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# Toward an Asian Pentecostal Theology<sup>1</sup>

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In the past two decades, the validity of Asian theological reflections has been forcefully argued not only by liberal theologians, but also Evangelicals.<sup>2</sup> As a result, a consensus has emerged through critical Asian theological reflections for the legitimacy of Asian theology. However, the question remains: How shall we construct such a theological framework? Meanwhile, the century-old Pentecostal movement is experiencing several paradigm shifts in theological reflection. Case in point, various theological concerns were raised in two recent conferences: Brighton Conference of World Evangelization (1991)<sup>3</sup> and Globalization of Pentecostalism Conference in Costa Rica (1996). In particular, the stance on constructing a Pentecostal theology was convincingly argued by participants from various parts of the world and traditions. Despite this progress, there are many basic unsettled issues in doing Pentecostal theology, let alone Pentecostal theologies related to specific contexts. As an example, the exact nature of the baptism in the Spirit, the primary Pentecostal distinctive, continues to be hotly debated.

Since both Asian and Pentecostal theologies are still in their formative stages, it is not surprising to note the variety of questions related to an Asian Pentecostal theology, that surface such as: Is it necessary?; If so, then why?; Is it feasible?; Are there areas which Asian theology would not be able to address; i.e. What are its limitations?; If the construction of an Asian Pentecostal theology is justifiable, how should we approach it, especially in the light of the existing path which Asian theology has taken?

Consequently, this paper intends to probe the possibility of doing theology from an Asian Pentecostal perspective. The main concern is what positive value such a theological reflection would have, particularly within the context of a broader Asian theology. The present discussion is meant to raise awareness among Asian Pentecostal thinkers concerning their unique capability and calling to engage in theological reflections within their local context. Secondly, this discussion will include an attempt to explore ways to effectively communicate some theological reflections in relevant ways to Asian recipients. With this in mind, the discussion will progress from theology in general, to Asian theology, and then finally to an Asian Pentecostal theology. In addition, several pertinent elements of Pentecostal theology will be incorporated in the first two segments of the discussion.

## 1. Theology

Simply defined, theology is a process which takes the divine truth, the revelation of God, and applies it to a specific human setting. By doing this, theology allows God to speak to human beings. The process can begin from either end: divine truth or human needs. With

this simple definition,<sup>4</sup> one can easily recognize three critical elements in theological reflection.

## 1.1 The Elements

There are two primary sources in the theological process. The first element is a divine source (D): God's revelation. God reveals not only who He is, but also what His will is in two venues. One is through His words. This includes the written revelation, the Scripture, as well as revelation through experiences. Through contemporary events, God continues to reveal His character and will. The other is God's revelation in history, or in deeds. The history of Israel is viewed as God's revelation of his salvation history (e.g., Acts 7:2-50; 1 Cor 10:1-5). Ideally, this divine source is to serve as the subject of any theological endeavor. The prime task is to interpret these divine messages. In the case of scripture, this takes careful exegesis of the texts. Knowing that the texts were given to ancient people, the first work of the exegete is to find out "what it meant to them, then and there," before one can interpret it in the present situation, "here and now."

The second element is a human source (H): contemporary human setting. After the interpretation of the ancient text, the message should be "redressed" with contemporary settings in mind. Different social, cultural, and religious settings present different human needs. The key word in this process is "relevancy": how to make God's message applicable to contemporary people. As the human setting is viewed through God's word, this functions as an object of the theological process. This human group also serves as the addressee for any theological communication. These first two can also be termed the text and the context, respectively.

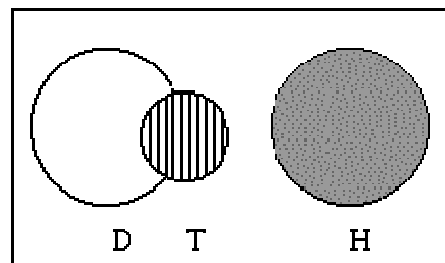
The third element is an agent mediating the two sources. This theologizer (T) is a human instrument bringing the two elements together so that God's message becomes relevant for contemporary hearers. The theologizer must be part of the two worlds: the divine and human. He or she must be a believer in God in terms of word and deed. Non-believers cannot truthfully do theology, on behalf of believers. This, of course, also assumes that the theologizer is a contemporary member of a given society.<sup>5</sup>

## 1.2 Models

Theoretically, there are three possible models, depending on the various dynamics influenced by the three elements.

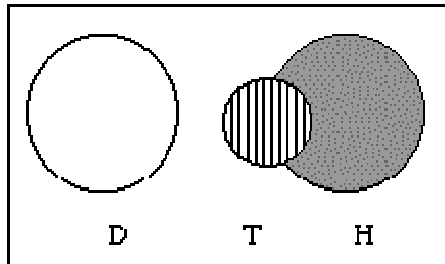
### 1.2.1 Emphasis on the Divine Element

The conservative theological camp often represents this model. Normally, there is a strong emphasis on the biblical authority. And the goal is naturally to bring humans to terms with the reality of the divine realm. The theologizer takes the role of a



proclaimer, as we often see from the Old Testament prophets. Hence, the primacy of the divine truth is clearly manifested. As a weakness, however, it tends to be detached from human needs and quests. As a result, theology exists for theology's sake, rather than making God's truth relevant for Christian recipients.

### 1.2.2 Emphasis on the Human Element



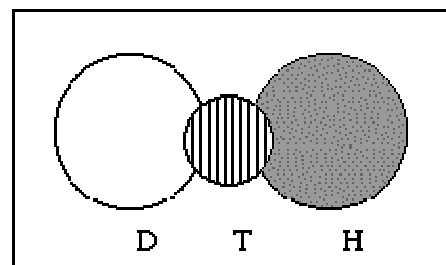
In many ways, this approach represents the opposite of the above discussion. Usually, the liberal Christian camp popularizes this approach. God and His revelation are seen as change agents of the human situation. Human needs, whether physical, political, cultural, or economic, become the beginning point of a theological journey. For instance, liberation theologians see the Bible,

especially the Book of Exodus, as providing a divine paradigm for, and even an endorsement to, efforts to "liberate" human beings from any form of oppression. Even the use of force is justified in liberating the oppressed. These advocates think that theology provides a legitimate ground for such actions. This approach has succeeded in making God's message directly involved in human affairs. Despite this, as often observed, God's words are sometimes forced to mean more than they originally intended. In this case, the theologizer may assume a position similar to that of a priest, representing the needs of the people to God.

### 1.2.3 The Ideal Model

The ideal model is obviously, one in which the theologizer is personally involved in both elements: divine and human. The theologizer first ought to establish an intimate relationship with God. In the Bible, this is often referred to as a call for service. In Isaiah, for instance, the prophet was allowed by divine providence, to witness what was taking place in the heavenly realm (Isa 6:1-2). In this crisis experience, he not only experienced strong conviction of God and His sovereignty (vv. 1-4), and an urgency to communicate God's plan to his own people (vv. 8-9), but also a divine commission from God himself (vv. 9-10). This experience and conviction sustained the prophet's challenging ministry, but also caused his message to be truthful to God's intention. Of course, one should not conclude, that the prophet had a single crisis experience. The initial spiritual experience may well have resulted in a subsequent and on-going relationship with God.

