERT has always had
difficulty with any concept of this specific charismatic experience with tongue-speaking and other gifts as for all. His concern is first the sovereignty of God (God is free to bestow his gifts where he will and man cannot organize them) and secondly the danger of universalizing a particular pattern of christian experience. Thus BAUMERT argues that a living experience of Christ in the Spirit is intended for all Christians: "eine bewusste Glaubens-Erkenntnis und ein Betroffenwerden von Gottes Zusage zum Wesen es vollen Christseins gehört" (p. 190). He then sees the contemporary Charismatic movement as the most recent in a series of Spirit-animated revivals. It has its specificity (closely related to glossolalia and other spiritual gifts) but this is a gift for some, not a requirement for all. Thus he reaches his final conclusion: "Die Charismatische Erneuerung' in unseren Tagen ist ein Geschenk Gottes zu einer charismatischen Erneuerung der Kirche" (p. 194). That is to say, this specific contemporary movement (Charismatic with a Capital C) is a true gift of God contributing to a wider charismatic renewal of the church. The present reviewer is convinced that the evidence points to the Pentecostal-Charismatic renewal of this century being more apparent where its ecumenical character is made more central than in this book. While aspects of this renewal are not for all (particular styles of prayer), there is evidence that some aspects are for all, and that this centers on the directness of communication between the Lord and the Christian established through baptism in the Spirit (see Chapter 6 of One Lord, One Spirit, One Body. The Ecumenical Grace of the Charismatic Movement (Exeter: Paternoster Press, 1987).  


In this work the authors have selected geographic variants as well as all the major historic divisions of Christianity: Protestant, Orthodox and Catholic. Some churches included have received little publicity.

Despite the official position of atheism in the Soviet Union, a revival among many Protestants, both registered and unregistered is relatively well known. The Ten Growing Churches include the Methodists and Lutherans in Estonia, Siberian Pentecostals, Central Asian Mennonites, Baptists in Moscow and the Ukraine, Catholics in Lithuania and Uniates in the Ukraine, and finally the Orthodox in Moscow and Siberia.

Natural sources inadequately explain the growth of these churches in the USSR. Human sources suggested are disillusionment with marxist dogma, the suffering capacity of outstanding evangelists, motivated grandmothers who teach basic truths to children, the high moral standards and work ethic, christian families, and foreign radio broadcasts. But severe restrictions thwart the training of the clergy. The dominant Russian Orthodox Church, when joining the World Council of Churches, claimed 50 million members, yet they are allowed only three functioning seminaries. Entrance to them is controlled by the State. The leading Protestants, (the AUCECB) a merger of Baptists, Evangelical Christians, Pentecostals and Mennonites are limited to offering correspondence courses. Only 25 graduated in 1985.

The most active Christians are subject to hostile articles in the press. For more than 20 years christian prisoners have consistently been numbered in the hundreds. The authors introduce little-known Protestants such as the Methodists and Lutherans in Estonia. Between 1943 and 1973 the Methodists almost doubled their small membership from 1242 to 2300. BOURDEAUX admits the lack
of growth in the capital Tallinn, where for the past five years the death of elderly members has exceeded the young people now joining the church.

The reviewer was somewhat disappointed that German Pentecostals in Siberia were selected instead of those in the Ukrainian Bible belt. However the successes and persecutions encountered among these Siberians are valid representations of the Christians of Evangelical Faith founded by Ivan VORONAEV in the 1920's. This was the decade in which this pentecostal denomination was recognized by the Soviet government.

The German Pentecostals in the tiny East Siberian settlement of Chuguyevka refused to register in 1981. This was due to unacceptable conditions which included renouncing religious education for their children. Services were interrupted followed by fines, arrests detentions and corrective labor. The Pentecostals appealed but regional authorities upheld the local Soviets and repression and slander continued. Citizens convinced of the integrity of the pentecostal community, were ready to speak out against injustice. Application for emigration by 50 Pentecostals to West Germany was refused. Extensive fasting by 70 believers culminated in the arrest of the pentecostal pastor. He was charged under six articles of the Criminal Code which included organizing meetings for young people and children. The pastor was sentenced to 5 years in a labor camp 3700 miles away. His family was twice refused permission to visit him. Of the twenty-two members who demanded his release in a public demonstration, seven were tried and sentenced. BOURDEAUX cites the spiritual growth of these Pentecostals whereas numerical growth has resulted from the large families.

