

# **Origin and Development of the 'New Apostolic Reformation' in South Africa: A Neo-Pentecostal Movement or a Post-Pentecostal Phenomenon?<sup>1</sup>**

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## **Abstract**

Within South African Pentecostal/Charismatic spheres, since 2000, a new configuration has surfaced that has been called the 'New Apostolic Reformation' (NAR). The adherents of this movement have sounded a call for the Pentecostal/Charismatic church, in particular, to return to what they describe as the 'Apostolicity' of the church.

The emergence of this New Apostolic Reformation is more than a South African phenomenon. C Peter Wagner, almost a decade and a half ago, in his book, *Churchquake* (1999: 5-8) contended that there were, at least forty thousand 'Apostolic' churches representing approximately eight to ten million members in the USA. He asserted that this New Apostolic Reformation is also rapidly growing in all of the six continents and is the 'greatest change in the way of doing church since the Protestant Reformation.'

In South Africa the following New Apostolic Reformation groupings have emerged, namely the New Covenant Ministries International (NCMI), Grace International (GI), Congress World Breakthrough Network (C-WBN),

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<sup>1</sup> An earlier version of this paper was read at the 2012 ASRSA Annual Conference in June 2012 at the Joint Conference of Religion and Theology at the University of KwaZulu-Natal in Pietermaritzburg. While the NAR has been introduced elsewhere, the special focus of this paper is on theories of the origin and development of the NAR.

International Strategic Alliance of Apostolic Churches (ISAAC) and Judah Kingdom Alliance (JKA).

The paper will also contend with the nature and extent of their deviation from 'mainstream' Pentecostal doctrines and practices.

A number of theories have attempted to explain the emergence of new religious movements (NRMs), inter alia, deprivation, revitalisation, and brainwashing. This study focuses on one of these theories, namely, revitalisation, but also favours a holistic approach to an understanding of the NAR.

**Keywords:** New Apostolic Reformation, Pentecostalism, Revitalisation,

## **Introduction**

Almost a decade and a half ago C. Peter Wagner, in his book, *Churchquake* (1999: 5) contended that 'The greatest change in the way of doing church since the Protestant Reformation is taking place before our very eyes'. He was referring to what has come to be known as the New Apostolic Reformation (NAR). According to Wagner (1999:5),

The New Apostolic Reformation is an extraordinary work of God at the close of the twentieth century, which is, to a significant extent, changing the shape of Protestant Christianity around the world...new forms and operational procedures began to emerge in areas such as local church government, interchurch relationship, financing, evangelism, missions, prayer, leadership selection and training, the role of supernatural power, worship and other important aspects of church life...for the most part they are taking the form of loosely structured apostolic networks. In virtually every region of the world, these new apostolic churches constitute the fastest growing segment of Christianity.

Very often the call for the 'constant need for new wineskins' is heard (Wagner 1999: 15-17). It is adduced that the new wine of the NAR cannot be contained in the old wineskins of denominational structures and processes.

## **The Present State of the New Apostolic Reformation in the North**

Wagner (1999:8) further claimed that there were, at least forty thousand ‘Apostolic’ churches representing approximately eight to ten million members in the USA in 1999. Earlier in 1998 Wagner (1998:4-6) edited a book called *The New Apostolic Churches* where he listed 19 groupings as exponents of the NAR. Their leaders included: Professor C Peter Wagner, Apostle John P Kelly, Apostle John Eckhardt, Pastor Michael P Fletcher, Pastor Bill Hybels, Bishop Wellington Boone, Larry Kreider, Pastor Roberts Liardon, Rice Brooks, Bishop Bill Hamon, Pastor Billy Joe Daugherty, Pastor Dick Iverson, Pastor Ralph Moore, Dr David (Kwang Shin) Kim, Pastor Lawrence Khong, Pastor Paul Daniel, William F Kumuyi, Bishop Dr Eddie C Villanueva and Dr Joseph C Wongsak.