The theologizer should also be a member of the society which forms the theological context of the addressees. He or she must be an active member of both time and place, a participant in social issues and struggles. If the theologizer is an outsider, he or she should not only understand the settings, issues, and struggles, but also have sympathy with the



people who are in the community. This often takes place either by participation in or through meaningful relationships with members of the community. The theologizer is intimately involved in the divine and human realms.

## **2. Asian Theology**

There has been a growing consensus for the validity of an Asian theology or theologies. For Asian theology, the two primary sources remain unchanged. However, the nature of the human element or the context is radically different from the "traditional" western theology. This "cross-cultural nature" also necessitates another dimension in theologizing: communication.

### **2.1 Asian Theological Elements**

#### **2.1.1 Divine Source**

It seems the divine side of the theological sources remains unchanged, even though the work is done for an Asian audience. However, a careful observation will prove, that even this requires a close examination. Of course, God's words do not change. It is rather, human perceptions of God's revelation are transitory. Asian should remember that the revealed words were given to Orientals (Hebrews for the Old Testament, and primarily Jews for the New Testament). Since God uses human thought mechanisms, His revelation assumes a close affinity to Oriental worldviews. In a way, God's revelation has already been "contextualized" to various human settings. Historically, then God's revelation has been "contextualized" into the western worldview. Therefore, in Asia, Christianity is viewed as a "western" religion, in spite of its distinct Oriental origin. So, Asian theologizers ought to "recover" the scripture in the Oriental context to best accommodate their psychology.

#### **2.1.2 Asian Context**

Probably the most critical segment is the human setting, which forms the context for the theological process.<sup>6</sup> This can be roughly divided into two groups. The first contains the more traditional elements: "Traditional Asian culture" is a convenient expression. This includes uniquely Asian worldviews, thought patterns, family systems, traditional social structures, and religions. Prevailing animistic influences in Asia make theological reflection far different from that done in the West. We should also remember, that all major religions, as well as new ones, come from this part of the world. At the same time, one should not expect a universal Asian culture. Plurality characterizes the vast differences in culture and religion among Asian communities.

The second is the contemporary setting. Rapid change characterizes Asian society, although the nature of change can be radically different from one place to another. For instance, the current political issues in Mongolia are unlike the Indonesian issues. Rapid urbanization in many Asian countries not only changes skylines but also brings new life styles. Harvey Cox argues that this uprooted mass have been drawn to Pentecostalism out

of their social and cultural dislocation.<sup>7</sup> The changes in social, political, and economic realms all require careful consideration in the theological endeavor, if theology is going to serve the people.

These unique Asian contexts present enormous challenges for the theologizer. At the same time, we need to recognize that this can provide surprising and creative vehicles to convey God's truth. This is particularly true because the biblical worldview shares many commonalities with contemporary Asian thought patterns and cultures.

### **2.1.3 Communication**

This is an additional dimension required in Asian theology. This does not mean that traditional western theology does not require a communicational dimension. For two reasons, however, the significance of this dimension in western theology is less obvious. First, western culture has been "Christianized" or rather Christianity has been "westernized,"<sup>8</sup> so in effect, the perceived cultural distance between the divine theological source and the human setting is minimal, if not non-existent. Second, as a consequence, in the west, the addressees of the theological message are found in the pew rather than in the market place. Theology is for church use, and one assumes that every one is found in this sphere. Language found in the scripture is commonly used in daily life, at least until recently. The falsity of these assumptions is apparent, but the perceived need for careful consideration on the communication process is deceptively minimal.

On the contrary, Asian theologians do their work not exclusively for church use, or for in-house consumption.<sup>9</sup> Asian theology needs to find a way to bring its theological fruits to the vast non-Christian world.

This process requires at least two considerations: the identification of the addressees and the method of communication. The identification of the target audience (A) and their life context is done by examining the human element, since the contexts for theologization and communication are identical. The method of theological communication, however, necessitates a careful selection of proper language, symbols, and forms. Assuming a considerable amount of theological communication is addressed to non-believers, it is necessary for the communicator to avoid obvious Christian expressions and terms, rather culturally indigenous language must be employed. This also requires the communicator to employ communication methods that are familiar to Asian thinking patterns. Intuitive presentation is preferred to logical reasoning. Story telling is a prime mode in communicating theological messages to Asians. One comments of its effectiveness among folk-Muslims in Africa, whose worldview shares many similarities with Asians:

. . . an approach called "storying" is reaping solid results among the 204,000 Kotokoli people in Togo. Storying involves going through the Old Testament orally with Muslims. . . . The approach is especially helpful in reaching tribal people who cannot read and write, and has also served to break down barriers.<sup>10</sup>

The "storying" approach, in this particular case, has the effect that new converts "remain in their culture and with their families."<sup>11</sup>

#### 2.1.4 An "Asian" Theologizer

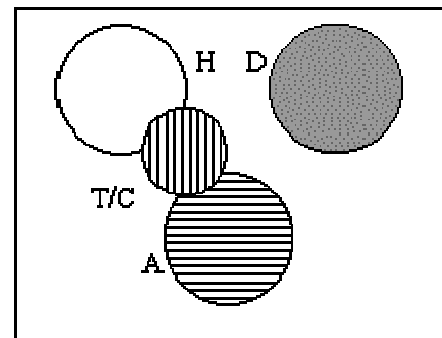
This all amounts to a great responsibility for the theologizer. And often the theologizer assumes the communicator's role (T/C). First of all, the theologizer needs to be part of the two sources, as discussed above. Then the perceived "cross-cultural" nature of the theological task requires a critical role for the theologizer. In addition to being a believer in God in terms of His revelation in words and deeds, he or she must be Asian in context and perspective. This immediately identifies the theologizer with an Asian living in Asia. But more importantly, he or she must possess Asian intuition, thinking pattern, values, and perspectives shaped by the shared Asian culture. The theologizer must be living in the Asian social, political, economical, and cultural context. He or she must exhibit sympathy with the Asian contexts which are often represented by suffering and oppression. This does not necessarily mean that all Asians possess such qualities, nor that non-Asians are not qualified to participate in theological activities in this region. In truth, being born and raised within the context more often than not makes one less sensitive to the significance, needs and settings. For this reason, non-Asians, widely exposed to the needs and contexts may have a better sense of necessity for theological articulation. The issue is the theologizer's awareness of, and involvement in, the Asian context.