The Mennonites in Central Asia are presented as a minority of a minority. In 1986 Peter REMPEL of the European Office of the Mennonite Central Committee declared that "The Mennonite churches are experiencing more freedom in the USSR than they have since the Revolution. This is a time of building churches, baptizing new members and ordaining new ministers." This may sound like a contradiction of the above-mentioned German Pentecostals. Instead it illustrates the error of stereotyping believers in the Soviet Union.

Introduced into Russia from Prussia in 1788 by CATHERINE II’s generous land grants and numerous benefits, the Mennonites were to number 120,000 by 1917. The Soviet Mennonites have been and remain models of productivity, which has led in turn to some concessions even on military service. Of the Mennonites who merged with the AUCECR in 1963, many opted for registration in autonomous churches allowed by officials in 1967. (Incidentally more than 200 pentecostal congregations are presently registered as autonomous churches.) BOURDEAUX indicates that contrary to Soviet law the Mennonites have Sunday school groups of twenty children taught by one or two young women. Since 1974 they have published an unofficial journal entitled Der Jugend Freund.

The Moscow church, predominantly Baptist, also serves as headquarters for 5,400 churches located in all 15 Soviet Republics. This church union is a merger of Baptists, Evangelical Christians, Pentecostals and Mennonites. Within the city limits of Moscow it is the only Russian Protestant church serving a population of almost 9 million. In addition to its 5,200 members there are now 17 new churches registered in the Moscow region. Its church sanctuary seats 800 but close to 2,000 persons squeeze into the six services held each week. In each two hour service three sermons are delivered, some by preachers who attended Bible schools. Since the late 1950's only a handful of Baptist pastors were permitted to study abroad. In the 1970’s correspondence courses for pastors were offered and by 1985 the number of graduates totalled over 300.

A crisis arose in the early 1960's during KHRUSHCHEV's ascendancy. Compromising leaders at headquarters issued a "Letter of Instructions" to some 60 Senior Presbyters (the equivalent of District Superintendents or Bishops), advising them to have the pastors
under their care eliminate evangelism in their sermons, curtail baptisms of converts from 18 to 30 to a minimum, and to forbid the church attendance of children. This resulted in a nationwide split among the Baptists and the schism remains to this day. Those who left the union and are known as the Reform Baptists were denied the right to be recognized by the government. Hundreds of their leaders have been imprisoned for continuing their ministries. Recently the Reform Baptists have been permitted to register as autonomous churches.

The Uniates, or Eastern Rite Catholics in the Ukraine, worship like the Orthodox in form, but they recognize the Pope as the head of their church. They comprise the largest church in the USSR with no legal existence since being officially liquidated in 1946. They are consistently persecuted by the Soviets and no Ukrainian catholic priest can receive official registration to conduct pastoral work. Pope John Paul II's renewed requests for legal recognition on their behalf is viewed as a provocation. A Soviet offer in 1984 to legalize the Ukrainian Catholic Church was conditioned upon their breaking ties with Rome. Since this would be renouncing Catholicism the Uniates refused.

The Lithuanian Catholic Church received permission to build a church in a busy port city. The parishioners completed it six years later in 1960, at a cost of 3 million rubels, but they were denied entry due to KRUSHCHEV's persecution. An appeal to BREZHNEV for the return of the church was refused though signed by 148,000. Despite such incidents the functioning churches still attract large crowds. In 1983 some 50,000 pilgrims made their way to the religious festival at Siluva, one of the national shrines.

The Orthodox Church in Siberia has attracted increasing numbers of the young and the intellectuals. Recently, preaching receives greater prominence in orthodox worship and homiletics is a major subject in their three theological seminaries

Michael BOURDEAUX and his wife credit the archives of Keston College for enabling them to write this book. BOURDEAUX, an Anglican, founded Keston College in 1969 as a center for the study of religion under communism. This center provides primary resource treasures for scholars and missions.
preaching. It could inspire pentecostal scholars to study actual preaching in pentecostal churches, Black and White.


