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Editorial Policy
The Journal of the Pentecostal Theological Association (JEPTA) is a peer-reviewed international journal which has a pedigree stretching back to 1981 when it began as the EPTA Bulletin. Despite its European origins, JEPTA has interests in Pentecostalism world-wide. It aims to promote and report research and scholarship in Pentecostal and charismatic studies, especially in relation to five fields of study:

• Theology
• Pentecostal/charismatic education
• Pentecostal history
• Charismatic history
• Missiology

The journal welcomes interdisciplinary debate and dialogue.

Editorial Addresses
Editorial Correspondence should be addressed to the Editor above. Books for review should also be sent to Dr Kay

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Book Reviews
REVIEWED BY BEN PUGH
Editorial

This edition carries a variety of articles. The first two (Kay et al and Cartledge) are examples of practical theology, the first more quantitative and the second more qualitative. The first deals with the personality characteristics of the students at a classical Pentecostal Theological College and the second shows how a testimony of Spirit baptism contains or is shaped by theological beliefs.

There then follows an excursion to Denmark guided by Geir Lie and reference to the work of a relatively little-known Pentecostal/charismatic, Poul Madsen. After this we move back in time with Charlie Byrd to the Anabaptists and what appears to be an original discovery about 16th century Pentecostal phenomena among these marginalised groups.

Hugh Osgood tells us about African Pentecostalism and the natural features (commodification and exoticism, to name two) that have enhanced its capacity to grow and jump cultural barriers. Contributing to the debate about globalisation of Pentecostalism, he offers a well-grounded analysis of the interaction between universal and local Pentecostal characteristics.

Finally we offer Frederick Ware’s response to Amos Yong’s important book on The Spirit Poured Out On All Flesh and Yong’s specially written response to Ware’s comment. This acute but friendly exchange reflects a discussion at the 2007 SPS conference in Cleveland, TN.

Later this year, we plan to give an account of the 1907 outpouring of the Spirit in Sunderland which later reached out to The Netherlands and Germany.

William K Kay
Psychological Type Preferences of Male Students at the British Assemblies of God Theological College: tough-minded or tender-hearted?

William K Kay, Leslie J Francis, and Charlotte L Craig

Abstract

Psychological type theory proposes that people make decisions through using one of two dichotomous judging functions (thinking and feeling). People who prefer thinking make judgements based on impersonal logic and tend to be objective and tough-minded, while people who prefer feeling make judgements based on personal values and tend to be compassionate and tender-hearted. This study explores the notion that the judging functions are key predictors of individual differences in terms of religiosity. The psychological type preferences of a sample of 190 male Assemblies of God theological college students were assessed using Form G (Anglicised) of the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator. The data revealed preferences for thinking over feeling, and the implications of this finding are explored.

1.1 Introduction

In an era of interdisciplinary study it is not uncommon to see attempts to utilise psychological concepts within theological discourse or conversely to apply theological ideas in secular argumentation. Exploration of Pentecostal people by means of psychological theory is made in this paper but, at the outset, it should not be assumed that psychological theory is deterministic or in some way overrides theological insights. As will be shown below, what this theory does is to provide a framework for understanding the differences between people, a compass for navigating the psyche (Jung 1971). This framework, can be used in turn by theologians and by those engaged in Christian life and witness. For example, various theological commentators argue that psychological type theory helps Christians to identify and appreciate individual differences and gifting (see, for example, Osborn and Osborn 1991), that psychological type theory is useful as a tool for deepening awareness of God’s gifts and grace (see, for example, Repicky 1981), and that psychological type theory may be employed to enhance religious growth and development in response to God’s calling (see, for example, Duncan 1993).

Jung, a contemporary of Freud, proposed a theory by which individuals could be classified into a series of types. Initially, the theory looks crude and oversimplified. Its basis lies both in an examination of classical Graeco-Roman attempts to observe and understand human behaviour and in the presumption that human beings operate as psychosomatic unities in a social world where they have to make decisions. The existence of a social world presumes its contrary, an interior and non-social world. In this way one can posit both an extravert function by which individuals reach out into the flow of the society of which they are a part and an introvert function by which they reach into themselves. Because individuals are social beings, they entertain emotions by which human bonds are made but, because they can reflect on these bonds, they form a cognitive and objective function in the form of thought. In this way thinking and feeling functions develop. Interaction with the external world produces either a concentration upon its outer features or an apprehension of the inner meaning of these features: this produces the functions of sensing and intuition; the sensing function deals with the immediately perceived world while intuition attempts to perceive the totality of any situation and may omit its detail. Finally, human beings require some way of organising their own time and intellectual and social space and this they can do either rationally by attempting to impose an order on flux of existence or by ‘going with the flow’ underlying flux of existence: this leads either to the judging or perceiving functions (Myers, McCauley, Quenk and Hammer 1998).

Details of the theory are given by Carl Gustav Jung in 1921 (English translation in 1923; see Jung 1971) and more recently and specifically in connection with the Christian faith by Francis (2005). Having isolated basic human functions, the theory creates types by ordering them into all
possible permutations. Since there are four pairs (extravert [E] or introvert [I]; thinking [T] or feeling [F]; sensing [S] or intuition [N]; judging [J] or perceiving [P]), these can be arranged in a maximum sixteen ways. So, a person could be classified as ESTJ, ISTJ, ESFJ, ISFJ, and so on. So, for example, the ESTJ is a person who is extravert, deals with the individualised detail of the world, makes decisions on the basis of rational analysis and organises his or her social and extraverted life using a judging function; and each of the types can be described by looking at these way these four functions are identified.

Jones and Francis (1999) argued that the judging functions are key predictors of individual differences in terms of religiosity. The judging functions are those functions that are termed ‘rational’ by Jung (1971): these are the functions concerned with reason and order and through which people make decisions and judgements. Decision-making can be based on one of two functions: thinking or feeling. On the one hand, according to the theory thinking types make judgements based on objective, impersonal logic. They value integrity and justice. They are known for their truthfulness and for their desire for fairness. They consider conforming to principles to be of more importance than cultivating harmony. They are often good at making difficult decisions, since they are able to analyse problems to reach an unbiased and reasonable solution. They may consider it to be more important to be honest and correct than to be tactful, when working with others. On the other hand, according to the theory feeling types make judgements based on subjective, personal values. They value compassion and mercy. They are known for their tactfulness and for their desire for peace. They are more concerned to promote harmony, than to adhere to abstract principles. They may be thought of as ‘people-persons’, as they are able to take into account other people’s feelings and values in decision-making and problem-solving, ensuring they reach a solution that is intended to satisfy everyone. They may find it difficult to criticise others, even when it is necessary. They find it easy to empathise with other people and tend to be trusting and encouraging of others. The current study aims to explore how the dichotomy between thinking and feeling can inform understanding regarding the psychological type profile of individuals drawn to (and likely to remain committed to) the British Assemblies of God. Although characteristics of both of these two judging functions (thinking and feeling) can be identified within the teaching and practice of the British Assemblies of God, the study aims to examine whether one emphasis may hold dominance over the other in terms of the psychological type preferences of the adherents.

One the one hand, there may be good reasons to argue that the British Assemblies of God might attract individuals who display the feeling type preference. British Assemblies of God belonging, as it does, to the worldwide Pentecostal Movement is bound to stress the value of religious experience. The central theological distinctive of ‘baptism with the Spirit’ is not only a doctrine which may appeal to the mind, but an experience which may transform the heart (Kay 1990). The result of this is that ministers and members of British Assemblies of God congregations will recognise the value of the heart and feel particularly attracted to Pauline teaching concerning the ‘fruits of the Spirit’ (Gal. 5.22) that speak of the fundamental qualities of the Christian life as involving love, joy, and peace. Such qualities are fundamental to the personal and interpersonal values associated with the preference for feeling. Preaching, particularly at large conventions or conferences, may well seek to appeal to the personal and interpersonal values of hearers. In any case it is hardly possible to listen to a sermon about the sacrifices made by missionaries or, most of all, by Christ himself, without exploring and wishing to embrace core feeling type values such as empathy, compassion, devotion, and care for others. Moreover, any preacher who calls members of the congregation to a first-time commitment or to consecration will almost invariably speak to people’s deepest values and, though the dangers of emotionalism are well understood, see tears or laughter as evidence of the work of the Holy Spirit in a way that would have been understood by John Wesley or the major twentieth century evangelists.

Appeal to the personal and interpersonal values associated with the feeling function is often associated with the renewal phases that periodically sweep through the churches, for example in the ‘Toronto blessing’ of the early 1990s (Hilborn 2001), but can also be found more consistently in appeals for money or material goods to alleviate poverty, disaster or to help missionaries.

On the other hand, there may be equally good reasons to argue that the British Assemblies of God might be associated with the thinking type preference. There is an expectation that Pentecostal Christians will exercise discernment based on objective, impersonal logic, particularly in the field of spiritual gifts. For example, prophecy, which is to be found in all thriving Pentecostal congregations, is, according to New Testament precepts, to be held open to critical scrutiny and to be judged (1 Cor. 14.29). Critical judgement is a process that inevitably has its primary location in the head, even if some aspects of it make proper appeal to the heart, that is, involving both thinking and feeling. The balance between charismatic manifestation and judgement is almost exactly parallel between the heart and the head. It is not often realised that, because Pentecostals value feeling type tendencies...
such as following one’s heart and being open to the leading of the spirit, they have a high regard for reason. This is why Pentecostal congregations function effectively with careful, objective verification of spiritual gifts.

On a more general level, the British Assemblies of God may appeal to a thinking preference by the stress placed on biblical principles of justice and personal ethical standards. God is holy and righteous and, therefore, God’s people must reflect this holiness and righteousness in their own lives. There is a recognition that personal morality is important, and ministers are expected to adhere to a holiness code in all that they do. The British Assemblies of God expects ministers to be disciplined if they fail to live up to these standards. Such a code may well be countercultural in the sense that it will run against the norms of political correctness and postmodern fragmentation. As a result, members of the British Assemblies of God need to be tough-minded and self-disciplined in the face of misunderstanding or even ridicule. These concepts and principles are likely to appeal to thinking types, who value integrity in both belief and action. Moreover, members of the British Assemblies of God would tend to reject the central thesis of postmodernism that there is no metanarrative; on the contrary, they would assert that the biblical metanarrative continues to provide a logical (if fideistic) framework for interpreting history, religious activity, morality and mission. Ordinary Sunday worship will blend appeals to the principles of integrity and self-discipline and will be found in such songs as that by William Booth:

   Thou Christ of burning, cleansing flame,
   Send the fire...
   God of Elijah, hear our cry!
   Send the fire!
   Oh make us fit to live or die!
   Send the fire!
   To burn up every trace of sin,
   To bring the light and glory in,
   The revolution now begin
   Send the fire!

   Send the fire!

To summarise, from a theoretical perspective there are clearly some aspects of the teaching and practice of the British Assemblies of God which are in tune with thinking type preferences and other aspects which are in tune with feeling type preferences. The empirical question remains, therefore, regarding which of these two perspectives speak more strongly to the membership. Although no published data have been identified which examine the preferences for thinking or feeling among members of the British Assemblies of God or other Pentecostal denominations, there is extant research concerned with the psychological preferences of individuals associated with charismatic movement. Both Pentecostal and charismatic churches share similar emphases and beliefs, both being characterised by emphasis on the importance of the charisma.ata. However, while the Pentecostal movement resulted in the establishment of new denominations (such as the Assemblies of God), the charismatic movement has resulted both in influencing and transforming a number of established denominations and in giving rise to a wide range of New Churches (Kay, 2007).

On the one hand, in a theoretically-based study Jones (1991) has argued that charismatics are often feeling types, although no empirical evidence is provided to support this assertion. On the other hand, two empirical studies have been undertaken to determine whether there is a relationship between charismatic experience and psychological type preferences. In the first study, Francis and Jones (1997) analysed the relationship between charismatic experience and psychological type preferences using the MBTI, among a sample of 368 participants attending courses on personality and spirituality. In this study charismatic experience was assessed by a five-item scale. Francis and Jones (1997) found that thinking type participants were more likely to report charismatic experiences than feeling type participants. In the second study, Jones, Francis and Craig (2005) analysed the relationship between charismatic experience and psychological type preferences using the MBTI, among a sample of 925 Christian adults attending workshops on personality and spirituality. In this study charismatic experience was assessed by the item, ‘Would you describe yourself as being influenced by the Charismatic movement?’ Three response options were provided: yes, don’t know, and no. Jones, Francis and Craig (in press) found that, compared with the self-designated non-charismatics, the self-designated charismatic sample contained significantly higher proportions of extraverts, thinkers, and perceivers. Among the charismatics there was a significant over-representation of ESTJ types and a significant under-representation of ISFJ types. Both of these studies contradict the predictions of Jones (1991) that feeling types would be more open toward charismatic experience.

The finding that charismatic experience is related to preference for thinking is important because it is possible on this basis to hypothesise that Pentecostal Christians will share this preference for thinking. Research among Anglican congregations (Goldsmith and Wharton 1993; Craig, Francis, Bailey and Robbins 2003; Francis, Duncan, Craig and Luffman 2004), among Anglican clergy (Goldsmith and Wharton 1993; Francis, ...
Payne and Jones 2001), among ordinands attending Anglican theological colleges (Goldsmith and Wharton 1993), and among Presbyterian clergy (Irvine 1989) have revealed preferences for feeling over thinking. Should members of Pentecostal churches demonstrate preferences for thinking, this finding would generate a clear conflict with the feeling preference found in other Christians, and may, therefore, help to account for important differences of attitude, belief, and behaviour between these churches and other denominations.

Against this background, the current study extends previous research by exploring the psychological type preferences of a Christian denomination which has not yet been profiled in terms of psychological type theory: the British Assemblies of God. It is hypothesised that the current study will support the finding that charismatic experience is associated with preference for thinking over feeling (Francis and Jones 1997; Jones, Francis and Craig, in press).

Method

2.1 Sample

Mattersey Hall is the theological college and training centre of the British Assemblies of God. Although it functions as an interdenominational college, the emphasis is distinctly Pentecostal and charismatic. Mattersey Hall has had a continuing existence, albeit in two or three different locations in the United Kingdom and under different names, since it was founded in London in 1919. According to the current website, Mattersey Hall aims to prepare ‘men and women through an education that is innovative and marked by academic excellence for productive Christian service in vocations and ministries matched to the marketplace of the 21st Century’. The research instrument was administered by one of the lecturers as part of the academic programme. The students were assured of confidentiality and anonymity. Although given the option not to participate in the project, most students attending the seminars completed response forms. Data were obtained from 190 male students at the college. Of the total respondents, 4% were under the age of twenty, 50% were in their twenties, 29% were in their thirties, 13% were in their forties, and 5% were aged fifty or over.

2.2 Measure

The participants completed the 126-item Form G (Anglicised) of the MBTI (Myers and McCaulley 1985). This instrument uses a force-choice questionnaire format to indicate preferences between extraversion or introversion, sensing or intuition, thinking or feeling, and judging or perceiving. Broad support for the reliability and validity of the instrument is provided in the international psychological literature, including studies by Bayne (1995), Salter, Evans and Forney (1997), Myers, McCaulley, Quenk and Hammer (1998), and Francis and Jones (1999). In one of the recent studies, Francis and Jones (1999) reported on the scale properties of Form G (Anglicised) among 429 adult churchgoers. Reliability was supported by the following alpha coefficients: extraversion, .80; introversion, .79; sensing, .87; intuition, .82; thinking, .79; feeling, .72; judging, .85; perceiving, .86.

2.3 Analysis

The scientific literature concerned with psychological type has developed a distinctive method of presenting full type profiles through a standard ‘type table’, providing information about the sixteen types, the dichotomous preferences, the pairs and temperaments, the Jungian types, and the dominant types. A type table is included in the present analysis (table 1) in order to facilitate comparability with the wider scientific literature concerned with psychological type. As a means of making of comparisons between different samples the chi-square analysis is used in order to assess the statistical significance of these comparisons. The chi-square analysis compares the observed frequency of distribution of people in a crosstabulation of categories against the frequencies which would have occurred by chance, in this case the frequency of thinking and feeling types in different groups (see table 2).

An association between two variables is expressed in terms of a probability or P value. The P value is regarded as significant if the association between the two variables could only have come about by chance less often than five times in a hundred or 0.05. Thus a P value of 0.01 indicates that the observed association would only have come about one time in a hundred and the 0.001 value indicates that the relationship would have come about by chance only one time in a thousand.
3. Results

Table 1: Type Distribution for male Assemblies of God theological college students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>N = 190</th>
<th>+ = 1% of N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Sixteen Complete Types</th>
<th>Dichotomous Preferences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISTJ</td>
<td>n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISFJ</td>
<td>n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INFJ</td>
<td>n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INTJ</td>
<td>n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESFP</td>
<td>n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENFP</td>
<td>n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENTJ</td>
<td>n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FJ</td>
<td>n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NF</td>
<td>n</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pairs and Temperaments</th>
<th>E</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>J</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ISTP</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISFP</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INFP</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>INTP</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ES-P</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EN-P</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
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<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENT-P</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1 presents the type distribution of the 190 male British Assemblies of God theological college students. These data demonstrate preferences for extraversion over introversion (52% compared with 48%), for sensing over intuition (74% compared with 26%), for thinking over feeling (56% compared with 44%), and for judging over perceiving (65% compared with 35%). The two predominant types are ESTJ (18%) and ISTJ (16%) as seen below.
The findings of the current study support the hypothesis that male theological college students in the Pentecostal tradition will be more likely to prefer thinking than to prefer feeling. Table 2 demonstrates that the current sample of male British Assemblies of God theological college students contains higher proportions of thinking types than other samples of Christian groups, for example, from that of male Church Scotland clergy ($IT^2 = 20.87, df = 1, p < .001$) and male Anglican Clergy in Wales ($IT^2 = 33.645, df = 1, p < .001$). However, table 2 also demonstrates that the current sample of male British Assemblies of God theological college students contains significantly ($IT^2 = 5.489, df = 1, p < .05$) lower proportions of thinking types than the male United Kingdom population norms (Kendall 1998).

