

THE CHARISMATIC RENEWAL IN MALACCA : A SOCIOLOGICAL STUDY

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SYNOPSIS

Chapter I is an introduction to the aims and purpose, the methods used and the problems faced in conducting this research.

Chapter II deals with the emergence of the charismatic Renewal in the world and in Malaysia. Certain important concepts of this study are defined here. The origin of the movement and its penetration and spread into the Malaysian society, especially into the established churches, are also discussed.

Chapter III introduces the groups under study. A general idea of the forms of worship and activities participated by the followers of the charismatic movement are shown here.

Chapter IV is an investigation of the backgrounds and recruitment of the leaders and members of the various Charismatic groups in Malacca. The aim of this chapter is to give the reader an understanding of the types of people who are attracted to such movements.

Chapter V gives some insights into the workings of the Charismatic groups in Malacca, such as the formation of the groups, the organizational structure, the financial situation, conflict and solidarity between the groups, links and affiliation between the groups and churches and the role of the priests in

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

AIMS AND PURPOSE

In their study, Gerlach and Hine (1970 : 2) have stated that, "A second wave, often called Neo - Pentecostalism or the Charismatic Renewal, attained sufficient proportions to make newspaper headlines during the 1950's and is still going on. It is attracting people from a wide range of socio - economic and educational backgrounds and is spreading into major protestant denominations as well as into Catholicism. The established Pentecostal Churches are enjoying an increase in membership that outstrips all other denominations in the United States as well as in Latin America"

This "second wave" of religious revivals or the Charismatic Renewal, as it is more commonly known, has found its way into Malaysian society. The recent years have seen the emergence of not a few but many Charismatic groups all over Malaysia indicating its increasing popularity among Malaysian Christians. The purpose of this research is to study the Charismatic Renewal Movement in Malaysia, particularly in Malacca. For this purpose five Charismatic groups in Malacca were chosen and their various aspects studied.

The main aim of this study is to offer a plausible explanation of the growing popularity and the spread of the Charismatic Renewal in Malaysia. More specifically, this research aims at gaining some insights into the workings of the Charismatic groups in Malacca - who are the people who join these groups? What is the organizational structure of these groups? Who runs these groups? Where do they get financial support to run these groups? Are they accepted by the established Churches? - these are only some of the questions that are posed in this study. It is hoped that the information gathered will shed some light on the Charismatic Renewal Movement in Malaysia.

Academically, although much has been written on the Charismatic Renewal Movement in the Western World by western authors, it remains a field that has not been thoroughly researched and comparatively little has been done especially in the Malaysian context. Although the Charismatic Renewal Movement has been in existence for quite some time now, it has only become increasingly popular and active in recent years and hence, it can be considered a relatively new religious phenomenon. It is a social phenomenon that cannot be ignored nor considered as just a passing trend or fancy. Indeed, the Charismatic Renewal Movement has every inclination and indication of being here to stay in the Christian World. As noted by Lee and Ackerman (1980 : 809) and Gerlach and Hine (1970 : 2-3), the Movement is

still progressing and has proved to be successful. This success is reflected in its world-wide membership and, its spread across class lines and into the major Protestant denominations as well as into Catholicism. The Movement has resulted in the formation of many Independent groups which meet in converted theaters, homes, church basements, campuses of colleges and universities, etc.

METHODS OF RESEARCH

In this study, the main method of research was participant - observation. In its most general form, participant - observation involves a "prolonged, multifaceted, face-to-face encounter between the observer and the members of a community that is designed to elicit their orientation to their social milieu" (Schwartz and Merton 19 __). For the anthropological study of religious belief, Schwartz (1970 : 27) has claimed that "regardless of the structural complexity of the society in which fieldwork is undertaken, participant - observation is the method par excellence for the empirical investigation of systems of meaning." It was also with the intention of being received and accepted easily into the various Charismatic groups that this method was chosen.

During the course of my two - month research, I attended as many Charismatic meetings as I could. During these meetings, I tried as far as possible to participate fully. The participation included singing, clapping and raising of hands and the saying of prayers.

Due to the short period of my research, I managed to locate and attend the meetings of only five Charismatic groups of which three were made up of Catholic Charismatics, one of Anglican Charismatics and the other of Pentecostal Charismatics. (Although the word "Charismatic" brings to mind certain characteristics or elements of Pentecostalism, the term "Pentecostal Charismatics" is used here more for convenience of identifying the group. By this term, I mean that most of the Charismatics in this group come from established Pentecostal Churches).

Interviews were also conducted with the Charismatics and priests from the different Christian denominations. The interviews with the priests were all recorded on tape and transcribed. However, all my interviews with the Charismatics were not recorded. This is because most of the questions asked were personal questions. Taping the interviews could have prevented my respondents from revealing certain information that could prove important to the collection of data for this research. Also, by not taping the conversations, this was an added assurance that what they said would not be used against them. Before the start of any interview, my respondents were assured that their identity would not, under any circumstances, be revealed.

During the informal interviews with the Charismatics, questions from a questionnaire were also asked. The questionnaires were comprised of fifteen open - ended questions. (See Appendix I) Forty - two questionnaires were completed. The sample of respondents were selected from the various Charismatic groups I had joined.

PROBLEMS FACED

Initially, there did not appear to be any problems for I managed to locate the various Charismatic groups fairly easily. Also, the Charismatics welcomed me quite warmly into their circles. However, their readiness to accept me into their groups can be questioned for as I learned later, just about everybody and anybody is welcome to join the Charismatic meetings. This is the view held by nearly all the leaders of the groups that I had joined. Although I made it known to all the leaders of the various groups that I was a student from the University of Malaya and was conducting a study on the Charismatic Renewal, I was nevertheless still welcomed to join in the meetings. However, to the leaders of some groups, I was not readily accepted. This I found out later in the course of my research.

The first problem I encountered was in tracing the Charismatics when they dispersed after the meetings. Because I am an Anglican, it was easy to get in touch with the Catholic and Pentecostal Charismatics for, apart from being of different denominations, I hardly knew them. Hence, the only time I could talk to them or make an appointment to see them later in the week was before or after the meetings which were held on an average of once a week. Except for the Portuguese Eurasian Charismatics who live as one community in the Portuguese Settlement, the other Charismatics (especially the Pentecostal Charismatics) were dispersed all over Malacca.

The main problem I faced was the hostility expressed by some of the Charismatics towards me. I could not get a personal interview with the leader of the Pentecostal Charismatic group. The leader did not wish to disclose any information with regards to his group for he feared that I would use it to defame him or his group. When I assured him that I had no such intentions, he said that perhaps my Supervisor had these very same intentions!! Furthermore, he was waiting for the registration of his group to come through (this is in accordance with the Malaysian Societies Act Regulation 1981) and because of that, he did not want anything to get in the way. Before I met the leader of this group, there was a Pentecostal Charismatic who had consented to an interview but at a later date. On the day of the interview (after I had met with the leader of this group) my respondent began to feel very ill at ease and in the end, she objected to the interview.

Another instance when I met with open hostility was with the leaders of one of the Catholic Charismatic groups. One of them, who although objected to an interview on her personal experiences, consented to an interview regarding the Charismatic Renewal and the group to which she belongs. However, in the course of the interview, she began to show reluctance in answering my questions. Later, I found out that this respondent (whom one of the Charismatics had described as being "hypersensitive" to such issues) had brought the matter up in one of the many meetings held regularly by the leaders of this group. There, as I was informed later, she had accused me of subtly implying that there was rivalry among the

various Catholic Charismatic groups in Malacca. As it turned out and as I expected, the rest of the leaders whom I interviewed after this incident were very cautious when answering the questions. Although these respondents answered all my questions and hence the collection of my data was not greatly affected in that respect, it nevertheless raised certain doubts of the possibility of more information being gathered through the voluntary cooperation of these respondents. Also, some of the leaders who prior to the incident were very friendly with me, turned quite unfriendly and one of them even passed a few sarcastic remarks about me and the research I was working on, saying that I was asking "silly questions". To these people (the leaders of the Pentecostal and the Catholic Charismatic groups), I was seen as a threat. However, in spite of all the hostility towards me, I was still allowed to join the meetings. As for all my other respondents, they were very cooperative and helpful.

CHAPTER TWO

THE EMERGENCE OF THE CHARISMATIC RENEWAL

Pentecostalism originated in the United States at the turn of the century. It has spread with remarkable success to Europe, Latin America and to many countries in Africa and Asia (Gerlach and Hine 1970 : 1). In the 1950's it became a "religious revival"¹ and was known as Neo - Pentecostalism. It is now more commonly known as the Charismatic Renewal. This wave of revivalism has penetrated into the strict religious norms of Catholicism and major Protestant denominations. In the Charismatic Movement, there is no clear concept of external authority and the whole religious mode of believing is towards the affective pole, that is, its experience and its emotions. Its worshippers are not bound by strict rules, norms, rituals, procedures or traditions that are inherent in main-line churches. In a constantly changing society, there is a desire for the freedom to break with traditions, to alter old ways of doing things and to introduce innovations. The Charismatic Renewal offers this break with tradition and the freedom of worship and expression is continually emphasized. Thus, the Movement becomes attractive to some but are rejected by others.