### 2.2 Possible Models

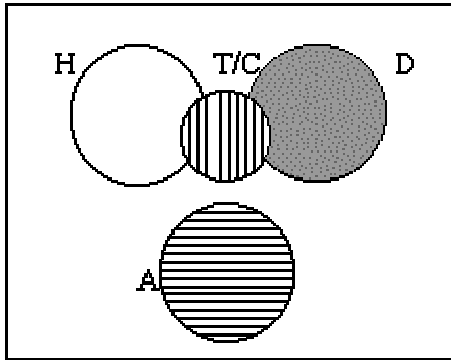
Having three primary elements with an agent (a theologizer), one can have numerous possibilities. One set of the three possibilities is that the theologizer can align him/herself with one of the three variables while paying less attention to, or even neglecting, the remaining two. Another possibility is the second set of three combinations. The scenario is when the theologizer is aligned to two elements, while paying less attention or neglecting the remaining one.

#### 2.2.1 Emphasis on the Human Source and the Target

Obviously, this demonstrates a great interest in the human realm of the theological task. Contextual relevance can be seen to be important in doing theology and in communicating its message. This often results in the negligence of the divine source. In some cases, the primacy of the human setting can distort the scripture to mean what the audience wants to hear. In a worst case, the communicated "Christian" message may be, in truth, a message of traditional religious beliefs with a Christian outlook. One should not forget that in any theological task, the divine revelation is the ultimate source.



### 2.2.2 Emphasis on the Divine Source and the Target

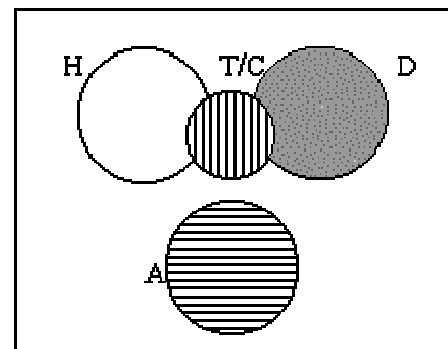


This case presents a setting, whereby the divine revelation is taken seriously. The theologizer/communicator is also careful in communicating the "then and there" biblical messages in a familiar cultural mode to the hearers. This model without doubt succeeds in telling the truth in a relevant way. However, as the human theological context is somehow overlooked, the divine revelation may not be able to "speak to the situation" even if the language and mode is culturally relevant. One example is from the ancient

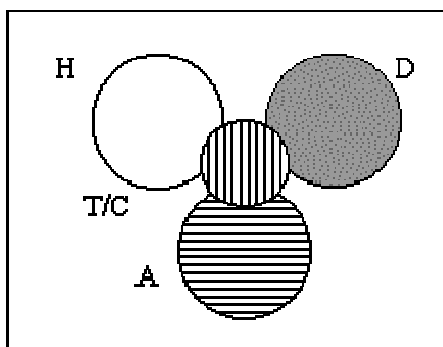
biblical stories that are retold with Asian symbolism and equivalence. David can be a boy watching carabaos (Asian water buffaloes) in a muddy rice field, or Jesus rebukes a mango tree. It takes creative imagination. Yet the traditional message fails to interact with contemporary Asian situations.

### 2.2.3 Emphasis on the Divine and Human Sources

This model neglects the communication process and the target. Much emphasis is given to traditional theological thinking, and relevant issues are well addressed in the light of God's revelation. Earlier works on Asian theology tend to fall into this category. The seminal work by Veitch illustrates this approach. He first assumes that the climax of the New Testament is the resurrection of the Lord and that the entire New Testament is written in the light of this event. Then, he continues, that we, Asian Christians, need to constantly ask a question, "What does it (the resurrection of the Lord) mean for the majority of mankind (*sic*) who live in Asia?"<sup>12</sup> In this otherwise excellent proposal, he assumes that theology in Asia takes place among "us" (or "we"), that is, within the church. He failed to see another critical dimension in doing Asian theology.



### 2.2.4 The Ideal Model



The ideal situation is, of course, that all three elements are organically integrated into the theological process. This can happen, as the theologizer/communicator is not only aligned equally to the three elements, but also part of them. In reality, however, the role of the



theologizer/communicator may be shared by a few individuals. For instance, the recently launched Asia Bible Commentary series under the sponsorship of the Asia Theological Association assigns a team of three for each book. An exegete or biblical scholar will work with the ancient text in its given context and hearers in mind. Then a theologian or missiologist will theologize the exegeted exposition "in the light of the interpretation by the Church universal and the plurality of issues in the Asian context."<sup>13</sup> Lastly, "a practical theologian with pastoral experience or a competent pastor will add pastoral insights."<sup>14</sup> This may not strictly correspond to the communicational dimension in our discussion. However, the fact that an experienced pastor, presumably Asian, is expected to make contextually relevant applications and communicate them in culturally acceptable forms is an important consideration. In any case, the role of the theologizer/communicator is extremely critical. He or she must have an equal sympathy of, and commitment to, all three elements and their dynamics. If the theologizer/communicator is not within the community, i.e., non-Asian, he or she ought to have an incarnational relationship in the Asian context, as well as in the communication procedure.

### **3. AN ASIAN PENTECOSTAL THEOLOGY**

Having briefly considered various critical issues and elements pertaining to theology and Asian theology, it is then necessary to add the final element to our journey of theologization. It is perhaps in order to discuss briefly the validity of doing an Asian Pentecostal theology.

#### **3.1 The Needs**

Do we really need an Asian Pentecostal theology, or a Pentecostal Asian theology? What is an Asian Pentecostal theology hoping to fulfill which a more generic Asian theology cannot achieve? How would Asian Pentecostal theology enhance the human understanding of God, among Asians as well as in the whole world? What will an Asian Pentecostal theology contribute to the expansion of God's kingdom?

The first thing to consider is if an Evangelical Asian theology suffices to meet our theological needs. If not, then one needs to probe where that theology fails. A more specific question will be if Asian Evangelical theology is adequate to address inherent spiritual/pneumatic concerns. With a more keen awareness of the spirit world, Asians have numerous "spiritual" questions, such as bad dreams, traditional omens, *feng-shui*, etc. Concerns of average Asians are non-Christian in nature. It is unlike the West, where theology is primarily addressed to people in the church. In Asia, theology should be adequate to address non-Christian multitudes as well. In the past, especially in the Christian circle, these concerns have been single-handedly condemned as superstition, and thus not worthy of mentioning, let alone trying to resolve the concerns. It is then conceivable that many Christians have two allegiances, as the standard theology is not capable of helping Asians in these "spiritual"<sup>15</sup> problems.

An equally probing question that will help us to determine the validity of an Asian Pentecostal theology is: What distinct contribution has Pentecostal theology made to the wider theological world in the past, and presumably in the west? Once we can identify deficiencies of traditional theology and the distinct contribution of Pentecostal theology, there are at least two theological worlds from which Asian Pentecostals can draw their clues.