Table 2: Frequencies of Thinking and Feeling among Christian groups and the United Kingdom population norms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sample</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Thinking</th>
<th>Feeling</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Church of England curates</td>
<td>unknown</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church of England curates</td>
<td>unknown</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church of England curates</td>
<td>unknown</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church of England clergy</td>
<td>unknown</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church of England churchgoers</td>
<td>unknown</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church of England churchgoers</td>
<td>unknown</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church of England churchgoers</td>
<td>unknown</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anglican theological college students</td>
<td>unknown</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anglican theological college students$^5$</td>
<td>unknown</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male Church of Scotland clergy$^6$</td>
<td>147</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male Anglican Clergy in Wales$^7$</td>
<td>427</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male Evangelical Bible College students$^8$</td>
<td>278</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church in Wales churchgoers$^9$</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male Church of England churchgoers$^{10}$</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female Church of England churchgoers$^{11}$</td>
<td>211</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male AOG theological college students$^{12}$</td>
<td>190</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male UK population norms$^{13}$</td>
<td>748</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5 (First nine comparisons) Goldsmith and Wharton (1993)
6 Irvine (1989)
7 Francis, Payne and Jones (2001)
8 Francis, Payne and Jones (2001)
10 Francis, Duncan, Luffman and Craig (2004)
11 Current study
12 Current Study
13 Kendall (1998)

4. Discussion and Conclusion

The finding that the current sample of male British Assemblies of God theological college students prefers thinking suggests that thinking types within the Christian churches may find their preferences better nurtured and utilized among denominations like the British Assemblies of God. Put another way, the finding suggests that those attracted to the Pentecostal and charismatic movement have a disposition to utilise thinking for making decisions and organising their lives. This preference for thinking highlights a number of potential strengths in this tradition. Members of this denomination with well-developed thinking preferences may exercise thought skill in using logical judgement, for example, in the area of discerning and interpreting spiritual gifts. Likewise, thinking types within the British Assemblies of God may be able to apply objective criteria impersonally to problem-solving when dealing with moral issues. They may have the tough-minded and self-disciplined attitude which enables them to act with integrity in the face of temptation.

However, this preference for thinking also highlights a number of points of potential weakness in the Pentecostal/charismatic tradition. For example, it may be that thinking types may find it difficult to put themselves in the position of others when making decisions. As a consequence, there is a danger that in the British Assemblies of God decisions may be made on the basis of objective criteria in order to adhere to principles of justice and truth, without due consideration for mercy and compassion. This has implications for the relationships of the members of the British Assemblies of God in three key areas.

First, the finding that the current sample of male British Assemblies of God theological college students prefers thinking has implications for intra-church relationships. Feeling types within the British Assemblies of God may feel their wants and values are marginalised if they are immersed within a predominantly thinking type environment. Feeling types may feel that their strengths are overlooked and that their needs are unmet. Thinking types within the British Assemblies of God may be advised to take care to balance concern for integrity and logical judgement with emphasis on the...
interpersonal Christian values of love, harmony, mercy, and compassion for humankind, in order to accommodate better the gifts and needs of feeling types.

Second, the finding that the current sample of male British Assemblies of God theological college students prefers thinking has implications for inter-denominational relationships. Ecumenical development may be enhanced by recognition that the predominant thinking type preference of the British Assemblies of God differs from the predominant feeling type preference found in many other Christian denominations. It may be the case that issues of debate and division between the churches may be explicable by psychological type theory. Different approaches to decision-making among Christian denominations may result in dissonance and even conflict, with some churches focusing the feeling type interpersonal values of love and compassion over the thinking type principles of truth and righteousness.

For example, the commitment of the British Assemblies of God constituency to integrity may result in an appearance of dogmatism in their approach to controversial issues of belief and behaviour, as perceived by other Christian denominations. An understanding of type theory may help churches to appreciate the values of other denominations and to ‘hear and speak each others’ distinctive language’ during inter-church dialogue.

Third, the finding that the current sample of male British Assemblies of God theological college students prefers thinking has implications for relationships with non-churchgoers. There is a danger that to feeling types outside the church the British Assemblies of God may appear single-mindedly uncompromising in their commitment to righteousness, and they may run the risk of presenting a morality which takes no account of human weakness. Feeling types outside the church may feel unwelcome in the British Assemblies of God if they perceive that there is an unwillingness to empathise with people and to meet them where they are at.

Having noted that the British Assemblies of God seems to attract a greater proportion of thinking types than other Christian denominations, it must be also noted that thinking types are represented among the current sample less frequently than among the male United Kingdom population norms. The population norms were established by Kendall (1998) and show that among 748 representative men in the United Kingdom, 65% of men prefer thinking. In contrast, among the current sample of male Assemblies of God theological college students, just 56% preferred thinking. This finding suggests that, although thinking types may be overrepresented among males students in the British Assemblies of God context compared to other Christian denominations, these male students within British Assemblies of God prefer feeling more frequently than the wider, unchurched population.

The current study has outlined the psychological type preferences of male British Assemblies of God theological college students. On the one hand, the data have revealed clear preferences for thinking to a much greater extent than other Christian denominations. On the other hand, the data have revealed preferences for thinking to a lesser extent than among the wider male population. However, the generalisability of the current study is limited as it focuses upon one section of the British Assemblies of God, namely theological college students. Further research among churchgoers and ordained members of the Assemblies of God is now needed to explore whether these finding are consistent among both lay people and the leadership of the British Assemblies of God.

**Bibliography**

Abstract

This article offers a reflection on the nature of Pentecostal experience. The practical-theological methodology is used to explore, analyse, reflect upon and theologically rescript an account of a person’s experience of Baptism in the Spirit. An interview with a person attending a New Church in the UK is used in order to demonstrate how disciplined attentiveness to a personal account can be an important step in appreciating the nature of spiritual experience for Christians. The analysis considers biographical, social and contextual information that enables the experience to be situated and understood via philosophical and sociological insights. The implicit or ‘ordinary’ theology contained in the account is rescripted in the light of the doctrine of the Trinity, the Christian life and sacramental theology.

1. Introduction

This article aims to explore aspects of Pentecostal experience by means of the discipline of practical theology. Practical theology is well placed to make a contribution to this theme because of its engagement with religious experiences and activities as part of its focus on contemporary enquiry. Whatever resources are used from Scripture, church history and Christian tradition, the discipline of practical theology has an orientation to the ‘now’ of ecclesial life that means it is attentive to the role of experience in Christian life and thought. The Pentecostal perspective will be brought to bear on this

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theme by considering the theology of ‘Baptism in the Spirit’ as mediated through an experiential account. Before I proceed it is necessary to define the key terms of ‘experience’ and ‘Baptism in the Spirit’.

‘Experience’ is a slippery term and however it is defined its use appears to be varied and sometimes inconsistent. The origin of the English word derives from the Latin ‘experientia’, often interpreted as ‘that which arises from travelling through life (ex-perientia).’ It is therefore assumed to refer to the accumulation of wisdom or knowledge that occurs as one proceeds through the life cycle. Yet, in contrast to this definition a more specific one has developed in which it is associated with the inner life of individuals, that may be shared as part of a group, but which is nevertheless inward and subjective. This definition is the one used by the philosopher Caroline Franks Davis when she writes: ‘An experience… is a roughly datable mental event which is undergone by a subject and of which the subject is to some extent aware’. This means that accumulated life experience is excluded (hence ‘roughly datable’). However, this does not mean that experiences are always isolated or that they always have sharply defined boundaries. On the contrary, Franks Davis maintains that experiences ‘do not take place in a vacuum, but are the product of interaction with other experiences, beliefs, the environment, and the subject’s “set”’. For the purposes of this paper, I shall use this definition as my working definition.

‘Baptism in the Spirit’ (hereafter B/S) is the Pentecostal doctrine that emerged from the Wesleyan and Holiness traditions emphasising a post-conversion crisis experience of being overwhelmed by the presence and power of the Holy Spirit as a means of empowerment for Christian life and witness. In its earliest days it belonged to a three-stage schema of conversion, sanctification and B/S, but subsequently there emerged a two-stage approach with the loss of sanctification as a distinct post-conversion experience. The two or three stage schema continues to exist side by side in the USA to this day, but in the UK, the three-stage scheme was never dominant in established classical Pentecostalism. In most Pentecostal denominations this crisis experience was symbolised or evidenced by ‘speaking with other tongues’ (glossolalia), although differences of emphasis can be found from the earliest days as to whether it should be regarded as the only sign, the main sign or one among a number of possible signs. Early Charismatic Renewalists from the 1960s adopted the Pentecostal doctrine of subsequence and the evidential sign of tongues (and were dubbed ‘Neo-Pentecostals’), but this eventually gave way in the 1970s as Charismatic Renewal was further integrated into mainstream denominations. In the 1980s with the influence of John Wimber and the Vineyard movement the connection seems to have been lost entirely.

In what follows I intend to explore a personal account of B/S and to suggest ways in which this account might be analysed and rescripted in the light of theological reflection.

2. Exploration: An Experience of ‘Baptism in the Spirit’

In order to explore the concept of experience in a concrete manner, as befitting the methodology, I have chosen to focus on an interview that was conducted in 1997 as part of a case study of a church called ‘Sudley Christian Fellowship’ (hereafter: SCF). The church emerged out of two groups from the British House Church Movement of the 1970s and was established as a single church in 1992. Since that time it has experienced fast growth, and evangelism has been allied to a serious programme of community outreach to the city of Liverpool. SCF at the time of the case study attracted a lot of young people who enjoyed its vitality and energy. The church had a vision that was committed to certain values: (1) devotion to the Lord Jesus Christ, (2) mission to the lost in both words and deeds and (3) the releasing of the power of God through faith that is aggressive and victorious, influenced by the mission theology and strategy of Ed Silvoso from Argentina.

The material that I shall use for the purpose of this study emerges from an interview conducted with a British female student, whom I named ‘Lesley’, aged 23 years old at the time and a fourth year nursing student in the local university. She was single and, apart from her parents, she had an elder brother (24) and a younger sister (20). Her church background was Anglican and Pentecostal, meaning that she had attended both kinds of churches. At

8 A fuller description of the church can be found in my Charismatic Glossolalia: An empirical-theological study, (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002), 32-37.
the time of the interview she was a member of SCF and had been attending the church for almost four years.

Lesley’s parents were both charismatic Christians and she remembered them praying in tongues from her earliest age. She also remembered attempting to imitate them at the age of two years old. That mimicry is still significant because she regarded her own tongues speech as sounding fairly similar to her father’s, but not because this was intentional. Her B/S occurred while she was living in Brazil at the age of fifteen years old and she recalled that it was a ‘very very vivid experience’. She had prayed a prayer of Christian commitment at the age of nine years old and regarded that event as her conversion. So the experience at the age of fifteen was a definite subsequent experience to conversion. She described the event in the following way:

I wasn’t part of a [Pentecostal] youth group at the time and nobody spoke in tongues in our youth group, not that I can remember. And I went away to this weekend and there were a few other young people who’d also gone with their parents. And it was run by two American guys who’d come over from the States to run this little retreat for the weekend. On the Saturday we all had these meetings which we attended but with all the pastors and their wives and people. And we just started, like somebody had a guitar. One of the American guys had a guitar and he just started playing and we were mucking around talking. And then it got into really, you know, it was natural, we just went straight into worship and we were all outside. I never remember dancing so much and just being excited, you know, worshipping God. I had never been like that. I was very reserved if you know what I mean. And then we were all on our knees. It was just kind of following on and we were all repenting before God for our sins and everything. And this American guy was leading us in a way. While we were all on our knees he went round and said: ‘I’m just going to pray that the Holy Spirit will come in [to] each one of you.’ And he just went round and he was laying his hands on each one of us. And there was only, there must have been about eight of us there. As he laid his hand on each one of us we all began to speak in tongues. And then I would say that we were all very drunk in the Spirit. After that we went ballistic, ha, yea…. We were really dancing and just completely out of it. It was real. I’ve never been drunk in my life, but if anything that was what it was to be drunk, and we were really going for it. I’ve never obviously experienced anything quite like it.

After the event, one of the American men stayed with her parents for about two weeks. In addition, one of her best friends had received a similar experience around the same time while visiting the United States. They were able to share experiences and this was influential in the shaping of her understanding of what had happened. Subsequently, she was also able to share her experience with her youth group and reported that many of them were also baptised in the Spirit as a result of her testimony. She became a leader in the group because of her experience, even though she was one of the youngest people there. It was at this point in her life that she started to attend a Pentecostal church and this allowed her to use the gift of speaking in tongues more freely.

At the time of the interview Lesley believed that speaking in tongues was the primary sign of being ‘filled with the Spirit’, or ‘baptized in the Spirit’. In addition to tongues there were other signs, even if tongues appeared to be the most basic sign, although not exclusively. When asked which books had influenced her understanding of these things she replied that books by Claudio Freidzon and Benny Hinn had been important.7

3. Analysis of the Experience

Caroline Franks Davis in her important book, The Evidential Force of Religious Experience offers philosophical insight into how to understand the nature of religious experience.11 She observes that there have been ‘non-cognitive’ and ‘cognitive’ views of religious experience. The ‘non-cognitive’ views have assumed that there is such a thing as ‘raw experience’ that lacks any form of interpretive content, which must be added at a later stage. By contrast the ‘cognitive’ view is a critical realist position that understands experience as being mediated via models and metaphors, which in themselves have essential cognitive functions.12 The strength of these models and metaphors as ‘reality-depicting’ is increased where they are grounded in communal histories and experiences over time.13 Indeed, she argues that there is a reciprocal interaction between concepts, beliefs, events, reflection, creative imagination and other cognitive and perceptual factors.14 In terms of strictly religious experience, she offers the following typology:15

1. Interpretive experiences are those which are viewed within a prior religious interpretive framework.
2. Quasi-Sensory experiences are ones in which the key element is a physical sensation, or associated with one or more of the senses, e.g.

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11 See n.2.
14 Franks Davis, The Evidential Force, 147.
visions, voices, sounds or tastes.

3. Revelatory experiences are ones in which the person acquires sudden convictions, inspiration, revelation, enlightenment or flashes of insight.

4. Regenerative experiences renew the person’s faith and improve spiritual health.

5. Numinous experiences make the person aware of his/her ‘creature-consciousness’ and mortality before the ‘mysterium tremendum’ carrying connotations of awe and dread, being over-powered yet having intense energy, viewing the numen as transcendent and sensing ‘rapture’ upon contact.

6. Mystical experiences give a sense of having apprehended an ultimate reality, offering an awareness of freedom from the limitations of time, space and the self, that is coordinate with a sense of ‘oneness’ (either with the divine or human other) and bliss or serenity.

Obviously, it can be seen from these very brief descriptions of the six types that there is a certain degree of overlap. Nevertheless, this typology seems a useful way of categorising experience in general terms in order to compare different kinds of data across a variety of religious traditions. It also has the advantage of allowing experiences to be shaped and expressed by implicit as well as explicit theological content, since how these experiences are articulated will inevitably reflect a particular theological/religious tradition.16 This does mean, however, that there is no dichotomy between concepts derived from experience and concepts brought to experience, or between ‘experience’ and ‘interpretation’, since these are intertwined.17 Nevertheless, the task of practical theology does not stop here, but seeks to move the account forward, in this case, by rescription or re-interpretation. So, how might the typology of religious experience assist in the analysis of the experience of Lesley?

First, there are clues in the interview to suggest that this experience has some relationship with an ‘interpretive framework’. As a young child Lesley mimicked her father speaking in tongues and both her parents were ‘charismatic Christians’, so she had a model of tongues-speaking from an early age which she hints may have influenced the phonetics of her own speech. She clearly understands the experience of B/S as subsequent to her conversion, with a period of six years between them. Where did she acquire this particular understanding? Did it come from her parents or from the ‘American guys’? Alternatively, it may have been mediated from her friend who had a similar kind of experience to her. This would give a role to her peer in the support of her theological understanding. In any case the combined roles of parents, American church leaders, peer and subsequent attendance at a Pentecostal church suggest a clear role for socialization in the establishment of her interpretation, which she articulated at the time of the interview.