The distinction that sets Pentecostalism apart from conventional Christianity is the "Baptism of the Holy Spirit" where, one who is baptised in the Spirit will receive one, some or all of the nine gifts of the Spirit. Glossolalia or "speaking in tongues" is the

most prominent and the most sought after by its adherents. Glossolalia is "the utterance of streams of sounds which are unintelligible to both speaker and listener but which Pentecostals call a "heavenly language" and considered to be the Holy Spirit acting through them" (Gerlach and Hine 1970 : 2). It has been said that "speaking in tongues" often helps those who are at a loss for "human words" when praying. Some Charismatics have even claimed that because "speaking in tongues" is a divine language, it serves to confuse the devil. ²

The Charismatic Renewal is a Pentecostal Movement and it is not to be confused with the established Pentecostal Church. The former is a relatively recent religious phenomenon while the latter has long been established. The Pentecostal Movement is run largely by laymen who hold other full - time jobs. This Movement has not been fully accepted by the Catholic Church and other major Protestant denominations. On the other hand, the established Pentecostal Church is run by organised clergies who work full - time for the Church and has long been accepted as a major Protestant denomination.

To define the term "Charismatic Renewal" we shall first have to examine the word "charisma". It is a term first used in sociology by Max Weber that literally means "a gift divine or of spiritual origin". According to Gerlach and Hine (1970 : 39), this quality "endows an individual with the power of persuasive influence over others and inspires dependent faith and personal loyalty in his followers". Dorothy Emmet (1958) states that the "Charismaticist"

is one who strengthens those he influences, inspiring them to work on their own initiative. The heightening of this inner power, she maintains, can be conveyed from one Charismatic to another. According to Kelsey (1964 : 78), a Charismatic life is one into which the Christian who receives spiritual baptism and speaks in tongues will enter, and into which he is opened to receive all the gifts of the Spirit. This Movement is a renewal for it signifies the "born - again" or transformative quality of a Christian who seeks salvation through the Baptism of the Holy Spirit.³ Thus, in broad outlines, the Charismatic Renewal is a religious revival that emphasises the "born - again" quality of a Christian and the power and acceptance of the "Baptism of the Holy Spirit". The emphasis is also placed on the charisma of the born - again Christian which is to lead others to the Movement, the Spirit and ultimately to salvation.

Because the Pentecostal Movement is being frowned upon mainly by the conventional and traditional Christian Churches, most Charismatic groups remain "hidden" especially those from the Catholic and main Protestant denominations (with the exception of the Pentecostal Church). Hence, it is difficult to estimate the number of Charismatics in the world. However, total world membership in the Pentecostal Movement has been estimated by various researchers at between eight and twelve million (Gerlach and Hine 1970 : 3)⁴

This Pentecostal Movement was believed to have been

introduced into West Malaysia since the 1970's. However, it was not until recently (in the last five years or so) that it has become increasingly active and has gained popularity and converts from non-Muslim religions. The Pentecostal Movement involves mainly the Chinese, Indians and Eurasians. In Malaysia, it is illegal for Christians, Hindus or Buddhists to proselytize Muslims. All Malays are Muslims by birth and because of the legal complications involved, there is an implicit understanding among the leaders of the Charismatic groups to turn away interested Malays. (Lee and Ackerman 1980 : 810, 825).

From my interviews with the Charismatics and priests, I have gathered that among the Catholic Charismatics, the Movement is practised quite openly for it has been said that the Pope has openly declared his approval and acceptance of such a Movement. In West Malaysia itself, there are quite a few Catholic Charismatic priests and the Charismatic Renewal Movement among the Catholics has reached a stage where there is even a Charismatic priest⁵ heading the Charismatic Renewal Movement in the southern states. It is interesting to note that the Charismatic Renewal among the Catholics has remained within the Catholic Church itself. In my interview with Father Andrew, parish priest of Christ Church Malacca, he had remarked,

".... Interestingly, this sort of splitting away has been largely prevented in the Roman Catholic Church because they do have an authority structure so instead of driving people away, it in fact brings them in, and members at maximum increase, and the life of the Church is enhanced..

In spite of its acceptance by the Catholic Church, there are still many Catholic priests and Catholics who cannot accept and acknowledge the Charismatic Renewal Movement. These are the traditionalists who are not prepared to accept any change in their form of worship nor in their beliefs.

Among the Anglicans, although it has been said that there are many Anglican Charismatics spread all over West Malaysia, they remain a "hidden" group. The Charismatic Renewal Movement has yet to be approved and acknowledged by the Anglican Bishop of West Malaysia. In fact, it has been officially discouraged. The perceived view is that in the Anglican Church, there is an authority problem and the Charismatic Renewal is seen as a way of escaping from its control. Said Father Andrew,

".... Charismatic Christianity is Euthusiastic Christianity because it tends to be emotionally enthusiastic and therefore anti - authority, it is often seen as a threat by the Church establishments and as in this country, the Anglican Church - it is frowned upon...."

For these reasons, many Anglican Charismatics are keeping a low profile for fear of being expelled by the Anglican Church. Many of them have taken part in the activities of other Charismatic groups. Some have even left the Anglican Church for other Churches where they as Charismatics are accepted. ⁶ To date, there is no

known Anglican priest in West Malaysia who is a Charismatic.

The Pentecostal Charismatics make up a large percentage of the total number of Charismatics in Malaysia. This group of Charismatics boasts of winning a great number of converts from non - Muslim religions. Apart from this, it is also winning over a large number of Charismatics from other denominations. It is therefore not surprising to find a "mixed" denominational group of Charismatics in any Pentecostal Charismatic meeting.⁷ Because of its very close ties in terms of ideology and forms of worship, this group of Charismatics receive the biggest support and encouragement from the established Pentecostal Churches.

There are Charismatics from other Protestant denominations, for example, the Methodist Church, the Brethren Church, the Evangelical Free Church etc. Due to the limited time of my research, I was unable to conduct a closer study of these Charismatics. However, they cannot be ignored for they constitute quite a large percentage of the total number of Charismatics in West Malaysia.

FOOTNOTES

1. A "religious revival" is a demonstration to indicate the re - emergence and renewal of a subsiding form of worship and belief. Pentecostalism has long been considered by the main - line Churches (Catholic and Protestant) as an outdated practise. As such, the Pentecostal Movement has generally been viewed as a revival of first - century Christianity.

2. In the Charismatic Renewal Movement and especially among the Pentecostal Charismatic group I had joined, there has been an over - emphasis on the gift of tongues. In I Corinthians Chapter 12 verse 8, the gift of tongues is not the most important of the nine gifts (i.e. wisdom, knowledge, faith, healing, miracles, prophecy, discernment, tongues and interpretation). In fact, it occupies the eighth place in the scale of importance. Members in two Catholic Charismatic groups that I had observed have discouraged it in the meetings for as they had said, "The gift of tongues gives satisfaction only to the one who has received it. Unless it can be interpreted, it is virtually useless to the spiritual growth of the group." (I Corinthians Chapter 14 verse 2 - 4) This view is also shared by all three priests I had interviewed. However, the Pentecostal Charismatic leader had argued that although it may seem the least important of the nine gifts, it is nevertheless the

easiest to attain and if God had bestowed the gift upon the Christian, should the Christian then not use it to the fullest? As an example of the over - emphasis placed on this gift, one of my respondents, a devout and educated Christian who although had received other gifts but not the gift of tongues, went in search of ways to attain it. She tried to imitate the people who spoke in tongues but failed to receive the gift. As a last resort and out of desperation, she "blackmailed" God. One day, while she was praying, she told Him that she would not move from her position until He bestowed the gift of tongues upon her. This He did and she has felt elated and full of happiness since that day.

3. In Christianity, there are two forms of baptism that is, baptism with water and baptism of the Holy Spirit. Baptism with water (usually associated with infant baptism) is a formal recognition that a person has entered into the Church and into the Christian World. "Baptism of the Holy Spirit" is an "infilling" of the Spirit in which the Christian is opened to receive the gifts of the Spirit. The latter is the more important of the two and one need not be baptised with water in order to be baptised in the Spirit.
4. However, there is a possibility that the membership of this Movement today is more than the estimated figure of 1970 for this Movement has proved successful and popular.

5. This Priest is of French descent and is currently attached to the parish of a Catholic Church in Segambut, Kuala Lumpur. He was formerly the parish priest of one of the Catholic Churches in Malacca and was one of the main leaders responsible for the growth of the Charismatic Renewal Movement among the Catholics in Malacca.