For all the proponents of the NAR, both in the North and the South, a reading of Ephesians chapter 4 verse 11 constrains them to call for the restoration of the fivefold ministry (of apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers) within the church as the agency of the kingdom. This call has been made before but the *modus operandi* of these ‘governmental gifts’ is different with the roles of the apostle and prophet dominating NAR ministry.

## **The Focus of the North**

Elmer L Towns in the foreword to Wagner’s book (1998: 7-9) saw America

... moving into postmodernism - a time when the Church no longer drives culture, nor does the Church have much influence on society. Our culture is going beyond its past Christian influence to the neutralization of Christianity. We have become open to all religions ....

He asks the critical question, why has the church become ineffective? Towns contends that some of the wrong things have been changed and some of the wrong things have been retained. Also, according to Towns loyalty to the scriptures has been confused with loyalty to ecclesiastical traditions.

Towns predicted churches emerging with new names, methods and worship expressions. New alliances would emerge where the glue that binds

churches together would be the 'Great Commission, winning people to Christ, worshipping God, Small-group Bible studies, energetic worship, gifted leadership and strong personal relationships' (1998:8). These alliances of churches would be committed to the essentials of Christianity but with changed methods of evangelism, worship, Bible study and leadership.

Wagner (1998: 18-19) explained the motivation for the name of 'New Apostolic Reformation' for the new movement. The word 'reformation' is used because this movement appears to be, at the very least, as radical as the Protestant Reformation almost 500 years ago. The term 'apostolic' captures the strong focus on evangelism and a return to the apostolic ministries of the New Testament church. 'New' merely adds a contemporary dimension to the name. Apart from this new name, Wagner (1998:18-25) states that these NAR churches display eight distinguishing features which reflect novel authority structures, leadership training, ministry foci, worship style, prayer forms, financing, outreach or evangelism and power orientation.

The most distinctive characteristic of the NAR must be its constant reference to the seven mountain mandate.

## **The Seven Apostolic Spheres, Seven Mountains, Seven Gates of Society**

According to C. Peter Wagner (1998: 25) the society 'to be transformed is not just one big conglomerate, but a unified whole that is made up of several vital pieces, each one of which must take its own path toward transformation. These segments of society should be seen as apostolic spheres'.

Wagner (2006: 113) outlines the 'strategy for war' for marketplace transformation, and makes an appeal for leaders to 'standardize our terminology' for the '7 spheres' or '7 mountains' or '7 gates' of society that must be transformed. Wagner's list embraces the home, church, school, government & politics, media, arts, entertainment & sports, commerce and science & technology.

These seven spheres of influence play a critical role in the shaping societies. Wagner writes further:

... [Wallnau] calls them the seven mountains. The warfare strategy is

*Irvin G. Chetty*

that ‘if the world is to be won, these are the mountains that mold the culture and the minds of men. Whoever controls these mountains controls the direction of the world and the harvest therein’ (2006: 114).

These seven spheres or mountains are perceived as having ‘principalities and powers that control’ them. Wagner goes on to describe how each of these seven mountains or spheres will become an ‘apostolic sphere.’ Apostles ‘are the only ones who will be able to change the power structure at the top of each mountain’ (2006: 114). Wagner calls these ‘extended church apostles’ who ‘will be able to lead the army of God into those strategic battlefields’. He then again refers to Wallnau:

How do we go about reclaiming the mind molders of nations, and what does this have to do with you and your calling to the marketplace? Everything! You are about to be drafted into an elite unit of marketplace commandoes .... Look at your occupational field and see it as a mountain. What companies and people are at the top of that mountain? Why are they at the top? What skills, knowledge, and personal characteristics are needed to occupy that position? What would need to exist for you to occupy the top of that mountain?’ (2006: 115).

While Lance Wallnau popularized the idea of seven mountains through his DVDs it was Johnny Enlow, who authored the book called ‘The Seven Mountain Prophecy’ (2008: 115).

