

An Understanding of Classical Pentecostal Mission:
Azusa Street Mission as
Transcendence of Race and Class, Inculturation and Detraditionalization

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Abstract

The purpose of this thesis is to demonstrate how mission is understood from the Classical Pentecostal point of view. Mission is generally interpreted as the spreading-out of the gospel of Christ. However, by considering the experiences of the black slaves and women in early America, the Classical Pentecostal mission was argued as three-fold empowerment: transcendence of race and class, transformation of Christianity (Inculturation) and detraditionalization (a shift of authority).

撮要

本文目的是要嘗試從古典五旬宗的角度來討論及理解宣教，宣教一向被視為宣揚基督福音的意思，但我們若考慮早期美國的黑奴及女性經驗後，古典五旬宗的宣教卻能被視為三重充權：種族及階級的超越、基督教的轉變（因地制宜的文化適應）及傳統的轉化（權力的轉移）。

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Introduction

Pentecostalism undoubtedly has a tremendous impact in the traditional Christian theology and in the missiology. Throughout the last century, Pentecostalism highlighted the investigation of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit.¹ Besides, regarding the number of Pentecostal/Charismatic Christians, in accordance with David Barrett, it is estimated that the number of adherents in 1995 is 463 million and 100 million more than that of Evangelicals.² This figure makes up almost 25 percent of Christians all over the world. There is still no sign that this growth will decline in the near future. Thus, we would say that no Christian can deny the significance of Pentecostalism nowadays.

In spite of the above accomplishment, it is, however, very difficult for the scholars³ to study the Pentecostal/charismatic movement and its tradition because of its youth, diversity, populist orientation and complexity. One of the most controversial issues is the holistic understanding of mission from the Classical Pentecostal perspective. Walter Hollenweger, a Pentecostal scholar, contends that in terms of numbers, the modern missionary movement is very successful in Pentecostal. Missionaries from the Third World is increased from 2951 in 1972 to 35924 in 1988. It is estimated that there will be 162360 missionaries for the year of 2000.⁴ Because of such great

¹ Lap Yan Kung, "Outpouring of the Spirit: A Reflection on Pentecostals' Identity" *Challenges & Opportunities for Asian Pentecostals*. Asian Pentecostal Society. 2nd Annual Conference, August 25, 2000, p.56.

² David Barrett, *World Christian Encyclopedia: A Comparative Study of Churches & Religions in the Modern World AD 1900-2000* (New York: Oxford, 1982), pp.815-848.

³ Donald W. Dayton contends that "the Pentecostal/charismatic movement has become arguably both the most influential Christian tradition of our time and the most difficult to study." in *Dictionary of Pentecostal & Charismatic Movement*, Stanley M. Burgess & Gary B. McGee eds., (Michigan: Regency, 1988), p. i.

⁴ Walter J. Hollenweger, *Pentecostalism: Origins and Developments Worldwide*, (Massachusetts:

amount of missionaries, a thorough understanding of mission is urgently needed.

Historically, different Pentecostal /Charismatic movements are regarded as a renewal of church. It is common to divide the renewal movement into 3 phases or waves because of its massive surges and profound influence. However, the period of these three waves is not precisely defined and there is no consentaneous compromise among the scholars. For examples, Barrett regards the three waves originated in the years of 1741, 1907 and 1970.⁵ Arnold Yeung, a Chinese scholar, traced the first wave back to the late of 19th Century or the early 20th Century. The second and third waves are in the middle of 20th Century and 1980 respectively.⁶ What the date referred of this thesis is confined within the first wave, the so-called Classical Pentecostal in which the year of its origin is 1901 or 1906.⁷

The main task of the thesis is to investigate the meaning of mission from the Classical Pentecostal point of view. By citing the experiences of the black slaves and women in early America, the Classical Pentecostal mission was argued as three-fold empowerment: transcending race and class, transforming Christianity and detraditionalizing institution.

To investigate the Classical Pentecostal mission, we will go back to the origin of the movement. A Pentecostal historian Vinson Synan recognizes the beginning of the modern Pentecostal movement is the Azusa Street Revival or Azusa Mission.⁸ This

Hendrickson, 1997), p.288.

⁵ David Barrett, "Global Statistics" in *World Christian Encyclopedia*, p.810.

⁶ 楊牧谷：〈靈恩運動〉收於《當代神學辭典(上)》，(台北：校園，一九九七)，頁 193。

⁷ David Barrette, "Global Statistics", p.822.

⁸ Vinson Synan, *The Holiness-Pentecostal Tradition: Charismatic Movements in the Twentieth Century*,

Revival is denoted massive events that ran from 1906 to 1913 in and around the Apostolic Faith Mission⁹ located at 312 Azusa Street in Los Angeles, California.¹⁰ The Apostolic Faith Mission was a committee organized and led by the founder of the Revival, William Joseph Seymour (1870-1922) who was a son of former black slaves. We will mainly explore the nature of the Azusa Mission in this thesis.

In the Revival, we will discuss two experiences: the black slaves and women. Based on the historical black root of the Azusa Mission, we will understand the early history of the black slaves in the American context. By tracing back its history, the Azusa Mission carries two dimensions of meanings. One is the empowerment of the black people by the outpouring of the Spirit: transcending race and class. Another is a mission of an inculturation of African customs.

In chapter one, we will revisit the history of the black slaves in America and understand the problems of the slavery and racism they suffered in the contemporary society from the sixteenth century to the early twentieth century. Mission to the black slaves from the beginning is a purely conversion of pagans from the white dominated Christian point of view. Because of discrimination of racism, they only formed a separate black church. In the beginning of the early twentieth century, the Classical Pentecostalism burst out in the Azusa Street in which led to a large series of missionaries and church planting. One of the most distinctive features was the class and race transcendence of the black. Their inferior and marginalised status was

^{2nd} ed., (Cambridge & Michigan: William B. Eerdmans, 1997), p.105.

⁹ Vinson Synan, "Seymour, William Joseph", *Dictionary of Pentecostal & Charismatic Movement*, Stanley M. Burgess & Gary B. McGee eds., (Michigan: Regency, 1988), p.778.

¹⁰ C. M. Robeck, Jr. "Azusa Street Revival", *Dictionary of Pentecostal & Charismatic Movement*, Stanley M. Burgess & Gary B. McGee eds., (Michigan: Regency, 1988), p. 31.

transformed and improved in this movement. An interracial meeting held in the Azusa Street. The black slaves were really empowered to have equal footings with the white people in attending church, worshipping together and praying together.

In chapter two, we will discuss and argue the mission to the black slaves is an integration of Christian faith into the African culture. It is an inculturation that the one-way understanding of mission (i.e. the west to the east or the civilised to the savaged) is replaced by the fusion of Christian faith into a specific culture. This understanding empowers and enriches the meaning of mission itself. Mission is no longer an imperialism but an inculturation.

In chapter three, we will argue for Pentecostal missionary women who carry a detraditionalizing power by claiming to the power of the Spirit. By considering the history of Protestant women missionary, we will assess their marginalized situation. It is found that the patriarchal church structure hindered the development of women missionary and the formation of women boards. Empowered by the Spirit, women can transform the dominant tradition by their individual calling and gifting from the Spirit. They are not restricted to go out for mission. They possessed the power of de-institutionalization. Further, the mission was generally confined to the medical and educational scope of works. Preaching and healing for the missionary women also enlightened and widened the ministerial domain in mission.

In the last chapter, we will come to a conclusion that the Classical Pentecostal mission, the Azusa Mission indeed, possesses the power to transcend race and class, transform Christianity and initiate de-traditionalization.

One remark should be highlighted that in this study of the mission from the Classical Pentecostal perspective, it is not my purpose to research on the principles of the massive missionaries¹¹ in Pentecostal movement. Rather, we will trace back the roots of Pentecostalism since they give us more theological and historical insights to understand the meaning of mission.

¹¹ Readers who are interested in the development of Pentecostal mission can refer the works of Gary McGee. By taking Assemblies of God as an example, he gives a thorough historical and theological understanding of missions. McGee, Gary B. *This Gospel...Shall Be Preached: A History and Theology of Assemblies of God Foreign Missions to 1959* (Missouri: Gospel Publishing, 1986) and *This Gospel...Shall Be Preached: A History and Theology of Assemblies of God Foreign Missions Since 1959---vol. 2* (Missouri: Gospel Publishing, 1989).

Chapter One

A. Root of Pentecostalism: the Black Heritage

Many scholars strive to get a whole picture of Pentecostalism from its historical and theological roots.¹² It is Donald Dayton who is the one to understand the roots of Pentecostalism mainly from a theological point of view. He comprehensively concludes that the roots of Pentecostalism include five elements: Methodism, the American revival of Christian perfection, the triumph of the doctrine of Pentecostal spirit Baptism, the rise of the divine healing movement and the rise of premillennialism.¹³ This five-fold pattern is very closely related to the historical development of church in America before the twentieth century. He also recognizes and alerts that there are other factors such as cultures (divisions along racial lines or by allegiance to a charismatic founder) that are very crucial to interpret Pentecostal tradition although he ignores them in his study.¹⁴

Walter Hollenweger, in his revised and updated edition of *Pentecostalism*, interprets Pentecostalism from the five different historical roots: Black oral, Catholic,

¹² Scholars such as Vinson Synan, Walter Hollenweger and Donald Dayton try to investigate the roots of Pentecostalism in the United States. Synan asserts that the historical origins of Pentecostalism lie primarily in the Wesleyan-Holiness, Keswick and Higher Life Movements and in the black American church. Quoted in Iain MacRobert, "The Black Roots of Pentecostalism" *Pentecost, Mission and Ecumenism Essays on Intercultural Theology*, Jongeneel, Jan A. B. ed., (New York, Bern and others: Peter Lang, 1992), p.73. Other two will be discussed below.

¹³ Donald W. Dayton, *Theological Roots of Pentecostalism* (Metuchen, N.J. & London: Scarecrow, 1987), pp. 35-171. Throughout the book, Dayton tries to argue and analyse the roots of Pentecostalism in these five dimensions. Further, a Chinese scholar also asserts that the five roots of Pentecostalism, very similar to that of Dayton, are John Wesley and Methodism, the Reformed idea of power for service, idea of dispensational premillennialism, healing in atonement and restorationism. 周學信：〈靈恩神學與歷史探討〉，（台北：校園，1999），頁 70-95.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p.17.

