Pentecostalism: global trends and local adjustments

Hugh Osgood[1]

Abstract

Pentecostal spread is often attributed to Pentecostalism's ability to make local cultural adjustments. This paper argues that there is also a strand within Pentecostalism that spreads through a conviction that it has embraced a global brand that needs little or no modification. The nature of this 'globally committed' strand is explored through the concepts of commodification, extraversion, importation and exoticism. Each of these sheds light on the thinking within the strand, enabling it to be distinguished from more 'locally committed' Pentecostal expressions. Particular attention is paid to the topic of importation as the migration of established Pentecostal groups across cultural boundaries highlights the extent of such established groups' commitment to further local cultural adjustment. Distinguishing between 'globally committed' and 'locally committed' Pentecostals strands is commended as valuable not only in academic debate but in assessing social concerns and analysing inter-church relations.

In this paper I seek to establish a case within Pentecostal research for acknowledging the existence of a particular form of globalising expectation in certain strands of the worldwide Pentecostal movement. I contend that such an acknowledgement should better define the differing patterns of local cultural adjustment that form the basis of much academic debate. It should also bring clarity where, from time to time, a determination on the part of an immigrant Pentecostal group to hold to a previously relevant local culture

---

[1] Research Associate, School of Oriental and African Studies, London University

gives rise to social concern.[2] Additionally, it should assist in the analysis and development of inter-church relations, an area of practical consequence for many within Christendom.

The particular form of globalising expectation I have in mind relates to Ritzer's McDonaldization concept.[3] For many who are seeking to find a form of Christianity for a postmodern age, this homogenous globalising approach described in the early 1990s now appears both simplistic and anachronistic.[4] Indeed, many who study Pentecostalism would say that homogenous globalisation as a descriptive terminology is also too simplistic for Pentecostal analysis, since global trends within Pentecostalism always undergo some form of local adjustment.[5] The tendency, particularly since the turn of the millennium, has been to attribute the success of Pentecostalism worldwide not to its homogeneity but to its heterogeneity, evident in its ability to adapt readily to local situations.[6] I contend, however, that this is only partly the case. I will endeavour to show that some strands of Pentecostalism believe they are part of a global brand that needs little local adjustment and that their confidence in their global relevance also has a role in carrying Pentecostalism forward.

In setting out this argument I am not seeking to prove that these 'globally-committed' Pentecostals are unremittingly successful in avoiding local adjustment, for such is never the case and rarely the determination. Furthermore, I will not endeavour to show consistent intentionality, for many have set out to meet local needs before embracing global aspirations. My argument is less in the realms of realisation and intention and more in the region of expectation. The fact that this strand of Pentecostalism expects its brand to be globally relevant is sufficient to mark it out from others.

---

[2] Hackney social services had such concerns over Congolese Pentecostal practice during the Child B case. Paul Vallely, 'The Believers', *The Independent* (18.7.2005) 34. James Westhead, 'Abuse Case Sparks New Fears', 3.6.2005, http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk/4602543.stm, accessed 14.3.2006.

[3] George Ritzer, *The MacDonaldization of Society* (Thousand Oaks, California: Pine Forge Press, 1993).

[4] John Drane, *The MacDonaldization of the Church – Spirituality, Creativity and the Future of the Church* (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 2000).

[5] Anderson is just one of many who argues against an over-simplistic analysis. Allan H. Anderson, *African Reformation: African Initiated Christianity in the 20th Century* (Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press Inc., 2001) 167-190.

[6] David Martin, *Pentecostalism: The World Their Parish* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2002). This thinking underlies the arguments in the concluding chapter.