6. Although these Anglican Charismatics have left the Anglican Church, they still identify themselves as Anglicans.

7. In the Pentecostal Charismatic group that I had observed, there were Charismatics from four denominations that is, Anglicans, Methodist, Brethren and Pentecostal. There were also non - Christians who attended these Pentecostal Charismatic meetings, that is, mainly Hindus, Buddhists, Toaists and 'free - thinkers'.

CHAPTER THREE

THE CHARISMATIC RENEWAL MOVEMENT IN MALACCA

INTRODUCTION TO GROUPS

During the course of this research, only five Charismatic groups were selected and studied. Three of the groups were comprised of Catholic Charismatics, one of Anglican Charismatics and the other of Pentecostal Charismatics.

The three Catholic Charismatic groups that I had observed are all found within Malacca town. The "Divine Light"¹ group is made up of Tamil - speaking members while the "Holy Baptism" group is made up of English - speaking members. The "Spirit Within" group is comprised mainly of the Portuguese Eurasians from the Portuguese Settlement. The prayer meetings of this group are conducted in simple English as Christang (a Portuguese dialect) is the mother tongue of these people and their understanding of the English language is limited.² Nearly all the members from these three Catholic Charismatic groups come from St. Patrick's Church.³ The "Holy Baptism" and the "Spirit Within" groups hold their meetings every Friday at 8.00 p.m. while the members of the "Divine Light" group meet once a fortnight on Tuesdays at 7.30 p.m. Some of the members from the "Divine Light" group also attend the meetings of the "Holy Baptism"

group. The prayer meetings are held in the school halls of the two Catholic schools.

To date, there are five Catholic Charismatic groups in Malacca, two of which I did not observe. However, I have gathered information on these two groups and they should be mentioned in order to give the reader a complete picture of the Charismatic Movement among the Catholics in Malacca.

One of these two groups is a Chinese - speaking group and it is made up mainly of schoolboys from one of the Chinese urban schools in Malacca. This group is led by a Brethren from China who is currently teaching in the school. This group is made up also of members from a nearby Chinese Catholic Church and Chinese - speaking members from St. Patrick's Church. The other group is found in Ayer Salak.⁴ The prayer meetings are conducted in English and the group is led by a nun (who comes from the Chinese Catholic Church referred to earlier) and one of the members of St. Patrick's Church.

The Pentecostal Charismatic group meets on the average of twice a month. The meetings are usually held in the home of one of the leaders. Because most of its members are from different denominations and religions, circulars are sent out to notify them of the next meeting. More often than not, the meetings are usually notified by word of mouth. Unlike the Catholic Charismatic

groups where there is a fixed time, day and place for the meetings. The Pentecostal Charismatic meetings are usually dependent on the availability of a guest speaker. The meetings are conducted in English.

The Anglican Charismatic group is a very small group comprising only seven to nine members. This group meets privately in any one of the member's house. However, these private meetings are rarely conducted. The open meetings that they have in the Church premises consist mainly of Bible discussion and/or sharing of spiritual experiences. The Anglican Charismatics usually attend the meetings held by other Charismatic groups (Catholics and Pentecostal). There is no formal name for the group.

There are other Charismatic groups in Malacca. Due to limited time, no attempt was made to trace them.

FORMS OF WORSHIP

Generally, the order of worship for all the groups is similar. The prayer meetings are always started off with songs of praise. This is followed by prayers of praise and thanks. A few more songs are sung before the sermon (or message) is delivered. The petition or prayers of need are then said. The prayer meetings then end with songs of praise.

The form of worship, however, varies from one group to another. In the Divine Light and Spirit Within groups, the speaking of tongues is not encouraged. Both these groups are made up of people with a low educational background and as such, the leaders of both groups feel that the members may not fully understand the gift of tongues. Instead, they may be frightened by it. Furthermore, both groups feel that speaking in tongues is by itself, not an asset to the spiritual growth of the group if it cannot be interpreted. However, it appears that some members have received the-gift of tongues though no attempts have been made to publicise it. In the case of the Holy Baptism and Pentecostal Charismatic groups, glossolalia is practised openly. In the Pentecostal Charismatic group, speaking in tongues has become the central focus of the believer's religious activity. Gerlach and Hine (1970 : 16) have defined a Pentecostal group as "any group in which speaking with tongues is accepted as a manifestation of the Baptism or infilling of the Holy Spirit and in which its practice is valued or encouraged by members." It is therefore not surprising to hear glossolalic utterances during most parts of the Pentecostal Charismatic meetings. Among the Catholic Charismatic groups, the Holy Baptism group is the only group which encourages glossolalia in the prayer meetings. It is also noted that most of the members in this group are from the middle and upper classes. The question that arises from these findings is, why do the members of the Holy Baptism group display their gift of tongues while the other two Catholic

Charismatic groups do not make an attempt to, even though they profess to have received the gift? All three groups maintain that the gift of tongues does not contribute to the spiritual growth of the group without the aid of interpretation. One suggestion is that members of the lower class are usually resigned to their fate. Humility is a key quality among the lower class. Because of their low educational background, their concepts and ideas of the world and their beliefs are somewhat limited. Hence, the gift of tongues is received and accepted without question. To the middle and upper classes, goal seeking and status achievement are major concerns. In the context of this study, this preoccupation could have been elevated from a mundane to a spiritual level. To these people then, the gift of tongues may be an indication of a higher status, hence, its ostentatious display when the gift is obtained. As pointed out by Schwartz (1970 : 175), "..... Spirit Baptism confers unique prestige and that those who achieve something in other spheres of life are beginning to realise that this worship is consonant with their position in society"

Unlike the solemn hymns of the established Churches, the songs of praise that are sung during these Charismatic meetings are more "modern" with a relatively fast rhythm. All the songs are repeatedly sung. The songs contribute largely to the emotional state of the worshippers. As observed, some songs may have a relatively fast beat at the start but towards the end, they gradually slow down and build up, leading to a crescendo. At this point, the notes are held and the worshippers would break out in

tongues. This may last a full minute or so after which the worshippers would gradually calm down. ⁵ In the Pentecostal Charismatic group, the members are more expressive. They would speak loudly in tongues and raise, wave or clap their hands and praise the Lord with phrases like "Praise the Lord", "Halleluyah", "Amen", "We worship you Lord", "We love you, Lord" etc. In the Holy Baptism group, this phenomenon is on a milder level. The raising and clapping of hands appears to be a spontaneous action in the Pentecostal Charismatic group. On the other hand, in all three Catholic Charismatic groups, the clapping and raising of hands is not a spontaneous action. When it does occur, it appears to be unnatural and hesitant. A possible explanation of this is that the clapping of hands has long been frowned upon by the established Catholic and Protestant Churches for reasons which are not clear. These Charismatics may still be, to some extent, bound by tradition. In all the groups, the songs and singing are accompanied by one or more musical instruments.

During the sermons or messages, the passages most often cited are those in Acts and Corinthians for it is in these two books that the day of Pentecost and the Baptism of the Holy Spirit are emphasised. In the Pentecostal Charismatic group, sermons and messages are delivered usually by guest speakers. Personal testimonies are a popular issue and more often than not, they are moving and often hilarious. The theme of these personal testimonies is focussed primarily on the acceptance of the Holy Spirit usually after a series of personal conflict. The aim of

personal testimonies is to move the listener into accepting the Holy Spirit in their lives as their guide and Saviour. In the Divine Light and Holy Baptism groups, when there are no guest speakers, a passage from the Bible is selected and discussed. In the Spirit Within group, the messages are delivered by one of the leaders.

Among the three Catholic Charismatic groups, the Spirit Within group is more Catholic in its approach in that many references to the Virgin Mary are made and the "Hail Mary" prayer is always recited at the start of every prayer meeting. On the other hand, the Holy Baptism group follows more in the lines of Pentecostalism while the Divine Light group while the Divine Light group is left somewhere in between the two extremes. One reason why the Spirit Within group is more Catholic in its approach is because the Portuguese Eurasians are very pro - Catholic. Also, the leader of the group wants to be as far as possible, in line with the Catholic Church.

SPECIAL ACTIVITIES

In the Pentecostal group, after every prayer meeting there is the "altar call" session. Here, all those who need to be prayed over will stay back after the meetings. These include people who desire the gift or the "infilling" of the Spirit, people who need to be healed from some illness, those who wish

to be rid of a bad influence that may lead them to sin, those who wish to be converted and a host of other problems. The "altar call" and not the formal service, is the appropriate time for various charismatic activities and manifestations. (Gerlach and Hine 1970 : 15)

Healing sessions are by far the most popular of all the activities and are carried out in all the charismatic groups. In the Holy Baptism group, these sessions are usually carried out after the prayer meetings. ⁶ in the canteen of the school in which the meetings are held. In the Spirit Within group, because the response for these healing sessions is great, they are held weekly on Wednesday nights in the school chapel. I shall briefly outline one of the healing sessions I attended that was performed by the Spirit Within group : The healing session started off with the "Hail Mary" prayer led by the leader. This was followed by a song of praise, a prayer and another song. Verses from the Book of Psalms were read individually by a few of the members. A short message was then shared by the leader with the rest of the worshippers. The leader then called all those who needed the laying of hands upon them to come forward. About eight of them did so. Then the leader reminded the people that team spirit was important and that joint prayers were needed as well as individual prayers. Others who did not need the laying of hands that night were asked to sit or stand beside or behind each of those who were 'sick'. They were then instructed to find out from these members what it was that needed to be prayed for.