## **The Present State of the New Apostolic Reformation in the South**

Within the global south Pentecostal/Charismatic spheres a new configuration of churches, aligning themselves to the New Apostolic Reformation, has also appeared. They comprise the following groupings: Judah Kingdom Alliance (JKA), New Covenant Ministries International (NCMI), Grace International (GI), Congress World Breakthrough Network (C-WBN), and International Strategic Alliance of Apostolic Churches (ISAAC).

According to T.R. Naidoo (2009: 48-51), at an Apostolic School of

Ministry conducted in 2005, the idea of networking with alike-minded churches was discussed. A relational model as the one used by David at 'Hebron' of a seamless 'alliance' to galvanise the fragmented nation of Israel was tabled. Churches could achieve a common goal through such an alliance while maintaining their existing affiliation or independence. These and subsequent meetings eventually facilitated the emergence of the Judah Kingdom Alliance (JKA). Sagie Govender, Frans du Plessis, Thamo Naidoo, Eddy O' Neill, Shaun Blignaut, Ben Kleynhans, Maxwell Ramashia, Alexander Chisango and Kobus Swart formed the core leadership structure of this alliance.

### **The Focus of the South**

A comparable growing concern, like their NAR Northern counterparts, of the lack of efficacy of the church, especially in the post-*Apartheid* South Africa has been evident in the South. The Northern influences on the South are inescapable given the fact of our global village. Apart from easy access to information, the existence of satellite Christian television platforms allow for viewing in 'real time' rendering the influence instantaneous.

In the South there has also been a disquiet and restlessness. In some sectors a measure of disillusionment has appeared. The old pattern of 'doing church' has led to this stalemate. While proponents of the NAR are grateful to their denominations for being the vehicle that 'led' them to Christ, they do not feel obligated to propagate their church traditions within their communities. They view this as vestiges of ecclesiastical colonialism. They were previously often 'prohibited' from fraternising with their ministerial colleagues within the same *locale*. Their similar socio-political and economic context has now catalysed them to 'even more zealously' re-examine the scriptures through 'postcolonial and post denominational eyes.' There are now very few 'Holy Cows,' with little being untouchable and beyond scrutiny.

The earlier mentioned eight characteristics (of a new authority structure, new leadership training, new ministry focus, new worship style, new prayer forms, new financing, new outreach or evangelism and new power orientation) as outlined by Wagner (1998:18-25) continue to also play a decisive role in shaping the focus of the Southern NAR.

In addition to the opening references to the fivefold pattern of ministry of Ephesians 4:11, an important text for the NAR of the South is 1 Corinthians

12:28, “‘And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondly prophets, thirdly teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, divers kinds of tongues’ (ASV). The primacy of the apostolic and prophetic offices within the NAR should be noted. The apostle also functions in the role of a teacher, by ‘accurately’ decoding God’s divine blueprint for this season.

This paper will use the example of the JKA to offer some insight into the NAR of the South. After their formation the JKA subscribed to the following objectives:

- ‘The JKA is a global apostolic alliance comprising of diverse autonomous ministries, churches and individuals who have covenanted to partnership in seamless relationships in order to advance the Kingdom of God in the earth. It was emphatically stated that the JKA will not be promoted but the ‘kingdom of God in every city and nation.
- The JKA was founded on the premise that the household of God is built on the foundation of Christ Jesus as laid by the apostles and prophets (1 Corinthians 3: 11, Ephesians 2: 20). The JKA is committed to the furthering of the apostle’s doctrine (Acts 2: 42), as entrenched within and revealed through the infallible word of God.
- The JKA represents an alliance of elders who are passionately dedicated to the re-establishing of ancient truths and lost principles (Isaiah 58: 12), ensuring the perpetuation of God’s divine order and technologies in the earth’ (Naidoo 2009:48-49).

Subsequent to the formation of the JKA there were a steady stream of enquiries by independent and denominational ministers about joining this alliance for fellowship and interaction with the NAR while remaining within their denominations.