If this globally-committed strand is acknowledged, it should assist academic debate on levels of cultural adjustment. It would be possible to explain, for example, how there are those in Europe, Africa, Asia and the Americas who see their Pentecostalism as essentially 'globally-committed' whilst others alongside them practice a Pentecostalism that they see as essentially 'locally-committed'. Not that such distinctions are new. African Pentecostal research has long had the 'Ethiopian' and 'Zionist' classification that Sundkler popularised at the beginning of the 1960s, and from which various versions have since followed.[7] However, these classifications have focused on different forms of local cultural adjustment, whereas in today's globalising climate we are in a position to take a wider view. Differing degrees of local cultural adjustment are still evident but differing global expectations can be identified lying beneath them.[8]

Moving to the realm of social concern, in these days of increased immigration, different Pentecostal groupings within a nation may hold to different cultural practices. Where a Pentecostal group can be acknowledged as having been 'globally-committed' in its country of origin, it could be argued that fewer cultural differences would be anticipated than with groups that were 'locally-committed' in their country of origin. In areas of inter-church relations too, although both groups present their own challenges, the ability to distinguish between the two should prevent unhelpful misunderstandings.

I shall seek to demonstrate the existence of this 'globally-committed' strand of Pentecostalism under four headings: commodification, extraversion, importation and exoticism.

Commodification

In 2000 Coleman published a study of commodification within a sector of Pentecostalism. [9] He argued that there are certain characteristics inherent within the Pentecostal/Charismatic genre that can be enhanced to produce a religious entity designed for a consumerist market.[10] His case study was the

---

[7] Bengt G. M. Sundkler, *Bantu Prophets in South Africa* (London: OUP, 1961) 39-43, 47-50.

[8] And probably have always been so. Though in the past to be 'globally committed' was more about conforming to missionary expectations.

[9] Simon Coleman, *The Globalisation of Charismatic Christianity* (Cambridge: CUP, 2000).

[10] Coleman, *The Globalisation*, 49-71.

Word of Life Church in Uppsala, Sweden, and his analysis took account of the cultural, social and political context he considered Sweden provided for the globalising process in which he believed the church to be engaged.[11] His thesis was not so much that Pentecostalism in general, or charismatic Protestantism in particular, had been globalised as that it could be globalised and that Word of Life provided an example of the way in which it could be done.

Coleman characterised globalisation as having three inter-related dimensions. He defined these as media, organisation and orientation, subdividing the last of these into awareness and attitude.[12] He explored Word of Life's relationship with all three dimensions to illustrate how Word of Life, in essence, had globalised itself.[13] Throughout his analysis it was evident that, to use consumerist terminology, Word of Life had confidence in its product. As a church it believed that its brand of Christianity could be promoted as readily adoptable, suitable to be taken up beyond its immediate local setting. This suggests that where a Pentecostal grouping embraces a significant degree of commodification there will be an underlying globalising expectation; a confidence that a brand has been developed, which, like McDonalds, can be promoted worldwide and implemented without need for local modification.

Commodification provides a useful starting point for examining a church's expectation. A church that works on its media presentation, its organisational structures and orientation strategies (in terms of awareness and attitude) in the globalising ways outlined by Coleman is bound to be different in character from a church with more local ambitions.

Whilst researching the relationship between evangelicalism and African Pentecostal Churches in Britain between 1985 and 2005 it became clear to me that many of the African churches I worked alongside had an understanding of commodification, even if the terminology would not have been of their choosing.[14] It was through some of the African churches that British evangelicals were introduced to a method of church growth whereby a pastor builds the profile and then peoples the profile. Invariably building such a profile would involve extensive use of media, not only of

---

[11] Coleman, *The Globalisation,* 72-86.

[12] Coleman, *The Globalisation,* 55,58.

[13] Coleman, *The Globalisation,* 49-71.

[14] Hugh Osgood, 'African neo-Pentecostal Churches and British Evangelicalism 1985-2005: Balancing Principles and Practicalities', London University PhD 2006.

advertisements and handbills but often of television and radio broadcasts, highly professional websites and impressively packaged merchandise. For many British evangelicals, understanding this required a major shift in perception.[15] The growth of the independent Christian broadcasting sector in Britain during the 1990s, though, owed much to these African churches. They were prepared to invest in the recording equipment as well as in the broadcast fees.[16]

Organisationally, many of the African churches established in Britain structured for growth from the outset by developing comprehensive staffing and thinking beyond the local.[17] In identifying organisation as a globalising mechanism Coleman wrote 'various forms of organisation are emerging that reflect and take advantage of increases in cultural and social flows associated with the detachment of production, consumption, communities and even identities from local places'.[18] Production-wise, African churches brought in preachers and musical performers from West Africa and America. Consumption-wise and community-wise African churches in London drew from right across the capital rather than from their immediate locality. (Previously this had been the prerogative of denominational flagship congregations in the city and West End.) As for identity, African churches were trans-national from the beginning. With Britain, Africa and America already linked in these churches' psyche, global confidence was hardly a foreign concept. They had a brand that had already travelled.