The leader also reminded the people and cited examples of all those who had been cured by the laying of hands. When each of the 'sick' had someone to pray for him or her, the praying began. One by one, those who did not need the laying of hands that night laid their hands on either the shoulders or the head of those who were 'sick'. The prayers were said softly and earnestly. After five minutes, the leader instructed those who were not 'sick' to change places with each other. They prayed again for another five minutes after which the same people exchanged places for the second time. After the prayers, the leader told all of them to raise their hands as he said a collective prayer. When everyone was seated, another prayer was said. This was followed by a song and the healing session ended with the 'Peace' ritual. ⁷

Whenever there is a special request from a person who has some form of ailment, a group laying of hands is usually practised. Here, a group of people, usually the leader and a selected few will all lay hands on that person and pray individually. In the Spirit Within group, not just anybody is allowed to lay hands on another person. Only those who are strong in their faith are allowed to do so. This is because the person to be healed may, unknowingly to the others, be possessed by some evil spirit. A person who is weak in faith and who lays hands on a possessed person may be in danger of being possessed himself. This group does not perform exorcisms. Many who have come to those sessions held by the Spirit Within group have gone home healed. It is these sessions that have drawn the Portuguese Eurasians to the

prayer meeting.⁸

The Pentecostal Charismatic group also organises healing sessions. Normally, when such sessions are organised, they are held in big halls to accommodate the large crowds that turn up. The hall is usually packed. This group also performs exorcisms and they are conducted by people (usually the invited guest or guests) who have received certain gifts of the Spirit which enable them to "cast out devils". These sessions appeal greatly to Christians and non - Christians alike and who believe that certain illnesses are "the work of the devil". Lee and Ackerman (1980 : 820) have pointed out that "supernatural beliefs continue to structure the thoughts and actions of many Malaysians. Such beliefs are prevalent in all different ethnic communities in West Malaysia. While each ethnic community has its own unique system of supernatural beliefs, a common subscription to supernaturalism among the different ethnic communities tends to favour a cross - communal exchange of supernatural ideas and practices. Thus, in West Malaysia, it is not unusual for members of one ethnic group to consult oculists or native healers from a different ethnic group it may be argued that given this cultural condition, Pentecostalism is readily accepted by many Malaysians because it has features which do not conflict with the supernatural ethos so prevalent in West Malaysia."

Among the Catholic Charismatic groups, a significant Pentecostal ritual is a programme of religions study known as

the "Life in the Spirit" seminar. ⁹ Those who attend this seminar are introduced to Pentecostal doctrines.

Other activities held are cottage meetings, ¹⁰ visitation of the sick and as in the Holy Baptism group, there are "cell" meetings as well. This group has formed, in the recent months, cell groups which meet on different days of the week. These cell groups are led by selected leaders. As these cell groups are much smaller and therefore more personalised than the main Holy Baptism group, it is hoped that closer unity and fellowship among the members will strengthen. Once a month, all the Catholic Charismatic groups will meet in St. Patrick's Church for a Charismatic Mass. This is aimed at building close ties and fellowship among the various groups. On Tuesdays, the Spirit Within group leaders hold Bible Studies with the Anglican Charismatics.

One outstanding feature of the Pentecostal Charismatic group activities is that it caters more for outsiders, that is, people from other religions and denominations. On the other hand, nearly all those who attend the Catholic Charismatic meetings and activities are Catholics with only a handful of non - Christians. With the exception of the meetings on Tuesdays between the Spirit Within leaders and the Anglican Charismatics ¹¹, no other denominational group attends the Catholic Charismatic meetings or the activities organised by the groups. One reason could be that the Catholic Charismatic group meetings and activities still

hold on to certain doctrines of the established Catholic Church which are not acceptable to the Protestant denominations for example, the worship of the Virgin Mary and other saints. Although Charismatic in nature, these groups are still seen by many as being predominantly Catholic in its approach.

2. English is used because the sole leader and a few of the committee members do not speak the Portuguese dialect fluently.

3. This is a Pentecostal base. The Church referred to is one of the sole English speaking Catholic churches in Malacca. Most of the Catholic Charismatic groups come from this Church.

4. Ayer Selar is a rural area about 10 miles from Malacca town. 75% of the population there is made up of farmers. Hence, most of the Catholic Charismatics in that area are farmers and their families.

5. In the Pentecostal Charismatic group, this may appeal to some of the worshippers that the song is sung again and the whole performance is repeated.

6. I was not allowed to attend any of these healing sessions that were carried out by the Holy Baptize group for they said that those sessions were 'personal'.

FOOTNOTES

1. The names of all groups and group members mentioned here have been disguised to protect their identities.
2. English is used because the main leader and a few of the committee members do not speak the Portuguese dialect fluently.
3. This is a fictitious name. The Church referred to is one of the main English speaking Catholic Churches in Malacca. Most of the Catholic Charismatics come from this Church.
4. Ayer Salak is a rural area about 10 miles from Malacca town. 75% of the population there is made up of farmers. Hence, most of the Catholic Charismatics in that area are farmers and their families.
5. In the Pentecostal Charismatic group, this may appeal so much to the worshippers that the song is sung again and the whole performance is repeated.
6. I was not allowed to attend any of these healing sessions that were carried out by the Holy Baptism group for they said that those sessions were 'personal'.

7. In this ritual that is, **everyone moves** from one to another, shakes hands and says the words **"Peace be with you"** This practice is a common feature in the Catholic Charismatic meetings.
8. Previously, before the introduction of the Charismatic meetings into the Portuguese Settlement, most of the present members of the Spirit Within group would go to a nearby Pentecostal Church for healing purposes. Although they had received a few criticisms about their beliefs, that are contrary to the Pentecostal beliefs, they nevertheless continued attending the services mainly for the healing sessions. When the Catholic Charismatic group was introduced into the Settlement as were the healing sessions, these members stopped attending the Pentecostal services.
9. The short span of my research did not enable me to investigate further this seminar. However, from my interviews particularly with the leaders of the Catholic Charismatic groups, this "Life in the Spirit" seminar has become an important part of their life as a Charismatic.
10. Prayer meetings that are held in homes of members.
11. Occasionally, the Anglican Charismatics also attend the Catholic Charismatic mass on the invitation of the Spirit Within leader.

CHAPTER FOUR

LEADERS AND MEMBERS : BACKGROUNDS AND RECRUITMENT

THE PENTECOSTAL CHARISMATIC GROUP ¹

The average attendance for the Pentecostal Charismatic prayer meetings is about fifty people. The Chinese make up more than seven - eights of the total number of members. There are also Indians and occasionally, there are one or two Europeans or Eurasians. Most of them are in their late teens, twenties or thirties. A few of them are in their forties. A notable difference between the members of the Pentecostal Charismatic group and that of the other Charismatic groups is that a majority of them are young people (21 - 35 years). The group's flexible form of worship has the emphasis on the freedom of worship and the notion that "everyone else is doing it" encourages the worshipper to express his emotions and feelings without being unduly uncomfortable or feeling out of place. The worshipper is free to clap, raise his hands or join in the prayers. This form of worship differs greatly from that of the main line churches which are governed by strict formalities. Such an informal form of worship would appeal more to the young than to the old.

The number of worshippers in this group is seen to be on the increase. In the Pentecostal Charismatic group, every new comer is made to feel that he belongs to one big family of worshippers. All of the members are referred to as "brothers and

During any of the prayer meetings or healing sessions of the Pentecostal Charismatic group, the names and addresses of non - members are sometimes recorded. Circulars are then sent out to these people to invite and inform them of the next prayer meeting or healing session. Normally, when healing sessions are conducted, the news is spread by word of mouth.

Generally, the Pentecostal Charismatic group is made up of Methodist, Anglicans, Brethren Church members, Pentecostals and non - christians who come either out of curiosity or to receive the Word of God or both. From my casual conversation with the members, I have gathered that most of the Pentecostal Charismatics have non - Christian backgrounds, especially those from the established Pentecostal Churches. The members of this group include doctors, dentists, teachers, clerks, secretaries, students etc. Most of them appear to be from the middle and upper classes.

The leaders or "elders" of this group have formed an organisation called the Full Gospel Businessmen's Fellowship (FGBMF) which is a branch of the Full Gospel Businessmen's Fellowship International.² This is an all - male organisation and among them are doctors, dentists and even a chef. The leaders appear to be from the upper and upper middle classes and nearly all of them hold professional jobs.