Evangelical, Critical and Ecumenical roots.¹⁵ He lays an emphasis on the cultural factor in the investigation of the origins and the development of Pentecostalism. People, he believes, cannot understand Pentecostal convictions and practices without considering their specific cultures in specific places.¹⁶ He even argues that William Seymour, a son of former slaves, was the founder of the Pentecostal movement because of his “oral black modes of communication”¹⁷. This black root is a good explanation of the fast-growing and influential movement induced by Seymour and his Negro heritage. The black root can be summed up as orality of liturgy, narrativity of theology and witness, a reconciliatory community, worship full of dreams and visions and healing prayer.¹⁸ Hollenweger affirms this black heritage in Seymour’s life that he introduced Negro music into his liturgy at the moment that the music was considered inferior and unfit for Christian worship.¹⁹ But the later history tells us that his African style of worship is very influential all over the world (we will talk later). Therefore, we will focus our discussion below on the cultural black root of Pentecostalism in a missiological perspective. We will trace back this root from the mission to the black slaves and the development of the black church in the United States. The social dimension will be heavily stressed so that we can view the

¹⁵ Walter Hollenweger, *Pentecostalism: Origins and Developments Worldwide*, p.2.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid., p.23. Hollenweger states that in an official report of the Assemblies of God, they have cast their lot with Seymour as founder of the movement, rather the doctrinal formulator, Charles Parham.

¹⁸The reason for the fast growth of the movement lies in the black root. In Hollenweger term, they can be summarized like this orality of liturgy, narrativity of theology and witness, maximum participation at the levels of reflection, prayer and decision-making and therefore a form of community that is reconciliatory, inclusion of dreams and visions into personal and public forms of worship; they function as a kind of icon for individual and the community and an understanding of the body/mind relationship that is informed by experiences of correspondence between body and mind; the most striking application of this insight is the ministry of healing by prayer. Walter Hollenweger, “After Twenty Years’ Research on Pentecostalism” *International Review of Mission* 75 (Jan 1986) 6.

¹⁹ Ibid., 4-5.

emergence of Pentecostalism out of its contemporary context.

B. Transcending Race & Class

a. History of the Marginalized Black Slave in America

i. Social Context in America: Slavery & Racism

After the discovery of the new land of America in 1492, the church became global since the gospel was proclaimed all over the world.²⁰ The land of America was understood to be the end of the earth and the mission of church seemed to fully achieve that her mission was to “make Christ known to the pagans and to bring them salvation”.²¹ Thus, conversion of the pagans such as the West Indians was necessary. Culturally speaking, church mission is to change the savaged culture such as the Indian and the African to the West superior entity. Here we will not discuss the tension between the mission and the culture until the next part. What we study in the following was the social situation of the black slaves in America, and then we will assess the marginalization of the black slaves in church.

After 1500, the black was imported from Africa to replace the Indian as a slave.²² During the years 1619-1830, the use of African labor was so prevailing that the black was not only an economic tool for the agricultural development of frontier America, but also an element in shaping the social value and an important ingredient in developing political relationships between regions. Black slavery became a fundamental of American socio-political life.²³ We will consider two aspects of the black slavery system: the living of the slaves and the business of slavery.

²⁰ Jean Comby, *How to Understand the History of Christian Mission* (London, SCM: 1996), p.55.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p.57.

²² *Ibid.*, p.64.

²³ William L. Van Deburg, *Slavery & Race in American Popular Culture* (London: Wisconsin, 1984), p.3.

It was too difficult to exactly understand the beginning of the slavery in early America. But there was evidence of enslavement between 1640 and 1660 and slavery set on the statute books of Maryland, Virginia and other colonies after 1660. By 1700 African Negroes began flooding into America and initiated a new interracial social and economic structure.²⁴ During the eighteenth century, it was common that all colonies in America constituted their own laws dealing specifically with the governance of Negroes.²⁵ From these slavery laws, we would take a glance at the life of the black slaves. For instance, New Hampshire's regulations consisted of a 1686 law prohibiting sale of strong drinks to Negroes and a special act of 1714 which controlled their going out of doors after nine o'clock at night.²⁶ There were also many different restrictions imposed on them. Slaves were strictly prohibited to wander off their plantation or working places without a "ticket" from their master or overseer. It was not allow for them to congregate in large numbers, carry clubs or arms and strike a white person. Slave owners were even given privilege from legal prosecution when their slave died under "moderate" correction.²⁷ All white persons were entitled to capture any Negro who was unable to give a satisfactory account of himself.²⁸ Therefore, the slaves led lives in a very restricted and inexorable way. They were the groups of oppression and indignity. We can see that the living way between the white and the black people was very different. It involved a racial discrimination and different unequal treatments of the slaves in the society. The

²⁴ Winthrop D. Jordan, *White Over Black: American Attitudes Toward the Negro, 1550-1812* (New York & London: W. W. Norton, 1968) p.44.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p.104.

²⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁷ During eighteenth century, general standards of physical punishment were harsh not just for the black, but also for white men and women. *Ibid.*, p.106.

²⁸ *Ibid.*

black slave seemed to be inferior. Up to this point, we may doubt that since the American history of the slavery was over three hundred years, why did they be deprived of their rights and freedom for such a long time? How many the slaves were in the society?

Statistically, there were nearly 4 million slaves²⁹ out of a total population of 12.3 million in the fifteen slave states in 1860.³⁰ There was almost one slave out of three people in those states. It was not a small number indeed. In addition, there were about 385000 slave owners out of about 1.5 million white families. It means that one-quarters of the white families owned slaves. The proportion of slave to white population was very uneven and varied greatly from area to area, with the heaviest concentrations in the Deep South. For examples, in South Carolina and Mississippi more than half the population were slaves, and in Louisiana, Alabama, Florida and Georgia the slave population was more than two-fifths while in Maryland, the proportion was 13 percent and in Delaware a mere 1.5 percent.³¹ On the other side, there was fifty percent of slave owners owned no more than five slaves and only 12 percent owned twenty or more.³² There were some slaveholders who owned three or five hundred slaves, and even some owned over one thousand.³³ This uneven distribution of the number of slaves in slaveholders resulted in an economic conflict in the society.

²⁹ The great majority of slaves were employed in agriculture, or in occupations relating to it. Out of 2.5 million slaves directly employed in agriculture. Peter J. Parish, *Slavery: History and Historians* (New York: Harper & Row, 1989), p.29

³⁰ The total white population was 8 million. Ibid., p.26.

³¹ Ibid.

³² Ibid., p.27.

³³ Ibid., p.28.

Slavery would be regarded as a labor system and the foundation of a distinctive economic system.³⁴ Some slaves worked in Southern industry subject to the request of their masters. However, this joining force of the slaves in industry resulted in depressing the wage levels. This triggered the dissatisfaction among the white workers who owned no slaves. There was wage competition between the slaves and the working white, leading to many strikes. The white people petitioned city and governments to exclude slaves from their occupations. The series of strikes widened the gap between the slave-as-black and the working white. “Racial tensions”, Parish says, “did clearly exist.”³⁵

Apart from the problem of racism, there was evidence of a widening gap among the white people, i.e. between slaveholders and non-slaveholders throughout the South of America. In spite of the fact that the proportion of slaveholders in the total white population was declining, there was an alarming reality that the wealth of the average slaveholder was growing much faster than that of the average non-slaveholder. By 1860, the slaveholder was ten times as wealthy as the non-slaveholder. It was because of the rising price of slaves. Parish reached a conclusion that “if one already owned slaves, one could enjoy the benefit of the steady rise in their value; if one did not own slaves, it was increasingly difficult to get one’s foot on the first rung of the slave holding ladder.”³⁶ It was obvious that the gap between the rich and the poor among the white became much wider. On the other hand, the slaves under the slavery economy in the society were treated as products or market shares. The slavery system involved the consideration of profitability and efficiency. The value

³⁴ Ibid., p.43.

³⁵ Ibid., p.103.

³⁶ Ibid., pp.60-61.

of a person was subjected to his race and his economic status. The nature of a human was eventually distorted and downgraded to be an object.

We can, from above, understand that in America, the African black slaves lived in an inequitable and dreadful condition. They were totally controlled and directed by the white people. Both the slavery system and racism were injustice and unequal signs in the society.

ii. Formation of Black church

Although the African blacks were slaves, some of them were given the chance to go to church. The attitudes of different denominations towards slavery were diverse. Quakers was the earliest denomination opposing the slavery system since 1776. Methodist banned slavery in 1784 while Presbyterians in 1818. Church started not only to ban the slavery, but also welcome the participation of the black in church activities and services. With the profound influence of the Great Awakening, by the end of the eighteenth century, there were about one quarter of black in the Methodists and Baptists in the South.³⁷ In the nineteenth century, slaves became active members of Baptist and Methodist churches, sometimes representing a third or even half of the congregation.³⁸

The reasons why there were many black slaves flooding into church might be: firstly, the conversion experience was stressed rather than religious instruction. It was much easier for Christianity to access to the illiterate and poorly educated, especially

³⁷ William E. Montgomery, *Under Their Own Vine and Fig Tree: The African-American Church in the South 1865-1900* (London: Louisiana State, 1993), p.18.

³⁸ Peter J. Parish, *Slavery: History and Historians*, p.84.

the black. It was an experiential religion rather than an intellectual, and a converted heart was of greater importance than a theological education.³⁹ Secondly, it was clear that slaves would take what they wanted and needed from their Christian faith and worship in its various forms. They would gain emotional and psychological strength to withstand the dehumanizing aspects in daily life. In the everyday routine of plantation life, Christianity brought spiritual comfort and relief to the individual slave and sustaining power to the slave community. For most slaves, says Boles, Christianity provided “both spiritual release and spiritual victory.”⁴⁰ Thirdly, most importantly, the African heritage was the key. Raboteau, writing of the eighteenth and nineteenth century meeting, maintains that

“where enthusiastic and ecstatic religious behaviour was encouraged, presented a congenial setting for slaves to merge African patterns of response with Christian interpretations of the experience of spirit possession, and experience shared by both black and whites.....While the American slaves danced under the impulses of the Spirit of a ‘new’ god, they danced in ways their fathers in Africa would have recognised.”⁴¹

The slaves’ expression of religious emotion in certain patterned types of bodily movement was influenced by their African heritage. In West African religion and slave Christianity, different practice can be found: “shouting, antiphonal responses, repetitious singing, glossolalia (or speaking in tongues), clapping, foot tapping,

³⁹ William E. Montgomery, *Under Their Own Vine and Fig Tree: The African-American Church in the South 1865-1900*, p.18.

⁴⁰ Peter J. Parish, *Slavery: History and Historians*, p.84.

⁴¹ Quoted in Iain MacRobert, *The Black Roots and White Racism of Early Pentecostalism in the USA* (London: Macmillan, 1988), pp.29-30.

stamping, jumping, swaying the body, alternately shifting the weight from one foot to the other, dancing and other motor behaviour.”⁴² These African heritages gave a feeling of “home” to the black.