### **3.1.1 The Historical Significance**

The Pentecostal movement emerged from a distinct social, intellectual and religious environment in Europe and America, tailored to serve the distinct needs of the time. Menzies lists factors, such as: "theological bankruptcy" in the midst of humanistic intellectualism, and a tension between liberal Christianity with its social gospel and the opposite conservative camp characterized by Fundamentalism.<sup>16</sup> From the very beginning, Pentecostalism has been the religion of the lowly, including the poor, racial minorities, women, and uneducated. It shook the complacent and optimistic mainline Christianity in America. The Pentecostal spiritual awakening, in a way, prepared the society for the coming harsh times including the war years and the depression. This eschatological movement looked forward to the coming of the Lord, as earthly hope seemed an impossibility.

In Asia, Classical Pentecostalism became a relatively later phenomenon, compared to other major Christian groups: Roman Catholics, Anglicans/Episcopals, Presbyterians, Methodists, Lutherans, and other denominations. This creates a number of implications. Being a part of a post-World War II movement, Pentecostal missionaries were not directly linked to colonialism, as other groups were identified in this respect.<sup>17</sup> If the colonial history is one of the "Critical Asian Principles" for any Asian theological attempt,<sup>18</sup> the post-colonial nature of Pentecostalism obviously has an advantageous appeal to Asians.

This also implies that, issues that Asian Pentecostals face today are different, from those that Western Pentecostalism faced in its formative stage. For instance, the early, immediate eschatological expectation in the West is not apparent among Asian Pentecostal churches. This can be traced to two possible sources: 1) Western Pentecostalism had lost its original eschatological emphasis by the time it was introduced to Asia; and/or 2) Pentecostal messages were preached to the nations that recently came out of war after being colonized. In the midst of national struggles, the Pentecostal missionaries brought a message of God's power and hope to meet the contemporary needs of the people. This resulted in a more "this-worldly" message than an earlier "other-worldly" one. Another example, maybe of less prominent attention is the issue of speaking in tongues. One can argue that the issue had been resolved or at least debated enough, and the Asian Pentecostals assumed the consequence of the western debate. However, it is possible that the Asian social and religious settings and needs require Asian Pentecostals to concentrate on more pressing issues, such as God's intervention in daily lives, in the midst of acute poverty. The lesser emphasis on eschatology and a more context-sensitive Pentecostalism in Asia have assumed a different profile, than the

western Pentecostal churches. For instance, earlier messages of Yonggi Cho to the suffering masses after the devastating Korean War were constructed around two emphases: 1) God's power to heal and solve human problems through the Holy Spirit; and 2) Human faith in God's miracle power. He is in fact a product of the miracle-faith principles. This combination resulted in a message of hope even in this world. The "can-do" spirit is the immediate consequence.<sup>19</sup>

### **3.1.2 The Theological Significance**

The rise of the modern Pentecostal movement created a powerful theological stir. Christians and secular media bluntly ridiculed its radical theology and practices. Yet, its important theological contributions are readily recognized. Several of them stand out.

First, the movement introduced to the theological world, a fresh emphasis on the person and work of the Holy Spirit. Traditional theology including Reformed Theology has elaborated on the theology of God, the Father, and the Son, but almost neglecting to develop a balanced Pneumatology. In the beginning, Pentecostal writings were modest in form, generally in sermons, Sunday School material, articles of church newspapers, or magazines. This does not preclude the occasional appearance of critical theological discussions in Pentecostal circles. However, serious Pentecostal academic works on the person and work of the Holy Spirit sharply increased in volume around the early 80's at least in North America.<sup>20</sup> In the meantime, some Evangelicals have been motivated to write on the person and work of the Holy Spirit, some times in the form of criticism against Pentecostal beliefs.<sup>21</sup>

The second theological contribution is the "democratization of theology," for the lack of a more suitable expression. Much of the traditional theology and worship were carried on by selected religious specialists, namely clergy and trained theologians. Lay, and especially female, participation was minimal. The eruption of the Pentecostal movement single-handedly challenged this stereotype. The experience of God's power in the baptism of the Spirit was taken as God's.<sup>22</sup> With the divine commission through the "anointing" of the Spirit, human or organizational approval and commission had relatively less significance among the early Pentecostals. Many early Pentecostal preachers and missionaries did not even have Bible school training. Ministry was "democratized" by elevating lay people to the level of priests. In this process, particularly notable is the active women's role in the movement. Early Pentecostal pioneers included many women.<sup>23</sup> Nevertheless, through the institutionalization, women's role became either limited<sup>24</sup> or indirectly discouraged.<sup>25</sup> However, a significant number of women contributed to missionary activities. Cavaness recently notes that in at least six Asian national Assemblies of God bodies, women either became the first Pentecostal missionaries or played a vital role in the formation of the national Assemblies.<sup>26</sup> Another "democratization" comes in the area of worship. The active participation of the congregation (laity) in worship was truly encouraged and actually practiced in many areas. Laying on of hands by the congregation became a daily scene. Manifestations of the Spirit included being "slain in the Spirit," prophesying, and speaking in tongues in public worship. These were some avenues, where the congregation actively partook in

worship. However, most significant, as far as theologizing is concerned, is the practice of "testimony." Here, regardless of church position, sex and education, members freely shared their experiences with God. This is where "personal theology" was constructed and expressed to the wider body. In this, the laity was encouraged, not only to formulate their personal theological interpretation of daily experiences, but also to take an active part in constructing a wider Pentecostal theology.<sup>27</sup> This makes Pentecostal theology distinctly "people's theology," versus the traditional elite theology.

The third theological contribution, closely related to the previous points, is the restoration of the aspect of God's immanence. Religion has a tendency to set deities as far apart from the human level as possible, so that their "other-worldliness" and consequently their supremacy will be enhanced. This sets the deities beyond the reach of the laity. In the process, the prominence of the religious specialist, whether Shaman, medium, witchdoctor, priest, minister, or pastor, increases. Consequently, hierarchy and institutionalization among the religious specialists further develops. A similar phenomenon occurs in the divine realm, as well. An increasing number of "middle class" deities are uncovered to mediate the mundane human concerns, which are too insignificant to call for the attention of the supreme deities. In some religious systems, mechanical divine decrees and laws rule the believers' life and concerns. Christianity is not an exception. God is made increasingly transcendental by diligent theologians and communicators (in many cases, preachers). God is often an unreachable, obscure, and abstract being somewhere "up there." It is revival movements that bring afresh the immanent aspect of God to the Christian community. In this sense, the Pentecostal movement is historically a revival movement. Suddenly, "this worldly" ("down here") concerns enter into public worship. Daily problems are regularly expressed such as sicknesses, financial problems, relational conflicts, family problems, business concerns and every imaginable "earthly" issue. This is done in anticipation of God's direct intervention in human situations. Pentecostalism narrowed the distance between God and us.

