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A Psychological Interpretation of the Religious Behaviour of Pentecostals and Charismatics

The history of religions has recorded periodic religious revivalism perhaps more often in Christianity than in other religious traditions. People have wrestled with the meaning and function of religion in their lives and have attempted to transcend the limitations of their belief-systems. Their reinterpretations and reforms are but the dynamics of an evolutionary process within each historical religious tradition.

Any attempt to understand revivalism in any religious tradition, would mean perceiving and acknowledging the religious and non-religious tensions within human beings who seek new meanings and new horizons. Hopefully these meanings and fresh experience would help them to shake off their lethargy and don a renewed spirit that would change them and reawaken the world psychologically, socially and economically, politically and spiritually.

The exact relationship between one's belief-system and life experience is a problem that can be traced back to a time when neither religion nor personality was carefully defined. Some hold that religion has contributed toward wholeness, others claim that it is a source of pathology, that it dulls the senses and intelligence, warps and injures personal development, and some also indicate that it is a means of liberation. However varied these conclusions, they point to one evidence: that one's belief with its traditions and practices is not an isolated aspect of personality. Therefore exploring the dimensions of one can lead to greater insight into the other.

Apparently religion is a force that has the power to control, direct and change mankind for better or for worse. Its origin and functions have been topics of research for theologians, anthropologists, sociologists and more recently psychologists. The multiplicity of de-

Definitions of religion indicate that there is to it something beyond finite symbols and explanations. However, in general, these definitions concede that it is a response of the whole person to what is held as sacred (God, ideal etc.). Its goal is to grasp in an ever-increasing measure that order of existence which is written into the very structure of life itself and without devotion to which wholeness cannot be achieved. Beliefs with their practices and traditions are the answers to one's search for meaning and value and they are important for the integration and growth of the personality. Function and structure in religion cannot be divorced from function and structure in personality. There is to religion both a personal and an institutional aspect.

Religious behaviour also reflects the needs and conditions of people. Therefore through the study of religious behaviour it is possible to assess the health or illness of the individual or society. Decades of investigation by William James and Abraham Maslow have indicated that religious behaviour can sometimes reinforce emotional and behavioural pathology. There is also proof that the genuinely mature person is at the same time authentically religious. All this goes to show that a person's religious behaviour can be an index of his/her quality of life.

One prominent movement today seeking a new experience and quality of life is the charismatic movement in the Catholic Church. During the past decade the charismatics (Catholic Pentecostals) have made their presence known and felt. The church has always accepted the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, however there seems to be a level of scepticism and reservation regarding some aspects of their extreme religious behaviour and their interpretation of the gifts of the Spirit, viz., speaking in tongues (glossolalia), faith healing, prophecy etc. In spite of the criticism the charismatics face, their revivalistic movement is gaining momentum.

It was therefore a matter of interest for me as someone involved in the field of psychology of religion to perceive the nature of the needs and conditions of these Catholics who feel drawn towards a revivalistic movement like this, and also to determine whether there is a relationship between their religious behaviour and personality.

My first experience of their religious behaviour was at a prayer meeting, where 20 adults (25-50 years)-priests, nuns, lecturers, teachers,

nurses and graduate students-assembled with a leader to pray. Looking back at that session, what impressed me was their lack of inhibitions, their warmth and spontaneity, before, during and after the session. There was an exuberance to their songs of praise and alleluia, that set and maintained the mood for their prayer meeting. They read the scriptures, gave homilies, spoke and prayed in tongues, interpreted glossolalic messages, witnessed to conversion experiences, prophesied, shared joys and sorrows, prayed for all types of healing, for the "Gifts of the Spirit", especially for the gift of tongues for those who did not have it. Their messages centred round repentance, forgiveness, conversion, exorcism and eschatological predictions. The end result according to them was a marvellous peace experience that brought with it healing, joy, relief, fervour (zeal), affection, changed attitudes and closer community life.