Second, the categories of the numinous and the mystical appear to combine in this account. The mystical appears to be the envelop that contains a numinous centre. Thus dance and excitement in the worship of God (mystical marked by unusual freedom) precede an act of repentance (numinous marked by being overpowered in confession) to be followed by speaking in tongues, drunkenness in the Spirit and dance again (mystical marked by freedom and oneness). Of course, the mystical and the numinous move into each other and overlap, hence the energy of dance moves into the energy of confession and out into the energy of tongues, drunkenness and dance again. It is also important to observe the mediation of these activities through music, being led in confession and the laying on of hands. The outcome of the experience is a renewal of Lesley’s spiritual life, thus including another of Franks Davis’ categories (regenerative). Attending to the mediation of these events suggests that there might also be another component at work. The American guys who led the young people in worship through music also led them in confession, suggesting that in some sense there was an understanding of purity before power, perhaps reflecting the Wesleyan roots of the leaders’ theological tradition.

Margaret M. Poloma’s book on the Toronto Blessing and Pentecostal revivalism makes a significant contribution to the understanding of charismatic experience.18 Although this book focuses on the Toronto Airport Christian Fellowship (hereafter: TACF) and the concept of revivalism, it considers these phenomena via the conceptual lenses of the ‘mystical self’ and the corporate ‘mystical body’. For our purposes, it is the mystical self which is in view and is pertinent for our analysis.

Poloma notes that at the TACF a number of different physical phenomena can be observed and these have some resonance with the experience of Lesley. They include laughing, rolling, falling, jerking, shaking and grunting, accompanied by the interpretation that ‘God is playing with his kids’. However, her observation also suggests that not all were laughing and that

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16 Franks Davis, The Evidential Force, 159-161.
18 Margaret M. Poloma, Main Street Mystics: The Toronto Blessing & Reviving Pentecostalism, (Walnut Creek: AltaMira Press, 2003).
uncontrollable weeping and violent shaking were in evidence, providing support for the mixed metaphors of play and power. The testimonies arising from these experiences interpreted them in terms of the presence of God, or as a flash sign saying ‘Spirit at work… Spirit at work… Spirit at work’. In a survey conducted by Poloma the majority of respondents were already Pentecostal or Charismatic, having either spoken in tongues (87%) or experienced being ‘slain in the Spirit’ (70%). In the TACF meetings 34% experienced ‘dancing in the Spirit’ and 24% experienced being ‘drunk in the Spirit’.

These experiences are interpreted by Poloma using the dynamic ritual theory of Victor Turner that sees societal groups moving between the relatively fixed structures of ‘normal’ routine and the spheres of action that can be described as ‘floating’, ‘antistructural’ or ‘liminal’. This liminality is part of the ritual process that operates on the edge of ‘normal’ society, a state of ‘betwixt and between’ that makes space for something else to occur. Poloma notes that in the TACF the ritual behaviour (phenomena) occurs in accompaniment to Christian rock music, which work together to produce a fluid antistructure ritual. It is in this context that the mystical self is revived via ‘prophetic mime’ (roaring, crowing/ clucking, and barking) and ‘spirit drunkenness’, and it is the later which is of most interest for our purposes. Spirit drunkenness, or being inebriated with the Divine, is associated with inward transformation or re-ordering as the outward behaviour displays chaos, although exact interpretations vary according to personal circumstances. It is this juxtaposition of the outward and the inward that resonates with the theory of Turner as the person negotiates change from the structure of the past and the structure of the future through an experiential ‘no-man’s land’. Open and emotional experiences are thus opportunities for catharsis that allow for changes in self-identity. It is in these personal revival experiences, according to Poloma, that fragmented selves and broken relationships are mended as ‘building blocks for communitas’. This sociological lens can also be applied to the experience of Lesley leading to a third point of analysis in addition to the two made above. At the time of her B/S, she is a young woman growing up in a foreign culture and is, to some extent, already living through a liminal cultural experience. She is now brought to a ‘neutral’ zone, away from her previous Christian and ecclesial mores to a ‘no-man’s land’, where there is freedom to express herself in new and unusual ways as a means of moving on and growing up. She moves from her past to her new future by means of a complex crisis experience. Music plays a significant part as does dance, for they often accompany one another. For her it is not the amplified music band but the acoustic guitar, yet given the social context this works just as powerfully. For her the gateway appears to be a ritual of repentance and this anti-structured worship ritual leads to spiritual drunkenness and glossolalia. As at the TACF the experience contains both an element of play (dance, drunkenness) and power (repentance, glossolalia). The move from her existing Anglican church to the new Pentecostal church suggests that for her the (past) structure of Anglicanism cannot promise sufficient reconfiguration to hold her, so she moves to a new structure that can accommodate her future. Once this critical move has been made, further new moves and alliances are now made more possible.

4. Theological Reflection

Frank Macchia, offers a Pentecostal theology centred around the metaphor of baptism in the Spirit, which he aims to use more broadly in order to overcome the criticisms of Pentecostal pneumatology. As part of this project he considers the way in which recent Pentecostal scholars, such as Steven Land, and commentators, such as Walter Hollenweger and Harvey Cox, have managed to give an account of Pentecostalism and its spirituality without recourse to this distinctive theological marker. In particular he notes how Hollenweger considers Pentecostalism to be fundamentally experiential and culturally constructed, and therefore how theology is conceived in that framework, thereby focusing on the oral and performative dimensions. Doctrinal statements are therefore considered to be very secondary to how Pentecostals do theology, and it is this experiential and inter-cultural approach which allows for the greater possibilities in terms of diversity and global ecumenism. But Macchia contends that this appreciation of the oral, narrative and dramatic features of Pentecostal theology need not leave the doctrine of baptism in the Spirit behind: it is not an either/or but a both/and. This is because ‘[t]he church has lived for centuries with both narrative and doctrinal expressions of the faith, and Spirit baptism as a biblical metaphor can function well as our chief distinctive on both levels’. Therefore he

19 Poloma, Main Street Mystics, 63-64.
20 Poloma, Main Street Mystics, 65.
21 Poloma, Main Street Mystics, 67.
22 Poloma, Main Street Mystics, 68.
23 Poloma, Main Street Mystics, 81.
25 Macchia, Baptized in the Spirit, p.50.
26 Macchia, Baptized in the Spirit, p.56.
wishes to see the metaphor used in both kinds of theology because such a disjunction is foreign to the biblical accounts and to Pentecostal preaching.

In this regard I agree with Macchia and believe that experiential categories of story, prophecy, poetry or song are saturated with theology, and this would include ‘ordinary’ variants of more dogmatic formulae as well as culturally determined expressions. Rather than there being two distinct spheres, I would suggest that there is an intersection that displays continuity and discontinuity, resonance and dissonance. Theology, if you like, is created, broken, reshaped and re-presented through experiential processes and this must be the case if it is to motivate, inspire and ultimately be relevant to the life of faith. The outcome of such a process is that accounts are rescripted as part of the ongoing task of theological construction. In the light of this approach, what kinds of reflections might be offered in relation to Lesley’s experience of her baptism in the Spirit? I note three points related to worship and the doctrine of God, the Christian life and ecclesial history, and the social, symbolic and sacramental mediation of experience.

First, it is clear that Lesley’s experience of B/S is a worshipful experience, that is, its ultimate theological context is worship. In other words it is fundamentally about being caught up in ‘wonder, love and praise’. This is implicit in the account and especially in the language used by Lesley. She only uses the word ‘God’ twice, ‘the Holy Spirit’ once and ‘the Spirit’ once. She lacks a Trinitarian framework to interpret her experience, and appears to have just a ‘binitarian’ (God and Spirit) or theistic (God = Spirit) understanding. Christ as the baptiser in the Spirit is not mentioned, therefore, she lacks the Pentecostal Christological framework of the four-fold or the five-fold gospel. Therefore, the participation in God demands to be rescripted if it is to be responsible to Scripture and Christian tradition. Its overarching theological meaning must be found in a participation in the worship of triune God, enabled by the Spirit, mediated through Christ and directed to the Father. Only such a theological account enables doctrinal continuity to be maintained within the experiential narrative: ordinary theology in this case must be supplemented and corrected by doctrinal theology for a richer, integrated and ultimately orthodox account.

Second, although this experience is a crisis experience of a kind, it must also be understood as located in a Christian life context. Lesley comes from a Christian home, with parents who pray for her and with her from infancy. She has a conversion experience at the age of nine and participated in church life up to her baptism in the Spirit. What she does not say is that she might have also been confirmed within the Anglican church at some point between the ages of nine and fifteen. If this is the case, she would have already participated in two church rites which have invoked the Spirit upon her. At the age of fifteen, she is already engaged and participating in the ecclesial community of faith as a believer, also being involved in a church youth group. If there is a theological disjunction it comes after not before her B/S. It is this crisis experience that enables her to share the experience of participating in God with others and, somehow, leads her to leave the Anglican church. Up to her B/S I suspect she did not entertain the idea of a two or three stage Christian life process, and it not clear from her account that she has a clear understanding at the time of the interview. Therefore there is an ongoing Christian life context that provides a shape for her direction and growth as a Christian. If anything, it appears to be an event in a ‘punctuated process’ rather than the second stage in a set of clearly defined stages. Surprisingly, Macchia concedes that there are problems with the classical Pentecostal expression of B/S: ‘A fragmented twofold or threefold initiation into the life of the Spirit is difficult to justify in Scripture’. If this is the case, and I guess this is where debate will ensue, then there might just be other possible accounts of Lesley’s B/S that rescript her theology. I suggest that ‘punctuated process’ is one such account that takes seriously both the continuity and discontinuity in the Christian life as a result of an encounter with the Spirit of God. Third, there is the social context of the event itself, which provides mediation of the divine via a cluster of actions and symbols. The action of worship is mediated through music and dance; the action of being led in repentance and response is mediated through the posture of kneeling; the event of B/S is mediated through the action and symbol of the laying on of hands accompanied by the invocation of the Spirit. This is subsequently symbolised by tongues speech, ‘drunkenness’ and dance. Theologically this may be accounted for in a broad sacramental sense. Speaking in tongues has been interpreted sacramentally and this is now well-established. But are there not other kinds of ‘mediation’, which may also be interpreted in a sacramental sense? This account given by Lesley suggests that tongues

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27 Arguably, this is precisely what Thomas A. Smail as the editor of *Theological Renewal* was aiming to do through his editorials of and contributions to that journal (1975-1983); his mature thinking comes to fruition in the book, *The Giving Gift: The Holy Spirit in Person*, (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1988).


29 Macchia, *Baptized in the Spirit*, p.27.

is not an isolated symbol, but works in conjunction with other symbolic actions. Making an observation of this kind opens out the sacramental nature of the whole event and invites theological rescripting. Building on the above two points, it could be suggested that within an overarching worshipping and witnessing life in the Spirit, there are indeed symbolic transitions that ‘punctuate’ the process. These punctuations mediate transition. Thus baptism would symbolise the transition par excellence, while the eucharist symbolises steady growth within the community as one is gradually nurtured in the Spirit. It could be argued that baptism enables the person to be integrated within the community of faith, while the eucharist both sustains and propels the same person out with an energy for life in the world. This cluster of socially mediated symbolic actions acquires a sacramental quality by doing both things simultaneously: it enables both a transition into something new (power in the Spirit) and propulsion out into the ongoing and routine (life in the world).

5. Conclusion
In conclusion I would like to suggest that Lesley’s account requires some rescripting for the purposes of a practical theology. I want to suggest that the (theological) event of Lesley’s B/S functions symbolically as a transitional marker: a bridge to enable deeper worship and greater participation in the Christian life. This ‘punctuation’ in the process of the Christian life becomes in effect a ‘jump’ to a different level of engagement. It compares to a ‘teenage growth spurt’ in the Christian life and is centred on an encounter with the Spirit of God. Such an encounter can be illuminated via socialisation processes (negotiating the influence of parent and peers), philosophical typologies of religious experience (integrating the mystical and numinous) and sociological interpretations of liminality (old structure – anti-structure – new structure). The doctrine of the Trinity gives a specifically Christian shape and content to the broad philosophical category of the mystical and numinous, and without such a move, arguably, the experience is theologically deficient. The ecclesial context gives ongoing expression to the process of socialisation, which is vital to healthy expressions of the Christian life, providing support and mutual accountability. And the sacramental theology suggested above enables a theological framework for transition in the Christian life, as symbols and actions create space for the Spirit to do new things and enable believers to move forward in their Christian lives in the context of worship.

There are always dangers with rescripting experiential accounts, but the methodological process has at least allowed us to do it in a disciplined manner. David Martin suggests that the main problem with the social science rescripting of narratives is that the metaphors, concepts and language that are used are based on certain kinds of ontologies, which may in fact be entirely inappropriate or in deed reductionist. That may be more of a problem for the social sciences than for practical theology. Of course, this study has privileged theological discourse as the evaluative discipline, and therefore presupposes a particular theological ontology (Trinity, creation, church). Nevertheless, I have taken Martin’s advice and have interrogated Lesley’s own account first and attempted to stay close to the discourse she produced. I accept that an over-strong rescripting can do damage but would maintain that even the philosophical and sociological analyses have been used sensitively. It is, however, the role of others to discern just how useful this rescripting is for constructive Pentecostal-Charismatic theology.

Poul Madsen and the Danish Kristent Fælleskab Movement

Geir Lie

Abstract

Hardly any research has been done on individuals and groups characterized by a combined doctrinal affinity with Holiness (i.e., Keswickean) anthropology and Plymouth Brethren ecclesiology. The following article on the Danish Kristent Fælleskab (Christian Fellowship) movement and its initiator Poul Madsen may contribute to a greater scholarly appreciation of an important segment within the Holiness-Pentecostal camp of believers. Neither Poul Madsen nor the movement he initiated are Pentecostal per se. On the contrary, Madsen has (illegitimately) been accused of being ‘anti-charismatic’. As a Norwegian scholar living in Norway, however, Madsen is important as there are historical roots from his Danish movement to Norwegian Restorationist churches which, in turn, have connections to Covenant Ministries International in the UK. Madsen’s Holiness/Brethren sympathies place him in the tradition of ministers such as Watchman Nee, Witness Lee, T. Austin-Sparks, Lance Lambert, Stephen Kaung, DeVern F. Fromke and Gene Edwards.

Introduction

Poul Madsen graduated from the University of Copenhagen in 1940 with a cand.jur (Master of Law) degree and for the next ten years worked in the Central Administration within the capital. In 1938, Madsen became acquainted with J. Fjord Christensen’s meetings located in the secular Teknologisk Institut and began to attend his Bible Study meetings on a regular basis.¹

Before we delve further into Madsen’s life and ministry I would like to introduce three individuals who have significantly shaped his spiritual development.

Jesper Fjord Christensen (1868-1956)

After completing his theological education, J. Fjord Christensen worked as a teacher for ten years ‘as he did not consider himself fit for a ministerial post.’² Later, though, he was persuaded to reconsider and chose the little village of Askø as his parish with its 200 inhabitants. In 1905 – eight years after his arrival in Askø – the vicar was soundly converted. His preaching now took a different turn, and Christensen gradually got the reputation as a skilled Bible teacher.

However, in 1916 the press turned against him. In a tragic accident, Christensen’s daughter had boiling water poured over her. ‘After much prayer’ he felt that he should not call for a doctor. Christensen felt convinced that God would prevail with physical healing. The Child Protective Services, however, were persuaded otherwise and ‘removed the child from its home and had her admitted to hospital for treatment.’³

After some time, Christensen felt that his ministerial work should not be confined to the Church of Denmark. In 1922, he applied for dismissal as a parish minister. For many years, Christensen travelled around the country for several months at a time. Then he would spend the rest of each year holding meetings in Copenhagen. During this phase of his life, Christensen had an experience where he felt that God spoke to him through the words in Rev. 1:11 – ‘What thou seest, write in a book.’ After this he began to write down his sermons word for word. For many years his written sermons were regular features in Mod Målet, Madsen’s monthly magazine.⁴

One reason why Christensen left the Church of Denmark was that he became convinced regarding the validity of immersion of believers. Although his meetings in Copenhagen were not identified with a particular local church, they were nonetheless criticized for drawing believers out of the Church of Denmark.

Sofie Jørgensen (1886-1987)

In 1936-37, 50-year-old Anna Sofie Marie Jørgensen returned to Denmark.

¹ Geir Lie is a Norwegian writer and publisher of Refleks a journal for Pentecostals. His website is http://www.refleks-publishing.com.
⁴ Madsen, Mod Målet, Dec. 1956, 2.
She had ministered with Hudson Taylor’s China Inland Mission since 1910.6 Jørgensen had been relatively close to Watchman Nee. While in China, she felt God revealed to her how believers in Denmark were ‘separated from each other, as all the various churches and denominations had high walls preventing them from being the One Body for the Lord that they were called to be.’7 While at prayer, she sensed God’s instruction to return to Denmark in order to intercede ‘that all these walls be torn down.’8 Jørgensen informed the China Inland Mission leadership about her decision to be dismissed from service. Instead they granted her leave of absence ‘as they assumed that it couldn’t possibly be God’s will and that she only needed some time with God alone for a certain period of time.’9 Together with a British CIM-missionary, Elisabeth Fischbacher, Jørgensen spent a year in prayer before it was clear to both of them that she ‘had to return to Denmark and be God’s instrument of prayer there.’10

Jørgensen was introduced to Christensen as he was interested in the teachings of Watchman Nee. In 1938, Christensen published the first edition of the Danish translation Bibelske menigheder. (This work was later published in English under the two titles Concerning Our Missions and The Normal Christian Church Life.) This book contains several of Nee’s messages to his younger co-labourers in China. It was originally not intended for publication. However, in the Danish preface Christensen wrote:

We have decided to have [the book] published in Danish as an honest attempt to solve a complicated church issue and to remove the curse of sectarianism from the Lord’s church. Actually, there is not much more to say in defence of this particular book except that it in everything corresponds to the teachings of the Bible. For the one who will not let the Word of the Lord be the highest norm and guiding principle in every thing, this book has no particular message.