Nevertheless, because of the racist and exclusivist practices in the white Baptist and Methodist churches, separate black Baptist and Methodist religious bodies came into existence in the beginning of the eighteenth century. The black slaves not only took part in church with a sense of a personal and egalitarian God who gave them an identity and dignity not found in American society, but also enjoyed the right to control over their own ecclesiastical institutions.⁴³ There were six largest mainstream black denominations in this period. Sanders contended that they “have all been partakers of the history of religious exile in America on the basis of denominational racism.” What Denominational racism means refers to “the marginalization and/or segregation of adherents on the basis of race within a Christian denomination, with the sanction of its leaders and constituents.”⁴⁴ Church in this period was commonly identified according to the race. It was seldom to find an interracial church in America. Benjamin Quarles confirmed that “by 1900 Christianity had divided along the color line even more markedly than ever before...the southern churches were almost completely separated.”⁴⁵

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Cheryl J. Sanders, *Saints in Exile: The Holiness-Pentecostal Experience in African American Religion and Culture* (New York & Oxford: Oxford, 1996), p.18. The first separate black Baptist church was organized between 1773 and 1775 in Silver Bluff, South Carolina, and the black Methodist church was in 1787.

⁴⁴ Ibid. The six denominations include African Methodist Episcopal, African Methodist Episcopal Zion, Christian Methodist Episcopal, National Baptist Convention, USA, Inc., National Baptist Convention of America, Unincorporated, and Progressive National Baptist Convention.

⁴⁵ Quoted in Iain MacRobert, *The Black Roots and White Racism of Early Pentecostalism in the USA*, p.50.

Despite the abolition of slavery in 1865, black people were also concerned that freedom had not brought about acceptance either outside or inside the churches. The need of freedom was often cried out by Black Christian abolitionists. They had proclaimed that God demanded equality for black people.⁴⁶ Horn recognizes the social situation in the early twentieth century that “while slavery had already been abolished, black people still carried the scars of this horrible system. They were still politically oppressed and discriminated against”.⁴⁷ A solution to the inequalities and freedom of the black was demanded in American society. The Pentecostal movement appeared to promise the impending fulfillment of the dream.⁴⁸

b. The Outpouring of the Spirit: Transcending Race and Class

Last part we understand the social context in America, in particular the issues of slavery and racism. We are now going to see the emergence of the Pentecostal movement out of these contexts in the early twentieth century. The beginning of the movement has a very distinctive and unique trait that cannot be disregarded. What the most peculiar and unique characteristic in the Classical Pentecostalism is glossolalia, an expression of the experience of the Spirit in large groups of church participants. Vinson Synan, a Pentecostal scholar in history, recognizes that Charles Fox Parham is the one

“who subsequently formulated the ‘initial evidence’ teaching that is central to the theology of most of the classical Pentecostal churches of the world. This

⁴⁶ Iain MacRobert, *The Black Roots and White Racism of Early Pentecostalism in the USA*, p.34.

⁴⁷ Quoted in J. Nico Horn, “The Experience of the Spirit in Apartheid: The Possibilities of the Rediscovery of the Black Roots of Pentecostalism for South African Theology” in *Experiences of the Spirit: Conference on Pentecostal and Charismatic Research in Europe at Utrecht University 1989*, Jan A. B. Jongeneel ed. (New York, Bern & others: Peter Lang, 1991), p.120.

⁴⁸ Iain MacRobert, *The Black Roots and White Racism of Early Pentecostalism in the USA*, p.34.

teaching holds that speaking in tongues unknown to the speaker is the necessary first sign that one has received the Pentecostal experience. This teaching was based on the fact that tongues appeared as the Spirit was poured out in the primitive church in Acts 2, 10, and 19, and were implicit in Acts 8 and 9.”⁴⁹

Here we are not going to discuss whether speaking in tongues is the initial evidence of the Baptism of the Spirit or whether this teaching is the only understanding from the scripture. What was important was that speaking in tongues was widely accepted and regarded as a common expression of the outpouring of the Spirit in the movement. It was a sign of church revival in the power of the Spirit. Although Parham was the founder of the dogmatic expression of glossolalia as the initial evidence for the baptism in the Spirit, the whole international Pentecostal movement would, however, be traced back to the Azusa Street Mission⁵⁰ led by Seymour

Seymour⁵¹ was the leader in the whole Azusa Revival Movement and the founder of the Apostolic Faith Mission. This revival was of great importance because of its prevailing influence and a profound impact in the formation of Pentecostal tradition.

⁴⁹ Vinson Synan, “Classical Pentecostalism”, p.220.

⁵⁰ Many scholars such as Johns, L. Lovett, Hollenweger, R. M. Anderson and MacRobert affirm the outbreak of the Pentecostal was at Azusa Street in 1906, rather than traced it back to Parham’s Bible School. J. Nico Horn, “The Experience of the Spirit in Apartheid: The Possibilities of the Rediscovery of the Black Roots of Pentecostalism for South African Theology”, p.121.

⁵¹ Seymour was raised amid poverty and the intensifying racism of the post-Reconstruction South. He joined an interracial group called the Evening Light Saints, which avowed the entire sanctification of believers, as the apostles of Christ had been infused with the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost. They believed that sanctification was more than personal or spiritual holiness but had social or community manifestations as well. Seymour thought those beliefs, the presence of women in the pulpit, and interracial worship signified the Pentecostal movement’s commitment to equality and justice in a multiracial society. William E. Montgomery, *Under Their Own Vine and Fig Tree: The African-American Church in the South 1865-1900*, p.349.

MacRobert reports that “many missionaries went out from Azusa that within two years the movement had spread to over fifty nations including Britain, Scandinavia, Germany, Holland, Egypt, Syria, Palestine, South Africa, Hong Kong, China, Ceylon and India.”⁵² The Azusa mission’s own publication, entitled *The Apostolic Faith*, exerted more influence by its popularity. The first issue in September 1906 numbered five thousand while the second ten thousand; by the end of 1907, forty thousand per month were being printed, and a year later, eighty thousand were distributed each month.⁵³

As mentioned before, the outpouring of the Spirit with glossolalia is the hallmark in the movement. But the outpouring of the Spirit is much more than just the phenomenon of speaking in tongues. From the historical development of the Pentecostalism, it meant restoration of human dignity and equality and the transforming power of race and class.

In spite of the fact that black people were still generally despised and treated as inferior by white society, the infant Pentecostal movement still rapidly became interracial.⁵⁴ Synan asserts that “In an age of.....general white supremacy the fact that Pentecostal blacks and whites worshipped together in virtual equality was a significant exception to prevailing attitudes and practices. Even more significant is the fact that this interracial harmony occurred among the very groups that had traditionally been most at odds -- the poor whites and the poor blacks.”⁵⁵ The

⁵² Iain MacRobert, *The Black Roots and White Racism of Early Pentecostalism in the USA*, p.56.

⁵³ Robert Mapes Anderson, *Vision of the Disinherited: The Making of American Pentecostalism* (New York & Oxford: Oxford, 1979), p.74.

⁵⁴ Iain MacRobert, *The Black Roots and White Racism of Early Pentecostalism in the USA*, p.82.

⁵⁵ Vinson Synan, *The Holiness-Pentecostal Tradition: Charismatic Movements in the Twentieth*

interracial phenomenon occurring in the very years of America's most racist period, between 1890 and 1920⁵⁶ was really very striking and contrary to the racist practice and culture.

Mattie Cummings recorded that at Azusa: "Every body was just the same, it did not matter if you were black, white, green or grizzly. There was a wonderful spirit. Germans and Jews, black and whites, ate together in the little cottage at the rear. Nobody ever thought of color."⁵⁷ An Anglican clergyman who was to become a leader in the British Pentecostal Movement, Alexander A. Boddy also reported that

"it was something very extraordinary, that white pastors from the South were eagerly prepared to go to Los Angeles to the Negroes, to have fellowship with them and to receive through their prayers and intercessions the blessing of the Spirit. And it was still more wonderful that these white pastors went back to the South and reported to the members of their congregations that they had been together with Negroes, the at they had prayed in one Spirit and received the same blessings as they."⁵⁸

It indicated that the harmony between the white and the black did exist within the racist period. It was important that not only the inferior black was accepted by the white, but also they took an active role in holding and leading the meeting. The outpouring of the Spirit in the meeting transcended race. It was right for the members of the Azusa assembly to say that the core of the revival was "in an

Century, p.167.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Quoted in Iain MacRobert, *The Black Roots and White Racism of Early Pentecostalism in the USA*, p.56.

⁵⁸ Walter J. Hollenweger, *The Pentecostals*, (London: SCM, 1972), p.24.

ecumenical spirituality which transcended race and class. For the first time in the history of the USA, white church leaders (sometimes from the racist South) were ready to have hands laid on them in a community led by Blacks in order to achieve a spiritual breakthrough.”⁵⁹

It was also interesting to see that most of the participants were white in the meetings continued week after week organised by Seymour and his workers. “There was a total absence of racial discrimination”, Synan noted, “Eventually what began as a local revival in a Negro church became of interest to people all over the nation regardless of race. In a short while the majority of the attendants were white, but always there was complete integration of the races in the services, one man exclaiming, ‘the color line was washed away in the blood’.”⁶⁰ There was no doubt that the Azusa Street meeting, the early stage of the Pentecostal movement, was conducted on the basis of entire racial equality

The equality or interracial nature can also be reflected in the organization of the Apostolic Faith Mission itself. It included twelve elders comprised three blacks and nine whites of which five were men and seven women. MacRobert agrees that the stumbling blocks of race and sex had been broken down in the pulpit as well as the pew.⁶¹ Human respect and equality in race and sex were attained in this association.

⁵⁹ Walter J. Hollenweger, “From Azusa Street to the Toronto Phenomenon: Historical Roots of the Pentecostal Movement,” *Pentecostal Movements As an Ecumenical Challenge*, Jurgen Moltmann & Karl-Josef Kuschel eds., (London: SCM & Maryknoll: Orbis, 1996), p.4.

⁶⁰ Vinson Synan, *The Holiness-Pentecostal Tradition: Charismatic Movements in the Twentieth Century*, p. 109.

⁶¹ Iain MacRobert, *The Black Roots and White Racism of Early Pentecostalism in the USA*, p.56.

The multi-racial and multi-ethnic character would also be found in the Azusa periodical. The first issue of the mission's periodical noted that "God makes no difference in a nationality: Ethiopians, Chinese, Indians, Mexicans and other nationalities worship together."⁶² One of the Azusa leaders estimated that more than twenty different nationalities were represented at the meetings. "It is noticeably free from all nationalistic feeling ... No instrument that God can use is rejected on account of color or dress or lack of education."⁶³ The experience of the Spirit for black Christians was more than personal holiness, it was also power from God to triumph over injustice and oppression in the social sphere.⁶⁴

To sum up, the outbreak of the Pentecostalism is the deliverance of the black from the oppressed and discriminated situation. The mission of the black is to uphold the social justice and restore human equality by the power of the Spirit. MacRobert is right to affirm that

"black people perceived Him [God] as with them in the diaspora, in slavery, and in the racist culture of the United States. They believed that the same Spirit which had been in Christ and in the Apostles was in them as they carried salvation and healing to the urban ghettos of America. Not only did the Spirit equip them to transform society- to obliterate the colour line through the power of love - She also liberated them spiritually, psychologically and socially, transforming poor, dispossessed, disenfranchised, ill-educated, powerless black

⁶² Robert Mapes Anderson, *Vision of the Disinherited: The Making of American Pentecostalism*, p.69.