THE CATHOLIC CHARISMATIC GROUP

Unlike the interdenominational structure of the Pentecostal Charismatic group, the members of the Catholic Charismatic groups are all Catholics. Nearly all the members are born Catholics though there are some who are converts with non - Christian backgrounds.

An average of forty people attend the meetings of the Holy Baptism group. This group has a mixture of Indians, Eurasians and Chinese in fairly equal ratios. Most of the members have attained an upper secondary educational level and most of them hold teaching and clerical jobs. Generally, they are from the middle and upper classes and they have been viewed by the Spirit Within group as "the rich men's group".

There are nine leaders in the Holy Baptism group. All of them are between their thirties and forties and all have attained a Form Five educational level. The leaders are mainly from the teaching, technical services and clerical lines.

In the Divine Light group, the members are all Indians and most of them are between 21 - 40 years of age. The members are made up mainly of housewives who have attained only a primary or lower secondary level education. Most of them are from the lower class although there are a few who are in the middle class.

Those in the middle class hold mainly teaching and clerical jobs. About 70% of these people are Malayalees and 20% of this group's members also attend the Holy Baptism meetings. An average of about fifteen people attend these prayer meetings. This group does not have a board of committee and the members all look to a man for guidance.

In the Spirit Within group, the members are made up largely of the Portuguese Eurasians from the Portuguese Settlement. There are also a few Chinese and Indians who attend these prayer meetings. The Portuguese Eurasians are economically poor and most of them become part - time fishermen to supplement their low income. Most of the women who attend these meetings are housewives or are unemployed. Most of the men hold technical and general service jobs. Most of them have a low educational background especially the women. They occupy a low status in society. An average of sixty people attend the prayer meetings. There are usually many children below twelve years of age in this group and they also join in the singing and worship.

The leader of this group is a Mr. Alfonso Rodrigo, a man in his early fifties who is believed to have formed both the Spirit Within and the Holy Baptism groups. Mr. Rodrigo works for the government in the clerical division and is in the middle income group. There are about seven 'co-group' ³ members under him. At the present moment, the running of the prayer meetings is largely

dependent on Mr. Rodrigo. Because of this, Mr. Rodrigo hopes to train two of his co - group members to be leaders of this group. The co - goroup is made up of a nun (Sister Angela), a housewife, clerks and a pensioner. Mr. Rodrigo is also responsible for the healing sessions that are held on Wednesday nights and he also conducts prayer meetings and Bible discussions with the Anglican Charismatics. Mr. Rodrigo has been looked upon by many of the Portuguese Eurasians as some sort of a "bomoh". They believe that Mr. Rodrigo possesses some form of curative power and that it is he who heals them of their illness.

Many of those who attend the Holy Baptism and Divine Light meetings come mainly in search of inner peace and fellowship. They also come to learn more about God. In the Holy Baptism group, many of my respondents have said that they joined the meetings out of curiosity. However, in the Spirit Within group, the main attractions are the healing sessions. Many of my respondents from this group have cited this reason as their main purpose for attending these meetings. It can be inferred from this finding that many of these people come for mundane motives, that is, to gain physical satisfaction. The Charismatic Movement here is seen not only as a means of gaining spiritual fulfillment but also, and mainly, as a means of curing them of their illnesses. Many who have been cured stay on and become regular members.⁴ This may be because they feel spiritually obligated. There are also some who come every week because their illness has not been cured, although they claim that

their going to the healing sessions and prayer meetings have helped relieve them a little of their aches and pains. There are others too who come not for the healing sessions but to find inner peace and have fellowship with others.

Most of the members of the three Catholic Charismatic groups were introduced into the groups mainly on the invitation of Friends. Quite a few of them were also introduced into the groups by relatives and followers of the movement.

The past year or so has seen a decline in membership in the Holy Baptism and Divine Light groups while in the Spirit Within group, there seems to be a gradual increase in attendance. Sources have revealed that the decline in attendance in the Divine Light meetings was due largely to the leaving of the priest who formed the group. As for the Holy Baptism group, the sharp decline in attendance as reported by some of my respondents, was due to some conflict⁵ between the leaders of the group. Apparently, one of the leaders, who acknowledged as the Youth Leader left the group/was and formed another.⁶ This resulted in a loss of members, especially the youths, from the Holy Baptism group. Also, conflict between the leaders of the Holy Baptism group led to Mr. Rodrigo's leaving the group and the formation of the Spirit Within group. When asked to comment on the decline in membership, many of the leaders of the Holy Baptism group claimed that the members left for other groups due to inconveniences, that is, in terms of transport,

distance from meeting place, etc. The decline in membership was also due to members having to leave town to work or study.⁷ The Spirit Within group, since its formation in early 1981, has attracted large members of the Portuguese Eurasians. This is due largely to the healing sessions and healing miracles that have occurred and have been witnessed in and by the community.

THE ANGLICAN CHARISMATIC GROUP

Most of the nine or so Anglican Charismatics are Anglicans by birth with the exception of two of them who have non-Christian backgrounds. Out of the nine Anglican Charismatics, two are Indians and the rest Chinese. Most of them hold teaching and clerical jobs and they are from the middle and upper middle classes. There are no leaders in this group although one of the members has been looked upon by the rest as a "spokesman" for the group. This member is the only male member of the group. He is in his forties and works as a clerk. All of them have an upper secondary level of education.

Nearly all of them have said that they joined the group because they wanted to learn more about the Charismatic Movement and about God. They also cited fellowship with other Charismatics as a reason for their involvement in this group.

The Anglican Charismatics were introduced to the group and to the movement in general by friends, relatives and followers. The

number of members in this group has remained somewhat stagnant as a result of the official discouragement of the Charismatic Movement by the Anglican Bishop of West Malaysia.

It has been found that among the Catholic Charismatic groups, those members in the Spirit Within and Divine Light groups do not participate as much in religious organisations within or without the church unlike those in the Holy Baptism group. The Spirit Within and Divine Light groups are made up of members from the lower class while those in the Holy Baptism group are mainly from the middle and upper middle classes. Herberg (1955) stated that involvement in church activity is part of the middle - class life - style. Goode (1966) found that middle class people tend to join voluntary organisations, and middle - class life - style explains activity and involvement in church organisations. The interpretation also offered by Goode was that religious organisations have become secularized for the middle class. The lower class, on the other hand, manifests a lower level of formal activities but a higher level of religiosity and psychological involvement in religion.

From my findings also, more women than men participate in the Charismatic Movement. According to McGuire (1969), women are more easily influenced than men. Studies of conformity, suggestibility and persuasion all point to a clear sex difference with women scoring higher in every case. D'Andrade (1967) has also stated that in most cultures, males are less nurturant and less expressive

emotionally than females. Religion in most cultures has strong emotional and nurturant components, and we would expect most females to respond to them. ⁸

The evidence provided by Herberg (1955) and Goode (1966) support and explain the finding that those in the middle class groups (Holy Baptism group) participate more in religious organisations than those in the lower class groups (Spirit Within and Divine Light groups). They maintain that involvement in religious organisations reflects the middle class life style. Researchers such as McGuire (1969) and D'Andrade (1967) have shown that females are more religiously inclined than males. Thus, we can conclude that it is hardly unusual that more women than men would be attracted to and would involve themselves in the Charismatic Renewal Movement.

FOOTNOTES

1. Due to the lack of cooperation and reluctance of the group leader to being interviewed, most of my findings on this group are based largely on casual observations and conversations with the members and leaders.
2. This is a world wide non - denominational group with a Pentecostal orientation.
3. That is , the board of committee.
4. One of my respondents who claimed that he was a non - believer in miracles and the power of God, is now a regular member of the group. This respondent used to suffer from severe pains in his knees and he would go to all the recommended 'bomchs' and 'sinschs'. However, all his attempts to find a cure failed. One day, the pain became intolerable to the point that he could hardly walk. It was then that he sought the help of Mr. Rodrigo. Together with four or five others, Mr. Rodrigo prayed and laid his hands on my respondent's knees. Immediately after the prayers, my respondent stood up and walked and in his words, "the pain just went away". After the miracle, my respondent introduced the Charismatic Movement to practically all the families living in the same lane as his and he has brought many to the prayer meetings.

5. Refer to Chapter 5 under "Conflict and Solidarity".
6. The reasons for his leaving are unknown to me.
7. One of the members of the Holy Baptism group I interviewed had pointed out that what was seriously wrong with the group is that the people there preach joy, peace and love and talk about "faith in action" but seem to do nothing about going out of their circle and reaching out to others. She feels that the members there mix only with their "own kind" and most of them seek self - gratification. There is "vertical mobility" among these people in that there is every attempt to reach Jesus through prayer and worship but there is little "horizontal mobility" in that these people do not go out of their way and reach out to others and share the good news with them. That is why, she pointed out, the number of people who attend this group's meeting is either stagnant or declining and not many people stay in this group for long. What my respondent had said is in great contrast to the Pentecostal Charismatic group members who make every attempt to evangelise, reach out to others and are eager to introduce them to the group's meetings.