Orientation for Coleman was partly an issue of awareness and partly of attitude. He wrote that '[t]rans-national contacts encourage 'relativisation' whereby members of any given culture are prompted to consider their own identity in relation to alternatives'.[19] Clearly such consideration does not have to lead to a reduction of self-importance. Confidence in one's own importance is just as likely an outcome. As Coleman concludes, '[p]erceptions of self and local context are negotiated under globalising conditions'.[20] Residence in two continents is bound to increase global orientation.

---

[15] Analysing such adjustments formed a major part of my PhD thesis. *Ibid.,*136-236.

[16] Osgood, African Pentecostals... 76.

[17] Osgood, African Pentecostals... 112-118.

[18] Coleman, *Globalisation*, 57.

[19] Coleman, *Globalisation,* 58.

[20] Coleman, *Globalisation,* 64.

Many of the African Pentecostal churches in Britain have the media skills, organisational contacts and world-wide mindset that underscore an expectation of the global relevance of their brand of Christianity. This, though, is not a complete picture of African Pentecostalism in Britain. Dr Jerisdan Jehu-Appiah, Minister of the Ghanaian Musama Disco Christo (Army of the Cross of Christ) Church in London, in his presentation to the 'World Council of Churches Consultation with African and African-Caribbean Church Leaders in Britain' said:

> There are three groups of African churches [in Britain]: branches in the UK of churches originating and operating in countries in Africa; churches started in Africa but which have moved headquarters and operation to Britain, or which were started here but have since opened branches in Africa; and churches started in Britain which are completely autonomous and without any formal links with Africa. The churches of the first two groups tend to be more traditional in the sense that they have close roots and links to Africa; the third group tend more towards north-American new-charismatic practice and teaching.[21]

For him, the globally-committed group I am focusing on is but the third of three groups of African Pentecostal churches in Britain. His other two groups had clearly developed stronger African cultural commitments in Africa before establishing themselves in Britain; hence his phrase 'more traditional in the sense that they have close roots and links'. In the light of this I would label Jehu-Appiah's first two categories as 'locally committed'. It has to be said, though, as I have argued elsewhere, that the groups he considers as 'tend[ing] more towards north-American charismatic practice and teaching' can also be 'branches in the UK of churches originating and operating in Africa' or 'which started here and have since opened branches in Africa'.[22] It is for reasons such as these that I believe 'locally committed' and 'globally committed' offer a better classification.

---

[21] Jehu-Appiah Jerisdan, 'An Overview of Indigenous African Churches in Britain: An Approach through the Historical Survey of African Pentecostalism', paper presented at the Consultation between the World Council of Churches (Office of Church and Ecumenical Relations at the General Secretariat) and African and African-Caribbean Church Leaders in Britain, Leeds, 30.11.1995 – 2.12.1995, http://www.pctii.org/wcc/jehu95.html, accessed 17.7.2005.

[22] Jehu-Appiah jerisdan, 'An Overview..'

Extraversion

If commodification is contributing in some measure to the global growth of Pentecostalism, it is because increasingly on the ground it is meeting with a receptivity brought about by extraversion. Paul Gifford has written on extraversion that:

> [f]rom the African side, external links are the most natural thing in the world. The material benefits to African churches are obvious, but this is not the only consideration… Over much of Africa the young listen to Michael Jackson tapes, watch Rambo videos, smoke Marlboro, drink Coca Cola, and wear Levis, NY Giant baseball caps and Nike trainers (or imitations thereof).[23]

Africa is not alone in looking outwards and wanting to take its place in a perceived global culture. For many emerging nations the aim is not to be distinctive but to be like everyone else; to be buying into global concepts, global prestige and global success. To quote Gifford on Africa again:

> For all the talk within African church circles of localisation, inculturation, Africanisation or indigenisation, external links have become more important than ever. Through these links the churches have become a major, if not the greatest single, source of development assistance, money, employment and opportunity in Africa. These links - bringing ideas, status, power, structure and resources, - operate for different churches in different ways, at different levels.[24]

For many Pentecostal churches around the world the 'external links' referred to by Gifford have operated by introducing American Pentecostal music style and content, American Pentecostal preaching style and content and American Pentecostal church growth principles and practice through books, CDs and DVDs.[25] If commodification demonstrates a confidence to 'get out what we have', then extraversion demonstrates a confidence to 'take in what we want'. Both are evidence of a conviction that there is within Pentecostal Christianity a universal brand that it would be good for everyone to

---

[23] Paul Gifford, *African Christianity: Its Public Role* (London: Hurst & Co., 1998) 317.

[24] Gifford, *African Christianity...* 308.

[25] Gifford gives examples for Ghana. Paul Gifford, *Ghana's New Christianity: Pentecostalism in a Globalising African Economy* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004) 27-30.

espouse. That similarities can be found in Pentecostal worship, preaching and practice, regardless of continent, should not be overlooked. The testimony of many churches is that they have looked outwards in order to keep apace with global developments and have found a form of Pentecostalism that they believe works as well for them in their situation as it purported to do for others in the situation from which it was imported.

Coleman did on one occasion write that with Gifford '[o]ccasionally, the metaphor of a 'conduit'… or… that of a 'channel' is used to depict a relatively hypodermic-like diffusion of religious ideology to African countries'.[26] In visits to Nigeria when researching the interaction between evangelicals and African Pentecostals in Britain, I found that for many church leaders the concept of an American 'fix' was far from inappropriate. One leader I interviewed told me how American Word of Faith teaching was deliberately brought into Nigeria in the 1980s to counteract confusion from a form of legalistic holiness that had taken hold of some of the Nigerian Pentecostal churches in the 1970s.[27] Ironically such a statement even implied a reversal of the concepts expressed in glocalisation jargon. Here global flux is seen to be anchored into context by a local fix.[28] My Nigerian interviewee was almost implying that some of the Nigerian Pentecostal churches needed a global fix to anchor their local flux. Such a non-glocalising perspective could only come from one who had a high regard for the hoped-for universality of his favoured brand.

Importation

I have postulated that the underlying thinking of those in West Africa who embraced north-American style and content of worship and preaching, together with north-American principles and practice of church governance and growth, was that they were aligning themselves with a globalising pattern that would readily allow for exact replication. . From this it could be anticipated that, when transferring their form of Pentecostalism (which in my research I labelled neo-Pentecostalism) to Britain, their confidence would be expressed in an eschewing of modifications that otherwise might be believed to secure a better fit within local British culture. Put more simply in

---

[26] Simon Coleman, 'The Faith Movement: a global religious culture?' *Culture and Religion* 3:1 (2002) 10.

[27] Osgood, 'African neo-Pentecostal Churches', 71,72.

[28] Brigit Meyer and Peter Geschiere (eds.), *Globalization and Identity: Dialectics of Flow and Closure* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1999) 2-6.

consumerist terms: those who believe they have a universally applicable product are not going to modify it when entering new markets. Importation, therefore, can potentially provide a further indication of a globally-committed strand of Pentecostalism.

In examining the development of African neo-Pentecostalism into Britain over a twenty year period, I identified five different phases of church planting.[29] The names I gave these phases were: constrained to plant, sent to plant, transferred to plant, trained to plant and 'called' to plant. The first phase was characterised by prominent African residents feeling constrained to gather their fellow nationals for spiritual fellowship, worship and teaching. The second phase was characterised by African churches sending some of their existing church ministers to gather their migrated members into new British branch churches. The third phase was characterised by some of those 'sent' church leaders realigning themselves to establish more independent congregations. The fourth phase was characterised by African church members coming to study in British Bible colleges with a view to starting churches. The fifth phase, which was the probably most entrepreneurial, involved church members already in Britain 'feeling called' to plant their own independent churches.