The fourth theological contribution is again related to the immanent experience of God: the experiential dimension of religious life. Traditionally, theology has been a cognitive and intellectual undertaking. This can be traced to Hellenistic reasoning and modern scientific research. Even in Christianity, "decent" worship, frequently found in so-called high churches, comprises of liturgy, order of worship, choir, hymns, homily, and well-worded prayers. God has been set so far apart, any communication with him requires proper rules and orders. Any experiential expectation, especially with the emotional aspect of human existence, has not been a part of the standard Christian life. The Pentecostal experience has challenged these stereotypes from the very beginning. The core of the message is human experience with the Spirit, called the "baptism in the Spirit." The consequence of this experience ranges from a deep spiritual conviction, speaking unknown tongues almost uncontrollably, being slain in the Spirit, sobering repentance, shaking, laughing, jumping, and many other expressions. With the freedom to exhibit overwhelming emotions, Pentecostal worship seems chaotic to outsiders. However, only those who have these experiences can understand and appreciate the dynamic and overarching control of the Spirit in the seemingly chaotic situation.

There are still other contributions of theological significance, which the Pentecostal movement has brought to the theological world. The eschatological emphasis is directly linked to the prevailing understanding of tongues and Spirit baptism. Also a distinct Pentecostal hermeneutics has emphasized the narrative material of the Bible. The present popularity of narratology can in part be traced to the Pentecostal movement.

### **3.1.3 The Missiological Significance**

The early Pentecostal pioneers perceived the eschatological significance of the baptism in the Spirit. It was often labeled as the "Latter Rain" in comparison with the first Pentecost recorded in Acts 2. The outpouring of the Spirit signified, for them, the imminent return of the Lord. This gave such urgency to spread the Gospel, that even preparing church buildings was not perceived as necessary. True significance was found in Acts 1:8, the Pentecostal experience was understood to be an empowerment for witness even to the uttermost part of the world. All the available means were utilized spanning from radio ministry, traveling evangelistic teams, tent meetings, production and distribution of tracts and small magazines, and crossing the ocean with one-way ticket. It was all to convert the heathen at home and in foreign lands.<sup>28</sup>

Speaking in tongues gained a special significance in foreign missionary work. In the beginning, tongues were understood as a missionary language gift, to give ability to preach in a foreign language that one has not learned.<sup>29</sup> Soon, they found out that this was not the case. However, this initial misinterpretation did not affect their missions zeal and commitment. Many early Pentecostal missionaries were not properly trained in the Bible and theology. But their strong commitment, earnest expectation of God's miracles and healing, and their endurance won them many legacies.<sup>30</sup> "Signs and wonders" became the hallmark of the Pentecostal missionaries.

### **3.1.4 New and True Ecumenism**

The congregation of the Azusa Street Mission was composed of the lowly and "colored people and sprinkling of whites,"<sup>31</sup> and this was a radical demonstration of God's power. The work of the Spirit brought down the racial, denominational, and social barriers.<sup>32</sup> However, this powerful work of inter-racial unity was quickly marred by the human spirit of division.<sup>33</sup> Often, the racial issue, rather than a theological difference, played a key role in the subsequent schisms among Pentecostal groups.<sup>34</sup> This was unfortunate, even to justify the phenomenal growth and influences of white Pentecostal groups including Assemblies of God, Church of God, Foursquare Church and others.<sup>35</sup> In this sense, the recent abolition of the white Pentecostal association is truly a miracle.

It is an encouraging providence of God, therefore, that there arose a stream of Pentecostal ecumenical activists, such as David DuPlessis,<sup>36</sup> Vinson Synan, Cecil M. Robeck, Jr., Simon Chan and others. These ecumenists have constantly called for the breaking of dividing walls as seen in denominationalism, racism, sexism, and clergy-lay dichotomy. It is commonly spoken of that true ecumenism can take place only by participation in two areas: 1) social works; and 2) in the ministry of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the

only true unifying force, motive, and agent. Therefore, it is critical for Pentecostals, especially among the Classical Pentecostals, to recognize that the work of the Spirit is far larger than the previous Pentecostal boundaries. When Pentecostals failed to recognize that the Pentecostal message was meant to be a gift to all of Christianity, another form of "cross-denominational" Pentecostal outpouring took place, i.e. the Charismatic Movement. Pentecostals should outgrow their narrow denominationalistic attitude, and rather become heralds and messengers of the unity of God's people in the Spirit!

### **3.2 The Theological Elements**

An Asian Pentecostal theology inherits the identical set of the theological elements. However, each element assumes an added significance. It appears that notable difference is found in the divine element (text), the human element (context) and the theologizer.

#### **3.2.1 The Divine Element: Pentecostal Truth/Distinctives**

A Pentecostal theology by nature has an added dimension to an Evangelical pneumatology. Pentecostals tend to emphasize the radical aspect of the person and work of the Holy Spirit. This includes miracles, healings, baptism in the Spirit, and the spiritual gifts normally found in 1 Cor 12:4-11. We should also remember that this Pentecostal theology is Asian. Then a standard theological question an Asian Pentecostal should constantly ask, to borrow Veitch's proposal for Asian theology, <sup>37</sup> is "What does the intervening work and coming of the Spirit mean to us as Asians?" However, theology is more than finding a meaning; it is transforming. Hence, we should further ask questions concerning, "What changes can the Spirit make in our lives, in particular with our Asian struggles?" Also considering the missiological significance of the Pentecostal blessing, one needs to ask: "How does this conviction require us to live and act?"

One further consideration is the role of the Pentecostal experience in doing theology in Asia. The conviction and understanding of Pentecostal truth is essential. This should not merely be an acquired knowledge, but a first hand encounter with the Spirit. Hence, one can say that the divine element in Pentecostal theology has a complementary experiential factor.

#### **3.2.2 The Human Element/Context**

The human element in an Asian Pentecostal theology is identical to that in an Asian theology. The unique cultural plurality and contemporary changes should be taken into consideration. However, in Asian Pentecostal theology, one should pay a special attention to the rich Asian perceptions of the spiritual world. Unlike the western world, many Asian societies hold the fundamental animistic beliefs in one way or another. Malevolent spirits are believed to cause sickness, misfortune, and disturbance especially in dreams. Many of the "high religions" of Asia also provide a fertile ground for awareness of spiritual beings. This has a direct bearing on the Asian Christian's religious experiences and our interpretation of them.