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Quoted in Iain MacRobert, *The Black Roots and White Racism of Early Pentecostalism in the USA*, p.50.

people who were despised and constantly being told that they were inferior by white society.”⁶⁵

This idea is very similar to the account of Seymour that “Pentecost meant more than speaking in tongues. It means to love in the face of hate, to overcome the hatred of a whole nation by demonstrating that Pentecost is something very different from the success-oriented American way of life.”⁶⁶

Pentecostalism carries a power of revival and restoration among people relation. The mission of church in the Pentecostalism is to fight for human disturbing adversity. Elliott states that

“wherever humanity is being diminished through subjection to forces over which it feels it has no control, there must be an intervention to break the power of that domination. This is so whether that outside force is seen to be possession by evil spirits, physical deformity, or social ostracism. In all cases the external forces must be overthrown so that personal control over individual life can be re-established.”⁶⁷

To help the marginalized and the powerless, it is the Pentecostal mission to empower them and free them from the oppression and discrimination by the outpouring of the Spirit. From the historical root of the Pentecostalism, we realize that the Pentecostal

⁶⁵ Ibid., p.90.

⁶⁶ Walter J. Hollenweger, “After Twenty Years’ Research on Pentecostalism,” p.5.

⁶⁷ Michael C. Elliott, *Freedom, Justice & Christian Counter-Culture* (London: SCM & Philadelphia: Trinity, 1990), p.84.

mission possessed the power of transcending race and class by the third Person of God, the Spirit to empower the marginalised to lead a new and justice life.

Chapter Two

Transforming Christianity: Inculturation

In early America, the black slaves from Africa help develop the economy of the state. They were not only the cheap labors providing an immense labor force, but also the uncivilized pagans that needed conversion from their African native religions and salvation from the superior Christianity. The Protestant missionaries and Roman Catholics saw no relationship between the animism, polytheism, idolatry, fetishism and superstition of African religion and the message of Christ. They planned to eradicate them.⁶⁸ The slaves, therefore, became the targets that the church started missions to them and made them become members or disciples in church.⁶⁹ Mission was perceived as a simple conversion of the pagans. From the black experience, however, we would find that the meaning of mission was, rather than a conversion, an inculturation. It was not the case that the blacks were totally transformed to adopt into the Western culture of Christianity, but their African heritage was also integrated into Christian faith, in particular in the style of worship.

Mission therefore was enriched and empowered in its own meaning. We re-interpreted the mission to the black as an example of inculturation. The relation between Christian faith and the African culture will be discussed. African American Christian worship was the focal point in the following study of inculturation.

⁶⁸ Iain MacRobert, *The Black Roots and White Racism of Early Pentecostalism in the USA*, p.15. Roman Catholic and Protestantism missions began work among the Negroes in the early sixteenth Century and the first systematic mission to slaves was inaugurated in 1701 by the English Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts. Ibid., pp.15-6.

⁶⁹ Some of the slaves' masters thought that the slaves who were the gifts from God were destiny to serve the white. They might not need any conversion and salvation. But the mission to convert the pagans was still the prevailing understanding of church mission. Therefore, the blacks became Christians afterwards.

a. The Concept of Inculturation

The phase of “inculturated Catholicism” was first coined by J. Masson in 1962. It then gained currency among Jesuits in the form of “inculturation”. It was soon accepted in Protestant circles and became one of the widely used concepts in missiological sphere.⁷⁰ Generally, inculturation meant the faith that was incultured in a great variety of liturgies and contexts.⁷¹ Despite the fact that Christianity was originated and rooted in Palestine in the Middle East, it grew up and became widespread in European soil, the so-called the West culture. Christian faith experienced a long historical integration with the West culture. The church unconsciously became the bearer of culture. Thus missionary outreach was a movement from the civilized to savages and from a superior culture to inferior cultures—a process in which the latter had to be supposed the disintegration of the cultures into which it penetrated.⁷² Transforming a barbarian culture into a civilized one was a process of Christianization. It was one of the main missionary tasks. To the African Americans, they underwent an inculturation of Christianity and Christianization of culture.

⁷⁰ David J. Bosch, *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission* (New York: Orbis, 1997), p.447.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p.448.

⁷² *Ibid.* By the time the large-scale Western colonial expansion began, Western Christians were unconscious of the fact that their theology was culturally conditioned; they simply assumed that it was supracultural and universally valid. And since Western culture was implicitly regarded as Christian, it was equally self-evident that this culture had to be exported together with the Christian faith. It was soon acknowledged that, in order to expedite the conversion process, some adjustments were necessary. The strategy by which these were to be put into effect was variously called adaptation or accommodation in Catholicism or indigenization in Protestantism. It was often limited to accidental matters, such as liturgical vestments, non-sacramental rites, art, literature, architecture, and music.

b. Worship in the Azusa Street Revival

As mentioned before, black people were particularly attracted in Azusa Street Revival not only because of the offering of a hope of a genuine racial equality and fellowship, but also the African native customs in liturgies such as worship.⁷³ The African black root had a significant influence on Classical Pentecostalism.

Before the Revival, the leader Seymour preached to a group of black in the Asbury home. After his preaching, there were at least seven people who lifted their voices in an awesome harmony of strange new tongues. Jennie Evans Moore fell to her knees from the piano seat and became the first woman to speak. Some rushed out to the front porch, yard and street, shouting and speaking in tongues for all the neighbourhood to hear.⁷⁴ This amazing phenomenon later developed to be an influential revival movement.

At the Azusa Street Revival, the report from *The Los Angeles Daily Times* of Wednesday morning described the motor behaviour of the worshippers in the meeting:

The devotees...work themselves into a state of mad excitement in their peculiar zeal. Colored people and a sprinkling of whites compose the congregation... worshippers... spend hours swaying forth and back in a nerve-racking attitude of prayer and supplication... an old colored 'mammy,' in a frenzy of religious zeal is swinging her arms wildly about her...Undismayed by the fearful attitude of the colored worshippers, another black women jumped to the floor and began a wild

⁷³ Iain MacRobert, *The Black Roots and White Racism of Early Pentecostalism in the USA*, p.79.

⁷⁴ Quoted in Iain MacRobert, "The Black Roots of Pentecostalism", p.78.

gesticulation... The sister continued until it was necessary to assist her to a seat because of her bodily fatigue.⁷⁵

These strange worship patterns were totally different from the white people. It gained a notorious account of the Revival since it was unacceptable for the white dominated church to worship God in such a way. There were two incompatible cultures in white and black Christianity (later the white and black Pentecostalism worldwide). The white was a literary, conceptual, exclusive, white culture while the black was an oral, narrative, inclusive, black one.⁷⁶ We might doubt that did the black types of bodily expression in worship happen to fall from the heaven? Was it created by the black under their unusually oppressed situation?

Probably, they carried their African cultural values in worship their God in America. Hollenweger recognized that the style of worship at the beginning of the Pentecostal movement was so unusual that a sense of “the spiritual, jazz and blues emerged.”⁷⁷ The black music gained recognition as a contribution by the Negroes to universal culture. There were different opinions concerning the function and origin of the Negro spiritual. It was considered, for instances, as an oral document of events in the history of the American Negro, as a protest against social injustice and as an adaptation of African songs.⁷⁸ In spite of the unknown origin of the songs of the black, it was important that the song was indigenous to the local community and

⁷⁵ Ibid., pp.78-9.

⁷⁶ Quoted in Walter Hollenweger, ‘Towards an Intercultural History of Christianity’ *International Review of Mission* vol.76 1987: 531.

⁷⁷ Walter Hollenweger, *Pentecostalism: Origins and Developments Worldwide*, p.30.

⁷⁸ Ibid., p.32.

reflected the current living conditions of the congregation.⁷⁹ We now proceed to see how the African primordial religious worldviews of God and the worship influence the style of African American Christian worship in the following.

c. African Heritage

Africa was a large continent with a long history and various native religions. It was almost impossible to describe all the religious worldviews and the knowledge of God and their religious practices because of their diversity and complexity. But we will base on the research of J. S. Mbiti, a professor of Theology and Comparative Religion at Uganda, to discuss African heritage. In his book *Concepts of God in Africa*, he studied the subject of God in different African religious and philosophical traditions by collecting data from over two hundred and seventy different peoples /tribes. The study was so rich that it included not only the investigation of the nature and attributes of God in Africa, but also his or her relation to the universe of spiritual beings, man, animals, plants, natural objects and phenomena.⁸⁰ Concluded from his study, a shared African primal worldview was clear that it provided fundamental ways of knowing and experiencing God despite the African heritage was not a monolithic entity. It was a common worldview that God created an orderly world and remained present and was dynamically involved in ongoing creation throughout the inhabited world. He /She created all things in cosmos including human beings whom they were divinely linked and related to all of creation. They therefore related holistically to God, to each other, to the cosmos and to the nature of the earth.⁸¹ All living creatures and natural phenomena were associated with acts of God. Lives were thus

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ John S. Mbiti, *Concepts of God in Africa*, (London: SPCK, 1970), p.xiii.

⁸¹ Ibid., p.18.

marked holistically rather than in separate compartments.⁸²

African peoples perceived reality as one related whole rather than as separate portions. There was no difference between secular and sacred. The 'rhythm of life' was bound up in the cosmos since a harmonious world was created and ordered by Almighty God. African people thought holistically long before the construction of a Christian cosmogony as a synthesis of God's love to the whole world.⁸³ Therefore, cosmic rhythm was the embodiment of divine order, harmony, and permanence. It was also the foundation for the 'rhythm of life.'⁸⁴ This primeval understanding shaped the foundational belief systems of the native African which in turn undergirded African American concepts of worship.⁸⁵

Further, another prevailing African idea and strong force in traditional African life that continued among African Americans was a communal solidarity expressed in terms of kinship or extended family.⁸⁶ Since God was the continuing source of life and sustenance of all creation, the existence of human beings was essentially in the unity of the creation order. Becoming human meant that one belonged to a family or community in the universe. One's humanity was recognized by a sense of belonging under God's creation. Therefore, the kinship system was a worldly assemblage that under creation of God, all created entities were interrelated and inherent to a global family.

⁸² Melva Wilson Costen, *African American Christian Worship* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1993), p.13.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, p.17.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, p.18.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, p.17.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, pp.18-21.