## **NAR and Evangelism in the North**

The NAR, as was noted earlier, is the fastest growing part of Christianity that is motivating non-denominational churches and leaders to fulfill the Great Commission. Aggressive outreach seems to be a common feature of this

movement. According to Wagner (1999: 183) their evangelism involves four distinct tasks: '(1) expanding the local church, (2) planting new churches, (3) mercy ministries in the surrounding community and (4) cross-cultural missions'.

## **NAR and Evangelism in the South**

The Great Commission of the gospels (now viewed by the proponents of the NAR as the second Great Commission) is an integral feature of Southern NAR practice. The earlier mentioned primacy of the apostolic office has an embedded connotation of evangelism from the Greek term *apostello* (literally meaning 'to send'). Using terminology from genetics, proponents of the NAR would often contend that evangelism is an integral component of apostolic DNA. It can be easily observed, especially in the South, that there is also a penchant for the use of computer terminology. References are replete with references of the need to change old operating systems, delete old hardware and old software, install new operating systems, new hardware and new software, format, change the ram, reconfiguration, migration, and the like.

## **Expanding the Local Church**

The tendency with the NAR of the South has been to explore creative, innovating and cutting-edge strategies that 'capture the imagination' of those outside the sphere of the church. More recently the costs and efficacy of the erstwhile popular tent evangelistic campaigns has been re-examined.

This focus on expanding the influence of the local church constitutes the out-reach arm. This is complemented by an equally innovative in-reach programme that nurtures new Christians in the faith in a similar fashion to how children are socialized within families. The Bible calls this disciple-making (Buchan 2001:156). The biblical mandate is not to convert people but to make disciples. Also the Great Commission is deemed as mandatory for all Christians, not just the clergy. Elsewhere, Chetty (*Towards a Praxis Model for Ministry as a Family of Families*, 1988) and Chetty (*Re-contextualisation of the Lukan oikos: A Social Scientific Approach*, 2002) offers helpful perspectives for disciple-making from a family sociology and social scientific New Testament vantage points, respectively.



## **Planting New Churches**

Here again, the South is 'in sink' with the North on the issue of the consuming demands of renewing or planting a church. Accurate Building School (ABS) which relates to the JKA has been in the forefront of planting new churches in Africa, Asia and Eastern Europe. The scope of missions to the nations (*ta ethna*) is a clarion call that has been heeded by the NAR of the South.

The three self formula (self-supporting, self-governing and self-extending) of Henry Venn and Rufus Anderson is being used with adaptations within NAR circles (Verkuyl 1978:184-185). Newly planted churches require support that these networks and alliances are providing. The NAR has noted the interdependent model of the early church. This is in keeping with so-called 'daughter' churches which assisted the 'mother' church in Jerusalem during the first century. Christian support should be viewed as multi-directional.

## **Mercy Ministries**

The previous *Apartheid* context of South Africa has spawned a number of watershed documents: the *Kairos* Document by the ecumenicals, the Evangelical Witness by the evangelicals and the Relevant Pentecostal Witness by the Pentecostals (Chetty & de Kock 1996: 68-87). Pentecostals of the South, like their Latin American who grappled with liberation theology in their context, struggled with the imposed dichotomy between the sacred and the secular. A conception of God as being uninterested in the totality of their lives began to be interrogated. Within the NAR ethos the emergence of what has been termed as a 'Dominion' focus is a response to this false dichotomy.

It is therefore no surprise to discover that RivLife International, a section 21 Company of River of Life Christian Ministries (ROLCM), reflects this holistic perspective. RivLife International 'is a multi-faceted Community Centre representing the social reconstruction and development programme of ROLCM'. The brochure of RivLife asserts that

'Poverty is a historic problem resulting in destitution, disenfranchisement and the lack of access to economic and social privilege. Having identified that this is the case, RivLife aims at holistic community development, which will address spiritual, social, economic, emotional and physical issues'.

The six impact points of RivLife are: Health (HIV/AIDS), Social, Gender, Nutrition, Youth and Economics. It should be mentioned that such a

comprehensive programme of reconstruction and development is not typical of either the JKA or the NAR of the South.