Also pertinent is the spiritual dimension of human struggle.<sup>38</sup> Modernization in Asia tends to neglect, just as its western predecessor, the spiritual factors in human life and suffering. Coupled with the native consciousness of the spiritual world, Asian Pentecostal theologians need to pay close attention to this.<sup>39</sup>

This spiritual environment and awareness among Asians provides not only a fertile ground for Christian theology, but also the risk of creating an animistic Christianity.<sup>40</sup> One example suffices to illustrate this concern. A radical theologizing attempt was recently presented by Hyun Kyung Chung in the 7th General Assembly of the World Council of Churches in Canberra, Australia. Accompanied by nine other Koreans as well as two Australian Aboriginal dancers, she performed a dance. Its main motif was to appease the "*han* spirits," who were oppressed and even killed unjustly. Consequently, they are filled with the *han*, bitterness and anger. She is quoted to argue that "we can feel, touch and taste the concrete, bodily historical presence of the Holy Spirit in our midst."<sup>41</sup>

### 3.2.3 The Theologizer/Communicator

The preceding discussions point to the critical role of the theologizer/communicator. First of all, he or she not only understands, and has allegiance to, the truth of God; but also is part of, or at least possesses sympathy with, the struggles and sufferings of Asians. Again, for being "Asian," I would apply that same principle as discussed above. Meanwhile, he or she should be sensitive enough to the Asian's awareness of the spiritual world, and its implications to the theological process. For Asian Pentecostal theology, it is naturally Asian Pentecostals who will undertake the job. For this theological task, the theologizer/communicator should understand the spiritual dynamics in Asian thinking. For instance, the central concern of power among animists greatly influences how to formulate a theology for these Asians, and what Pentecostal theological element(s) should be emphasized.<sup>42</sup>

Then, must one be a Pentecostal in order to do Pentecostal theology? I would argue so, for the experiential significance. The impact of a personal Pentecostal experience is often so revolutionary that one's once-unshakable theological outlook can change radically. Substantial cases are numerous.<sup>43</sup> One may argue that "sympathizers" can participate directly in Pentecostal theology. The contribution of such theological reflections from outside will be helpful up to a certain point.<sup>44</sup> But as a non-Christian cannot do theology for Christians, Pentecostals should not expect non-Pentecostals to do theology for them.<sup>45</sup>

## 4. Then, So What?

Having discussed all the elements and procedures, what does that mean to us, especially to us, Asian Pentecostal educators of the Bible and theology? Here are some moderate proposals.

### 4.1 The Primacy of the Divine Source

A Pentecostal's strong conviction comes from his or her experience with God's power in the Spirit. This often has been an object of scorn by mainline Evangelical Christianity. However, it is the experiential aspect of the Spirit which makes Pentecostals who they are. One laments the "Evangelicalization of Pentecostalism" in recent years, presumably as the Pentecostal groups are identified with the Evangelicals.<sup>46</sup> The movement of the Pentecostal groups towards the Evangelical churches brought the long-awaited recognition, as a "decent" Christian group. However, this, coupled with other factors, has caused the Pentecostals to be less appreciative of their distinctives, and consequently to lose some of them.<sup>47</sup>

The significance of the Pentecostal message can best be preserved and enhanced, only when Pentecostals remain truthful to their distinct beliefs and practices. This should be preached in the pulpit, not for the sake of the distinctives, but for the maximum contribution to the church at large and for the blessing of the people. What happens, however, in a local church has much to do with the Bible school training which the pastor has received. Pentecostal Bible schools and seminaries should not exist to compete with other Evangelical schools. Rather, they exist to train people to spread the Pentecostal blessing, in addition to traditional Evangelical theology.

In any theology, the primacy of the text should always be stressed and established, in spite of the critical role of the contemporary settings. The divine source is the subject of theological work. When the context takes a priority, the context often determines the selection and interpretation of the text(s). This generally results in an unbalanced emphasis on the setting. *Han* theology, *minjung* theology, buffalo theology, and liberation theology are but a few examples.

Also critical is the historical and theological significance of the Pentecostal movement in the West. We Asian Pentecostals, then, need to ask questions such as, "Then what historical significance do we find in an Asian Pentecostal movement?" And "What implications does theological significance in the West provide the Asian Pentecostal church, and how do we apply them in our settings?" Every Christian movement has its own historical and theological mandate. It is particularly important to ask, "How does our Pentecostal conviction compel Asian Pentecostals to witness of Christ to fellow Asians?" and "How can we achieve this missiological mandate?"

## **4.2 The Critical Significance of Asian Context**

What does it mean to be an Asian Pentecostal theologian? It calls for the uniqueness and critical role of the context/addressee. His or her mandate is to be faithful to the truth of God and to the struggles of fellow Asians. However, it is an irony that, while western seminaries are adding new courses and majors in Asian cultures, religions, and the church, Asian Bible schools and seminaries are merely communicators of the western theology. This is simply wrong. Schools are here not to duplicate western theology, but to train Asians who will in turn bring God's revelation to the human setting and struggles in Asia. If we put much emphasis on Israel's history, but neglect issues surrounding us, such as poverty, corruption, street children, the sex industry, oppressive rules, human rights



issues, devastating environmental concerns, rising price, etc., are we doing our job right? Asian Bible schools and seminaries must make a conscious effort to make God's truth relevant to Asians, but not necessarily, let's say, to American Christians. This should be reflected in a school's philosophy, objectives, curricula, faculty training, and literature. Theologians, Bible school teachers, and pastors should pay close attention to the local issues like "the Holy Spirit as the Mother God" once popular in the Cebu area of the Philippines, as much as they do to Luther's reformation theology.

### **4.3 The Central Role of the Theologizer/Communicator**

The critical role of the Asian Pentecostal theologizer/ communicator has been repeatedly stressed. Then who are they? They are Bible school teachers, pastors, and theologians in Asia. These front-liners not only face a challenging living environment in which theologizing takes place on a daily basis, but also are affected by their cultural and religious traditions. There is a strong potential for a "corrupted" theology of the S/spirit, because of their awareness of, and possible involvement in, animistic practices. It is also true that there are numerous "folk Pentecostal" groups in the Philippines, Indonesia, and other Asian counties.<sup>48</sup> Also the arrival of new Pentecostalism, such as the Toronto Blessing and Third Wave movement, poses another challenge. In truth, every Pentecostal Christian participates actively in the formation of his or her Pentecostal theology, and this rather "democratized" nature of the Pentecostal theological activity can complicate the situation.

In the area of communication, probably Pentecostalism, among modern Christian traditions, possesses elements and forms which are either close to, or easily identified with, Asian values and ways. Story telling, a popular Asian medium of communication and preservation of traditions, is also a common form through which Pentecostals have formulated their theology. Asian Pentecostals should take full advantage of this effective means of communication which is well attuned to Asian culture.

### **4.4 A Need for Theological Platforms**

Now, let us say that a young Asian Pentecostal Bible school teacher formulates a theology on any given topic. Suppose it might be a simple comparison of a biblical theme and a cultural practice or a real life struggle.<sup>49</sup> He or she does this as a practicing Pentecostal, by taking God's expectant intervention to a human setting. Would this theologizer/communicator just preach his or her theological reflection on Sunday, and that's it? We need a good academic platform in which Asian Pentecostal theological reflections are published. This will function as a place of sharing. Such an academic publication will encourage creative and experimental theological reflections. This will also promote dialogue among Pentecostals, as well as with the wider Christian world in Asia. The wide spread of the Pentecostal movement in Asia and the formative nature of Pentecostal theology in general, urgently call for a good theological platform. However, such a publication should not purport to be a duplicate of western Pentecostal journals! There are already a few young Pentecostal organizations such as Asia Pacific Theological

Association and Asia Charismatic Theological Association. Who knows whether God is preparing them for such a time as this?