My respondent had also pointed out that the members in the Holy Baptism group are a class by themselves. In another

interview with Mr. Rodrigo, he had also said that the Holy Baptism group has created an elite class and that those who have the gift of tongues tend to feel superior towards those who have not.

8. See Arggle, H and Bert. Hallahmi, B, The Social Psychology of Religion, Routledge and Kegan Paul, London and Boston, 1975.

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CHAPTER FIVE

THE ORGANISATIONAL NETWORK

FORMATION OF CHARISMATIC GROUPS¹

The Holy Baptism group is the first Catholic Charismatic group in Malacca and it was formed between 1974 - 75. The Spirit Within and Divine Light groups were both formed later in 1980. Among the reasons cited for the formation of these groups are the search for truth and closer unity with Christ and the appreciation for prayer and praise "not with one's mind but with one's heart". The Spirit Within group was brought to the Settlement in order to lead the Portuguese Eurasians away from the nearby Pentecostal Church which they went to for healing purposes.

The Divine Light group was formed by sister Louisa and Father Christopher. Father Christopher has since left Malacca and Sister Louisa now takes full charge of this group. This group actually originated from the Tamil Assosiation in St. Patrick's Church. The Spirit Within group was formed by Mr. Rodrigo. There is an uncertainty as to who actually formed the Holy Baptism group. In my interview with Sister Louisa, she had claimed that together with another priest (Father Cecil), they had attended a seminar on the Charismatic Movement in Kuala Lumpur and when they returned to Malacca, Sister Louisa had decided to form a Catholic Charismatic

group. However, according to Mr. Rodrigo, it was he who started the first Catholic Charismatic group in Malacca and it was he who had attended the seminar in Kuala Lumpur with Father Cecil. In my interview with one of the committee members of the Holy Baptism group, he had said that five of them had attended the seminar in Kuala Lumpur and when they returned, they all agreed that the time was right to start a Catholic Charismatic group. In my interview with members of the Holy Baptism group, most of them supported that Mr. Rodrigo was the founder of the group. From what I have gathered, prayer meetings were held regularly in the home of Mr. Rodrigo long before the seminar that was held in Kuala Lumpur. Mr. Rodrigo had also passed round circulars informing people of the prayer meetings. As the group grew and as space became limited in Mr. Rodrigo's house, with the agreement and help of Father Cecil, the prayer meetings were transferred to a school hall. This was the formal start of the Holy Baptism group.

The Anglican Charismatic group was formed in 1979 by one of the Church members. Together with a friend of hers who is a Pentecostal, this church member had introduced the Movement to members of the Church particularly those who have Charismatic inclinations. Due to the official discouragement by the Anglican Bishop, the growth of this group was hindered. This Church member has since left Malacca and is now the headmistress of one of the Anglican schools in Kuala Lumpur.

STRUCTURE OF ORGANISATION

The Holy Baptism group is run by a board of committee which is made up of nine members. This is a highly organised group with various 'ministries'. There are the Chairs Ministry (those who are assigned to arranging the chairs for the meetings), the Greeter's Ministry (those who stand outside and greet the people who come for the prayer meetings), the Healing Ministry (those who are specially chosen to lay hands on others), the Music Ministry (those in charge of the musical instruments and the leading of songs), the Prayers Ministry (those in charge of prayers) and a host of others.

Once a year on May 1st, this board of Committee holds an Annual General Meeting which is not opened to all but only to their own committee members. The election of office bearers takes place among themselves and it is they who decide on who to bring into the board of committee from the ordinary members. This day is known as the 'day of reflection' and it is also a social gathering. Taking Schwartz's (1970) theory of social status into account, this board of committee is likened to an exclusive club opened only to a particular few. It is these particular few who decide on how the Charismatic group should be run and, among the ordinary members, on who would be chosen to join this 'prestigious club'. This board of committee also meets every Monday to plan for the next Charismatic prayer meeting.

In the Spirit Within group, the board of committee or 'co - group' is made up of about seven members. The structure of this group is not as highly organised as that of the Holy Baptism group with their various "ministries". Instead, the organisational structure of this group is at its simplest level. There are three co - leaders, a secretary, a treasurer and two other committee members. The co - leaders do not go by the titles of Chairman or President unlike in the Holy Baptism group where there is a Chairman and a Vice - Chairman. This board of committee also meets once a week on Mondays to plan the next prayer meeting. One reason that explains the difference in organisational structure between these two Catholic Charismatic groups lies in the background of the members themselves. The committee members in the Holy Baptism group are made up of well - educated, middle class people whereas those in the Spirit Within group are of low educational and economical backgrounds (with the exception of Mr. Rodrigo and one or two others). Simplicity is a quality inherent in the Spirit Within group members and this quality has been brought not only into the form of worship in this group but also into the organisational structure. It is simplicity that attracts these people into joining the prayer meetings. This simple form of organisational structure has served its purpose well and there is no apparent need for a more complex and complicated form of organisational structure.

In the Divine Light group there is no 'co - group' or board of committee. Because of this, the Tamil Assosiation of St. Patrick's Church controls this group. Sister Louisa is the advisor to the Tamil Assosiation and she was also one of them who formed the Divine Light group. This group had originated from the Tamil Assosiation, however, not all members of the Tamil Assosiation are Charismatics. According to one of the group's members, Sister Louisa had wanted to start a co - group ever since the Divine Light group was formed. Unfortunately, most of those who attended the mēetings at the start were uneducated and she was reluctant to form the co - group. Now, even though the group has attracted educated Indians who attend the meetings, and who are/most likely candidates for the co - group, Sister Louisa /th has yet to call a meeting and get them together to form the board of committee. Apparently, the meetings had always been postponed because Sister Louisa 'could not make it'. An interesting piece of information that I had gathered is that as soon as the co - group is formed, the Divine Light group will be independant of the Tamil Assosiation (This is because of the non - Charismatics in the Assosiation) It is hoped that the co - group will be a formal organisation as that found in the Holy Baptism group. Surprisingly, my respondent had also said that "everything Sister Louisa says is the gospel truth". This is especially so to the Tamil community in St. Patrick's Church. It is possible that one of the reasons why Sister Louisa has yet to form the co - group is that once the co - group is formed, all decisions will

be made by the co - group and the role she now plays, that is, in deciding all matters, will undoubtedly be lessened. This brings to mind something Mr. Rodrigo had said in my interview with him, that the Catholics, especially the uneducated look up highly to the "people in white" and these "people in white " abuse the power that they have over the Catholics. Gerlach and Hine (1970 : 48) pointed out that "Movement members, especially those with leadership drives and capabilities compete for a broad range of economic, social, political, psychological and spiritual regards. They compete for personal influence and authority over others, for positions of power, for financial support, for the recognition by others of the fact that they do have certain gifts and capabilities. They are motivated by the desire to do the will of the Lord or to further the cause of their people. The need to achieve always involves some comparison with the performance of others."

The Pentecostal Charismatic group is run by the Full Gospel Businessman's Fellowship. This is a formal organisation that is linked to the Full Gospel Businessmen's Fellowship International. At the time of research, this organisation was awaiting its registration in accordance with the Society's Act. This is because this organisation is not linked to any particular Church and as such registration is necessary to avoid any legal complications. On the other hand, the Catholic Charismatic groups are not registered and there is no apparent need to do so as they

come under the Catholic Diocese.

• In the Anglican Charismatic group, there is no board of committee nor is there any distinct form of organisational structure. The size of this group makes it impractical for the emergence of a board of committee. However, although there are no leaders in this group, one of the members has been looked up to by the others as a representative for their group.

FINANCIAL SUPPORT

The Pentecostal Charismatic group meetings are financed by the Full Gospel Businessmen's Fellowship Malacca. They are also financed by the members who attend the meetings through collections taken at every meeting.² The Full Gospel Businessmen's Fellowship Malacca does not receive any financial support from the Full Gospel Businessmen's Fellowship International. However, it does receive spiritual support. Most of the members of this group hold professional jobs and as such they are able to organise and fund mass healing services, prayer meetings, etc. They are also able to finance the guest speakers who are usually foreigners.³ The equipment used to aid in the prayer meetings are sophisticated and reflect the financial position of the group and its members. Microphones, guitars, an organ, a slide projector and stage lightings are some of the equipment used during the meetings.

The Catholic Charismatic meetings, with the exception of the Divine Light group, are fully supported financially by the members themselves. The Holy Baptism and Spirit Within groups do not receive any financial support from the church. At almost every meeting held by the Holy Baptism group, a "secret bag" (Collection bag) is passed around. Unlike the Holy Baptism group, the Spirit Within group does not pass around any bag. There is however, a collection box on a chair. Mr. Rodrigo does not believe in passing the bag around for he says that the people may feel compelled or obliged to donate some money. Besides, the people who attend the meetings are poor. By placing a collection box there, Mr. Rodrigo feels that the money received from the members is given voluntarily and with a willing heart. No collection bag is passed around and no collection box is found in the Divine Light group. This group is at present being supported financially by the Tamil Assosiation of St. Patrick's Church. Once a month or so, there is a Tamil mass and the collection received will go to the Tamil Assosiation. When the co - group is formed and when they become independant of the Tamil Assosiation, a collection bag will be passed around as financial support will then have to come from the members themselves. For all the three Catholic Charismatic groups, donations of any sort come directly from the members themselves. They get no public funds and none from the Church either.