But the one for whom a ‘Thus sayeth the Lord’ determines every issue, will be thankful for this helping hand in clearing away confusion.11 Most likely it was also through Jørgensen that Christensen found out that Nee was in Europe in 1939. The young Chinese man was invited to his younger co-labourers in China. It was originally not intended for publication. However, in the Danish preface Christensen wrote:

We have decided to have [the book] published in Danish as an honest attempt to solve a complicated church issue and to remove the curse of sectarianism from the Lord’s church. Actually, there is not much more to say in defence of this particular book except that it in everything corresponds to the teachings of the Bible. For the one who will not let the Word of the Lord be the highest norm and guiding principle in every thing, this book has no particular message.

But the one for whom a ‘Thus sayeth the Lord’ determines every issue, will be thankful for this helping hand in clearing away confusion.11 Most likely it was also through Jørgensen that Christensen found out that Nee was in Europe in 1939. The young Chinese man was invited to Denmark for meetings at the International Høyskole in Helsingør. Nee’s teachings there were later published in book form and entitled The Normal Christian Life. This book has been widely proliferated. By 1972, it had been translated into 18 different languages.12

In 1942, Madsen felt convinced to be baptized by immersion (as a believer). He was baptized by Christensen, who remarked humorously: ‘Now it is imperative that your head is sufficiently buried under water. You think too much.’13

T. Austin-Sparks

Through Christensen and Jørgensen, Madsen later heard about both Nee and the British minister T. Austin-Sparks.14 Madsen’s brother John, who attended London Bible College from 1946 to 1950,15 frequently attended Austin-Sparks’ meetings at 39 Honor Oak Road. Poul Madsen visited England in 1948, 1949, and 195516 where he befriended many of Nee’s friends. Among these were Austin-Sparks and his son-in-law Angus Kinnear. Madsen writes:

Austin-Sparks came to play an important role in my life, without knowing so. It was because of his extraordinary eye for what is essential in Scripture. Before I had initiated the Bible Readings in Copenhagen in 1949, I heard him in a house meeting in Scotland… While I listened to him, I received ‘a new Bible’ and sensed what Scriptural teaching truly is. Without this help, I could hardly have started to go through the entire Bible.17

Hvide Marker

Madsen’s work, originally referred to as Hvide Marker (White Fields),18 originated in Copenhagen in 1947. It was an extension of two missionaries’ departures for India and China, respectively:

A small circle consisting of their friends felt the need to support them in intercession and consequently decided to gather for prayer on a monthly basis. This circle of people grew quickly. Other circles in various towns came into being. During the 3 years that have passed since the first prayer

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6 Daphne Deen (Oversees Missionary Fellowship, UK), letter to the author, February 20 1996. Cf. the various letters (almost 30) from Ms. Jørgensen which appeared in Meddelelser (published by Lærernes Missionsforening) from 1915 until 1937.
7 Eva Johansen (Give, Danmark), letter to the author, March 2, 1996.
8 Johansen, letter 1996.
9 Johansen, letter 1996.
10 Johansen, letter 1996.
14 For further information on Austin-Sparks, cf. Geir Lie, ‘T. Austin-Sparks – a brief introduction.’ Refleks 4-1 (2005), 48-52.
18 The name is inspired by the words of Jesus in John 4:35 – ‘Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest’, (Poul Madsen, ‘Nytårsbrev.’ Mod Målet, January 1955, n.p.)
circle came together for the first time, the amount of intercessors for these missionaries has grown to more than 60.19

After some time, the need for systematic Bible teaching became apparent. In February 1949, this was provided for through walk through of the whole Bible.20 The first meeting was in a private home. However, the ever-increasing amount of participants soon made it necessary to rent a more suitable locale. The newly established activity seems to have been viewed with a certain scepticism – at least to begin with:

Closed doors were opened through answered prayer. The year after we were shut out of the YMCA localities and publicly warned against in Kristeligt Dagblad, God opened up all of Copenhagen’s churches to us. In fact, the Cathedral was given to us five evenings in a row – all in answer to prayer.

Hundreds of people sought salvation without us having initiated any press campaign, without or even paying a dollar for advertisement or for localities. It was all given us as an answer to prayer.21

Niels Sørensen, who led the meetings in Copenhagen until his passing away in 1946, had initiated the monthly magazine Det salige håb (The Blessed Hope) back in 1939. In 1947, the 30 year-old Poul Madsen took responsibility for the magazine, which was now renamed Mod Målet (Towards the Mark).22

As early as February 1950, Madsen also started Bible Readings in Odense. At first, the question did not arise to arrange Sunday meetings. Such gatherings were considered ‘a typical church matter – and Hvide Marker is simply no Church.’23 On the contrary, it was said to be ‘quite beyond Hvide Marker’s purpose to be a Church.’24

On January 1st 1955, the name Hvide Marker was replaced by Kristent Fælleskab. There was a consciousness that the Church itself was ‘formed by the Holy Ghost’ and consisting ‘of all believers within Copenhagen.’ Consequently, a person could not enrol in Kristent Fælleskab, having one’s name written in a specific church protocol.25 Madsen’s ecumenical attitude was also expressed through his insistence that no attendant who wanted to ‘identify with fellow believers meeting elsewhere in our large city’ should have to fear ‘that there would be made any attempts from our side to ‘capture’ him or her.’ In fact, he exhorted such people not to support the Bible Readings financially if done at the expense of the assembly which they considered their spiritual home.26

**Interacting with British fellow-believers**

It did not take Madsen long to find that Christians in the UK had a far better grasp of the Scriptures than believers in Denmark. The British believers also tended to be much more systematic in their reading of the Bible. Back in 1948, Madsen had befriended Charles J.B. Harrison, who was also positively influenced by Austin-Sparks. During one week of teaching, Harrison had given a survey of the entire Bible.27 Inspired by ‘my dear brother C.J.B. Harrison, who visited us in Copenhagen in 1951 and held a number of meetings with us,’ Madsen prepared a schematic survey of the various books of the Bible. These surveys were published in Mod Målet over a period of five and a half years.28 In 1955, they came out in book form as Bibeloversigterne.29

Although Madsen was not able to date a specific ‘born again’ experience,30 he acknowledged going through a religious process during his high school years. Gradually ‘a longing for good devotional literature that could help me in my faith life was awakened within me,’ he writes. At this point he had no idea that ‘Christianity could be of any other brand than Evangelical Lutherdom, as expressed through the good old Church of Denmark, where [he] had learned so much. At that time, the giants were still within the Church of Denmark.’ Through contacts outside the Church of Denmark, Madsen soon was introduced to the Kirkeklokkene publishing avenue.31 Despite an anchor within the Church of Denmark, they ‘considered it a God-given

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20 Madsen n.p.
24 Madsen, Mod Målet, July 1950, 13.
31 ‘The Kirkeklokkene magazine appeared for the first time in 1888 as a result of a group of Christians in Copenhagen. This was led by ministers within the Church of Denmark, who desired to do something new. They had the desire to call people towards the Church and to help solve a social need among the city children.’ Wholesale dealer of butter, Thorvald Plum, was among the initiators of the magazine. He started the publishing house by the name Kirkeklokkene, producing the first books during the late 1800s. ‘KMIs årsmøde’, Godt Budskab, June 1994, 2. Consider also Christian Svendsen, ‘100 år’, Godt Budskab, Oct 7 1988, 1-2, 7, 10.
Madsen was already familiar with Nee’s church-building work in China and Bakht Singh’s ministry in India, as evidenced by the prayer group started in Copenhagen in 1947 –

The brethren within the Little Flock soon were some for whom we felt a particular responsibility. We had a feeling that the Lord used them beyond the ordinary. It was a privilege for us to stand with them in faithful and responsible intercession. Later, we also heard about Bakht Sing’s work in India. The very same feeling that we had a spiritual co-responsibility for his ministry seized many of us.36

### Poul Madsen versus Witness Lee

In early 1957, Madsen travelled to Taiwan and India with his wife and Austin-Sparks. He characterized this visit as a disappointment.37 In Taiwan he met, among others, Witness Lee. Lee held gigantic meetings where some 5000 believers would gather for the celebration of the Lord’s Supper. During the six weeks they spent in Taiwan, the Madsens grew increasingly surprised and perplexed. During one specific gathering, Lee suddenly turned towards Madsen, enquiring: ‘What is the local church?’ Madsen responded that the local church is the total sum of all genuine Christians within a certain geographical area. Lee then ‘corrected’ him in public by reeling off 10 criteria which had to be fulfilled in order for a local church to be rightly constituted.

One of these criteria, Lee asserted, was rightly appointed elders. Madsen immediately countered: ‘I totally disagree!’ Madsen felt more and more that Lee, instead of leading a Christian church, had established an organization which had to be fulfilled in order for a local church to be rightly constituted. Of these criteria, Lee asserted, was rightly appointed elders. Madsen immediately countered: ‘I totally disagree!’ Madsen felt more and more that Lee, instead of leading a Christian church, had established an organization ruled with a rod of iron and characterized by exclusiveness.

If we ignore the typical culture shock which most first-time visitors to the so-called Third World encounter,38 the tone in the letters he sent back to Denmark was chiefly positive – ‘Everywhere, however, we have been

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37 Madsen, interview, Nov. 19 1994. Madsen’s disappointment over not having his expectations fulfilled also included a disappointment with Austin-Sparks. It was therefore no coincidence that the latter, despite his participation at Madsen’s summer conference in 1954 and 1956, respectively was not invited back until 1969. (Poul Madsen, ‘Hvad ser du?’ Mod Målet, June 1969, 18.)
38 ‘There are lots of rickshaws. I had a ride in one of them the other day. I hoped that I wouldn’t receive too many fleas from it.’ (Poul Madsen, ‘Rejsebrev nr. 6,’ Mod Målet, April 1957, n.p.) ‘We have been accommodated at the best hotel in town. We live in a fabulous room which has not been cleaned for several months. Fortunately, we may assume that the bed linen had been changed during the Chinese New Year, approximately a month ago. So no more than 30 Chinese people have slept in this bed linen before us! We considered going to bed with our raincoats on!’ (Poul Madsen, ‘Rejsebrev nr. 7,’ Mod Målet, April 1957, n.p.)
received with a heartfelt sincerity which has truly touched us.’ Even Madsen’s observation of the ‘spiritual training’ within the church with the newly converted ones seems to be positively taken – ‘personal desires, inclinations and peculiarities had to be put aside in favour of the much larger goal of serving the whole, i.e., serving Christ in His Body.’ It was much later when Madsen’s anxiety came to the surface:

As previously mentioned, many of the assemblies in Taiwan have gone through schism. They have been through painful struggles. Much is still going one which causes grief and sadness. This is evident, in particular, with the large work connected with Watchman Nee and Witness Lee. Everywhere in the Far East, these assemblies struggle with serious internal difficulties.

Later Madsen observed that Witness Lee had moved from Taiwan and relocated to the U.S.:

This talented man now follows a new line of thought. Many have a hard time accepting his teaching. He needs much prayer so that his gifting and energy will be used in the best way possible for the Lord. He wants to serve the Lord with his whole heart. However, Watchman Nee’s name is now connected to things which many feel he would not approve of if he knew about it.

In spite of an earlier respectful reference to the Chinese leaders, Madsen’s anxiety is specified every time these very same individuals are mentioned in Mod Målet:

Witness Lee and Stephan [sic] Kaung have received American citizenship. They are very energetic and attract hundreds of people. I feel a deep anxiety when I reflect on their work. They have been entangled in something fatally exclusive and sectarian, in spite of their rich giftings.

We must keep them in our prayers.

After having studied Nee’s book *The Normal Christian Church Life* Madsen thought (in hindsight) he was able to detect a seed of the exclusivity he witnessed with Witness Lee’s work in Taiwan. After Lee moved to the U.S. and became even more extreme, Madsen asserted this was a direct result of Lee rigidly following the principles laid out by Watchman Nee. Madsen observed that Nee’s teachings had a positive impact in many places which gather around the message of the Cross and its significance for the individual believer. However, Madsen believed he saw a danger in an overemphasis on the subjective. The church-oriented books, in turn, according to Madsen have had harmful effects.

**Bakht Singh**

After leaving Taiwan, Madsen met Bakht Singh in India. Singh had already established several hundred churches. These were simple ‘primitive...
local assemblies made according to the New Testament pattern. Singh established some 400 churches in India. All of these were financially self-reliant. Madsen wrote:

> It is an amazing testimony that these assemblies, which basically consist of poor people, never ask for financial assistance. In fact, they go so far as never to allow friendly people who have not been born again to support the work with gifts.

Singh visited Denmark and ministered together with Madsen in 1957, 1965, and 1969. Singh’s success in his home country, however, seemed to have gradually decreased due to the ‘centralized exercise of authority.’ Singh was himself the judicial owner of all assembly buildings, an issue which caused internal problems.

**Poul Madsen – anti-charismatic?**

Madsen has been accused of being so-called ‘anti-charismatic.’ Some claim Kristent Fælleskab lost quite a few people to both the Pentecostal Movement and to the Charismatic Renewal. The British medical doctor, Michael Harry, was introduced to Madsen in Austin-Sparks’ Honor Oak Assembly in London. In 1961 he moved to Denmark where he took active part within Kristent Fælleskab (also with preaching responsibilities) until 1965. In August of that very same year, Harry participated in the FGBMFI’s first meeting in Europe, in Martin Lloyd-Jones’ Westminster Chapel in London. After the sermon, Harry went forward and received the Holy Spirit ‘in faith’. Tongues were not released, however, until he was back home in Copenhagen. It soon came to a schism between him and Madsen. Harry chose to become a member of the Church of Denmark.

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56 Hans Kristian Neerskov, interview, Dec. 12 1994. Together with other young people from the Emdrup Church (Church of Denmark), Neerskov started to attend Madsen’s meetings for young people – ‘Hvide Marker’ – in 1951. Neerskov considered himself part of Kristent Fælleskab until 1959. He has since pastored Pentecostal churches in Jylland and Copenhagen and also worked fulltime within Dansk Europamisjon.
‘Anti-charismatic’ is a negatively-loaded expression, though. Besides, Madsen claims to have spent much time together with Pentecostals and the ‘friends from Apostolic Church.’ Sigurd and Anna Bjørner were friends of his who frequently visited Madsen’s meetings.60 Also, the Norwegian ministers Lyder Engh, Thoralf Gilbrant, and Martin Ski attended Madsen’s summer conference in 1967.61 Nevertheless, Madsen did have serious theological objections both to the Pentecostal Movement and to the Charismatic Renewal.62 He rejected the term ‘Spirit Baptism’ as unscriptural. Because the Bible, he claimed, neither says that the Spirit is being baptized or is the baptizer. ‘The one who baptizes, however, is our Lord Jesus. He baptizes with the Holy Spirit and with fire.’63 Madsen understood this scriptural term as a reference to the church:

Both baptism in water and baptism in the Spirit presupposes a body which can be lowered down. Where baptism in water is concerned, I have to bring my physical body and let it be lowered down in water. Where baptism in the Spirit is concerned, I do not have any spiritual body I may bring. But one does exist! The one spiritual body which has been lowered down (i.e., baptized in the Spirit of God) refers to the spiritual body of Christ – His Church.