Once the first phase was past, the pattern that emerged was, to my mind, clearly one of minimal modification. However, as I have already stated in this paper, observing patterns of local adjustment may not be sufficient to obtain an accurate picture. There is a history within the study of Pentecostalism of researchers looking at the same group and coming to different conclusions about the extent of local modification. The church-planters' personal expectations as to their groups local or global relevance need to be considered. In this paper it is these expectations that will be my primary focus under this heading. I will set out my findings on this phase by phase.

In the first phase I identified, 'constrained to plant', there was no real sense of community leaders establishing a franchise for a universal Pentecostal brand. If anything they were seeking to evoke a sense of re-affirmed nationality with the Ghanaians looking for something Ghanaian, the Nigerians seeking something Nigerian and so on. Many of these groups, however, began to re-configure when in the mid-1980s new arrivals spoke of changes they had experienced in Pentecostal church life in Africa. As African

---

[29] Osgood, 'African neo-Pentecostal Churches', 88.

Pentecostal churches in Africa began to think globally, the impact was felt amongst the diaspora in Britain.[30]

In the second phase I identified, 'sent to plant', there clearly was a sense amongst the newly arrived church-planters that they had come to establish something of a universal Pentecostal brand. However, the claim to universal relevance was moderated by the denominational nature of the church plants. Church-planters were expected to gather their fellow denominational members into congregations that would replicate the principles and practice of their denominational headquarters back home. Frustration with this led to what was a limited third phase, which I identified as 'transferred to plant'. Here those sent to plant denominational branches left their denominations to set up independent churches believing that in shedding denominational constraints they would achieve a greater global relevance.[31] The thought of an individual Pentecostal congregation having more global relevance than a whole Pentecostal denomination may seem far-fetched but it illustrates the underlying conviction of these transferring church-planters that style and

content, together with principles and practice, determine relevance. It is presumed that if your style and content align with what are perceived to be globally recognisable forms of worship and preaching, and your principles and practice align with what are perceived to be globally preferred methods of growth and governance, your global relevance will increase. Conversely it is presumed that if your style and content in worship and preaching are denominational, and particularly if your principles and practice in growth and governance are also denominational, your global relevance will decrease.

In the fourth phase I identified, 'trained to plant', it is the nature of the preferred training institutions that discloses the underlying thinking of the would-be church-planters. If bringing in a flexible form of Pentecostalism that could be modified to British culture was high on the agenda of those applying for training places, then the bulk of applications would have gone to colleges with long experience of ministry in a British ethos. In the 1980s and 1990s there was no shortage of such colleges, all of which would have welcomed significant numbers of students from overseas, keen to be equipped as church-planters. In reality there were two colleges that attracted most of the students: one was attached to Kensington Temple in Notting Hill Gate and the other to Victory Church, Finchley.[32] Both of these churches

---

[30] Osgood, African Neo-Pentecostalism, 89.
[31] Osgood, African Neo-Pentecostalism, 112, 113.
[32] Osgood, African Neo-Pentecostalism, 118, 119.

were of the opinion that cultural adjustment was not a priority. Those trained could plant churches according to their own convictions and gather likeminded people around them.[33] On minor matters there would be variations but on major matters they would all think and act the same. To some extent there was a 'one size fits all' approach. For those planning to start a Ghanaian church in Brixton, a Nigerian church in Bayswater, or a Brazilian church in Acton, the teaching was basically unchanged.

In the fifth phase, 'called' to plant, the expectation of church-planters (certainly as they set out) was consistently high. Many of them believed that

they were establishing churches that would impact all communities in Britain, not just the African diaspora. Their concept of being globally committed often extended beyond the thought of having a universal brand that could be readily franchised by church-planters such as themselves to that of having a universal brand with such widespread appeal that attracting the full diversity of the unchurched, regardless of age, social background or ethnicity, was all but guaranteed.[34] They had been inspired by the significant church growth they had seen in Africa and by the large (though mainly mono-cultural) congregations some of their fellow Africans had secured in Britain using an identical neo-Pentecostal approach. Maybe it is not surprising, therefore, that they had confidence in the universality of their product.