The above two customary notions, the rhythm of life and the kinship system, became the key elements in the formation of the African belief system. This belief system was so important that it help African slaves make sense of their present world in America, aid themselves to achieve identity and continuity, link their experience to the Christian tradition giving them direction to life and meaning.⁸⁷ It empowered them to bear the oppressed circumstances. The interpretation of the kinship system was similar to the Christian concept of “love-your-neighbour”. It provided a foundation of accepting the idea of brotherhood or the sisterhood in Jesus Christ and an extended family was established. This African Christian community in a new land provided a sense of belonging and comfort to themselves in spite of the fact that they still suffered in slavery. The belief system in African culture unconsciously permeated into Christian tradition. With help of the proclamation of the message of hope in bible, the slaves gained a power to withstand the rigorous situation. This further advanced the fusion between their native heritages and the Christian culture.

In a strange and alien land, African people were enslaved, marginalized and oppressed by the people who introduced them to Christianity. This experience served to deepen the need for communities of refuge, which happened naturally when people gathered around a common cause. The gathered community found that they would get in touch and communicate with God and with one another in secrecy as ‘invisible communities of faith’.⁸⁸ The invisible environment allowed free space where enslaved worshipers could hear an anticipated message of hope in God’s world. The personhood and the value of each worshiper could be affirmed. The whole

⁸⁷ Sara Little, *To Set One’s Heart: Belief and Teaching in the Church* (Atlanta: John Knox, 1983), pp.18-21.

⁸⁸ Melva Wilson Costen, *African American Christian Worship*, p. 14.

community could experience freedom, a spiritual and divine freedom, in Christ. Each time a member of the community of faith experienced freedom from bondage, the total community would vicariously experience a newfound freedom. Worship gatherings are opportunities for the community of faith to continually reconstitute and reinforce the spiritual bond within and between congregations.⁸⁹ Worship therefore played a vital role in their daily life and became a point of fusion between two different cultures.

MacRobert related the roots of Seymour's spirituality in Azusa Street Revival to the African and Afro-American past of his people, their experience of spirits, their dehumanization and liberation, their songs and the stories of the Bible that they told as their story. Seymour affirmed his black heritage by introducing Negro spirituals and Negro music into his liturgy at a time when this music was considered inferior and unfit for Christian worship.⁹⁰ The black heritage was integrated into Christian traditions to give out a product of Pentecostalism. It was much more clear in the ritual of worship.

d. Worship

Worship in a very broad sense meant man's act or acts of turning to God. These acts may be formal or informal, regular or extempore, communal or individual, ritual or unceremonial, through word or deed. Most African peoples had the practice of worship of God. Some tribes such as the Dinka and Nuer seemed to spend nearly all

⁸⁹ Ibid., p.15.

⁹⁰ Quoted in Walter Hollenweger, 'Towards an Intercultural History of Christianity' *International Review of Mission* vol.76 1987: 530.

their waking time in acts of worship.⁹¹ Every day living was not separate from worship.

Although written information on the place and use of music, singing, and dancing in worship was little, Mbiti believes that religious ceremonies and rites were often accompanied by one or more of the above activities which were a very popular part of African life in general.⁹² To worship God, African peoples would, communally or personally, sing and dance with different styles, clap hands with cymbals and trumpets. Some rites did not involve either singing or dancing, but for most religious ceremonies, it was impossible to imagine that African people could assemble and part solemnly without singing and dancing in honour to God, or as an expression of their feelings. As the drum was the commonest musical instrument, it was safely assumed that it was used in most cases, though other instruments like whistles, bells, horns and guitars were also used.⁹³

Prayers were the commonest acts of worship, some of which might be long and formal, but most of them were short, spur-of-the-moment and to the point.⁹⁴ Different 'positions' in praying were found in different tribes. They included kneeling, standing (sometimes with alternating with kneeling), pacing up and down, brandishing their spears, falling down, sitting, crossing their arms, clapping their hands, bowing down, looking up, raising outstretched hands and clap, kissing their necklaces, laying down on the ground, spitting towards the rising sun and different

⁹¹ John S. Mbiti, *Concepts of God in Africa*, p.178.

⁹² *Ibid.*, pp.218-9.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, p.218.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, p.194.

bodily gestures.⁹⁵ These practices in worship were very different from the mainstream traditional understanding that was an orderly, rational, motionless and calm. It went without saying that African worships were greatly resisted by the conventional American.

An African originated practice of a ring shout that could last up to five hours was frequently described in praise houses in rural southeastern states, especially South Carolina and then spread to Virginia, Alabama, Florida and Georgia. The ring song was reported in the nineteenth century that “old and young, women and men... boys with tattered shirts and men’s trousers, young girls barefooted, all stand up in the middle of the floor, and when the ‘sperichl’ (spiritual) is struck up, begin first walking and by-and-by shuffling round, one after the other, in a ring. The foot is hardly taken from the floor, and the progression is mainly due to a jerking, hitching motion, which agitates the entire shouter; and soon brings out streams of perspiration.....more frequently a band, composed of some of the best singers and of tired shouters, stand at the side of the room to base the others, singing the body of the song, and clapping their hands together or on the knees. Song and dance are alike extremely energetic, and often, when the shout lasts into the middle of the night, the monotonous thud, thud of the feet prevents sleep within a half mile of the praise-house.”⁹⁶ Although the ring shout was discouraged and even prohibited by church such as the African Methodist Episcopal Church, it was still practiced by changing its form at some places such as the Sea Islands in the twentieth century. There were some who claimed that forms of the “holy dance” originated in the ring

⁹⁵ Ibid., pp.206-7.

⁹⁶ Quoted in Melva Wilson Costen, *African American Christian Worship*, p. 53.

shout.⁹⁷

e. Spirit Possession

In Pentecostal worship, persons with a spirit-filled phenomenon were common. We might trace back to the African history. Spirit possession seemed to occur in all African societies, though in different forms. The possession was induced through dance and drumming. Some African peoples such as the Bemba believed that the spirits of chiefs possessed men and women who then practiced healing and divining. The Ganda had many spirits which possessed people, making their demands known that way. The divinities might also possess a person making him their mouthpiece or medium. The Lamba held that woodland spirits possessed people, becoming visible to their victims who then danced and created songs. The spirits of chiefs possessed commoners, and the person so possessed wanders about the country acting as a healer or doctor and helping people in trouble. For the Ndebele, dreams were a medium of communication between the departed and the living, and significant dreams preceded spirit possession.⁹⁸ All these spirit possessions had their functions and meanings in their native religion. There were many similarities between those practices and the spiritual gifts mentioned in Christian tradition.

With the primal African worldviews of God and the native-born worship patterns, we argue that the mission to the slave in early America as the root of Pentecostalism was a kind of inculturation. It was a general understanding of mission to the black slaves that was a pure conversion from their pagan culture. Rather, it was an inculturation that the African practice was integrated into the Christian tradition, for example the

⁹⁷ Ibid., pp.52-4.

⁹⁸ John S. Mbiti, *Concepts of God in Africa*, pp.266-7.

patterns in worship. The biblical messages of God's word that embraced the eschatological hope in future and the love of neighbourhood strengthened and empowered the black in facing their oppressed context. These two different traditions of African and Christian cultures enriched each one and conformed to produce a composite in Pentecostalism. If we look back to the earlier history, we may find that African heritage included direct involvement in the shaping of Judeo-Christian worship traditions. For instance, by the time Abraham came out of Ur and settled in Egypt; and the formulation of theological statements and the shaping of significant creeds in church were inspired by several prominent African leaders such as Clement, Origen, Tertullian and Augustine. The influence of the African culture was undeniably laden in the early church.⁹⁹ It was not a quarrel of "kernel and husk" among the two cultures. We might stress on the need of the community at its context. African black cultures or the Christian traditions was the resources that help the community to withstand the injustice and inhuman oppression and empower themselves to restore a society of peace, love and justice.

Conclusively, there were two meanings of Pentecostal mission in above study. Before the outburst of the Classical Pentecostalism, mission to the black induced an inculturation of African customs in the American Christianity. Mission could be regarded as an inculturation, rather than an imperialistic personal conversion or a salvation of human spirit. It empowered the meaning of mission. Also, the beginning of the Pentecostal movement led to the founding of the Apostolic Faith Gospel Mission which in turn initiated the massive missionaries in the early twentieth century. The interracial church was set up and the harmony between the white and

⁹⁹ Melva Wilson Costen, *African American Christian Worship*, p.14.

black were achieved in this movement. Therefore, the movement carried a power of transcending race and class.

Chapter Three

Yielding Detraditionalization

One of the most distinctive features in Azusa Mission was the active leading role of women. They were given an equal right with men in the leadership of the Azusa Revival and in spreading its message across America and the world. There was a committee consisting of twelve-people whom they were responsible for granting licenses to those missionaries approved by the Azusa Movement. Over half of the committee were women.¹⁰⁰ Pentecostalism offers them unaccustomed opportunities for authoritative leadership in missionary works. Also, different from the norm of other churches, Pentecostal women were allowed to preach.¹⁰¹ It was an unusual practice in mainline traditional church. By the middle of the twentieth century, Synan acclaims, the Pentecostals had more women preachers than any other branch of Christianity.¹⁰² It seems that women in Pentecostalism were given more opportunities and freedom in managing and leading church. What is the reason that makes Pentecostal women in Azusa Mission have the chance to play the leading role in missionary works that have long been dominated by men? Why is there a difference between the role of women in the Azusa Mission and the mainstream traditional church?

¹⁰⁰ Dana L. Robert, *American Women in Mission: A Social History of Their Thought and Practice*, (Macon: Mercer, 1996), p.242.

¹⁰¹ Vinson Synan, *The Holiness-Pentecostal Tradition: Charismatic Movements in the Twentieth Century*, p.190.

¹⁰² Ibid. By 1995, the Assemblies of God in the United States claimed no less than 4961 ordained women out of 31752 credentialed ministers (15.3%), with 359 of these serving as senior pastors. In the Pentecostal Holiness Church, which ordained women from the beginning, no less than 17% of all licensed and ordained ministers in 1992 were women.

a. Marginalization of Women in Mission

It is evident that women often constitute a large portion of the whole congregation in church. They also played a vitally important role in missionary history. In spite of the fact that they actively participated in missions, they have, however, been largely forgotten by the mission historians.¹⁰³ It was hard to find out any shadow of women in mission history. It seems that women unavoidably became the groups of marginalized in the history of mission. We may investigate this oppressive history and then discuss it related to the patriarchal Christian tradition.

i. Masculine Domination of Missionary Societies

During the late of eighteenth century, there were many missionary societies established. For examples, the Baptist Missionary Society formed by Carey and his friends in 1792, the London Missionary Society in 1795, the Church Missionary Society in 1799, both the Union New York Missionary Society and the Northern Missionary Society in the State of New York in 1796, the Connecticut Missionary Society in 1798 and the Massachusetts Missionary Society in 1799.¹⁰⁴ These newly developed and organized societies contributed much to the success of the Protestant mission in the following century. Nevertheless, the above mentioned missionary societies were surprisingly consisted of men only. What women might do was “to encourage their men in such good work, to pray for the new societies, and to accompany their husbands to the preaching of the annual sermons.”¹⁰⁵ It was

¹⁰³ Quoted by Ruth A. Tucker, “Women in Missions: Reaching Sisters in ‘Heathen Darkness’”, in *Vessels: Foreign Missions 1880-1980*, Joel A. Carpenter & Wilbert R. Shenk eds. (Michigan: Grand Rapids, 1990), p.252.