To the same extent that I am a member of this Body and live as a member of the Body, I am a partaker of the baptism in the Spirit.64

Madsen maintained that Mt 3:11, Mk 1:8, and Acts 1:5 pointed forward to the same event – Pentecost. He asserted that 1 Cor. 12:13 pointed backwards to the very same event! Thus, he concluded that ‘baptism in the Spirit’ included all believers objectively being made available on the Day of Pentecost.65 Hence, ‘regeneration’ and ‘baptism in the Spirit’ become more or less synonymous terms, irrespective of being applied in different use contexts:

When we talk about being born of the Spirit, we think of the new life which is imparted to the believer. When we talk about being baptized in the Spirit, we think of the new life which the believer enjoys together with all other believers. […] The new birth points to the individual aspect, while baptism in the Spirit points to what we have together with the saints, our mutual lives as members on the same Body.66

Thus, Madsen challenges the theoretical foundation of Pentecostals’ interpretation of ‘baptism in the Spirit.’ As a Christian counsellor he also points out the illegitimate pressure which this doctrine necessarily must place ‘over all who submit to this doctrine although they themselves have never spoken in tongues.’ As they allegedly lack ‘the power from on high’ and also feel inferior to those ‘baptized in the Spirit’, the end result according to Madsen is that they ‘of all their might yield to a striving after an [illegitimate] experience of speaking in tongues.’67

However, Madsen does not reject the validity of all forms of tongues speech.68 On the contrary, he claims that this gift of the Spirit does have a legitimate place within the church assembly:

Tongues do have their legitimate place within the Church of God, but no outstanding place. It is definitely not the evidence of one having been ‘baptized in the Spirit’ or having experienced some sort of a breakthrough into the spiritual realm,’ as some erroneously claim. Let us together with the apostle Paul seek to give this gift its rightful place.69

Madsen goes on to say: ‘With this understanding, we work together with brothers who have a different view on these matters. Is that really possible? Hitherto it has not been without problems but still blessed and to the glory of the Lord’s name.’70

The cooperation Madsen alluded to most probably referred to Operasjon Joshua, an evangelization work patterned after George Verwer’s Operation

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62 Cf. Madsen spoke against an overemphasis on faith healing in his Helligåndens væsen og virke, 51: ‘The Bible talks about gifts of healing, but not of healing ministers or healing evangelists. And the Bible never speaks of healing in such a way that the vessel is glorified. Neither do we see anywhere in the Bible that the one used to communicate healing created sensation around his name or his work. In our days there are some very dangerous streams operating along these lines.’
64 Madsen, ‘Debt med Anden’, Mod Målet, Sept. 1963, n.p. Madsen continues: ‘Baptism in the Spirit is always connected to the Body of Christ. It is to the same extent that we live as a Body that we live in the Power of the Spirit. The one who separates himself and his activities from the Body of Christ separates himself from the Baptism and the Power of the Spirit.’
65 Madsen, ‘Helligåndens væsen og virke’, 35.
67 Madsen, ‘Helligåndens væsen og virke’, 41.
68 ‘There are people who claim that this particular gift is not functioning today in its genuine form. They refer to all the hysterical and exhalative manifestations, which are referred to as tongues speech, and claim that the genuine glossolalic gift was reserved for the early Church. It is true that a lot of false forms of tongues speech occur today. However, this sad fact should not erroneously lead us to reject genuine expressions of tongues speech. The latter form God wants to bestow on his church today. Where it exists it builds up and enriches’, (Madsen, ‘Helligåndens væsen og virke’, 36.).
69 Madsen, ‘Helligåndens virke’, Mod Målet, March 1972, 8. Cf. also Madsen, Helligåndens væsen og virke, 55: ‘The genuine form of speaking in tongues is beautiful, heavenly, harmonious, clean. It leads the attention of the believers being present towards the Lord.’
70 Madsen, Mod Målet, March 1972, 14.
Mobilization, but with a focus on Denmark exclusively. This was initiated by Mr. Rino Lange who belonged to Kristent Fælleskab in Copenhagen. This work was initiated in 1970 in cooperation with Unge Kristne (Young Christians), led by Johannes Facius (who had been active within Kristent Fælleskab from 1955 until the early 1960s) and Johnny Noer, among others. This cooperation meant that the yearly summer conference on Nyborg Strand was not held in 1970, and that Kristent Fælleskab and Unge Kristne together co-arranged a conference which was held at the Apostolic Church’s headquarter in Kolding. However, Madsen and Kristent Fælleskab in Copenhagen gradually felt that Operation Joshua became too charismatic. Neither were they capable of endorsing Facius’ teachings on ‘Spirit baptism’ which corresponded with traditional Pentecostal belief. It came to a formal schism in 1975.

**Schism between Madsen and Kristent Fælleskab**

The Kristent Fælleskab movement was never numerically large. Today they have local churches in Copenhagen, Odense and Hillerød. In total, they count some 400 adult believers. In 1990, a schism developed between Madsen and the three churches. This was primarily attributable to Madsen desiring more authority than the churches were ready to grant. They would have preferred that he simply continued assisting in teaching and remaining in his mentor role, including functioning as one of the elders. The result of the schism was that Madsen established a separate Kristent Fælleskab assembly in Copenhagen which now counts some 60-70 adult believers.

On his own initiative, Madsen has continued to publish the *Mod Målet* journal. The three Kristent Fælleskab churches who no longer work with him, each publishes their own church magazines. In addition, the churches in Copenhagen and Odense have taken common responsibility for their own magazine entitled *Kristent Perspektiv*.

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1 An edited version of this article was initially read at the Sixteenth Centuries Studies Conference in Atlanta, Ga. Anabaptist Spirituality session on October 21, 2005.
2 Contact details: Charles.byrd@wycliffe.ox.ac.uk. Charles Byrd is a pre-doctoral student at Oxford University.
acceptance of this twentieth century phenomenon, it has a long and rich historical heritage dating back to the Day of Pentecost as recorded in the Book of Acts. A particularly intriguing part of this legacy dates back just 500 years. During the European Reformation of the sixteenth century, the radical reformers of Switzerland referred to as the Swiss Brethren, probably the first group to be called Anabaptists, practiced a form of spirituality that was very similar to the modern movement’s experience in nature, character and form. This paper argues that an analysis of the reasons presented by the Anabaptists at the Zofingen Disputation in 1532 for not attending Reformed churches established that Swiss Anabaptist spirituality does in fact reflect Pentecostalism in the modern sense of the term. The importance of the Zofingen Disputation is based upon its unique character in that it is a rare documentation of the theology, nature and form of Anabaptist spirituality. It reveals worship practices and scriptural interpretations that are analogous to the Pentecostal phenomena that occurred in early twentieth century America not the least of which was requiring evidence of the infilling of the Holy Spirit. Additional contemporary documents to include personal letters, articles of confession and chronicles will also be used to support this opinion and establish a historical background.

A history of Pentecostalism normally focuses on the appearance in the early twentieth century of a spiritual phenomenon which incorporated the manifestation of the gifts of the Holy Spirit as described in the book of Acts and in I Corinthians 12 and 14. Speaking in unknown tongues, glossolalia, was the most prominent and delineating gift manifested, setting the movement apart from traditional Christian denominations of the time as well as various contemporary Holiness movements. ‘Pentecostalism’ is a modern term that generally refers to believers who manifested the gifts of speaking in tongues, interpretation of tongues, prophecy, healing, and other gifts mentioned by the Apostle Paul in I Corinthians 12 and 14, all through the power of the Holy Spirit. The term was initially coined as early as the late nineteenth century in the Holiness movements of America. But when the Pentecostal movement began to spread, it had theologically equated similar manifestations of spirituality since the Day of Pentecost, none of them were sustained or as successful as the current movement. It should be noted that Pentecostal was never used in its modern sense in the Bible, the first Church or succeeding generations of Christianity nor was it ever practised and insisted upon the operation of the gifts of the Holy Spirit as a normal part of meetings, worship, and spirituality in general.

Early in the development of their reformation theologies, both Luther and Zwingli, the founder of the Swiss Reformation, acknowledged the work and presence of the Holy Spirit in a very personal way in the lives of Christians. Initially Luther was greatly influenced by the mystical writing of John Tauler as well as the Theologia Germanica. Both taught that each Christian could and should experience God within themselves outside the parameters of intellectual understanding and the clergy. A Christian, ‘… was transformed from a thinker about the nature of God into a reborn being, a

Azusa Street prayer meeting and revival in Los Angeles, California in 1906, has grown to represent over 25% of current Christendom according to some accounts.

Walter J. Hollenweger characterized early Pentecostal spirituality with five distinctive: (1) an emphasis on the oral aspect of liturgy, (2) narrative forms of theology and witness, (3) maximum participation thus forming a reconciling community, (4) visions and dreams were included in personal and public spirituality, and (5) ‘…an understanding of the body/mind relationship which is informed by experiences of correspondence between body and mind… (healing).’ Their strength was in what happened to them in their liturgies. In addition to practising the gifts of the Holy Spirit they believed that speaking in tongues was the initial evidence of the baptism or indwelling of the Holy Spirit. They had a strong belief in the primacy of the Bible, in a personal salvation that reflected the life of Christ in the life of the believer by acts of love, and the empowerment of the individual by the Holy Spirit to live a pious life in this world. The movement began in small Bible studies and schools, prayer meetings and house churches. However, the history of the movement is primarily examined outside the context of Church history before the nineteenth and twentieth century. This is probably because, notwithstanding evidence of sporadic appearances of similar manifestations of spirituality since the Day of Pentecost, none of them were sustained or as successful as the current movement. It should be noted that Pentecostalism was never used in its modern sense in the Bible, the first Church or succeeding generations of Christianity nor was it ever used during the Reformation to describe or define those Christians who practised and insisted upon the operation of the gifts of the Holy Spirit as a normal part of meetings, worship, and spirituality in general.

Early in the development of their reformation theologies, both Luther and Zwingli, the founder of the Swiss Reformation, acknowledged the work and presence of the Holy Spirit in a very personal way in the lives of Christians. Initially Luther was greatly influenced by the mystical writing of John Tauler as well as the Theologia Germanica. Both taught that each Christian could and should experience God within themselves outside the parameters of intellectual understanding and the clergy. A Christian, ‘… was transformed from a thinker about the nature of God into a reborn being, a


new character, one who lived in the Spirit. Zwingli believed as well that, ‘God the Father himself speaks through his Spirit to a human being; in order to receive Him, one has to trust the taking-place of this spiritual connection, pray to receive the Spirit and abandon one’s own reason.’ Consequently, these ideas took on a life of their own in the works and beliefs of some of the more radical followers of both men. Andreas Karlstadt, Thomas Müntzer and Caspar Schwenckfeld were all close friends, adherents and or supporters of Luther and Zwingli in the beginning. Each, however, in their own highly spiritualistic and perhaps mystical way encouraged the estrangement of the more radical elements of the Reformation from the magisterial concept of reform and ultimately, if not unknowingly, contributed to the eventual establishment of Anabaptism. All three believed in the efficacy of the work of the Holy Spirit in the personal lives of Christians, an inner word (spirit) juxtaposed with the outer word (ordinances). Each taught that if one were truly Christian, their individual lives should reflect such faith. Daily activities and actions should be a visible conformity to the life of Christ. Politically, the idea that the state should have any control or influence over the church was adamantly rejected by most radicals. However, certain fatal heresies developed out of some of these teachings in Luther’s mind, such as Müntzer’s adult baptism and his spiritualism. What separated these spiritualists and mystics from mainstream Protestantism was their tendency to interpret the work of the Holy Spirit in terms of new revelation. Christian traditions, institutions, and by some, the Bible itself were considered to be part of the past and of little or no use to a newly reformed if not chiliastic Church. Some historians have classified them as revolutionary spiritualists. Luther, stated that the Spiritualist spoke very easily about, ‘…Geist, Geist, Geist, and then ‘kicks away the very bridge by which the Holy Spirit can come…namely, the outward ordinances of God like the bodily sign of baptism and the preached word of God.’

Zwingli had similar problems with some of his closest followers. Notwithstanding his earlier positions on the work of the Holy Spirit within

the believer’s life, he alienated Conrad Grebel, Felix Mantz, George Blaurock and others of like mind when he insisted on a state controlled church and rejected infant baptism. They believed that infant baptism was contrary to the Word of God, insisting that one became a Christian only after making a conscious decision as an adult to follow Christ and only then was water baptism appropriate. Additionally they objected to the large role that Zwingli was giving to the government in the life of the church. They believed that the church was to be a separated entity led by the Holy Spirit and uninvolved in politics. Zwingli’s intent, however, was to conduct a more gradual and less traumatic reform of the Church by continuing infant baptism and other rituals, thus maintaining the continuing support of the city council of Zurich. Finally, in 1525, the group separated themselves from Zwingli. Conrad Grebel and his followers baptized each other, thus committing a fatal heretical error in Zwingli’s mind. A mandate was issued by the city council of Zurich forbidding the practice of Anabaptism. The penalty for being rebaptized was death. Subsequently the radicals were expelled from the city of Zurich and fled to the more rural areas of Switzerland. This marked the beginning of the Swiss Brethren or Anabaptist movement in Switzerland. The Anabaptists were considered radical Protestants by the Catholic Church, the Zwinglian reformed church and the Lutheran church. They were constantly summoned to disputations and inquisitions to defend or explain their beliefs regarding infant baptism as well as their concept of a separated and spiritual church. Consequently they were persecuted, arrested, ostracized, jailed, and many were executed. In response to the persecution they were forced to meet in secret conventicles or small house churches to study the Bible, worship, and practise their beliefs, thus avoiding participation and attendance at local Reformed churches. It was in these conventicles that the gifts of the Holy Spirit were manifested in much the same way as Pentecostalism at the turn of the twentieth century. The establishment of Anabaptism in the St. Gallen and Appenzell regions of northern Switzerland immediately saw manifestations of gifts of the Holy Spirit. The baptism of adults by Grebel and others of the initial group of Swiss Brethren from Zurich can be traced back to the conventicles already being convened there since 1523 to promulgate the Zwinglian reform. From the very inception of the Swiss Reformation, conventicles (meetings held

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10 G. H. Williams, p.1298.
outside the control of the official church) were held and greatly encouraged by Zwingli. Although St. Gallen and Appenzell were forty miles to the east, lay leaders conducting the same types of Bible reading conventicles were already in place teaching Zwinglianism which continued to insist on a high level of personal spirituality. Initially the support of the city council of St. Gallen for these gatherings was forthcoming and enhanced their success. Joachim von Watt, called Vadian, a humanist scholar, teacher and friend of Zwingli, was the burgomaster in St. Gallen. He supported the conventicles and the Reformation in general. Johannes Kessler, the resident school master of St. Gallen and author of a chronicle that documented the manifestations of the gifts of the Holy Spirit among the Anabaptists, was one of the first influential leaders of a conventicle. He led a group in a private home that grew in size to require a large guildhall. It was through the conventicle that Zwinglian ideas came to St. Gallen. Popular evangelical preaching, systematic readings, meetings, and discussions like those of Kessler and others who would follow, effectively prepared the way for the Reformation. However, the prior existence of the conventicles also made it possible for the Anabaptists to convince many of the validity of their beliefs thus taking control of the conventicles. Manifestations of the gifts of the Holy Spirit began to occur within the context of Anabaptist led prayer and worship. As Anabaptism spread throughout the region it took on the appearance of a Pentecostal revival. There was speaking in tongues, weeping, and confession of sin, followed by water baptism. However, there also began to appear incidents of aberrant behaviour such as in Appenzell where adherents, ‘… became as little children, babbling and playing in the dirt.’ In St. Gallen women spoke in unintelligible languages and prophesied under the guise of the Holy Spirit. Margaret Hottinger of Zollikon came to St. Gallen and became a spiritual leader in one of the conventicles. According to Kessler she spoke in tongues and languages that no one could understand. She lived a disciplined way of life and was highly regarded by the Anabaptists who believed that those who spoke as she did were the most devout and immersed in God. Notwithstanding occasional aberrant behaviour among those who manifested such Pentecostalism, there was an apparent spirituality that was accepting of the gifts of the Spirit not unlike that of the first church as described in I Corinthians 12 and 14. There are many other examples of Pentecostal behaviour particularly of the gift of prophecy both forthtelling and foretelling. The most influential aspect of the prophetic gifts was the chiliastic emphasis placed by many Anabaptist prophets and groups on the coming of Christ and the end of the world. The chiliastic influence of Thomas Müntzer who believed and taught that he was living in the Last Days was probably the source of the strongest apocalypticism. Kessler also identified Magdalena Muller as a prophetess who gathered a following to herself with prophecies of future events, however, aberrantly and of dubious theological and spiritual value.

There was no written liturgy for an Anabaptist conventicle, however, there was order and structure patterned after Paul’s instructions to the Corinthians. In the conventicle setting a reader or preacher would either preach a sermon or lead a group discussion based on a Biblical passage. In either case, time would be allowed for participation by the attendees. The preachers and leaders were not necessarily trained theologians by any means but were literate, students of the Bible, and generally respected in the community. The practice of open participation also encouraged the exercising of the gifts of the Spirit as outlined in I Corinthians 12 and 14 in an appropriately scriptural manner. Paul’s instruction in I Corinthians 14:29-32 regarding the gift of prophecy allowed a time for others to judge what was spoken. The practice was referred to as the Lex Sedentiorum or in German, Sitzerrech, the right to speak out in the face of the opened scripture. Unfortunately, during these same meetings while the gifts of the Holy Spirit were being manifested properly, aberrant and less than edifying events occurred. Kessler, Vadian, and other chroniclers, including the city records, registered the most outrageous of incidents. Accusations of sexual misconduct and even a fratricide became identified with Anabaptist conventicles along with the manifestations of the gifts of the Spirit. These

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15 B. Gordon, p.78.
17 G. H. Williams, p.222.
20 Fast, p.51.
23 J. Kessler, p.52.
24 Williams, pp.518-519.
25 C. A. Snyder, Profiles of Anabaptist Women, p.50.
records are of a less than objective nature and must be read with caution but they have provided us with negative examples of the abuse, misuse and aberrant behaviour in St. Gallen. They do, however, record the prolific nature of Pentecostal behaviour such as speaking in tongues or ecstatic language, prophecy, private conventicles or prayer meetings where these things occurred, as well as the confession of sins with much contrition and weeping. They also describe a people that were living upright, holy, morally clean, ethical, and Christ-like lives in their communities.