When comparing the Spirit Within and Holy Baptism group, it ... 52

is noted that for the Holy Baptism group, financial support poses not much of a problem. Most of the members come from the affluent class and the Public Address systems and musical instruments have all been donated by the members themselves. As for the Spirit Within group, the only equipment and musical instrument used is a guitar. One Spirit Within Charismatic had commented on the social and financial positions of the two groups by saying simply, "When you go to their meetings, you will see many big, big cars parked in the school compound, but when you come to our meetings, you will see only one or two old cars!".

As for the Anglican Charismatic group, because there is no formal organisational structure, there is no cause for financial support.

CONFLICT AND SOLIDARITY

4

Among the Catholic Charismatics, the conflict arises between the Holy Baptism and Spirit Within groups' leaders. There is an obvious enmity between Sister Louisa and the Rodrigos. Apparently, when the Holy Baptism group was formed, there already arose the conflict of the way the group should be run. There was a conflict of ideas and opinions. When the group was formed, a suggestion was to form a board of committee as soon as possible. However, Mr. Rodrigo was very much against the idea, for the formation of a board of committee would make it all very mundane and he felt that this would lead to a loss in the spirituality of the group. What

Mr. Rodrigo wanted was for every member to have a say in the running of the group and not just a group of people who would decide on all matters regarding the group. Mr. Rodrigo was also against the idea of the "social gathering" meetings where the board of committee would meet, not so much as to discuss the problems of the group but more for light conversation over drinks and snacks. Due to this conflict of ideas, Mr. Rodrigo caused quite a few people to turn against him.

The word that is going around is that Mr. Rodrigo himself voluntarily left the group to form the Spirit Within group (which many Holy Baptism members, especially the co - group, feel is an act of open opposition against them). However, according to Mr. Rodrigo, he was given no choice but to leave the group. He was seen as a disuniting factor and he was outvoted by the rest of the co - group members. He was forced to leave the group.

After some time, Mr. Rodrigo eventually decided to hold prayer meetings in his house again and as this group grew, the meetings were shifted over to the Portuguese Settlement.

From these findings, it is noted that some form of competition and power struggle exists among the leaders. Each leader is motivated by his or her own ideologies and opinions which may or may not be the same as the others. They compete for personal influence and authority over others and they are motivated by the desire to do the will of the Lord. Gerlach and Hine have stated that "most of the competition stems from altruistic devotion to the cause or

to the group. It is a blend of striving for self, for the group, and for the cause - a blend so complex that neither the competitive participant nor the observer can isolate his motives". (1979 : 49)

In the case of Mr. Rodrigo and the other group leaders, personal striving and interpersonal competition have caused Mr. Rodrigo to leave the Holy Baptism group and form the Spirit Within group. In another instant, one of the leaders, who was acknowledged as the Youth Leader, left the Holy Baptism group and formed another.⁵ On the one hand, the leaving-of these leaders had led to segmentation in the group. On the other hand, this had contributed to the spread of the movement. As Mrs. Rodrigo had said, "It's the way the Lord works. Maybe, He wanted Alfonso (Mr. Rodrigo) to bring the Portuguese Eurasians to Him and spread the Charismatic Movement in the Settlement"

The Charismatic Mass that is held once every month when all the Catholic Charismatics meet in St. Patrick's Church is an outward sign of solidarity among the Charismatic Catholics. However, the Rodrigos feel that the Charismatic Mass is a facade behind which these Charismatics hide from the truth, especially from the fact that there is a little fellowship among the groups and the existing conflict of opinions. There is little attempt in actually getting to know the Catholic Charismatics other than their own.

There is no obvious signs of competition among any of the Catholic Charismatic groups to gain members. As an example, Mr.

Rodrigo's brother and cousin are in the Holy Baptism group. Members come and go as they please and they are not compelled to stay with the group. Two members of the Spirit Within group used to attend the meetings held by the Holy Baptism group. However, when they found that they could not fit into this "rich man's group", they switched over to the Spirit Within group.

LINKS AND AFFILIATION

The Holy Baptism, Spirit Within and Divine Light groups are all linked together in that the groups are all affiliated to St. Patrick's Church. There are a few from St. Vincent's Church, that is, the other main English - speaking Catholic Church in Malacca. One possible explanation why not many of the Charismatics are from St. Vincent's Church is that the priest there is not in favour of the Charismatic Movement although he does not openly object to the Church members being Charismatics.

The Pentecostal Charismatic group is a mixed denominational group and hence, the group as a whole is not affiliated to any church, Pentecostal or other wise. However, members are from the Anglican, Methodist, Brethren and Pentecostal Churches.

The Anglican Charismatics are affiliated to the Anglican Church of Malacca although they receive little or no spiritual support from the church in their cause. This group of Charismatics

have ties with both the Pentecostal and Catholic Charismatic groups as they attend the prayer meetings held by these groups.

The Pentecostal Charismatic group does not have ties with the Catholic Charismatic groups mainly because of the differences in ideologies and forms of worship. Basically, the Pentecostal Charismatics cannot accept the concept of the Virgin Mary and the Saints as adhered to by the Catholic Charismatics. Also, the Pentecostal Charismatics maintain that the many references to, and the actual worshipping of the Virgin Mary and the Saints is a form of idolatry.

As to whether the three different Charismatic groups look down on each other is an issue of uncertainty. The weekly Bible discussions that are held between the Anglican Charismatic group and Mr. Rodrigo has been frowned upon by the leaders of the Holy Baptism group. They claim that Mr. Rodrigo may be "led astray" by the Anglican beliefs. On the other hand, there is no objection to the Anglican Charismatics attending the Catholic Charismatic Mass. In fact, the Anglican Charismatics have been made to feel quite at home. As for the Pentecostal Charismatic group, the leader has told one of the Anglican Charismatics that he would prefer to have non - Christians than Christians ⁶ in his prayer meetings. One reason why he said that could be because Christians (with reference to non - Pentecostals) are likely to be more critical than non - Christians since they have already been exposed to one set of doctrines

and ideologies of the Christian faith.

An important question that arises is about the way in which Charismatics still remain members of the established Churches and Father Andrew of Christ Church Malacca had pointed out a sense of security from the established churches and a force of habit as two reasons why Charismatics still remain members of their established Churches. Reverend Suwito of the Westley Methodist Church in Malacca had this to say, "... a majority remain in their home Churches. I feel that that's the way it should be and by so doing, whatever contributions these Charismatic individuals may have to offer, they will be able to do so by way of strengthening the Church rather than to leave it. I feel that's the way it should be, rather than to allow the polarization to widen"

THE ROLE OF PRIESTS IN THE CHARISMATIC RENEWAL

All the three priests I interviewed seemed to support the Charismatic Renewal. To the Catholic Charismatics, the presence of a priest during the prayer meetings is important but not entirely necessary. What is more important is the agreement of a priest to be the official priest for that group. The reason given is that the Catholic Charismatic groups will be perceived as respectable groups within the Catholic Church. The priest is seen as a direct link between the Charismatic group and the Catholic Church. It is because of this reason that Mr. Rodrigo is adamant in getting an

official priest for his group. The priest that now attends the Holy Baptism group meetings does not attend the Spirit Within meetings. The reason given by this priest is that he wants to concentrate in building up the Holy Baptism group. However, the Spirit Within group leaders feel that this is a lame excuse and they pointed out that it is the difference in social status between the members of the two Charismatic groups that prompted this priest to attend only the Holy Baptism meetings. As for the Divine Light group, Sister Louisa takes full charge of the group. 7

Among the Anglican Charismatics, there is no known Anglican Charismatic priest. One of the Anglican Charismatics had pointed out that when and if one or more Anglican priests would openly declare themselves as Charismatics, the Anglican Charismatics in Malaysia would come out of their closets and take a more active part in the Charismatic Renewal Movement.

Thus, it can be said that the priests in established Churches bestow an air of respectability to the Charismatic groups that emerge from these churches. However, they do not play as vital a role as the leaders in the growth of these Charismatics groups. They are seen more as figure heads that link the Catholic Charismatic groups to the Catholic Church. They may take a part in the running of these groups; however, the actual running and organisation of the Catholic Charismatics groups is under the control of laymen.

As for the Pentecostal Charismatic groups, they are usually an independent group and hence do not require the services of any priest. However, the leaders are usually known as "elders" who take the place of priests and whose presence and support is important for the smooth running of the group.