The fact that successive phases of African neo-Pentecostal church planting in Britain maintained the same expectation that their brand of Christianity could work in Britain without significant modification to the local context is an example of how attitude determines action. Whilst observers can point to areas where contextualisation has occurred (often, it would seem, unintentionally), the question as to how much greater African neo-Pentecostalism's impact might have been had it adopted a more nuanced approached remains unanswered. It could be that any positive effect derived from a greater cultural awareness would have been undermined by the simultaneous loss of confidence that comes from believing one has a globally-relevant, universally-suitable brand.

Exoticism

If there is a sense in which commodification and extraversion go hand-in-hand (the 'offer' of the former meeting the 'desire' of the latter), then there is

---

[33] Colin Dye, *Building a City Church* (Eastbourne: Kingsway, 1993) 71,72.
[34] Osgood, 'African neo-Pentecostal Churches', 130,131.

a sense in which 'importation' and 'exoticism' also complement each other. Churches entering a nation from outside can provoke fascination; new cultural practices can carry an allurement of their own. The Pentecostal church-planters who see no need to adapt for culture are bound to be bemused when their approach is deemed to have within it elements that are so at odds with the prevailing culture as to have considerable allure.

Sectors within British evangelicalism have a record of identifying the exotic in the practice of others. Where a sentimental attraction prevails, even support of missionary work can become a form of exoticism. A review of the main fascinations for British evangelicalism from the 1970s to 2000 would include: an interest in the Prayer Mountain practices of Pentecostal churches in South Korea, a drawing towards the Jewish cultural expressions developed within Messianic Judaism, the assumption that Caribbean Pentecostal denominations are primarily about gospel music, an espousing of ecstatic forms of self-expression first evidenced in the charismatic Toronto Vineyard church and a focussing on the prayer styles of African neo-Pentecostalism. The way in which these Pentecostal movements responded to the fascination shown in their practices indicates the extent to which they viewed themselves as having a globally adoptable brand. If they truly believed themselves to be globally relevant, they would expect their practices to be universally embraced. If, however, they saw themselves as locally-committed rather than globally-committed, they would expect otherwise.

To start with, the Caribbean Pentecostal denominations certainly did not expect other churches to found gospel choirs but they were concerned lest evangelicals should characterise them only by their music and not register the considerable contribution that they were making through their evangelism and social action.[35] Similarly, Messianic Judaism did not expect non-Jews to adopt Jewish cultural practices.[36] Nonetheless, it initially welcomed the interest. It was only later that some of its leaders realised that the resultant sentimentality was risking the movement losing focus.[37] By contrast, the Toronto Vineyard church saw what happened in its midst as a distinct work of God and were delighted to think that such a work could

---

[35] See the magazine of the African and Caribbean Evangelical Alliance. Unattributed, 'Millennium Celebration – "Faith in the Future"', *Focus* (April-June 1999) 13.

[36] Dan Cohn-Sherbok, *Messianic Judaism* (London: Continuum, 2000) 60-65.

[37] Conversation with Richard Harvey of All Nations Christian College, Ware, who is currently writing a PhD on Messianic Judaism.

have widespread effect.[38] It never set out to establish a global movement but quickly began to wonder if it was God's purpose to make it the centre of something of global significance. Many, though, sensed from the outset that it would be just a phase. Considerable numbers of those who were caught up in its various ecstatic expressions thought of it as a season of divine visitation, a time of spiritual renewal for the church as part of God's greater agenda.[39]

The South Korean Pentecostals and African neo-Pentecostals were different. As evangelical leaders became excited first about Prayer Mountains then about African 'all night's of prayer, the leaders of these Pentecostal movements were somewhat bemused. They could not understand the fascination with something as basic as prayer. To the South Koreans and Africans involved in the praying it seemed obvious that everyone should prioritise prayer.[40] They believed they had embraced a globally relevant Pentecostalism. For them gospel choirs had their place in inspiring corporate worship, whilst Jewish cultural expressions were of only local significance. Ecstatic expressions were something that African neo-Pentecostals had largely laid aside and South Koreans had not particularly emphasised. Extensive commitment to prayer was simply not in the same category. For the South Koreans it seemed natural to find a personal place and set aside time alone to pray intensely. For the Africans it seemed equally natural to gather together in large numbers and all plead with God simultaneously; everyone loudly verbalising his or her prayer requests for hours at a time, striding up and down as much as spaced permitted and pumping with clenched fists to leave God in no doubt about the intensity of the requests. The intensity of the praying came spiritually, the style of praying came naturally. The South Koreans were left wondering why British evangelicals did not pray as intensely as they themselves did on their Prayer Mountains and the African neo-Pentecostals were left wondering why British evangelicals did not pray as intensely as they did in their all night prayer gatherings. [41]