¹⁰⁴ R. Pierce Beaver, *All Loves Excelling: American Protestant Women in World Mission* (Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1968), p.16.

¹⁰⁵ R. Pierce Beaver, *All Loves Excelling: American Protestant Women in World Mission*, p.17.

difficult for women, although they were well educated, to make any decision about themselves in taking part in mission inside this masculine dominated world.

ii. Traditional Roles of Women

Apart from the very minority of women in the mission societies, different traditional roles and concepts towards women also hindered their engagement in mission, and some even strongly discouraged their involvement in missionary tasks.

Patterson explained why women were long been in subordinate roles from sociological perspective. She traced back the history to the Industrial Revolution. Many families left the farms for the cities while the Industrial Revolution took over. It was common that middle-class women stayed home as men went to work. Men became the sole providers. Many married women contributed nothing to the family income. Men became providers and their status depended heavily on their being good providers. Woman being an unproductive member in the family became in a subordinated and inferior rank. This understanding of women's roles was profoundly rooted in society and therefore, their involvement in missions became restrained and passive.¹⁰⁶

Aduna Gnanadason, an interim associate convenor of WCC, believed that the contributions to the missionary and evangelistic tasks of the church throughout its history from women had been very inadequately recorded. Gnanadason explained that "women's selfless and devoted service to the church had often been trivialized or counted for nothing. Women and the gifts they bring have been marginalized,

¹⁰⁶ Virginia Paterson, "Women in Missions: Facing the 21st Century", *Evangelical Missions Quarterly* 25 (1989): 64.

because it is assumed that it is but natural that they give so much of their time and talents, voluntarily, to the life of church and the community, both in upholding the faith of the church and in spreading the “good news” they have experienced as they struggle for dignity and humanhood. What women offer to the church is often considered peripheral because it is seen as an extension of their “housewifely” tasks.”¹⁰⁷ Therefore, the endless effort and thankless service to the community are not properly valued as they should be.

The American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM) being the first American sending agency established in 1810 was an influential and systematic missionary organization in the early nineteenth century.¹⁰⁸ The ABCFM held a belief that “men should not be asked to go abroad without wives and that Christian family life was part of an effective missionary witness.”¹⁰⁹ That means it was better for men to go for mission after getting married than as a single person. However, it was not the case for women. It was an unusual practice to send out an unmarried female on missions.

iii. Opposition of a Single Woman as a Missionary

Rufus Anderson, who became Secretary of the ABCFM in 1823 and whose forty-three-year holding in that position saw him emerge as the most significant strategist and administrator of an expanding American foreign mission movement. His main argument of opposing the sending-out of women was of practical reason,

¹⁰⁷ Aruna Gnanadason, “Women in the Ecumenical Movement,” *International Review of Mission (IRM)* 81 (1992): 237.

¹⁰⁸ R. Pierce Beaver, *All Loves Excelling: American Protestant Women in World Mission*, p.25.

¹⁰⁹ Ann White, “Counting the Cost of Faith: America’s Early Female Missionaries”, *Church History* 57, 1 (March 1988), p.19.

rather than a theological one. Once he wrote in 1836 that “the result to which missionary societies and missionaries generally have been conducted is, that unmarried females should rarely be sent on missions, except in connection with families to which they are related by ties of nature or of intimate and endeared friendship, and where it is known that they would be received gladly as permanent members of the family.”¹¹⁰ It was clear that unmarried women should not live alone and unprotected in foreign lands. The only acceptable living arrangement was residence with another missionary family.

Pierce Beaver showed his sympathy to women who desired to involve in missions but failed to achieve it due to the Mission Board’s restriction. He rightly pointed out that “despite their [female] marvelous achievement through several decades, the single women were still few and still a kind of second-class missionary. They were hedged around with restrictions. Board members were overanxious about their safety. It was difficult for them to exercise initiative. It was the same with all the American boards and societies.”¹¹¹ We may see that unmarried females had no rights to join in missions by themselves. They were discriminated under the existing institution. As Anderson retired as the Secretary of the ABCFM in 1866, it was crystal clear that his disinterest in accepting women in joining the missionary works by saying to his successor, N. G. Clark that “I cannot recommend bringing the women into this work; but you are a young man, go and do it if you can.”¹¹² In a nutshell, women who had the vision for missionary service were barred from serving overseas

¹¹⁰ Quoted in R. Pierce Beaver, *All Loves Excelling: American Protestant Women in World Mission*, pp.61-62.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, pp.62-63.

¹¹² R. Pierce Beaver, *All Loves Excelling: American Protestant Women in World Mission*, p.85.

as missionaries in their own right, what they did were to initiate mission work close to home only.¹¹³

There was an increasingly urgent need of ‘helpers’ in the mission field. Since most of the time, the missionary wives did not meet their expectations to educate and share gospel with girls and women in heathen places. It was because they had to handle their house affairs such as nurturing and teaching their children and giving full support and care to their missionary husbands. They often urged for more freedom to accomplish what they hoped to do in the field. There was a pressing demand of employment of unmarried women to carry out such special tasks.¹¹⁴ Besides, an attempt to establish schools in the field gave the chance for women to take part in missions. Since the establishment of schools enabled people to read the basic document of the Christian faith, the Bible and to train native pastors who would help the missionaries and eventually take their places. Women would teach female converts the Bible and prepare these women to be proper wives for native pastors. Thus, women would now be staffed as “female assistant missionaries”.¹¹⁵

However, the works of the female missionaries in heathen land were officially confined in teaching the native girls only. They certainly were not ordained and would have no formal opportunity to do what their male counterparts did.¹¹⁶ Tucker

¹¹³ Indeed, many of the inner-city slum missions were founded by middle-class or wealthy women who were seeking to give meaning to their religious faith. One influential pioneer in urban missions was Phoebe Palmer, founder of New York City’s Five Points Mission. Quoted in Ruth A. Tucker, “Women in Missions: Reaching Sisters in ‘Heathen Darkness’”, p.254.

¹¹⁴ R. Pierce Beaver, *All Loves Excelling: American Protestant Women in World Mission*, p.59.

¹¹⁵ Ann White, “Counting the Cost of Faith: America’s Early Female Missionaries”, p.21.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p.23.

recognized the wide need for many single women who felt the call of God to reach their heathen sisters. They were barred from answering their summons without a marriage partner who shared the same commitment.¹¹⁷ Even when they were sent out as female teachers, the boards seemed to hide the presence of these women and advertised their work very little so as to shield themselves from criticisms. For example, in the month of September at 1839, the *Missionary Herald* declared the mission trip to Ceylon involved a couple with “three female teachers,” but the teachers did not identified. It was common for the missionary societies to disregard the presence of women.¹¹⁸ On the other hand, a prevalent notion that “woman’s work in the foreign field must be careful to recognize the headship of man in ordering the affairs of the Kingdom of God”¹¹⁹ might downgrade the value of women’s work. The inferior rank of women in mission and the lack of recognition by men were further shaped. But was it impossible for the single women to enjoy their rights in taking part in the mission? The setting-up of their own women’s boards might be the answer they mostly desired.

iii. Resistance of Setting-up of Women’s Board

The emergence of the women’s boards was an important and new development between 1860 and 1900. Up to 1900, there were numerous missionary boards in Canada and United States, ninety-four sending and forty-three supporting agencies in the United States.¹²⁰ By 1900, there were forty-one women’s boards in the United

¹¹⁷ Ruth A. Tucker, “Women in Missions: Reaching Sisters in ‘Heathen Darkness’”, p.255.

¹¹⁸ R. Pierce Beaver, *All Loves Excelling: American Protestant Women in World Mission*, pp.60-61.

¹¹⁹ It was made by the secretary of the American Baptist Missionary Union in 1888. Quoted in Gerald H. Anderson, “American Protestants in Pursuit of Mission: 1886-1986”, *IBMR* 12, 3 (July 1988): 104.

¹²⁰ R. Pierce Beaver, *All Loves Excelling: American Protestant Women in World Mission*, p.85.

States and seven in Canada.¹²¹ However, the setting-up of the women missionary societies often encountered a great resistance from church boards that were controlled by the men.

Beaver depicts the church was a place of male arrogance and power. The men were most reluctant to share control and ministry with the women. The refusal to the establishment of a women board in Evangelical Association was a very controversial and discriminated incident. When ladies in the Association in 1878 proposed the possibility of setting up a women society, an influential officer of the church gave a very frustrated and discouraged answer, "It will be useless to appeal to the Board, they will not grant permission for such an organization." At last, the request did meet refusal while putting to the Mission Board and it asserted that there was no need of a women's organization.¹²²

We may see that in course of the founding of woman's missionary societies, there might be various resistance and challenge by the dominated masculine church. Even those societies were found, they still met endless challenges. They were criticized by their poor management of administration, frequently over budgeting in missionary program, inability in handling holistic mission works and others.¹²³ Beaver professes correctly that it was unavoidable for woman's societies to rival with the official church organizations, in particular in the financial aspect. Money was supposedly diverted from the denominational budget. What the women gained was

¹²¹ Quoted in *Ibid.*, p.86.

¹²² *Ibid.*, p.102. In 1880, a petition for permission to form local auxiliaries was granted. Four years later the Woman's Missionary Society was organized.

¹²³ *Ibid.*, p.178.

supposedly the church lost. There were other problems such as confusion and duplication of administration, promotion, and finance on both the home and foreign fields.

iv. Unjust Criticisms from Masculine Organizations

There were two common but unfair accusations about the women broads. The first accusation often made by male administrators and missionaries was that the women threw the program out of balance. Women were interested only in their specialized work and did not understand mission problems as a whole. Too much money and personnel put into work for women and children while the general work starved. However, Beaver argued that the reason for lack of concern was the exclusion of the women from participation in the basic program.¹²⁴ It was fundamentally the consequence of the discrimination of women from the involvement in missions.