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FOOTNOTES

1. In this sub heading, the Pentecostal Charismatic group will not be dealt with. This is due to insufficient information.
2. Half - way through the prayer meetings, a collection bag is passed around and anybody who wishes to donate something to the group in the form of cash or kind may do so.
3. Because the Full Gospel Businessmen's Fellowship International (FGBFI) is a world - wide organisation with numerous contacts, evangelists from the organisation are sent out and are financed by the FGBFI. The FGBFI will inform its branch organisations who in turn will invite these evangelists to their prayer meetings as guest speakers and may also contribute financially to their stay in this country.
4. Only the Catholic Charismatic groups will be discussed here for the short duration of this research did not enable me to conduct an indepth study on the conflict and solidarity of the Pentecostal and Anglican Charismatic groups.
5. The reason(s) for his leaving the group are unknown to me. However, as I understand it, there has been some sort of disagreement between this Youth Leader and the other leaders

of the group.

6. "Non - Christians" refer to those who have just joined the group as non - believers in Christ.

"Christians" refer to those who are from denominations of established churches (e.g. Anglicans, Catholics etc) other than the Pentecostal Church.

7. Towards the end of my research I received word that an Indian priest was soon to be attached to St. Patrick's Church and from what I have gathered, he would represent the Divine Light group as their official priest.

... a broader fragmentation in a main group may lead to an inter - state movement in Malaysia. Pairs or groups of individuals may leave the main group for another town or state and being inspired by Charismatic ideology, these individuals may be motivated into starting a Charismatic group. In the Holy Baptism group, the leaders have claimed that many of their group members had left for other states due to educational or occupational reasons. Although it is not known if these members have formed their own charismatic groups, nevertheless, ... 62

CONCLUSION

The Charismatic Renewal is a movement that has its roots in Pentecostalism. In Malacca, the movement is quite widespread and has gained members from non - Christian faiths and Christian denominations. There are many factors which have led to the spread of this movement.

Among the Catholics, the conflict that arose between the leaders of the Holy Baptism group had resulted in the segmentation of that group and the formation of other groups, one of them being the Spirit Within group. Thus, segmentation of a main group contributes to the spread of the Movement. As in the case of the Spirit Within group, its formation has resulted in the spread of the Charismatic Movement into the Portuguese Settlement and the outcome has gained many Charismatics from among the Portuguese Eurasians.

On a broader front, segmentation in a main group may lead to an inter - state spread of the movement in Malaysia. Pairs or groups of individuals may leave the main group for another town or state and being inspired by Charismatic ideology, these individuals may be motivated into starting a Charismatic group. In the Holy Baptism group, the leaders have claimed that many of their group members had left for other states due to educational or occupational reasons. Although it is not known if these members have formed their own charismatic groups, nevertheless, we cannot

rule out this possibility.

The healing sessions that are held mainly by the Spirit Within and Pentecostal Charismatic groups has also attracted many people. These sessions further aid in the spread of the movement. The people who are attracted to the healing sessions may have come initially for secular reasons. However, many who have been healed have remained in the movement, possibly due to spiritual obligations. In Malaysia, as in other developing societies, the vast majority, including the educated people, still believe in magic and superstition. Although each ethnic community has its own unique system of supernatural beliefs, a cross - communal exchange of supernatural ideas and practices takes place among the different ethnic communities. For example, many of my Portuguese Eurasian respondents had, at one time or other, sought the help of Malay 'bomohs' and Chinese 'sin - sehs'. When the Charismatic Movement was introduced into the Settlement, these people were attracted to it because of the healing sessions that were conducted by Mr. Rodrigo. Given this cultural condition, the Charismatic Renewal Movement is easily accepted by many Malaysians because it has features which do not conflict with supernatural ethos that is widespread in Malaysia.

The spread of the movement among the Catholics in Malaysia and especially in Malacca is also due largely to the open acceptance of the movement by the Pope himself. The situation is further enhanced by the acceptance of many Catholic priests who, by their presence

in the various Catholic Charismatic groups, bestow an air of respectability to the groups and to the movement. On the other hand, the official disapproval from the Anglican Bishop of West Malaysia and the fact that no Anglican priest has openly declared himself a Charismatic has prevented many Anglican Charismatics from openly participating in the Movement's activities. However, this has not prevented the Anglican Charismatics from having fellowship with Charismatics from other groups and from spreading the Movement to fellow Anglicans. Reports from my Anglican Charismatic respondents and Father Andrew have confirmed that there are many Anglican Charismatics in West Malaysia who participate in the movement on the quiet for fear of being expelled from the Anglican Church.

In Malacca and generally in Malaysia, more people are attracted to the Pentecostal Charismatic groups. These groups boast of gaining more and more Charismatics from Christian denominations as well as those from non - Christian faiths. Unlike the Charismatic groups that emerge from main line Churches which to an extent, still adhere to the traditions set by the Churches, the Pentecostal Charismatic groups are not bound by such traditions. As such, these groups practise more fully the concept of the "freedom of worship". Due to this flexible form of worship, more young people than old are attracted to these groups.

The infiltration of foreign Christian groups such as the Full Gospel Businessmen's Fellowship International into the country has further spread the Charismatic Renewal in Malaysia.

Malaysia is in a transitional phase of progress and development. The years under the colonial rule have instilled the idea into the average Malaysian that Westerners are superior and more advanced. Foreign ideas, especially those from the 'advanced West' would therefore appeal somewhat greatly to the Malaysian public. The same can be said of the Charismatic Renewal Movement. New Charismatic ideas brought in by foreign Christian groups would be well received by Malaysian Christians, especially the new converts who desire and are "hungry for the Word". The invitation of foreign speakers and especially faith healers by this group (FGBFI) are main attractions that lead many Malaysians, Christians and non - Christians, to the Movement.

The Charismatic Movement has been used by some, especially those from the middle and upper middle classes, as a means of status elevation. In this study of the Catholic Charismatic groups, the acquisition and display of the gifts of the Spirit, especially the speaking of tongues, by the members of the Holy Baptism group is seen as a means of acquiring status. Among the lower class Charismatics as those in the Spirit Within and Divine Light groups, the gift of tongues has been humbly accepted and no attempt has been made to publicise it. This finding corresponds to Schwartz's (1970) theory that Spirit Baptism confers unique prestige and that their involvement in the Charismatic Movement is consonant with their position in society. If the Charismatic Renewal Movement is viewed as a way of gaining status, it is possible that it may be attractive to those, who having achieved a certain position in

society, wish to elevate it through religion. The Charismatic Movement may therefore also be spread in this fashion.

From the findings of this research, the Charismatic Renewal Movement has gained members from Christian and non - Christian faiths, the poor and the rich and the lower and upper classes. It is not surprising that the movement should gain popularity among the Malaysian society for to a large extent, it functions to answer both mundane and spiritual problems. The belief that the Holy Spirit is working in and through the Charismatic communities has become increasingly stronger and the solution of secular problems is testimony of the efficacy of the Spirit.

The Charismatic Movement in Malaysia appears to receive support from many Christians. To a very great extent, it serves to integrate Christians from the various denominations. When one is in the company of Charismatics, the questions often asked are "Are you a Charismatic?" or "Are you baptised in the Spirit?", instead of "Are you a Catholic?" or "Are you a Protestant?". In the Charismatic Renewal, everyone is united in the Spirit. There is one uncomplicated ideology and one common aim, that is to receive the infilling of the spirit. Indeed, the future of the Charismatic Renewal Movement in Malaysia looks promising. The increasing number of Malaysians, Christians and non - Christians, participating openly and secretly in the movement today is evidence of its popularity and this ultimately ensures its survival and continuity.

APPENDIX I :
SAMPLE OF QUESTIONNAIRE DISTRIBUTED TO
EACH SELECTED CHARISMATIC

NAME OF RELIGIOUS GROUP _____

RESPONDENT NO. _____

1. Race _____

2. Sex _____

3. Age _____

4. Occupation _____

(If retired, state former occupation)

5. Marital Status _____

6. Educational Level _____

7. Political Preference _____

(Please state which political party you support)

8. What organisations or societies (e.g. unions, clubs, etc.)
have you been or are still involved with? _____

9. When did you join this religious group? _____

How did you hear about this group _____

Why did you join? _____

10. Before joining this religious group, what were your religious
practices? _____

How long were you involved in these practices? _____

Do you still follow any of these practices? _____

If yes, which ones? _____

11. Are any of your family members in this religious group? _____
If yes, how many of them and who are they? _____
Those who are not in this religious group, do they belong to
other religions? _____
12. What is your position in this religious group? _____
13. On the average, how often do you attend the group's meeting?

Do you participate in the group's special activities? _____
If yes, what are they? _____
14. Have you personally experienced miracles and visions? _____
If yes, how many times (average) _____
Please describe briefly your most significant miracle and/or
vision: _____
15. What newspapers do you read often? _____
What books, magazines, or articles have you read recently (in
the last 6 - 12 months)? _____
What are your favourite books or magazines? _____

- Thank you for your cooperation -

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