In 1527 the Anabaptist themselves began to see that the spiritual extremists identified within their movement were a real threat to any future existence. Michael Sattler, a former monk and Anabaptist leader from Freiburg in Breisgau, Germany, authored the Schleitheim Confession, the first statement of fundamental beliefs for the Anabaptist. Its primary purpose was to document the tenets of their faith that all had agreed upon up to that time; baptism, the ban (church discipline), communion, separation, election of pastors, pacifism and no oath taking. However, the confession was not addressed to the magisterial reformers, Lutheran or Zwinglian, but to the free thinking or libertine Anabaptists, specifically to, ‘… certain false brethren among us…in the way they intend to practice and observe the freedom of the Spirit and of Christ.’ The ‘false brethren’ was a reference to those in St. Gallen and similar places who had obviously misunderstood the freedom of the Spirit, not unlike the Corinthian church of the New Testament, and given themselves over to self-indulgence of the flesh, thinking that faith and love permitted all kinds of behaviour. Sattler made reference to this abuse in the letter he wrote to the believers at Horb while he was awaiting execution in Rothenburg, having been convicted of being an Anabaptist. He stated that the love Paul spoke of in I Corinthians 13 had been,

…adulterated by some of the brethren (I know who they are); they have not been willing to edify one another by love, but are puffed up and unprofitable with the vain knowledge and understanding of things which God would have remain hidden to all but Himself alone. I Corinthians 8:1. I do not censure or reject the grace and revelation of God, but the puffed up make use of this revelation. What would it profit, says Paul, if I should speak with the tongues of men and angels, and understand all mysteries and knowledge, and have all faith, tell me, what profit is all this, if love be not exercised? You have experienced what such presumptuous speaking and ignorance has produced; you still daily see their false fruits, though they have given themselves to God.

Sattler goes on to exhort his beloved brethren not to forget to assemble themselves together for that is where they would uncover the hearts of the false brethren. It is evident that he was referring to the use or misuse and abuse of the gifts of the Holy Spirit. His reference to speaking in tongues, and an unwillingness to reject the grace and revelation of God, referring to the gift of prophecy in all probability, as well as his insistence that the believers at Horb continue to assemble themselves together in order to continue to edify and correct each other in love (Sitzerrecht), all confirm the manifestation of the pneumatic gifts of the Holy Spirit in Anabaptist meetings.

A most invaluable insight into how these meetings were conducted and what was expected of the participants for the purpose of this study was provided by Henry Bullinger. He was a prominent Swiss reformer, successor to Zwingli and church historian who published the text of a previously unpublished, anonymous, and unreserved Swiss Brethren tract in his work written against the Anabaptists in 1560. The themes, language and date appear to place the document’s origination between the disputation between Zwinglian theologians and the Anabaptists at Zofingen in July 1532 and the disputation that occurred at Bern in 1538. The tract was probably written at least five years after Sattler attempted to gain control and establish some order regarding the operation of the gifts of the Spirit as well as some consistency of belief among the Anabaptists at Schleitheim. The contents of the tract were first presented at the Zofingen disputation in 1532. The purpose of the document was to record the reasons

28 Kessler and Harder, p.382.
30 G. H. Williams, p.291.
31 G. H. Williams, p.291.
34 Peachy, p.5.
why Anabaptists did not attend the Reformed churches. The reasons set forth give us a relatively detailed idea of how Anabaptists conducted their meetings and worship services and subsequently provide us with direct evidence of the Pentecostal nature of Anabaptist worship and belief. Of the nine reasons given for nonattendance, reason number one is most pertinent to this discussion:

‘Here Follows a Résumé of the Above-Named Reasons Why We Do Not Attend Their Preaching:

The First Reason
Item: The first reason is that they do not observe the Christian order as taught in the gospel or the word of God in I Cor. 14, namely, that a listener is bound by Christian love (if something to edification is given or revealed to him) that he should and may speak of it also in the congregation, and again thereupon be silent, according to the text which reads: ‘How is it then brethren? When ye come together, every one of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation. Let all things be done unto edifying,’ etc. And again, ‘Let one or another prophet speak (that is prophesying), and the other judge. If anything be revealed to another that sitteth by, let the first hold his peace. For ye may all prophesy one by one, that all may learn, and all may be comforted. And the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets. For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints,’ etc. It thus further appears that Paul spoke to the church of God, yea to all Christians whom he in the beginning of the chapter admonished to seek after spiritual gifts, yet most of all, that they may prophesy, prophesying meaning that they receive the meaning from God to share with others (for edification, exhortation and comfort).’

Anabaptists’ understanding of Paul was that conventicle attendees were bound by love to speak out to edify the church using psalms, doctrine, tongues, interpretation, revelations, and prophesies. Paul encouraged Christians to seek after spiritual gifts and especially that all would prophesy—meaning that anyone who had received understanding from God on some matter should share it with the others including the leader (‘for edification, exhortation and comfort’) and then allow it to be judged. This was to be done in a seemly, convenient and orderly manner for when the congregation assembles it is a temple of the Holy Spirit where the gifts or the inner operation of the spirit in each one serves the common good.

So Paul in the end of the chapter commands that they shall not forbid speaking in tongues, which, according to the beginning of the chapter serves to the edification of the congregation. How much less authority has one to forbid prophesying, teaching, interpreting, or admonition to the edification of the congregation?

The Anabaptist specifically objected to the Reformed practice of only allowing one person to speak in worship services. If only one speaks and no one else is speaking or prophesying how could anyone confess that the congregation was spiritual according to I Corinthians 14 and that God was dwelling and operating through his Holy Spirit with his gifts? Forbidding others to exercise the gifts was tantamount to frustrating and impeding the work of the Holy Spirit whose role it was to edify the church and the salvation of souls ‘…so that men might recognize the congregation as spiritual.’

It is interesting to note that notwithstanding the name Anabaptist which refers to the rejection of infant baptism and the rebaptism of consenting adults upon confession, the first reason for not attending the Reformed churches was their lack of spirituality based on Paul’s instructions in I Corinthians 14. It would appear that to the Anabaptists the presence of the Holy Spirit, as evidenced initially through the working of His gifts within the congregation, was the mark of any true Christian church not just an Anabaptist church.

The next eight reasons for avoiding Reformed churches were based on the first reason, the absence of the presence of the Holy Spirit. The second reason accused the Reformers of falling away from their former position of resisting the rulers and constrainers of the evangelical faith, such as authorities, popes, emperors and princes in matters of faith but now using those same authorities to compel men to faith against their former teaching and the word of God. The third reason indicts the Reformers for using the magisterial system of justice to defend themselves and their faith with the use of violence as opposed to the sword of the Spirit and other weapons described in Ephesians 6. The fourth reason points out that by using the magisterial system of justice in matters of faith, the Reformers provide evidence that they do not have sword of the Spirit, ‘…and because they do not have it, it is manifest that they also lack the Holy Spirit as he who

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35 Peachy, p.10.
36 Peachy, p.10.
37 Peachy, p.11.
38 Peachy, p.11.
39 Peachy, p.12.
41 Peachy, p.15.
should wield that sword in and through them." The fifth reason was they did not use the Christian spiritual ban to maintain spiritual order within the church. 'Why? Because, as indicated, they lack the Holy Spirit, while such [discipline] is commended and possible only to those who have the Holy Spirit, according to John 20. They argued that if the Reformers had the Holy Spirit they would not be reliant upon magisterial justice. The sixth reason was,

... because they... are no established, separate church of God, nor body of Christ (through the Holy Spirit, as Spirit is love, yes Spirit and love of God, both of which they lack) baptized of Christ, I Cor. 12; Matt.3. [And] also as indicated [they] transgress the gospel, and also live in sin against divine love, so we cannot regard their supper as the Lord’s supper.'

Here is the first mention of baptism of any kind, however, it is a reference to the qualifications for those participating in the communion. I Corinthians 12 and Matthew 3 both refer to Christians being baptized in the Holy Spirit not water. Therefore if partakers are not baptized, i.e., newborn spiritual persons who live in faith and the Holy Spirit before taking the Lord’s supper, they eat and drink judgment to themselves.

It is only in the seventh reason that water baptism is mentioned. They accuse the Reformed preachers of not maintaining the evangelical order as written in Matthew 28 and Acts 2. In those scriptures they believed that Christians were instructed to teach the unbeliever first and then baptize them after a confession of faith. ‘And they have inverted the order and practice, that they baptize first, and namely the young...something that is a perversion of said evangelical order.’ The eighth reason refers to early Reformed teachings which instructed Christians to forsake all for the sake of Christ. But now they were teaching the opposite in that they were trying to compel Anabaptists to abandon their beliefs for the sake of family, farm and home. The Anabaptists claimed that they were holding to the original practice, that they baptize first, and namely the young...something that is a perversion of said evangelical order.

The ninth and final reason consists of an explanation of why Anabaptists could buy and sell from Reformed Christians but not be involved in spiritual matters with them. They stated that Christians can have fellowship with the world, apart from sin, for the sake of bodily nourishment but to use the world in such a manner was not forbidden. 'This, however, does not mean that we have fellowship in their matters of faith.'

42 Peachy, p.16.
43 Peachy, p.18.
44 Peachy, p.20.
45 Peachy, p.23.
46 Peachy, p.24.
47 Peachy, p.25.

Conclusion

Anabaptist spirituality as outlined above is very similar to and thus reflects the Pentecostalism of the early twentieth century. The manifestations of the gifts of the Holy Spirit began to appear in both instances within the context of private prayer meetings in homes, small Bible studies and schools or in the case of the Anabaptists conventicles. The primary gifts manifested in both movements were speaking in tongues and prophecy and in the absence of such there was no evidence of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. They both believed that a Christian was bound by love to share their spiritual gift for the edification of the whole body notwithstanding who might be the designated leader. The idea of a separate people and church is another shared principle. They both conceived the church as being separate from any political institution, state government or the unsaved world in general. The manifestation of the gifts of the Spirit was seen by both as confirmation that they were indeed reinstituting the Apostolic church of the New Testament. It is beyond the scope of this paper to expound on the theological origins of the Pentecostalism of the Anabaptists. There is, however, much in the way of contemporary literature that gives us a picture as to where and how these beliefs were derived, not the least of which are the early works of Luther and Zwingli. Many radical Reformation leaders were former priests, monks, and theologians in their own right. They had studied the Church Fathers, particularly Tertullian who Stanley Burgess has called ‘the first Pentecostal theologian’. The influence of Müntzer, Karlstadt, Schwenkfeld and others in regard to their insights into the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in an individual Christian and the difference between being baptized in the Holy Spirit and being baptized in water cannot be overestimated. Why Anabaptism did not succeed as the modern Pentecostal movement has is another area of inquiry that is not within our scope. The impact of aberrant behaviour, misuse, and abuse of the gifts took its toll as the reactions of the mainline reformers and Anabaptists themselves at Schleitheim attest. However, five years later the Anabaptists still insisted that the manifestation of the gifts of the Holy Spirit defined a true Christian church. There is much more research to be done on the spiritual nature, character, and form of this great Reformation movement that so highly prized the efficacy and work of the Holy Spirit in order to establish their proper historical place and significance in the history of Pentecostalism.

Pentecostalism: global trends and local adjustments

Hugh Osgood

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 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 gives rise to social concern. 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. 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. 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. 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. 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.

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. 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.

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. 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. His case study was the 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. His thesis was not so much that Pentecostalism in general, or charismatic Protestantism in particular, had been globalised as that it could be globalised of Pentecostalism under four headings: commodification, extraversion, importation and exoticism.

Dimensions. He defined these as media, organisation and orientation, subdividing the last of these into awareness and attitude. He explored Word of Life’s relationship with all three dimensions to illustrate how Word of Life, in essence, had globalised itself. 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. 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 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. 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.

Organisationally, many of the African churches established in Britain structured for growth from the outset by developing comprehensive staffing

8 And probably have always been so. Though in the past to be ‘globally committed’ was more about conforming to missionary expectations.
10 Coleman, 49-71.
11 Coleman, 72-86.
12 Coleman, 55, 58.
13 Coleman, 49-71.
15 Analysing such adjustments formed a major part of my PhD thesis 136-236.
16 Osgood, 76.
and thinking beyond the local.\textsuperscript{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’.\textsuperscript{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 ‘trans-national contacts encourage ‘relativisation’ whereby members of any given culture are prompted to consider their own identity in relation to alternatives’.\textsuperscript{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, ‘perceptions of self and local context are negotiated under globalising conditions’.\textsuperscript{20} Residence in two continents is bound to increase global orientation.


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:

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

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:

\[ \text{For all the talk within African church circles of localisation, inculturation, Africanisation or indigenisation, external links have become more} \]

\[ \text{and links to Africa; the third group tend more towards north-American new-charismatic practice and teaching.} \]

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 ‘tending 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’.\textsuperscript{22} It is for reasons such as these that I believe ‘locally committed’ and ‘globally committed’ offer a better classification.


\[ \text{22 Jehu-Appiah} \]

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 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 local 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 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-

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24 Gifford, 308.
Hugh Osgood

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Pentecostalism: global trends and local adjustments

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. Both of these churches 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. 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. 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

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

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

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.

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

30 Osgood, 118,119.
31 Osgood, 112,113.
32 Colin Dye, Building a City Church, (Eastbourne: Kingsway, 1993) 71,72.
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 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 allure 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. Similarly, Messianic Judaism did not expect non-Jews to adopt Jewish cultural practices. 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. 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 have widespread effect. 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.

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. 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

37 Conversation with Richard Harvey of All Nations Christian College, Ware, who is currently writing a PhD on Messianic Judaism.
neo-Pentecostals were left wondering why British evangelicals did not pray as intensely as they did in their all night prayer gatherings.\textsuperscript{41}

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 as 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.

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\textsuperscript{41} Osgood, ‘African neo-Pentecostalism’, 143,144.
Osijek, Croatia
Evangelical Theological Seminary
The launch of a new Ph.D. program
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Review Article on Amos Yong’s,
The Spirit Poured Out on All Flesh:
Pentecostalism and the Possibility of
Global Theology

Frederick L. Ware

Abstract

Amos Yong’s book is not only a valuable contribution to but also represents an important development in Pentecostal theology. His work brings Pentecostalism into conversation with concerned individuals throughout the world who are dealing with various large scale cultural and social crises. Yong constructs an interpretation of Pentecostalism in response to the predicament of late modernity, which he sees as marked by questions concerning the existence and possibility of experiencing the supernatural, the implied relativism of religious and cultural pluralism, and the autonomy of science and its claims about truth and reality. In this space allotted to me, I do two things: (1) give a brief overview, interspersed with commentary, on the salient features of Yong’s book and (2) suggest that the agenda of Pentecostal theology be broadened to include treatment of other global issues such as the globalization of capitalism, mass migration, and war and violence.

Introduction

Pentecostalism is global – spread out, in nearly every part of the earth. Would it not be desirable for Pentecostals to speak on matters of importance for human civilization throughout the world? Yong’s answer is ‘Yes’. His

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aim is not to create a homogeneous language or common denominator of Pentecostalism but to portray diverse traditions of Pentecostalism as sources for the enrichment of Christian theology and engagement of Christians in and with the world. Yong’s thesis is: ‘Pentecostalism as a worldwide movement provides an emerging theological tradition through which to explore the possibilities and challenges of confronting the development of Christian theology for our late modern world’ (p. 18). This global theology (or as Yong sometimes calls ‘world theology’) is characterized by a Luke-Acts interpretive framework, pneumatology as the controlling category of Christian theology, and emphasis on experience of the Spirit of God (pp. 27-29).

**Defining Pentecostalism and the Style of Pentecostal Theology**

In chapter one, emphasizing the unique experience of various Pentecostal groups, Yong suggests how each group contributes insights into the meanings of Pentecostalism. He celebrates Latin American and Caribbean Pentecostalism’s providing persons in this region with an alternative to Catholicism, syncretism with various religious and cultural traditions, and engagement in social and political activities. He describes the grassroots movements of Pentecostalism in Asia and the syncretism of Pentecostalism in this part of the world with indigenous traditions and longstanding cultural practices. He makes a sketch of the independent movements of Pentecostalism in Africa and African Diaspora, emphasizing the priority and insights of these movements on the issue of social justice. The chapter lacks any discussion of Pentecostalism among whites in Europe and North America. However, the theological texts of white Pentecostals and Charismatics are cited frequently throughout Yong’s book. The apparent privileging of these sources may be attributable to the few academic texts produced by racial and ethnic minorities (pp. 78-79).

Chapter one raises, for me, questions about the style of Pentecostal theology and the audiences of the Pentecostal theologian. Throughout the book, there is emphasis on experience. However, there is very little use of primary sources, such as, first-person reports on life in the Spirit. Instead, there is extensive use of secondary sources and academic texts in theology and other disciplines. How might a shift to or greater integration of primary sources alter the construction of Pentecostal global theology? How would use of primary sources influence the Pentecostal theologian’s relationship to his or her audiences?

It seems to me that the use of primary sources serves as a corrective and establishment of boundaries for Pentecostal theology, not to mention designation of a ‘home’ for Pentecostal theology in the communities whose faith it seeks to interpret. At issue is the conception of Pentecostal theology as either ‘church theology’ or ‘academic theology’. In both cases, Pentecostal theology can be ‘scholarly’. As church theology, Pentecostal theology aspires to a greater mission and larger audience. Church theology may be formulated in rational language that bridges church and academy. One shortcoming of academic theology is that it may not contribute to the church’s mission. As church theology, Pentecostalism supports the mission of the church while at the same time dialoguing with the academic community.