The second unfair charge was that the women did not pay their share of basic mission work, which had to be done before there could be special activities for women and children. Actually, the women, Beaver suggests, were loyal supporters of general denominational budgets. Their raising funds for their special works were completely apart from the primary endowment to the church.¹²⁵ Moreover, the cost of administration and maintenance of the women's work was relatively low. It was achieved chiefly through two ways. The first was the voluntary basis of the work. The second was the relatively low salaries with an unusual devotion of the single women missionaries.¹²⁶ Thus, the woman societies would spend larger share of

¹²⁴ Ibid., pp.178-180.

¹²⁵ Ibid., p.178.

¹²⁶ Ibid., p.179. All missionaries were supposed to serve sacrificially, but women missionaries

money in their missions.

vii. Widow Case

The refusal of Martha Wyman, a widow becoming a missionary predominantly highlighted the issue of discriminating women in missions. Her husband was a missionary at Ceylon where he had served until his fatal illness. Wyman had long served the community with her husband with great commitment. However, after the death of her husband, she requested the ABCFM to reappoint her as a missionary so that the missionary work would be continued. The Board finally rejected her request and merely allowed her participation without any payment. It was mainly due to her changed status as a widow. That meant as she no longer had a husband to support her, the Board would not pay her for the same work done.¹²⁷

b. Patriarchal Christian Tradition

From above historical review of women in mission, we may observe and summarize two points that explain the inferiority and marginalization of women. Firstly, a subordinate and inferior image of women is profoundly rooted in the society. Different conventional signs of weak, vacillating, emotional and timid were stuck to them. We may trace those labels back to Christian tradition, in particular the biblical passages.¹²⁸ Since there was almost no difference between a society and the

generally existed on mere subsistence salaries. The women's societies and their Federation operated on "shoestring budgets." Almost all officers including executive secretaries were unpaid volunteers. A vast army of women at headquarters, in branch societies, and local auxiliaries all across the land found in this cause the grand passion of their lives. They unstintingly devoted time, energy, and abilities far beyond what might be reasonable expectations. It was all highly amateurish and unprofessional.

¹²⁷ Quoted in Ann White, "Counting the Cost of Faith: America's Early Female Missionaries", 26.

¹²⁸ From the Hebraic understanding of women such as Pentateuch, they are subordinate to men and

Christian culture in medieval period, Christian ideas heavily shaped and influenced social values and customs in the West. Therefore, the secondary status of women is inevitably resulted. This dominated tradition also affects and contributes to the next reason.

Secondly, most missionary boards were, from its beginning to the end, dominated and controlled by men. Although there was a period of time that women could have their missionary societies and have their own ministries, they ultimately could not escape from merging into their parent boards and their influence in missionary work was greatly diminished.¹²⁹ For instances, in 1909, the woman's board of the United Brethren Church merged into the general mission board. In 1919, the woman's board of the Disciples of Christ lost its forty-five-year-old separate identity. Women's missions of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, had lost their separate identity completely by 1930. The woman's American Baptist Foreign Missionary Society was merged into the general missionary board in 1955.¹³⁰ Tucker disappointedly recognizes that women's societies were being pressured to merge with their parent boards. The women did lose their influence although denominational boards now readily accepted single women missionaries.¹³¹ The patriarchal institution and hierarchy cannot be removed in the missionary board. Despite the

there are also many patriarchal ideas. In Pauline letters, the inferiority of women is sharply portrayed.

¹²⁹ In 1910, a jubilee celebration of the successful women missionary was held. Their contributions were summed up that in 1909, there were 4710 unmarried women in the field. The numbers of women involved were up to two million and the financial giving was about two million. There were now nearly 6000 bible women and native helpers, some 800 teachers, 140 physicians, 79 nurses and 380 evangelists. However, after 1910, the women's missionary movement declined. Quoted by Ruth A. Tucker, "Women in Missions: Reaching Sisters in 'Heathen Darkness'", p.259.

¹³⁰ Dana L. Robert, *American Women in Mission: A Social History of Their Thought and Practice*, pp.302-3.

¹³¹ Ruth A. Tucker, "Women in Missions: Reaching Sisters in 'Heathen Darkness'", pp.259-60.

fact that women achieved tremendous contributions in missionary works¹³², their effort was, however, gained no truthful credit they deserved. Gerald Anderson rightly identified the marginalization of women by concluding that rejection, discrimination and lack of recognition by men were prevailing in the missionary history of women.¹³³ The inferior rank of women was deeply embedded in Christian tradition. The dominated culture of Christianity is patriarchal in its origin and women often play a secondary role in missionary history.

We may see that Christianity has its long history and practices. It shapes and molds various cultural and social values into invariable and solid terms. One of the typical cultures is the patriarchy in church structure. It is difficult to reform or even subvert this man-dominated tradition. What can tell us from the missionary experience of the Pentecostal women that they are empowered to become the leaders?

¹³² They undergirded the missionary movement with prayer, study, financial support, personnel and diffusion of information. The contributions also involved the publications of periodicals in different denominations such as the Congregationalist, the Methodist (1869), the Baptist (1878), the Presbyterian (1871), the United Brethren (1881) and the United Presbyterian (1887). By 1890, there were 34 American women's societies supporting 926 missionaries in various fields, and together with the married women of the general missionary boards, they composed 60 percent of the total American missionary force. By 1900 there were 41 women's agencies supporting over 1200 single women missionaries. In 1910 the women's foreign missionary movement claimed a total supporting membership of two million. Quoted in Gerald H. Anderson, "American Protestants in Pursuit of Mission: 1886-1986", 102.

¹³³ Ibid.

c. Pentecostal Women in Mission

A historian Synan proposes that “directly or indirectly, practically all the Pentecostal groups in existence can trace their lineage to the Azusa Mission.”¹³⁴ He regarded the revival in Azusa Street as a supremely inceptive place for all Pentecostal parties. We may at first look back to the committee of the influential Apostolic Faith Gospel Mission. There were twelve people acted as a committee. Seven of them were women consisting of two black and five white.¹³⁵ Women in this core society shared the same rights of men in the leadership of Azusa Mission. At this pioneer phase of the Pentecostalism, women had the opportunities to attend and even become the leaders of new evangelistic, educational, charitable and missiological works despite in periods of time when the forces of routinization tried to restrict the role of women.¹³⁶

Secondly, the examples of Aimee Semple McPherson and Florence Louise Crawford might highlight the freedom and achievement accomplished by women in mission. McPherson was the first one to establish a Christian radio station in the United States and also the founder of the International Church of the Foursquare Gospel.¹³⁷ She greatly encouraged the ordination of women preachers in the church. Her upholding the rank of women made the church with 67% of the ordained female clergy in 1944.¹³⁸ On the other hand, Crawford was the founder of the Apostolic Faith Church

¹³⁴ Quoted in Gary B. McGee, “The Azusa Street Revival and Twentieth-Century Missions” *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 12 (April 1988) 59.

¹³⁵ Dana L. Robert, *American Women in Mission: A Social History of Their Thought and Practice*, p.242.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, pp.249-253.

¹³⁷ The church now has over 1.9 million members with over 31000 churches and meeting places in 72 countries around the world. Sheri Benvenuti, “Pentecostal Women in Ministry: Where Do We Go From Here?”, *Cyberjournal for Pentecostal-Charismatic Research* [<http://frontpage.home.net/pctiicyberj/ben.html>] 1 (1997) 5/2/2001.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*

that was an international Pentecostal church. After attending the ARM in 1906, she took charge of a mission in Portland and later launched a worldwide mission in Sweden in 1911 and in Norway in 1912. In 1919, the church purchased an airplane that was used to distribute literature and spread the faith throughout the Pacific Northwest. Crawford, being a woman, was the leader of the thriving Pentecostal ministry until her death in 1936.¹³⁹ What was the reason that transformed or empowered those women in Pentecostalism to overcome the traditionally subordinated practice in missions?

d. The Power of the Spirit: Detraditionalization

Grant McClung in his *Explosion, Motivation and Consolidation* gives out three levels of understanding of the motivation of the Pentecostalism: theological motivation, evangelistic zeal and supernatural recruitment.¹⁴⁰ The following discussion we will only focus on the evangelistic zeal and supernatural recruitment¹⁴¹ in order to resolve why the women would be empowered in Pentecostal missions.

¹³⁹ On one occasion, she felt she was baptized by the Holy Spirit, as evidenced by her speaking in tongues. Unexpectedly, her bodily afflictions including lung problems and bouts of spinal meningitis were healed. She then became an enthusiastic worker for the mission and was appointed as a state director and an itinerant missionary, traveling through California. Later she was invited to take charge of a mission in Portland. Her ministry was called the Apostolic Faith Church. During the summer of 1908, Crawford published the first issue of the church's newspaper, *The Apostolic Faith*, and by the end of the year was producing both German and Norwegian editions. June Melby Benowitz, "Crawford, Florence Louise", *Encyclopedia of American Women and Religion*, (Oxford: ABC-CLIO, 1998), pp.75-76.

¹⁴⁰ Grant McClung, "Explosion, Motivation, and Consolidation: The Historical Anatomy of the Pentecostal Missionary Movement" *Missiology: An International Review* 14, 2 (April 1986) 161-165.

¹⁴¹ McClung considers theological motivation as the literal biblical criticism and its inspired eschatological urgency. It was about the literal interpretation of scripture such as Joel 2:28-32. Since the focus of this paper is mainly confined in mission from a historical standpoint, rather than starting up a new discussion of the biblical criticism of the Pentecostalism. We may ignore the first theological motivation in the following discussion.

Starting from the Azusa Mission, evangelism and missions were the focal point of the movement. People volunteered to go for missions by selling out their possessions. They were possessed with a fired passion to go to the ends of the earth for the Lord so that the coming of the Lord might be hastened. Their raging affections to proclaim the gospel were characterized by a spontaneity in sending forth personnel without prearranged financial help and a careful study of the mission field. McClung regards this zeal of missionary as a 'pure faith'.¹⁴² This pure faith was typically illustrated in a narrative. He quoted an example of an ordained lady Almyra Aston who was sent to India in 1911. All she had was ten dollars only as her departure from California. Miraculously, she arrived the destination where she labored for several years.¹⁴³

Supernatural recruitment was the calling from God for Pentecostals to start missions through dreams, visions, prophecy, tongues and interpretations, inner impressions, the direct voice of God and reading the Scripture.¹⁴⁴ To discover the mission field, people were sometimes enlightened by the Holy Spirit in prayer to hear the name of a place which they had never heard of before and later having to find it. McClung brought up the following example:

It was during this period, whilst I was in prayer, that the Holy Spirit impressed a word upon my soul. It was the name of a town that I had never visited and know nothing about.....I felt that God was speaking to me to go this particular town to establish another church.¹⁴⁵

¹⁴² Ibid., p.163.

¹⁴³ Ibid., pp.163-4.

¹⁴⁴ Grant McClung, "Explosion, Motivation, and Consolidation: The Historical Anatomy of the Pentecostal Missionary Movement", p.164.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid.