Having stressed the aspects of a micro, or in this case local, Pentecostal theology/theologies, where are we going from there? The ultimate goal of constructing local theologies, let's say, "Igorot Pentecostal theology of land," etc., is not to create theological regionalism (or provincialism). Nor is the Asian church called to Asianize Christianity, even though we may have to de-westernize traditional theology. It is rather to take part in formulating a healthy macro Pentecostal theology, so that ultimately Pentecostal theology will make a contribution to, and enrich, sound Christian theology.

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## Footnotes

1. An earlier version was presented at the Asia Pacific Theological Association General Assembly, Manila, Philippines, on Sept. 17, 1996. It was also published in *Cyberjournal for Pentecostal/Charismatic Research* [<http://www.pctii.org/cybertab.html>] 1 (1997). Because of the specific original audience, the paper, including footnotes, contains many references to the Assemblies of God. Suggestions by Harold D. Hunter in the process of the present revision are gratefully acknowledged.
2. For instance, Kosuke Koyama, *Waterbuffalo Theology* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1974), and Donald Leroy Stults, *Developing an Asian Evangelical Theology* (Manila: OMF Literature, 1989), respectively. A consistent effort of Yeow Choo Lak has resulted in a series of collected papers with such titles as *Doing Theology with the Spirit's Movement in Asia*, ATESEA Occasional Paper 12, eds. John C. England and Alan J. Torrance (Singapore: ATESEA, 1991).
3. Selected papers presented by Pentecostal/Charismatic theologians were published in *All Together in One Place: Theological Papers from the Brighton Conference on World Evangelization*, Harold D. Hunter and Peter D. Hocken, eds. (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993).
4. As far as the present discussion is concerned, the construction of a logical and systematic presentation of various categories such as God, the Bible, Christ, Human Beings, etc. is not in view.
5. Shoki K. Coe, "Foreword," in *The Human and the Holy: Asian Perspectives in Christian Theology*, eds. Emerito P. Nacpil and Douglas J. Elwood (Quezon City, Philippines: New Day, 1978), p. iii, identified only the first two elements by calling the theological task a "double wrestling."
6. See for a detailed discussion, Julie Ma, "Pentecostal Challenges of East and Southeast Asia," a paper presented in Globalization of Pentecostalism Conference in San Jose, Costa Rica, June, 1996, which will be included in a future volume by Regnum/Paternoster.

7. Harvey Cox, *Fire from Heaven: The Rise of Pentecostal Spirituality and the Reshaping of Religion in the Twenty-First Century* (Reading, MA: Addison Wesley, 1995), p. 104.
8. E.g., Kazuo Muto, "Christianity and the Notion of Nothingness," *Japanese Religions* 21 (1996), pp. 199-201.
9. This point was made by Masaaki Sasaki in a private conversation in Baguio, Philippines in May, 1990.
10. "Regional Overviews: Middle East/Muslim World," *Mission Today* 96: *An Annual Overview of the World of Missions* (Evanston, IL: Berry Publishing, 1996), p. 88.
11. "Regional Overviews," p. 88.
12. James A. Veitch, "Is an Asian Theology Possible?" in *The Human and the Holy*, p. 226. The article was originally published in *Scottish Journal of Theology* 28 (1975), pp. 27-43 and subsequently in *Southeast Asia Journal of Theology* 17 (1976), pp. 1-14.
13. Bruce J. Nicholls, "Asia Bible Commentary: A 10-Year Project Sponsored by Asia Theological Association," a paper distributed at ATA General Assembly, July 19-22 in Bangkok, Thailand, p. 1.
14. Nicholls, "Asia Bible Commentary," p. 1.
15. Rodney L. Henry, *Filipino Spiritual World* (Manila: OMF Literature, 1989). Also Charles Kraft and M. G. Kraft, "The Power of God for People Who Ride Two Horses," in *The Kingdom and the Power: Are Healing and the Spiritual Gifts Used by Jesus and the Early Church Meant for the Church Today? A Biblical Look at How to Bring the Gospel to the World with Power*, eds. Gary S. Greig and Kevin N. Springer (Ventura, CA: Regal, 1993), pp. 345-56.
16. A brief, but useful background is found in William W. Menzies, *Anointed to Serve* (Springfield, MO: Gospel Publishing House, 1971), pp. 17-33.
17. For instance, the Roman Catholic Church in the Philippines, the Dutch Reformed Church in Indonesia, and the Anglican Church in India are usually viewed as part of the colonizers.
18. See Emerito P. Nacpil, "The Critical Asian Principles," in *What Asian Christians Are Thinking: A Theological Source Book* (Manila: New Day, 1976), pp. 3-6.
19. A popular Christian song probably originated from the circle, with words, "We can do. It can be done. Then let's do it. . . ."
20. For other theological contributions of Pentecostalism, see Wonsuk Ma, "Pentecostal Biblical Studies: Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow," a paper presented in Globalization of Pentecostalism Conference, San Jose, Costa Rica, June, 1996, which will be published in a future volume by Regnum/Paternoster.
21. An example is Frederick Dale Bruner, *A Theology of the Holy Spirit: The Pentecostal Experience and the New Testament Witness* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1970). More constructive contributions came from scholars such as James D. G. Dunn, *Baptism in the Spirit: A Re-examination of the New Testament Teaching on the Gifts of the Spirit in Relation to Pentecostalism Today* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1970); Colin Brown, *Miracle and the Critical Mind* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans; Devon, UK: Paternoster, 1984).