### **Cross-Cultural Missions**

Global Pentecostalism has reflected a shift of gravity from the North to the South. More Pentecostals live outside of the range of the 'northern developed' nations. They occupy the so-called 'southern world.' It is commendable that missions are emanating from the South also. Given then that missions is mandatory for all Christians, its flow should be multi-directional. It is noteworthy that the NAR, by its practice of cross-cultural missions, is gradually challenging, the import mentality of the South and beginning to replace it with an export one.

A caution has been sounded by the NAR of the South to South Africans from either an Indian or African cultural background that to develop an 'urge' to 'send' missionaries only to India and Africa respectively, can become problematic. Given the recent *Apartheid* past of South Africa, the NAR takes care not to create an impression of a 'mono-cultural ethnic sending God'. They contend that God called Abraham out from his people. The NAR of the South is correct when it asserts that the God of the Bible transcends ethnicity.

The next focus of this paper will be upon the nature and extent of the deviation of the NAR from erstwhile Pentecostal doctrines and practices.

### **NAR as a Neo-Pentecostal Movement or Post-Pentecostal Phenomenon**

The similarities of the NAR with the erstwhile dominion theology & the Restorationist Latter Day Saints Movement should be noted, especially in the South where the NAR is gaining ground. Proponents of the NAR, in both hemispheres have often made references to the necessity of new wineskins. Generally, the NAR does not see any elements of continuity between any old order and their new movement.

### **Deviation from Pre-Millennialism**

For most Christians present actions largely determines the future. They believe

they will ‘reap what they sow.’ In stark contrast, for most Pentecostals the future determines the present. Their view of eschatology governs their view of current events. Their interpretation of prophecy has had a very significant effect on their perception of world historical events and on their political and social response to those events. On a smaller scale their eschatological views have affected their own history by stimulating evangelistic and missionary endeavour (Wilson 1988: 264).

Major sectors of Christianity throughout church history have displayed little interest in developing an elaborate millennial eschatology. The passage of 1000 years is simply an indicator of Christianity's historical age. As with many other newer religious movements, the term millennium has a special meaning for Pentecostals, who have developed a set of theological categories which are both distinctive and controversial. Most of their forebears, deriving their doctrine from a fundamentalist interpretation of the Bible, declared themselves to be premillennialists who expected a second advent of Christ to occur prior to the establishment of a one-thousand-year reign of Jesus Christ described in Revelations 20:1-7. For many Pentecostals, this premillennial belief could be further described as pretribulation (rather than mid- or post-tribulation). Adherence to a pretribulation posture guarantees believers that the ‘rapture’ (sudden removal of Christians from the earth before the great Armageddon) will spare them of the terror and destruction destined to fill the earth before the promised thousand-year reign of Christ. In contrast to some premillennialists who view the fulfillment of biblical prophecies as gradually unfolding within the long history of the church, most Pentecostal (and fundamentalist) premillennialists are futurists who expect the major fulfillment of biblical prophecy to occur in the imminent future. This unique millennial eschatology was especially significant for early Pentecostals who focused on the second coming of Christ rather than creature comforts and this-worldly gain, using their limited resources to spread the Gospel in the ‘last hour’ of human history, as it was known.

The NAR, in contradistinction to this common premillennial view of Pentecostals, favour a postmillennial position. Is the NAR a post-Pentecostal movement with this deviation from a cardinal Pentecostal doctrine? According to the NAR only when the seven mountains are infiltrated, influenced and eventually dominated will the *parousia* occur.