Generally Evangelicals have been more comfortable theologizing about the person of the Holy Spirit than in explaining what He does. Their theological texts define and defend His divinity but only awkwardly describe His deeds. This short study by the Andrew Mutch Professor of Historical and Systematic Theology at Gordon Conwell Theological Seminary, is meant to fill this lacuna.

The origins of this book are, as John R. REID describes in the Preface, to be found in the proceedings of the Consultation on the Work of the Holy Spirit held in Oslo, Norway in May 1985. Sponsored by the Theological Working Group of the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization and the Theology Unit of the World Evangelical Fellowship, the consultation's task was to explore how the Spirit works in the conversion process. Under the leadership of Tormod ENGELSVIKEN, the consultation consisted of forty-five participants and fifteen observers from many parts of the world and representing many theological traditions within Evangelicalism. The papers, circulated to the participants before the conference, constituted a substantial, if uneven and inconsistent, pneumatology. This arrangement maximized the time for the consideration of specific difficult issues. The discussions that constituted an integral part of the consultation were characterized by careful listening and by honest confession of differences. It is safe to say that for many participants the meetings provided a forum for old prejudices to be confronted and new understandings to be achieved.

The nature of the meeting seemed to require a more permanent record as well as a means of disseminating the results to a wider circle. Whereas the publication of conference papers in, or near, their original form often creates an editorial nightmare as well as an economic disaster, a unified work by a recognized theologian with proven writing skills seemed to be the answer. The format of the book, following that of the conference, combines theological assessment with testimonial case studies.

David WELLS condensed the massive material into six chapters in which he studies the personhood of the Spirit, His relationship to other religions, His work in making the gospel effective, in forming the Church and in "power encounters." Each of these topics is considered exegetically, theologically and historically. The book concludes with five case studies reporting on evangelism in China, East Africa, South Africa, Australia and the Philippines.

Among the key issues for the consultation was the necessity to achieve a fuller understanding of how the work of the Spirit is a "sign to the unbeliever." The reports of healing, "power encounters" and liberation from demonic possession have marked evangelism in many parts of the world but western theologians have found it difficult to categorize these events within traditional theological systems. On the other hand, Pentecostals have been slow to establish a theological framework in which to understand and explain these phenomena. Thus the mixture of evangelical and pentecostal theologians at the consultation was a matter of particular significance. Among the pentecostal/charismatic participants were William MENZIES, Peter KUZMIC, Alan COLE and John WIMBER. (For the sake of understanding any personal bias, it must be stated that the writer of this review was also an observer and, furthermore, a former student - and an admirer - of the author.) Others, in particular those
from developing countries, offered testimonial case studies highlighting the importance of such manifestations. There was no effort to force a consensus on this issue. Those favoring contemporary charismata were not asked to renounce their position; those rejecting them were not asked to endorse them. On this point and others, there was agreement to disagree.

Thus in the spirit of the consultation, WELLS has presented a summary of the issues that allows him, as the official scribe, to retain his own position. The material is well organized and well expressed, but one has to wonder what exactly is new in the material. The spectrum of evangelical opinions are acknowledged; other views are rejected. Warnings are given concerning the dangers of variant emphases, especially those from nineteenth century Liberalism and Neo-Orthodoxy.

Undoubtedly many readers will scrutinize the discussion of charismatic gifts and will agree that the author has chosen his words with care. He offers three understandings of signs and wonders: "The first position - that exorcisms and miracles, especially healing, should always accompany evangelism - is usually based on three major presuppositions... The second position... is that the appearance of miracles in the Bible is rhythmic and... ended with the conclusion of the apostolic ministries... The third view of signs and wonders accepts the notion that miracles in the Bible appear according to a rhythm but questions whether the connection with the apostolic office can be established in so airtight a manner" (pp. 88f.). The first is presumed to be the pentecostal position, the second is clearly the anti-charismatic argument of Benjamin WARFIELD that has a decreasing number of proponents, and the third position is suggested as the biblical view that mediates the previously mentioned extremes. One wonders, however, if the pentecostal/charismatic position - especially that expressed by the consultation participants - can be fairly represented by the words, "healing should always accompany evangelism." Is this a theological straw man that the reader can easily discard? Would it not be more fair to represent Pentecostals as recognizing the sovereignty of the Spirit and admitting that miracles have, in fact often accompanied the spread of the gospel? Such linkage is, for example, suggested by Alan COLE in his case study of China. (A sociological survey indicated that a large percentage of pentecostal believers in France trace their conversion experience to an experience of healing in themselves, in a family member or in a close friend.) Pentecostals have much work to do in formulating a coherent theology of evangelism and in communicating it clearly.