---

[38] David Hilborn, 'Introduction: Evangelicalism, the Evangelical Alliance and the Toronto Blessing' in David Hilborn (ed.), *'Toronto' in Perspective: Papers on the New Charismatic Wave of the Mid 1990s* (Carlisle: ACUTE, 2001) 3-34.

[39] Margaret Poloma, 'A Reconfiguration of Pentecost', in Hilborn (ed.), *'Toronto'*, 123-125.

[40] Colin Whittaker, *Prayer Mountains: How Paul Yonggi Cho and the Church in Korea Tapped the Power of Prayer* (Eastbourne: Kingsway, 1989).

[41] Osgood, 'African neo-Pentecostalism', 143,144.

How much the Africans and South Koreans understood about the extent of the local cultural adjustments they had made in matters of style, is an interesting point. In adopting styles that come naturally it is easy to assume that what is natural to one is natural to all. On points such as this, principles and practice become entangled and observers can easily see the compromising of a homogenous globalised ideal as grounds for labelling

Pentecostal globalisation is heterogenous throughout. My point is that local adjustment will always occur but that there is an importance that needs to be attached to whether or not it was prioritised.

One further point can be illustrated by considering Messianic Judaism alongside African neo-Pentecostalism. African neo-Pentecostals do not think of their neo-Pentecostalism as African to the same degree that Messianic Judaism thinks of its Christianity as Jewish. This distinguishes African neo-Pentecostals from other African Pentecostals who have always wanted to ensure that their Pentecostalism is predominantly African. It is also true that South Korean Pentecostals do not see their Pentecostalism as significantly different from that of their fellow classical Pentecostals in America and Europe. For them Pentecostalism has already found a form that is globally relevant.

I will conclude these thoughts on exoticism with an observation drawn from the phenomenon of double importation already referred to. To make my point I will contrast African neo-Pentecostals, who are 'globally committed', with other African Pentecostals who are 'locally committed'. The former have been strongly evident in Britain since the 1980s and the latter since the 1970s. If the neo-Pentecostals appear to culturally adjust slowly and slightly, it might be expected that Pentecostals who have deliberately and extensively culturally adjusted in Africa would culturally re-adjust deliberately, extensively and rapidly in Britain. This, of course, has not been the case. To these African Pentecostals the African designation is all important; as integral as the Judaism designation of Messianic Judaism. There are groups that will show no surprise at having their cultural differences identified, as they have deliberately adjusted to a local culture. Others, though, may well be bemused as they believe themselves to be globally relevant.

Conclusion

In this paper I have sought to assemble evidence for a globally committed strand of Pentecostalism from four perspectives. Commodification presents a methodology that, when utilised, indicates an underlying expectation of

global relevance. Extraversion, on the other hand, highlights a key factor in the desire to be globally relevant. Importation provides an opportunity to look at the globalising expectations, or otherwise, behind what often appear to be minimal levels of adjustment made by Pentecostal groups to the culture of the new host country. Exoticism, in tandem with this, gives an opportunity to identify globalising expectations through the varying responses of imported movements to a host country's fascination with their cultural differences. It is the combination of all four perspectives that I contend makes my case for the existence of a globally committed strand of Pentecostalism that is driving Pentecostal growth forward alongside Pentecostalism's ability to be extensively modified in different local contexts. For those involved in inter-church relations, the addressing of social concerns within multi-cultural communities or academic research into Pentecostalism, evidence of such a strand's existence could lead to a pertinent re-acknowledgement of Pentecostalism's subdivisions.