## **A Renewed Focus on Prophecy versus Glossolalia**

Early Pentecostals, records Pentecostal historian Edith Blumhoffer, 'intentionally ignored historical tradition, opting rather for biblical terminology and precedent'. Their leaders worked during the early decades of the 20th century to mobilize resources 'for a brief and intense spurt of activity they thought would usher Christ's return' (1993: 4). Although Pentecostals shared their restorationist worldview with other fundamentalists, they differed in their belief that the birth of Pentecostalism with the fresh outpouring of the Spirit was 'itself a fulfillment of end-time prophecy' (Wilson 1988: 264). As did the Apostle Peter (in the Acts of the Apostles 2:16-21) nearly two thousand years earlier on the Jewish feast of Pentecost, Christian Pentecostals have continued throughout the 20th century to proclaim that the words of the prophet Joel (Joel 2:28-32) are now being fulfilled:

In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams. Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days, and they will prophesy. I will show wonders in the heaven above and signs on the earth below, blood and fire and billows of smoke. The sun will be turned to darkness and the moon to blood before the coming of the great and glorious day of the Lord. And everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved (NIV).

An appreciation of the meanings attached to and functioning of prophecy is an important key to understanding Pentecostalism at the onset of this third millennium. Although glossolalia, the often self-identified factor said to distinguish this rapidly growing world-wide Pentecostal movement from other approaches to Christianity, has been the subject of more scholarly studies, prophecy has always been an integral part of Pentecostalism's beliefs and practices. Different groups have emphasized different outward signs of the Spirit-baptism sought by Pentecostal believers. However, these diverse Pentecostal sects and denominations are agreed that such baptism will be accompanied by paranormal experiences, including glossolalia (speaking in tongues), healing, demonic deliverance, miracles and prophecy. As we enter into the second decade of the present millennium, it appears that the prophecy is

increasing in importance. Theological nuances about prophecy continue to proliferate within the many streams of the Pentecostal movement.

The NAR, in the South, emphasizes prophecy at the expense of glossolalia. Is the NAR then a post-Pentecostal movement with this deviation from this important Pentecostal practice? The practice in most NAR formations both in the North and the South show a growing movement away from glossolalia.

### **A Selective Hermeneutic**

Given the selective fundamentalist and allegorical interpretation of biblical passages, a comment on the hermeneutics of the NAR is warranted. In the history of hermeneutics the dangers of an unbridled allegorical interpretation as a license for a 'wax-noise' method is generally acknowledged. Extreme should therefore be taken not to subvert the *theopneustos* (God-breathed) meaning of scripture for any narrow, distorted *eisegesis* (reading in) of our own presuppositions and biases. The legacy of Pentecostal's problematic fundamentalist interpretation of certain passages of scripture is still a rampant practice. The challenging goal of exegesis (drawing out) of the Holy Spirit-inspired meaning should remain an ardent pursuit of every adherent in vintage 'Berean' style. These Bereans were people who were characterised as those who 'searched the scriptures daily' (Acts 17: 11). Ironically, the NAR of the South often quote this text without any rigorous commensurate searching like these Bereans.

### **Theories to Explain the Emergence of the New Apostolic Reformation**

A number of theories have attempted to explain the emergence of new religious movements (NRMs), *inter alia*, deprivation, revitalisation, and brainwashing (Glock 1964: 24-36; Turner 1979). This study focuses on one of these theories, namely, revitalisation, but also favours a holistic approach to an understanding of the NAR.

## **Revitalization Theories**

NRMs can reflect a range from Utopian, reformist, messianic, revivalist to that of charismatic. Wallace proposes the term revitalization to designate all the nuances implied in these terms. He defines a 'revitalization movement' as a 'deliberate, organized, conscious effort by members of a society to construct a more satisfying culture' (1956: 265). The persons involved in this process feel that the cultural system in which they are living is unsatisfactory. This was the case with the NAR of the South. Mainline Pentecostalism was not addressing their concerns which led to a feeling of gross discontent. As a result, the emerging NAR tried to change it, not gradually, but immediately and radically. In tandem with the revivalist notion, the NAR also positions itself as a restorationist movement. It seeks to restore the pristine lost teachings and practices of the early church. In many parts of the world, NRMs have been explained according to this revitalization model. Here, we will focus on the messianic and millenarian, expressions of this theory.