**Pneumatological Soteriology**

In chapter two, Yong argues that ‘Christian salvation includes both the transformation of human beings into the image of Jesus by the power of the Holy Spirit and the transformation of all creation into the new heaven and new earth by the triune God’ (p. 91). Salvation is the work of both Christ and the Spirit (p. 82). This pneumatological soteriology (or Spirit Christology) is biblical, holistic, and dynamic, according to Yong. He contends that an interpretation of Luke-Acts supports this conception of salvation as the work of both Christ and the Spirit (p. 86). Salvation, seen through the lens of pneumatology, has multiple dimensions – personal, familial, ecclesial, physical, social, cosmic, and eschatological (pp. 91-96). Salvation is marked not only by experiences of crisis (e.g., conversion, sanctification, and baptism in the Spirit) but also other forms of experiences more or less dramatic that bring persons into better relationship to God (pp. 118-119). God’s salvation occurs in time (at specific moments in the present) as well as over time (from past to present) and ultimately in the future (pp. 105-106). In chapter 2, Yong succeeds in providing a theological interpretation of Christian religious experience that not only coheres with Pentecostalism but also provides the dynamic quality of experience and depth of relationship with the supernatural that is doubted and frustrated by late modernity.

**Pentecostal Ecclesiology**

In chapter three, Yong claims that ‘the church is an organic, dynamic, and eschatological people of God called after the name of Jesus and constituted in the fellowship of the Holy Spirit’ (p. 122). He says that, and I agree with him, the Holy Spirit breathes life and grace (‘resurrection power’) into the church (p. 161). In seeking to develop a Pentecostal ecclesiology, Yong draws mostly upon various biblical texts interpreted through the Luke-Acts framework in order to demonstrate Pentecostal reflection on the traditional marks of the church, that is, the idea of the church as one, holy, catholic, and...
Yong says that Pentecostals have not given sustained thought to ecclesiology and when they have reflected on ecclesiology, it has been with reliance upon free-church tradition and evangelical theology (p. 123). These are not the only resources available to Pentecostals. For example, in William Turner’s *The United Holy Church of America*, he describes how the concept and practice of ‘holy convocation’ (i.e., the annual ‘gathering’ or ‘assembly’ of the people of God) influences Pentecostal ecclesiology. I suspect that Yong’s chapter on ecclesiology may be enriched by consideration of the praxis of convocation expressed by various Pentecostal groups.

**Pentecostalism and Ecumenism**

In chapters four and five, Yong turns to the topic of ecumenism. For Yong, the church catholic is characterized by diversity, pluralism, and justice (pp. 200-202). In chapter four, he claims that ‘Pentecostalism participates in the catholicity of the church’ (p. 167). Yong says: ‘the Pentecostal experience of the Spirit provides a reconciling dynamic able to heal the fragmentation of the church’ (p. 168). The actual history of Pentecostals has been a display of conflicting tendencies. On the one hand, Pentecostals have been inclusive, egalitarian, and ecumenical. One the other hand, Pentecostals have been exclusive, stratified, and withdrawn. Yong’s attempt to overcome the divide between Trinitarianism and Oneness is crucial for validating his claim that Pentecostals has this potential to unite. So, in chapter five, he shows that Trinitarianism and Oneness are complimentary and mutually corrective emphases in Pentecostalism (pp. 227, 232-243). Clearly, Yong makes a lot of head way in bridging the ideological gap between Trinitarian and Oneness Pentecostals. While Yong withdraws the terminology of orthodoxy and heresy from the debate between Trinitarian and Oneness Pentecostals, other Christians will continue to employ these concepts. The result of this language, though it would be external to Pentecostalism, will be to associate Trinitarian Pentecostals with mainstream Christian teachings about God and metaphysics and Oneness Pentecostals with doctrines long regarded as heretical.

Yong’s claim that Pentecostals ‘participate’ in the catholicity of the church is more hopeful than empirical. A stronger argument for ecumenism could be constructed in terms of values. I would recommend that future theological reflection for Pentecostals would be in exploring the idea and formation of values and methods for adjudicating conflicts between values and organizational practices. The tendency of Pentecostalism toward ecumenism conflicts, though not always, with the tendency of ecclesial pragmatism. Ecclesial pragmatism is a covering term for the ways that Pentecostals have organized socially, built institutions, and articulated values and underlying rationales for these social structures. At its best, ecclesial pragmatism seeks to implement the faith commitments of Pentecostalism, one of which happens to be ecumenism. It is imperative for not only the issue of ecumenism but also for other matters of concern facing Pentecostal churches that ecclesial pragmatism be informed, challenged, and accountable to the values of Pentecostalism. Moreover, there is a need for honest, open dialogue on the façade of doctrine and Bible that often veils the motivations, commitments, and interests that influence the priority that Pentecostals have given to certain values over others.

**Spirit-Centered Theology of Religions**

In chapter six, Yong claims that ‘the religions are instruments of the Holy Spirit working out the divine purposes in the world and the unevangelized, if saved at all, are saved through the work of Christ by the Spirit, even if mediated through the religious beliefs and practices available to them’ (p. 236). According to Yong, we are justified in believing that the Spirit is present in other religions if we discern phenomena in these religions that correspond, in Christianity, to the fruits of the Spirit, works of the kingdom of God manifest in the life and ministry of Jesus, salvation, conversion, and holiness (p. 256).

In chapter six, Yong is developing a Spirit-centered model of religions. This Spirit-centered model may be contrasted with Christocentric and Theocentric models of religions. These models are described in Paul Knitter’s *No Other Name?: A Critical Survey of Christian Attitudes Toward the World Religions*. Christocentric models usually exclude or severely limit interreligious dialogue. Theocentric models celebrate pluralism, encourage interreligious dialogue but usually postulate the existence of an Ultimate Reality, which is not something that is affirmed or implied in all religions. Yong’s Spirit-centered model may be a mediating position between the Christocentric and Theocentric models. Yong’s pneumatological soteriology leaves open the possibility of general revelation and salvation genuinely occurring outside of Christianity.

Yong’s Spirit-centered model raises questions and concerns about Christian identity and religious epistemology. In Yong’s pneumatological soteriology, Christian identity is evolving. Christians are in the process of becoming (pp. 240, 256, 272). This idea may be a bit disconcerting for persons desirous of something fixed or enduring. If Christian identity is fluid, then what is the constant in this situation of change? Is it the process of becoming itself that is the constant? Are there criteria other than Christian categories for discerning the presence of God in religions? A bit more needs to be said
about how we are to or should adjudicate conflicting truth claims of various religions.

**Spirit, Science, Truth and Reality**

In chapter seven, dealing with the challenges posed by modern science, Yong argues that ‘pneumatological imagination… illuminates not only the scientific enterprise but also the human engagement with the natural world in all its complexity’ (p. 267). The Spirit shapes the orders of creation and enables human participation in the world and in the process of God’s transformation of the world (p. 301). Life in the Spirit is an engagement with reality and conveys revelation of truth (pp. 254, 299). Truth is transcendent, revealed by the Spirit of Jesus (pp. 257, 298). In the contest between interpretations, some rise to a level of supremacy and better represent the truth (pp. 272, 289). According to Yong, ‘all truth is God’s truth and therefore communicable universally and verifiable in other [domains of discourse]’ (p. 283).

The epistemology and metaphysics implied in chapter seven may presuppose or lean in the direction of ‘perspective realism’. Perspective realism, a term coined by Evander McGilvary, is the belief that truth is seen from particular points of view and speculation does not contribute to an accurate perception of the truth. In other words, truth is not a product of the human mind. Truth is something external to humans but from the proper perspective we may apprehend it. But the individual, as well as any group to which he or she belongs, apprehends truth only partially.

Chapter seven is reliant upon Charles S. Pierce’s theory of signs (or semiotic). The content and argument of this chapter may be enriched or changed significantly by consideration of the theories of other philosophers, such as, Willard V. Quine’s naturalized epistemology, Donald Davidson’s philosophy of language, Hilary Putnam’s internal realism, and John Post’s and Nancey Murphy’s non-reductive physicalism, Richard Rorty’s neo-Pragmatism. Richard Rorty’s book *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature* puts Pierce’s work in context and dialogue with other philosophers and also exposes the limitations of epistemology- and metaphysics-centered philosophy.

**Broadening the Agenda of Global Theology**

The global issues, mainly epistemological and metaphysical challenges posed by late modernity, addressed in Yong’s book are: (1) questions concerning the existence and possibility of experiencing the supernatural, (2) the implied relativism of religious and cultural pluralism, and (3) the autonomy of science and its claims about truth and reality. In chapters one through five, Yong attempts to show that genuine experience (meaningful encounter) with God is possible. His Spirit-centered theology of religions, in chapter six, is a position taken in response to the problem of religious and cultural pluralism. In chapter seven, using Pierce’s theory of signs, Yong proposes that from various domains we may speak meaningfully and truthfully about reality.

The agenda of Pentecostal global theology can and should be broadened to include other issues, such as, the globalization of capitalism, mass migration (voluntary and forced), and war and violence. Capitalism is the dominant ideology of political economy and has a somewhat quasi-religious status with respect to the value it places on as well as treatment it accords to persons, things, and the environment. The rules and processes of the market are thought to result in the best quality of human life. Is this truly so? What does Pentecostalism have to say about this dominance of capitalism and the structuring it gives to social life? How does capitalism rival and, in some cases, distort religion? The mass movements of peoples throughout the world are having profound and far-reaching consequences. Migration places strains and stresses on societies often unprepared or unwilling to deal with shifts in demography, religion, and culture. What does Pentecostalism have to say about the crises and ideological positions taken on human movements in the world? At any time, all around the world, human beings are engaged in violent conflict- war, terrorism, genocide, sectarian violence. What does Pentecostalism have to say that leads humanity into peaceful resolution of differences?

These global issues are symptomatic of a deeper problem of individual and collective identity. Even the epistemological and metaphysical problems have their rooting in anthropology. The migration of peoples from Europe, starting in the late 15th century, resulted in their establishment and transplanting of institutions, that is, the development of a culture, which has not been life-affirming for all persons throughout the world. Resolution of various epistemological and metaphysical questions is vital for maintaining the intellectual foundation of this culture. However, an increasing number of thinkers argue that modern culture has exhausted itself. The current crises are, in effect, laying a foundation for a new culture. The fundamental question of anthropology is: Who are we? What is meaningful existence and by which means culturally, religious, or socially is its achievement possible? Broadening the agenda of Pentecostal global theology will result in expanding pneumatological soteriology to an investigation of theological anthropology, articulating what is means to be human, naming the evils to be exorcised from human civilization, and being more explicit about how God transforms human life.
Extending the Conversation: A Response to Frederick L. Ware

Amos Yong

Professor Frederick Ware raises a number of important questions in his review of my book. In the spirit of dialogue with which I have written and concluded my book, I will take up his questions in the order that they appear in his essay.

1. Ware asks about the style, audience, and approach of pentecostal theology in reflecting on my methodology and the phenomenological survey I provide on world pentecostalism in chapter one of my book. Specifically, he wonders about the role of primary sources – ‘first person reports on life in the Spirit’ – for pentecostal theology. He seems to be motivated not only by the prospects of how such autobiographical sources will shape pentecostal theological reflection but also by how the resulting pentecostal theology might be read and received by the wider pentecostal public. The inclusion of such perspectives will render pentecostal theology more accessible to the church and the layperson in the pew. Otherwise, pentecostal theology runs the risk of speaking only to the academy and, hence, failing to bridge church and academy.

A response to this issue needs to proceed at two levels. First, I want to affirm Ware’s note about the importance of pentecostal voices and narratives for pentecostal theology. In my first book, each chapter began with that autobiographical voice in order to locate the theological reflections that followed, and in my newest book on theology and disability, I also begin each chapter with autobiographical ‘testimonies’ with which I then interact in the text. The premise of the book under discussion – i.e., that the Holy Spirit has been poured out on all flesh in some way – further highlights the importance of listening to and registering the concerns of every voice. In hindsight, perhaps the argument would have been more engaging and palpable if I had included such primary source accounts and woven these voices into my argument. In a sense, that is what I attempted to do in my phenomenology of world pentecostalism in the first chapter: there I was interested in documenting pentecostal beliefs and practices ‘on the ground’ around the world in order to situate my own theological analyses amidst the concrete realities of pentecostal life. Part of my goal in SPF was to reflect on pentecostal practices especially as these have been instantiated in the global pentecostal context, and to draw out the logical and theological conclusions implicit in pentecostal practice. For this process, Ware suggests the addition of pentecostal testimonies and narratives would have enhanced the book’s appeal to the pentecostal audience. I suspect he is correct on this point.

At a second level, however, I want to interrogate the assumptions beneath Ware’s suggestion that a pentecostal theology that does not engage the church will be an academic theology that perpetuates the distance between rather than links church and academy. At one level, Ware is right: there is always a danger of exacerbating the distinction between church and academy. But at other levels, a number of questions arise. i) How exactly does Ware understand the relationship between the church and the academy? Is theological writing forced into an either-or in this case? Is it not possible to write toward the academy but yet impact the church inasmuch as one’s audience includes members of the body of Christ who are also members of the theological academy? ii) Is there a role for academic theology, and if so, how might its genre differ from that of theology written for the laity of the church in particular? iii) Does Ware privilege ‘church theology’ in general, and should such privileging be normative for the theological task? As understood within a Barthian framework, I do not reject the claim that in one sense, Christian theology is written by the church (i.e., even by individuals who are part of the ecclesia) and for the church. Of course, there are also viable senses of apologetic, missionary, or cultural theology which is directed not toward the church but to the ‘world’. But I see further a domain of academic theology directed toward one’s colleagues in the guild who are also believers, and believe this is a valid realm of inquiry that is for the church, but not necessarily for the laity. Would Ware grant the legitimacy of such an undertaking for theological work?

It should be clear by now that I would see SPF and other works in this genre as academic theology which is in a real sense for the church even if it...

1 Professor of Theology, Regent University School of Divinity, ayong@regent.edu
2 Amos Yong, The Spirit Poured Out on All Flesh: Pentecostalism and the Possibility of Global Theology (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005) – hereafter cited in the text as SPF and, where appropriate, followed by page number(s).
3 As in SPF (esp. 18-22), in this essay I use ‘pentecostal’ (uncapitalized) and its cognates to include classical Pentecostalism (capitalized), charismatic traditions, and related renewal movements.
may not be first and foremost for the laity.5 Yes, I grant that SPF might have been enriched by narrative pentecostal voices, but that is only one way to approach the articulation of a distinctively pentecostal theology. My own goal as a systematician was a programmatic outlining of a world pentecostal theology considered within the genre of systematic and dogmatic theology as handed down by the theological tradition. At that level, then, I placed my methodological bets on a three-fold (not three-tiered! There is no hierarchy in my theological method) approach: a phenomenological description; a biblical (Lukan) vision; and a theological (pneumatological) focus. Within this framework, testimonies and narrative certainly have a place at various junctures in the theological enterprise,7 but for the kind of work I was envisioning in terms of engaging the wider theological academy, I do not think there is only one approach that is paramount. Pentecostals have produced a great deal of narrative based church and apologetic literature already; what is lacking are systematic theological constructions that are at the same time authentically pentecostal, and this was in part the genre I intended SPF to fill. In all of this, I really don’t think Ware disagrees substantively with me as he himself recognizes the value of a plurality of methodological approaches to any academic project.8 I hope that someday soon, Ware will himself write a systematic theology that privileges especially the Afropentecostal tradition, and at that point, we will see how he includes testimonial narratives and what kind of role they will play in his own

5 Other recent books would be those by Frank D. Macchia, Baptized in the Spirit: A Global Pentecostal Theology (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2006), Veli-Matti Karkkainen – about whose work, see my essay ‘Whiter Evangelical Theology? The Work of Veli-Matti Karkkainen as a Case Study of Contemporary Trajectories,’ Evangelical Review of Theology 30:1 (2006): 60–85 – and even Ware himself, Methodologies of Black Theology (Cleveland, Oh.: Pilgrim Press, 2002). Ware’s response in this last case might be that his book is not about pentecostal theology in particular, and hence does not demand as mine does to be engaged with pentecostal testimonies and narratives. Yet as a methodological argument, it could be counter-suggested that his book could have gained from hearing autobiographical voices. Of course, but not necessarily – and this is in essence the gist of my own response.


7 On this point, I remain convinced James William McClendon, Biography as Theology: How Life Stories Can Remake Today’s Theology (Nashville: Abingdon, 1974), is right.


constructive reflections.9

2. In his reflections on my discussion of pentecostal participation in the catholicity of the church, Ware says that such is ‘more hopeful and empirical’, and suggests instead an argument for pentecostal ecumenism based on values and ecclesial pragmatism. This is a rather obscure paragraph in Ware’s paper, but the gist of his proposal, I suggest, is as follows.10 Pentecostals, as Grant Wacker has shown, are pragmatists.11 Ware suggests that pentecostal ecumenism can be furthered if a) ecumenism can be shown to be a value or faith commitment that is embedded in pentecostal spirituality, and b) if pentecostals can be convinced that it is their best interests to be ecumenical. As an example, I think Ware would say that when pentecostals have seen the pragmatic value of supporting Billy Graham or Promise Keeper meetings, and that these are not counter to but extensions of pentecostal values, they have usually been ecumenically cooperative.