The author at last went to Slough in Buckinghamshire and set up a church with more than five hundred members. Hence, we might see the direct calling from God to people (male or female) implicitly possessed a missionary power.

Beside the pure faith and the calling proposed by McClung, the belief of gaining a gift of a special foreign language was also important for missions. The earliest Spirit-filled people at Azusa Street often believed they had received the gift of a specific foreign language for the purpose of becoming a missionary. Many Pentecostals traveled abroad on faith and acted as a missionary to a particular language group.¹⁴⁶ It was common that as people received the baptism of the Spirit with speaking in tongue, they would discover that their tongues were one of human languages gained from the Lord. They then went for missions upon summons. Here we cited two examples. An African-American Julia Hutchins believed she had received the gift of the Uganda language and led a small group to Liberia while Louise Condit and Lucy Leatherman, who believed they could speak Arabic, departed for Jerusalem in 1906.¹⁴⁷ Hence, we might summarize that the pure faith, the gift of tongues and the extraordinary calling from God would be the factors that granted the approval of people including women for missions in Pentecostal tradition.

¹⁴⁶ Dana L. Robert, *American Women in Mission: A Social History of Their Thought and Practice*, pp.241-2.

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, pp.242-4. Other narratives: G.W. and Daisy Batman had the gift of languages and departed for Liberia with their three children. Lucy Farrow received the Kru language and went to Liberia. Rosa Pittman, received the baptism of the Holy Ghost with the speaking in tongues, went to China for mission. Cora Fritsch at first hoped that the gift of tongues would enable two fellow missionary women (Pittman and Beatrice Lawler) to speak Chinese. Her early expectation that the gift of tongues would somehow make language study unnecessary was not borne out. Similar narratives can be referred to Paul N. Van Der Laan, "Dynamics in Pentecostal Mission: A Dutch Perspective", *IRM* 17,299 (July 1986): 47-50.

Similar to these ideas, Barfoot and Sheppard held three factors responsible for the equality of the sexes in ministry in early Pentecostalism:

1. The importance of “a calling”
2. The confirmation of the call through the recognition of the presence of ministry gifting in the person by the community
3. The community’s eschatological belief that they were experiencing the “latter rain” in which “your sons and your daughters will prophesy.”¹⁴⁸

These factors were very critical to the involvement of women in mission since the satisfaction of the above criteria would grant women the right and the power to start missionary works. The third element was the conviction that the eschatological vision gave the Pentecostals the impulse or the motive to evangelize all the lands. An eschatological urgency was being constructed. The first (the calling) was just the same as, in McClung’s phase, supernatural recruitment. The calling might obtain from different ways discussed before. The second element told us that for a Pentecostal, one’s call to ministry should be confirmed by the gifting. It involved a community conformation and an assessment of one’s call. Benvenuti elucidated the validation of the ministry as one was already doing through the empowerment of the Holy Spirit. That was to say, continuing what one was working was simply the validation of one who possessed the gift. For women who had a strong desire in missions, they now had the opportunity to participate in those missionary activities.

Benvenuti agreed that authority was not the issue in early Pentecostalism since authority is not derived through position alone, but rather was found in the individual

¹⁴⁸ Quoted in Sheri Benvenuti, “Pentecostal Women in Ministry: Where Do We Go From Here?”.

who served the body of Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit.¹⁴⁹ With this understanding, the gender of the individual in question became unimportant. It was totally unnecessary to discuss which gender was qualified to serve. Through this distinctive understanding in Pentecostal mission, women were released in the discriminated tradition and the oppressed situation in church. They became a missionary force upon they had the calling, possessed the gift recognized by their community and held the eschatological notion.

Now we may see that Pentecostal women who could go out for different missionary works or hold a leading role were empowered by the claiming on the power of the Spirit. No matter the reasons given, either in McClung terms: evangelistic zeal and supernatural recruitment or the Barfoot and Sheppard three-fold factor, they all have a same focus that Pentecostal missionary women could satisfy no requirement bound by the institution or depend nothing on the approval of the missionary boards. It was a distinct missionary model different from traditional Roman Catholic and Protestant missions. The latter two usual practice was to give missionary all the resources they wanted such as the financial support and detailed strategy. Most importantly, all the missionaries were well trained such as the Catholic monks and Protestant evangelists who studied theology and were proficient at different languages.¹⁵⁰ All these were the qualifications of being a missionary. This was totally different from Pentecostal missionary model.

How would we understand Pentecostal model which often stress on the significance

¹⁴⁹ Ibid.

¹⁵⁰ William Richey Hogg, "The Rise of Protestant Missionary Concern 1517-1914" in *The Theology of the Christian Mission*, G. H. Anderson ed., (Nashville & New York: Abingdon, 1961), pp. 96-7.

of the Spirit? The claim to power from the Spirit is, in a sociological term, a detraditionalizing power. We will use the sociological term of detraditionalization to further characterize Pentecostal missionary.

As we know, Christianity has profoundly rooted in western culture and become a dominated tradition. Christopher Hill once notes that “the Church guided all the movements of men from baptism to the burial service... the Church controlled men’s feelings and told them what to believe”.¹⁵¹ Although this situation was changed so much, we cannot look down on its influence in the church. From the missionary history, the patriarchal institution was prevailing. Women experienced many difficult times in missionary works. The tradition that men hold all authorities and make the decisions in the missionary matters should be under transformation. A shift of authority is needed.

Detraditionalization, Paul Heelas explains, involves a shift of authority from without to within.¹⁵² People in the past feared for the nature and were ignorant to it. What the church told them was the real beliefs and even the eternal truths. The church possessed the supreme power and authority in coping with all life matters. However, in modern time, the individualization is so prevailing that people have their own social and cultural resources to decide what they value, to organize their priorities and to make sense of their lives. The authority is shifted to the person. However, inside the church, there was a different story. The authority still retains in the

¹⁵¹ Quoted in Paul Heelas, “Detraditionalization and its Rivals”, *Detraditionalization: Critical Reflections on Authority and Identity*, Paul Heelas, Scott Lash and Paul Morris eds., (Cambridge: Blackwell, 1996), p.1.

¹⁵² *Ibid.*, p.2.

patriarchal hierarchy. Some of issues such as the missionary decision or the ordination of women still remains the unsolved the matters and women seem to have no voice to say.

Heelas also points out that several processes such as communication technology and capitalism undermine the authoritative of cultural meta-narratives.¹⁵³ That is to say the past grand narratives claimed by church now are under challenged by the society. From Pentecostal women experience, the claiming to the power from the Spirit can be regarded as a dynamic power which transforms the dominated culture in church. Since the patriarchal structure is a historically collective heritage, there are many traditional requirements set by church in missionary such as the disallowance of women missionary before the nineteenth century. By stressing on the individual experience and being called by the Spirit, women in Azusa Mission took the opportunity to go out for mission. Since they did not depend on the financial support from the institution and had no obligation to the church, they were focused what God called them to do. These personal experience construct women's own narratives. Women began to accumulate the social and cultural resources to enrich and transform their images, not only traditional family wives but also missionaries. Detraditionalization has opened up wide ranges of possibilities in the quality of life.¹⁵⁴ By claiming to the power of the Spirit frees oneself to do what he or she cannot do in a dominant tradition. This detraditionalizing power enhances the roles of women in mission. Also, it empowers and enlarges the scope of works in mission. Since women works in mission only limit to several aspects such as education, charity works, prayers and medicine, but now they can preach and start a healing ministry.

¹⁵³ Ibid., p.4.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid., p.17.

What the gifts given to women by the Spirit can initiate different new ministry and missionary works. Different new narratives of women greatly uplift the women missionary history.

One may doubt that if the claiming to the power of the Spirit possesses a detraditionalizing ability, will Christian traditions continuously be detraditionalized and at last result in a tradition of nothing? We have to remember that every detraditionalizing process cannot occur without re-traditionalization. For example, while the patriarchal structure is converted, the institution does not become nothing but undergo a transformation of its structure and ultimately a new transfigured structure will be replaced. This transformation is the result of the re-traditionalization of Christianity.

Therefore, from analysis of the motivation of Pentecostal women in mission, we may find that a detraditionalizing power is associated with the outpouring of the Spirit. This power enhances the flexibility of Christian tradition that pays more attention to the need of the people and the social and cultural context.

Conclusion

In his magisterial work of *Transforming Mission*, David Bosch surveys the whole history and all theological ideas of Christian mission. A former Pentecostal missionary, Veli-Matti Karkkainen, disappoints that the treatment of the significant and influential Pentecostal mission is almost non-existent in his book.¹⁵⁵ That means the understanding of Pentecostal mission still has many rooms to develop. It is the purpose of this thesis to outline and discuss the origin of the Classical Pentecostalism in the Azusa Street. From its two important experiences of the black and women, we would have an elementary and primary understanding of the Azusa Mission.

In the racist period at the early twentieth century, the founder of the Azusa Mission, Seymour and his black heritage started lots of interracial meetings that different people of different races, black or white, worshipped and prayed together. These events were unusual in the society and even inside Christian church. By the outpouring of the Spirit, the racial line was washed away. The Spirit in the meetings empowered the black to get unity with the white, and even organised and led the meetings. The Spirit really transcended the race and class of the black who was long considered to be marginalized in American history.

The peculiar worship patterns that were hardly found in mainstream traditional church in the Azusa Mission brought various criticisms. By putting the movement in the

¹⁵⁵ Veli-Matti Karkkainen, "Pentecostal Missiology in Ecumenical Perspective: Contributions, Challenges, Controversies" *International Review of Mission* 88, 350 (July 1999) 219. Karkkainen insists that this is even more tragic for Bosch's work since it is not written in a European or North American theological ivory tower but in the continent where the most explosive growth of Pentecostalism is taking place.

missionary history of the slaves in the eighteenth century, we notice that Christianity encountered a different African culture, especially the different worship styles. If we believe that Christianity is neither a culture nor a monolithic institution, it is, rather, a good news about love and justice for a person as well as a community. Then, the main task of the church is to manifest Christ to the black and let them encounter him, dialogue with him, opt for him and form a community with him in their midst, and establish a true *koinonia*.¹⁵⁶ The Azusa Mission is, thus an authentic African Christianity, and also an outcome of the inculturation.

With the patriarchal culture in missionary history, women seldom had opportunities to enjoy their rights in missionary works. By claiming to the power of the Spirit, Pentecostal women gained a power of detraditionalization that they overcame the hierarchical structure and initiated different missionary works themselves. This way of missionary model provides a new way for women in traditional church that many women-discriminated rules are found.

The Azusa Mission as the origin of Pentecostalism has its significance in the experiences of the black and women. By outpouring of the Spirit, it is simply a power of transcending (race and class in the black case), transforming (Christianity) and detraditionalization.

¹⁵⁶ Quoted in Norman Thomas, *Readings in World Mission* (London, SPCK: 1995), p.212-3.

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