Messianic movements 'crystallize around a single figure who is regarded as a new messiah' (Jules-Rosette 1987: 84). Those figures around whom these groups centre are leading personalities who claim to be a new Christ, or who claim to be his or her direct messenger and last prophet. The founders of the NAR are individuals who have a charismatic personality which enables them to create new religious answers or, at least, to restore the earlier discarded ones. In the case of the NAR of the South, claims emerge of being an apostle or a prophet, a type of 'set man' from God who accurately discerns this present *kairos* (season). This charismatic emissary, upon receipt of 'microns of grace' disseminates the divine strategy to its adherents.

Millenarian movements centre on the promise of life in a Golden Age, which is 'an ideal end point at which a new world will be established' (Jules-Rosette 1979: 19). These movements are not new. They were particularly active during the Middle Ages, when they functioned as a catalyst for the lower classes in times of disaster, poverty, sickness, and also as a response to authoritarian forms within the Church. The NAR of the South, with its new focus on the Seven Mountains Mandate, also predicts a golden era when these seven spheres are initially infiltrated, then influenced and eventually dominated. This essentially would imply that in the economic sphere there would be a wealth transfer from 'non-adherents' to adherents of the NAR.

## **Evaluation of the Theoretical Models**

Deprivation theories give too much importance to the negative factors contributing to the origin of NRMs, whereas revitalization theories emphasize positive ones. There is a hope for better days, the longing for an era of plenty where no death or sickness will pervade, the desire for a time of peace and harmony. In the case of the NAR of the South these ideals and dreams are realised in the arrival of the charismatic apostle and / or prophet mobilising the 'faithful' to dominate the seven spheres of society.

Deprivation theories were used to explain the origin and development of the Pentecostal movement where the marginalised adherents moved from the periphery to the centre of society. Perhaps a modified understanding of deprivation could throw some light on the emergence of the NAR. There was a growing dissatisfaction of functioning as consumers of wealth with an ardent longing to become elevated as creators of wealth. Being at the centre of society was still a situation of deprivation. Adherents aspired to graduate to the status of owners and leaders. NAR adherents boldly proclaimed that they destined to be the 'heads and not the tails'. Thus, the NAR, are an answer, among others, not only to particular problems, but to a whole set of desires, and dreams.

Both the deprivation and revitalisation theories contain insights which may be very useful for understanding NRMs. However, scholars now favour a holistic approach because there are no single causes. As La Barre (1971: 26) says, 'in the study of crisis cults, the word 'and' serves better than the contentious word 'only'. NRMs should not be explained by a single cause, be it economic, political, military, social, or psychological. There is a need for a more holistic approach which can account for all the variety of phenomena.

The NAR of the South is a southern solution for the challenges of the South. They provide answers for misfortune and illness, for the waning of Pentecostal explanatory systems. A similar growing concern, like their NAR Northern counterparts, of the lack of efficacy of the church, especially in the post-*Apartheid* South Africa has been evident in the South. In the South there has also been a disquiet, restlessness and disillusionment. Old patterns of 'doing church' have proved to be irrelevant and ineffective. Proponents of the NAR do not feel obligated to perpetuate ecclesiastical colonialism within their communities. Their postmodern context has sparked a re-examination of the scriptures through 'postcolonial and post denominational eyes,' with very little being sacrosanct. This 'holy discontent' is viewed by many NAR adherents as

'divinely inspired.' God is an active participant in history, now also through the NAR. To explain the NAR as mere human activity through both the deprivation and revitalisation theories is to miss perennial divine strand.

## **Concluding Remarks**

Based on our discussions of how the NAR has responded to certain cardinal Pentecostal issues, it reflects a neo-Pentecostal stance while on other beliefs and practices it show traces of major deviations from its Pentecostal traditions. The latter could well mean that the NAR is post-Pentecostal movement.

A number of theories have attempted to explain the emergence of new religious movements. This study while focusing on revitalisation theories favours a holistic approach.

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Irvin G. Chetty

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