I hope Ware agrees that SPF is itself an effort to make an argument for (a). Of course, on this point, I am not a lone voice sounding in the wilderness, but am simply pulling together the biblical and theological rationales for a claim that has long been championed by pentecostal scholars like David Duplessis, Cecil M. Robeck Jr., Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, and, more recently, Wolfgang Vondey, among many, many others. With regard to (b), however, I am a bit conflicted. Perhaps I am misunderstanding Ware on this point, but I don’t think that our theological assertions can be sustained only at the pragmatic level. But there are at least two issues here. One concerns the criteria for discerning theological truth claims. I have gone on record to insist that the pragmatic criterion is indispensable to adjudicating truth claims, so long as other criteria – e.g., truth as coherence with other realms of knowledge and truth as correspondence to the way things actually are or should be – are not subordinated.12 I don’t think that Ware would disagree with me on this matter, but perhaps further discussion can clarify this.

9 The strength of Ware’s systematic account will also undoubtedly draw from resources in the black pentecostal tradition of ‘holy convocation’ to which he refers; I had access only to William Clair Turner’s dissertation, and not to his revised The United Holy Church of America: A Study in Black Holiness-Pentecostalism (Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press, 2006), which appeared after SPF.

10 Here, I extrapolate also from an essay Ware has written for a book I’m co-editing: Frederick L. Ware, ‘Spiritual Egalitarianism, Ecclesial Pragmatism, and the Status of Women in Ordained Ministry,’ in Amos Yong and Estrelda Alexander, eds., Philip’s Daughters: Women in Pentecostal-Charismatic Leadership, Princeton Theological Monographs series (Eugene, Ore.: Pickwick Press, 2008), forthcoming.


12 I argue this in Spirit-Word-Community, ch. 5.
The second issue has to do with the best approach to developing, nurturing, and fostering ecumenism in pentecostal circles. Ware seems convinced that the ecclesial pragmatism of pentecostalism invites approaches at the organizational, social, and institutional levels of pentecostal life and practice. Making theological arguments may be only half of what needs to be done, at best; the other half is to translate such values into pragmatic applications. As a Peircean with regard to the inextricable relationship between beliefs and practices, I would wholeheartedly support this argument. Yet the writing of books is the performance only of making an argument, not of putting that argument into practice. For Ware to develop the conjoined proposal of values and ecclesial pragmatism is also only the performance of such an argument, not its application. So in the end, I’m unsure what Ware means by saying that such an argument is a better one than what I provide in SPF.

Yet this is not an unimportant issue. Pentecostals have, after all, a long history of sectarianism and anti-ecumenism in their background. There are still tensions within classical pentecostal groups and denominations that are wrestling with the holiness standards of their past and the upward social mobility of more recent generations. There are also ecumenical tensions within and between Oneness and trinitarian pentecostal movements: within in terms of the challenges confronting apostolic churches as they confront developments in the twenty-first century, and between in terms of the differences that separate Oneness pentecostals from their trinitarian pentecostal ‘brothers and sisters’ (if such terms could be used), and vice-versa. Last but not least, there remains a chasm between pentecostal churches and other evangelical, mainline Protestant, Roman Catholic, and Orthodox communions on a host of ecumenical issues. Part of the problem, I think, is that pentecostals have not yet sorted out the distinction between a sectarian posture against the world (which value, I suggest, is one that needs to be nuanced but also cultivated) and an anti-establishment or anti-Constantinian one with regard to other churches (which need to be nuanced but also cultivated) and an anti-establishment or anti-Constantinian one with regard to other churches (which need to be transformed into a critical ecumenism). To engage matters on all of these fronts, all of the resources that Ware can marshal regarding pentecostal values and pragmatism need to be brought to bear so that the issues can at least be discussed and ecumenical practices consistent with pentecostal values can be allowed to emerge.

3. Ware’s third set of questions concern the relationship between Christianity and other religious traditions. On the one hand, he seems to be concerned that my dynamic and pneumatological view of Christian identity is insufficient to account for what endures amidst the historical flux. On the other hand, would such a fluid Christianity provide criteria to distinguish faith from other religions, enable the discernment of the presence or absence of God in other traditions, or capable of adjudicating conflicting truth claims? Ware has put his finger of most of the questions that pentecostals are anxious about in my attempts to develop a pneumatological theology of religions. These are not unimportant matters, and I have attempted to respond to these and other similar queries elsewhere. Hence let me make only two summary points here while at the same time putting the proverbial ball back in Ware’s court.

First, in a postfoundationalist and historically-aware milieu, I do not think it possible to establish Christian identity in any uncontested way. Any appeal to the Bible will immediately raise counter-questions in the wider Christian world by Catholic and Orthodox traditions, even as any definition centered on Christ will, in the pentecostal context, engender disagreements depending on whether one stands on the Oneness or the trinitarian side of the fence. In any case, at a theological level, I have long argued that what defines pentecostalism is neither tongues nor initial evidence but the centrality of the Holy Spirit in pentecostal spirituality, piety, and practice. Hence I insisted in SPF on pressuring to think through what I have called this pneumatological imagination, not necessarily to demarcate pentecostalism from other Christian traditions, but to explicate an integral pentecostal self-understanding and to present an authentic pentecostal witness. Yes, such a dynamic and pneumatological self-definition will be disconcerting to those who have settled on past definitions and traditions; my only response is that it is precisely such a self-critical approach that is able to at least attempt to keep up with the new things that the Spirit says and does in every age.

I think that if Ware were to look honestly at developments in his own

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15 Elsewhere in his response, Ware cites Bill Turner’s work, and I am pleased to report that in recent conversation, Turner is in agreement with me on this point; see also William C. Turner, Jr., ‘Pneumatology and Liberation Theology,’ paper presented to the African American Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity colloquium, Regent University School of Divinity, 13 October 2007, a revised version of which will be forthcoming in a book edited by myself and Estrela Alexander.

black Pentecostal tradition, the discontinuities between past and present would be inexplicable outside of a pneumatological orientation. I eagerly anticipate Ware’s own theological interpretation of Black Pentecostalism, a task for which he is one of the very few scholars and theologians capable of undertaking.

But, second, how then can we discern the Spirit in other religions? More specifically, Ware asks, ‘Are there criteria other than Christian categories for discerning the presence of God in religions?’ I admit this question was much more pronounced in earlier books, and I sense its lingering effects in SPF have motivated Ware’s inquiry. I think I am less worried now about looking for ‘neutral’ criteria for discerning the Spirit since the discernment of the Holy Spirit will always be a Christian undertaking. I am still very concerned, however, that Christian judgment about other faiths take into consideration the self-understanding of people in other religious traditions. Pentecostals should be especially cautious in this regard since they have long been stereotyped, misjudged, and misunderstood from outsider perspectives that have neglected our own accounts. I think Ware is sensitive to the thickness of this issue as he has wrestled with difficult epistemological questions along these lines in his work on theological method in black theologies. I suspect that his ongoing work in black theology in general and black Pentecostalism in particular will allow him to continue to explore this insider-outsider tension further. I am especially interested in how Ware privileges (or not) the particularity of the black experience in this task. Do black testimonies trump non-black narratives or not? Is it just a matter of establishing the categories of black theological discourse as normative for engaging other theologies? Do we discern the truth or falsity of all theological and religious claims according to criteria established by black theology? It seems clear to me that there can be no black and white (pun intended!) response to any of these questions, and it is precisely such complexity that drove the argument in SPF. At the same time, this does not develop into a bland relativism. SPF represents my own attempt to provide a Pentecostal account—a kind of Pentecostal testimony, if you will—that does not at the same time foreclose the conversation or disallow religious others from presenting their own views. Along the way, I welcome and invite others, especially theologians the caliber of Ware, to join in the task of discerning the way forward in a world of many faiths.

In response to the final chapter in SPF on theology and science, Ware’s suggests a range of dialogue partners for my work. Here, I really wish Ware would have said more about how the work of Quine, Davidson, Putnam, Post, Murphy, and Rorty might add to the discussion. His main concern, it seems, is that my Peircean inspired account is too metaphysical and perhaps even too epistemological. Let me respond first to this point in general before returning to a brief interaction with the interlocutors mentioned by Ware.

Ware is correct to be suspicious of the dense metaphysics which appears periodically throughout my work, and I myself have been worried about losing my Pentecostal colleagues in my forays into speculative metaphysics. After all, Pentecostal pragmatism will in most cases not have the kind of patience to deal with such metaphysical inquiries. I have in the past been tempted to lay the blame for my ‘love of wisdom’ on my doktorvater, a speculative metaphysician of the first rank. Yet after initially retreating with apparent embarrassment in the face of queries about how this ‘nice Pentecostal boy’ can be seduced by such metaphysical generalities and abstractions, I keep coming back to three fundamental issues that are unavoidable: i) that its not if or whether to do metaphysics, but what kind of metaphysics one does; ii) that all theological accounts assume some kind of metaphysical framework or other; and iii) that doing metaphysics allows us to clarify our presuppositions, engage in more viable modes of comparison and contrast, and conclude to more appropriate identification of similarities and differences. For my part, I have found in Peirce a helpful dialogue partner for the task of world Pentecostal theology today. This means neither that other dialogue partners are unhelpful or unnecessary nor that metaphysics has to be at the center of the Pentecostal theological quest; on this latter point, I agree with Ware that any ‘metaphysics-centered philosophy’ would be severely limited. But if Ware does not like a triadic, realistic, and social metaphysics of Peirce, I encourage him to articulate and make explicit his own metaphysical assumptions. I don’t think, however, that in the longer run an anti-metaphysical posture or a non-metaphysical theology will sustain Pentecostal theological inquiry, and hence it is not in the best interests of Pentecostal theologians to avoid metaphysics altogether.

But perhaps I’ve misunderstood Ware as rejecting the metaphysical move when he is in fact suggesting an alternative metaphysical account in dialogue with the philosophers he has named in the American philosophical tradition. I confess that I have not read Quine, Putnam, or Post, and am only minimally familiar with Davidson’s work, having focused on his reflections on meaning and truth. I am generally familiar with the analytic tradition

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17 I dedicated Spirit-Word-Community, my second book, to my advisor, Robert Cumings Neville.
which informs Quine’s and Putnam’s work, however, and am not enthused about its prospects for providing the kind of metaphysical sub-structure needed for a viable world philosophy today. For similar reasons, I think the earlier Rorty has less to contribute to pentecostal theology than Peirce, although I am willing to be corrected on this point.20 But Ware’s intuitions about the importance of Murphy’s work seem to me on the mark, especially her work in philosophy of science. Murphy’s Anabaptist background allows and even invites marginalized perspectives into the conversation, and enables the formulation of new hypotheses with the possibility of their blossoming into full fledged research programs. Further, her non-reductive physicalism, which Ware refers to, also holds some potential for pentecostal theological reflection, especially when set within the framework of the science of emergence.21 I see my own work at the intersection of pentecostal theology and science very much as at least parallel to the path charted by Murphy, and have even sought to emulate her philosophical and methodological instincts. But at the end of the day, Murphy is still predominantly a philosopher of science rather than a metaphysician, and so she does not come clean with her own metaphysical commitments. However, I do not see anything she does as being inconsistent with the fallibilistic metaphysics of the sort proposed by Peirce, and I even think that a Peircean assist would invigorate Murphy’s research project. This is especially the case since epistemology models ontology,22 and hence any work in the epistemology and philosophy of science will assume some kind of metaphysics.

5. In his last section of his response, Ware pushes me to think more about how pentecostal theology has been impacted by and should respond to such issues as globalization, capitalism, migration, economics, war, and violence. These are essential issues that readers of this journal are all too familiar with and also concerned about. There are important matters to be considered with regard to the Afropentecostal diaspora in Europe; the emergence of the prosperity gospel among pentecostal churches on the continent; if and how pentecostal churches should respond to EU and international politics; and many other related questions that have theological import. And given the expansion of our telecommunications technologies – pentecostals have always been at the forefront of appropriating advances in mass media capacities – what happens in Euro- and Anglo-American pentecostalism is intertwined with the pentecostalism of the global south, whether we like or acknowledge such or not.

I am pleased to report that I am currently preparing a set of lectures on the topic of ‘Pentecostalism and Political Theology: Problems and Possibilities’. My intention is to articulate a pentecostal political theology, a pentecostal theology of economics, and a pentecostal theology of social justice, according to the triadic method that shapes the argument in SPF. Yet because these are uncharted waters for pentecostal theology, they need to and should be addressed from across the pentecostal academy. For times and tasks such as these, I am grateful for co-laborers in pentecostal theology such as Fred Ware who raise important questions, suggest important trajectories of inquiry, and are willing to work together in such unfamiliar territory. May his tribe increase!


23 Thanks to Eric Williams and Dale Coulter of the Society for Pentecostal Studies for initially gathering a panel of respondents to my book during the 2007 annual meeting, and to Fred Ware for not only participating in the panel but also submitting a written version of his response for publication at the invitation of William Kay, the editor of JEPTA. I am also grateful to William Kay for this opportunity to respond to Ware in writing.
Book Reviews

Alexander Boddy: Pentecostal Anglican Pioneer
Gavin Wakefield, 2007

Heaven, truly, is smiling on me. At precisely the point in my doctoral thesis when I was writing a chapter on Azusa Street, Cecil Robeck’s new book appeared. Now, at precisely the moment when I am preparing to write a chapter on Sunderland, Gavin Wakefield’s biography of Alexander Boddy falls, fresh off the press, into my hands. Both books have supplied me invaluable clarification as to the exact sequence of events surrounding the birth of the movement whose cen
tenaries they celebrate. Wakefield’s book is an evenly weighted survey of all available primary data on Boddy’s life from birth to death. The chapters are long and detailed but there can be no doubt that this book is a priceless compendium of information about Boddy, a reference tool that is the only one of its kind and will doubtless be cited for some time to come.

While Wakefield spares us no detail on the life of Britain’s first Pentecostal leader, he is keen at every point to draw out the significance of a particular incident or period of his life to our understanding of Boddy’s character. In this way, a major thesis that Wakefield demonstrates is the essentially pastoral nature of Boddy’s contribu
tion to church life. Boddy’s gentle, tolerant approach was honed by his vast exposure to people of other cultures, creeds and classes. This fact is brought out in chapter 3, a chapter that surveys Boddy’s travel writings and gives de
tails of his adventures in North Africa (1883), Russia (1886) and North America (1889-91). Pentecostal readers will quite likely skim past this chapter and move on to the most exciting bit: chapter 5: “Pentecost Comes to Sunderland.” Indeed, were it not for the obligations connected with writing a review, I might well have succumbed to doing so myself. Chapter 5 itself has no surprises. After a fairly short section on the Welsh Revival (all of which seems to be based on a recent article in the Church Times) Wakefield soon progresses onto a very thorough treat
tment of the main events. All the voices of support and of opposition are given a hearing: the Christian press, the local and national newspapers, Reader Harris, Jessie Penn-Lewis and Smith Wigglesworth. The chapter finishes with a unique and helpful review of the history of revivalistic nonconform
ity in the area in an attempt to answer the question, Why Sunderland? Boddy’s pastoral strengths are brought out to the full in chapter 8, which deals with his theological leadership of the young Pentecostal movement. In particular, Boddy was eager to maintain the centrality of Christ and was keen that tongues be seen as a “confirma
tory token” of Baptism in the Holy Spirit, rather than identified as the baptism itself. According to Wakefield, he never insisted that tongues were the normative initial evidence. Other studies have claimed that Boddy’s position softened over time. For the first time, Boddy’s perspective on Christology, the spiritual gifts, heal
ing, eschatology, the Church and the sacraments, are all dealt with in detail in one place. The inclusive spirit with which Boddy strove to maintain unity through theological controversy is clearly shown in this, the most valu
able and ground-breaking chapter in the book. The book concludes by paying tribute to, and critiquing, Bod
ny’s firm leadership, his thoughtful teaching and his pastoral concern. All is summed up by Wakefield’s de
scription of the stained-glass window made in memory of him that can still be seen at All Saints Church, Monk
wearmouth: it is of a shepherd carrying a lamb in his arms.

This biography ably answers the question that all good biographies should: Who was he? It could be ar
gued that this question is long overdue for a detailed answer since most other books that mention Boddy are geared up only to answer the question: Who was he in relation to the Pentecostal movement? A stubborn fact remains, however, that this book’s most inter
ested readership will be Pentecostal scholars for whom the second ques
tion remains the really interesting one. I suspect that, rather than the events that caused Boddy’s personal traits to catch the light, it will be the relatively scant information supplied about his cultural milieu and theological influences that will be more highly prized by this book’s likely audience. How
ever, as a book that gives honour to whom honour is due, bringing into centre stage a figure that has long de
served far wider recognition, this book is a commendable piece of work.

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PENTECOSTAL & WESLEYAN EXPLORATIONS OF SCIENCE & CREATION

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PROPOSALS DUE JUNE 30, 2007

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Thomas Jay Oord & Amos Yong, Meeting Co-Chairs

Pentecostals and Wesleyans have affirmed that God is Creator and that in God we live, and move, and have our being. The two theological traditions have also acknowledged that science provides significant hypotheses and data with which Christians must work to understand their experiences and to articulate well their affirmations about the world that God has created. Yet there has been little sustained engagement between either tradition with the theological questions raised by modern science.

In the third joint meeting of the Society for Pentecostal Studies and the Wesleyan Theological Society, we invite paper proposals that explore facets of the theology-and-science dialogue and of Pentecostal and Wesleyan approaches to theology of creation. Proposals for the meeting should be 250-300 words. Authors should send their proposals and brief biographical information to WTS session leaders or SPS interest group leaders no later than June 30, 2007.

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