22. "Anointed to Serve" is the title of William W. Menzies' book, reflecting this understanding.
23. For a brief editorial comment on the subject, see Edith L. Blumhofer, "Women in American Pentecostalism," *Pneuma* 17 (1995), pp. 19-20.
24. For instance, in most Pentecostal denominations except Foursquare Church, women are not included in top executive positions in North America as well as in Asia, with rare exceptions. Only recently, the Assemblies of God, U. S. A. has appointed a woman executive board member for the first time in its history. See Deborah M. Gill, "The Contemporary Status of Women in Ministry in the Assemblies of God," *Pneuma* 17 (1995), pp. 33-36.
25. E.g., Barbara Cavaness, "God Calling Women in Assemblies of God Missions," *Pneuma* 16 (1994), pp. 49-62.
26. A conversation with Barbara Cavaness at the School of Mission of the Division of Foreign Missions, Assemblies of God, U. S. A., July 12, 1996, Springfield, MO.
27. Steven J. Land, *Pentecostal Spirituality: A Passion for the Kingdom*, JPTSup. 1 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993).
28. For various missiological discussions, see the entire issue of *Pneuma* 16/1 (1994).
29. A good example is found in Gary B. McGee, *This Gospel Shall Be Preached: A History and Theology of Assemblies of God Foreign Missions*, 2 vols. (Springfield, MO: Gospel Publishing House, 1986, 1989). For the missiological understanding of tongues, see Gary B. McGee, "Popular Expositions of Initial Evidence in Pentecostalism," in *Initial Evidence: Historical and Biblical Perspectives on the Pentecostal doctrine of Spirit Baptism*, ed. Gary B. McGee (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1991), pp. 119-30.
30. One example is the life and story of Elva Vanderbout (later Mrs. Soriano) among the Igorots of the northern Philippines, Inez Sturgeon, *Give Me This Mountain* (Oakland, CA: Hunter Advertising, 1960).
31. "Weird Babel of Tongues," *Los Angeles Daily Times*, April 18, 1906, p. 2.
32. One example is found in the testimony of Vicar A. A. Boddy of Sunderland, England after his visit to the Azusa Mission, Los Angeles, "We (Boddy, and two of Azusa Mission representative, Mrs. Jennie Moore Seymour and Mr. J. A. Warren) knelt, three of us, in prayer near the altar. . . . Two coloured friends and a white brother from distant Sunderland praying together in Azusa Street Mission!" *Confidence: A Pentecostal Paper for Great Britain*, Oct. 1912, 233-4 quoted by Douglas J. Nelson, "For Such a Time as This: A Story of Bishop William J. Seymour and the Azusa Street Revival, A Search for Pentecostal/Charismatic Roots" (Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Birmingham, 1981), pp. 252-53.
33. An extensive study on William Seymour of the Azusa Mission, see Nelson, "For Such a Time as This." Excellent short articles related to the early Pentecostal movement are found in *Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, eds. Stanley M. Burgess and Gary B. McGee (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1988).
34. Parham was particularly disturbed by the mingling of black and white worshippers, and noisy and indecent style of worship, James R. Goff, Jr., *Fields White unto Harvest: Charles F. Parham and the Missionary Origin of Pentecostalism* (Fayetteville, Ark.: University of Arkansas Press, 1988), p.131.

- The accusation is also expressed in an announcement made by Mr. W. R. Quinton, an assistant of Parham of a new meeting in Whittier: the new services will be dignified with no connection with "trances, fits and spasms, jerks, shakes and contortions. . . the religious anarchy, which marks the Los Angeles Azusa street meetings. . .," "Apostolic Faith People Here Again," *Whittier Daily News*, Dec. 13, 1906, p. 1.
35. This does not necessarily mean that the white Pentecostals did not have ecumenical corporation. See Cecil Robeck, Jr., "The Assemblies of God and Ecumenical Cooperation: 1920-1965," in *Pentecostalism in Context: Essays in Honor of William W. Menzies*, JPTSup. 11, eds. Wonsuk Ma and Robert P. Menzies (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997), pp. 107-50.
  36. David DuPlessis, *A Man Called Mr. Pentecost* (Plainfield, NJ: Logos International, 1977).
  37. Veitch, "Is an Asian Theology Possible?" p. 226.
  38. A good example is a question recently raised by an American Pentecostal missionary in the Philippines who posted, "Is traditional western theology adequate to answer some non-western questions, such as 'what do we do when there is a drought, and people expect God to be able to bring rain?'" It is almost amusing to read various responses to it, from one extreme to another. However, the Mandate forum has a restricted access (Bob Braswell as the forum coordinator and his e-mail address is [bb@xc.org](mailto:bb@xc.org)), and archival material is available to subscribers.
  39. In the west, the Third Wave movement has championed the spiritual implications of human suffering. E.g., Charles H. Kraft, "Two Kingdoms in Conflict" and "Dealing with Demonization," in *Behind Enemy Lines: An Advanced Guide to Spiritual Warfare*, eds. Charles H. Kraft, Tom White, and Ed Murphy (Ann Arbor, MI: Vine Books, 1994), pp. 17-29, 79-120 respectively.
  40. Charles H. Kraft's "deliverance ministry" was recently attacked as an "animistic Christianity," e.g., Robert J. Priest, Thomas Campbell, and Bradford A. Mullen, "Missiological Syncretism: the New Animistic Paradigm," in *Spiritual Power and Missions: Raising the Issues*, Evangelical Missiological Society Series, 3, ed. Edward Rommen (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 1995), pp. 9-87; and Kraft's response appeared in the same volume, "'Christian Animism' or God-Given Authority?" pp. 88-136.
  41. Cox, *Fire from Heaven*, pp. 213-8, especially p. 217. Chung's theological approach is elaborated in Chung Hyun Kyung, "'HAN-PU-RI': Doing Theology from Korean Women's Perspective," in *Frontiers in Asian Christian Theology: Emerging Trends*, ed. R. S. Sugirtharajah (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1994), pp. 52-62.
  42. For instance, recently Julie Ma, "Ministry of the Assemblies of God among the Kankana-ey Tribe in the Northern Philippines: History of a Theological Encounter" (Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation: Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, 1996).
  43. Jack Deere, a Baptist theologian once teaching at Dallas Theological Seminary provides a parallel experience, Jack Deere, *Surprised by the Power of the Spirit* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1993), and in a similar way, Charles H. Kraft,

- Christianity with Power: Your Worldview and Your Experience of the Supernatural* (Ann Arbor, MI: Servant Books, 1989), pp. 1-9.
44. One fine example is Jürgen Moltmann's many works, e.g., *The Church in the Power of the Spirit* (London: SCM, 1977).
  45. Cox points out that Pentecostalism is misrepresented by such non-Pentecostals or even shamanistically-oriented theologians, since "only two of the many hundreds of Pentecostal denominations in the world belong to the World Council of Churches," *Fire from Heaven*, p. 215. From this aspect, the on-going dialogues of Pentecostals with the Roman Catholic Church, World Council of Churches, and the Reformed Church should be encouraged. It is also noted that some Pentecostal groups have joined their National Councils of Churches. Chung's case clearly demonstrates that anyone without the distinct Pentecostal experience is simply not qualified to do Pentecostal theology.
  46. One time, Thomas F. Zimmerman, a former general superintendent of the Assemblies of God, U. S. A. was the president of the National Association of Evangelicals.
  47. This is not only North American phenomenon. A former chief executive of Costa Rican Assemblies of God shares the same sentiment. One time, he was grieved to find out that less than 50% of the Costa Rican Assemblies of God people had experienced the baptism of the Spirit which is viewed as the most distinct mark of the denominational doctrine.
  48. Cox ponders a possibility of "Pentecostal shamanism," *Fire from Heaven*, p. 225.
  49. One example, presumably by a non-Pentecostal Asian theologian, is found, Peter K. H. Lee, "Dancing, *Ch'i*, and the Holy Spirit," in *Frontiers in Asian Christian Theology: Emerging Trends*, pp. 65-79. Another, by a Pentecostal, is, Wonsuk Ma, "The Spirit of God among Leaders of Ancient Israelite Society and Igorot Tribal Churches," in *Pentecostalism in Context: Essays in Honor of William W. Menzies*, pp. 291-316.