As a summary of evangelical thinking about the evangelizing Spirit of God, this book is excellent. As a record of the consultation, it is an admirable attempt at the impossible. As a contribution to a brotherly conversation over the role of the supernatural in evangelism, it is not the final word. More discussion and listening are required.

III. Notes

The Bulletin voor Charismatische Theologie, a publication by the Dutch Charismatic foundations "Vuur" and "Charismatische Werkgemeenschap Nederland," enjoys a growing readership. With the twentieth issue (1987) the first decade of this periodical has been completed and celebrated, not only with a cumulative index, but also with significant reflections about the Charismatic movement from scholars of several denominations. Among the articles included in this jubilee edition are: J. VERNHOF, "De charismatische beweging: Een 'holistische' spiritualiteitsbeweging met mogelijkheden tot een eigen theologie;" Cees VAN DER LAAN and Jean-Jacques SUURMOND, "De relatie tussen de pinksterbeweging en de charis-
In the article by C. VAN DER LAAN and J.J. SUURMOND, the relationship between the Dutch Pentecostal movement and the Charismatic renewal is considered, primarily from the pentecostal perspective. The birth of Pentecostalism as an ecumenical renewal movement, its development into various denominations and organizations, and the unsuccessful dialogue between the Pentecostals and the Charismatics during the 1970's is briefly described in the first part by VAN DER LAAN. SUURMOND then reasons as to why the dialogue ceased and offers suggestions for a new start. The acceptance of a fundamentalistic theology is seen as a major cause why the initial ecumenical attitude of Pentecostalism slowly disappeared. In order to overcome this present prejudice, SUURMOND suggests that Pentecostals and Charismatics start meeting in prayer and praise; and secondly he calls for annual meetings of pentecostal and charismatic theologians and historians. This combination of prayer and theology, he argues, may create mutual acceptance and would gradually take away the fear on the pentecostal side of entering into a broader dialogue.

C.v.L.


Well known among American Catholic Charismatics, Bishop McKINNEY has a ministry that reaches beyond his own ecclesiastical group. In this small book, he offers spiritual counsel on prayer, evangelism, healing, praying with Scripture, yielding to the Spirit and hearing from God. The material was apparently developed and presented as homilies and thus has a very pastoral and personal tone. The essays are not only affirmations of basic teachings, but also testimonials of how the theological truths become experiential realities. Bishop McKINNEY's life and ministry are built around the theme of "Jesus Christ is Lord" which he sees as the answer to the "burning question" of the center of Christianity. With this theme in focus, the roles of Mary and the ecclesiastical hierarchy are discretely presented in a positive manner.

D.D.S.

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IV. RECENT PUBLICATIONS


V. CHRONICLE

FRANCE. THREE PENTECOSTAL DENOMINATIONS in France (Église de Dieu, Églises Apostoliques, Églises du Réveil) held a pastoral convention at the protestant convention centre "Porte Ouverte" in Châlon-sur-Saône during November 19-20, 1987. This meeting is noteworthy because these churches are (together with the Lutheran-Reformed Church and the Baptists) members of the French Protestant Federation. Another meeting of this kind is planned for 1988 to deepen the beginnings of fruitful ecumenical dialogue. (correspondent: Hubert JURGENSEN)

NETHERLANDS. Loek OUDEMAN, teacher at Centrale Pinkster Bijbelschool Zeist, has earned his doctorandus title at the (Roman Catholic) University of Nijmegen. His thesis, "Charisma van onderscheiding der geesten," dealing with the gift of discerning spirits was accepted by the Faculty of Theology in January 1988. (correspondent: Cees VAN DER LAAN)
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