The observable striking feature of the meeting was its exhilarating effects on the participants. If they were warm and friendly before, now they were enthusiastically so. The most eye-catching phenomenon was glossolalia and the emphasis given to it. I could best describe it as a rapid flow of unintelligible sounds that had the intonation of speech. Those who had this gift preferred to pray in "tongues", the "have-nots" were "prayed over" by the "haves" so that they may receive, "the initial sign of the baptism in the Spirit" and thus be initiated as members of the ingroup of glossolalists. They also explained glossolalia as the first of many gifts of the Spirit, the "gateway" to many others they hope to receive.

Another remarkable feature was their tacit acceptance of a hierarchy among themselves despite their denial of elitism. Those who were recipients of more gifts of the Spirit like glossolalia, interpretation, prophecy, healing etc. were higher on the totem pole of spirituality and leadership.

The most significant of their claims was a "healing" that included the physical, psychological, social and spiritual. I could not help assuming at this point that these charismatics found the time and energy to attend these sessions because the catharsis (healing) they experienced was meaningful for them. So great was their sense of "well-being" that it reinforced their need and willingness to attend more such prayer meetings.

The reasons for their participation and membership in the movement were varied. For example, some wanted "more peace in the home", some were bored with the church - its coldness, rigidity, ritualism, others wanted to experience a sense of belonging, avoid loneliness, a healing of some kind etc., but all wanted their religious experience to do something for them, preferably give them a more satisfying life experience if not a magical solution to their needs and problems.

Some of the factors that caught my attention were:

1. The expansion of the movement in the face of opposition
2. Though many were exposed to the movement only some were drawn to it
3. The members of the movement were adults
4. The members were charismatics by choice
5. The reasons for their choice were motivated by their needs and dissatisfactions
6. "Experience" seemed to be a key-note of their prayer life though this was explained by many as a "good feeling."

It would appear, therefore, that motivation for membership and viability of the movement was need-based.

More certain now about the possibility of a relationship between life experience and religious experience, I ventured to test this hypothesis on a sample of Catholic charismatics and non-charismatics, in particular the glossolalists versus non-glossolalists.

At this point perhaps it is necessary to introduce briefly pentecostalism and glossolalia from a historical, theological and psychological point of view. The aim is not so much to review a subject that has been widely written about, but to provide a focus to search for a relationship between religious experience and nature of the needs and conditions expressed by its members.

History of Pentecostalism and Glossolalia

Glossolalia was known to exist during the pre-Christian era and continues to be manifested to this day as a religious behaviour especially among pentecostals.

In pre-Christian literature glossolalia was essentially associated with religious services and explained as a result of "spirit possession", and the incoherent speech was considered inspired. Often this was accompanied by loss of mental control, ecstasy, visions, and power of healing. Since the speech was unintelligible interpreters were needed.

References to Christian glossolalia are found first in Acts 2:1-13 when the spirit descended on the disciples on the day of Pentecost, later when Cornelius believed the Gospel of Peter (Acts 10:44-48), when disciples of John the Baptist received the Christian truth from Paul (Acts 8:5-25), and at Paul's conversion (Acts 9:1-7). In all these cases glossolalia seems to be associated with the supernatural and does accompany a conversion experience.

The Ante-Nicene period was a time of persecution, apologetic defence of the faith and doctrinal formation. There is ambiguous reference to glossolalia and Pentecostal gifts in the lives and writings of the early fathers of the church. Montanus was the first to openly regard himself as the inspired organ of the Holy Spirit and called on his followers to live in a state of "frequent ecstasy and vision". In the fifth century the phenomenon was virtually non-existent. Origen wrote that the Holy Spirit gave signs of His presence at the beginning of the church's ministry but since that time the signs have diminished. Later, Augustine stated that the phenomenon existed as a "betokening of the Holy Spirit. . .and it passed away". It is important to note that the Ante-Nicene period was one of religious turmoil and stress, and when the tension eased the phenomenon became non-existent.

The period of Reformation, a time of social, economic and religious revivalism, records prominent religious figures possessing this gift. The post-Reformation period once again manifested dissensions, dissatisfactions and persecution. It is reported that there were extremist attitudes in religious behaviour among the Christians. They experienced such phenomena as ecstasy, prophesying, and tongue-speaking, especially among children. Since the sixteenth century, when Christians began to break up into innumerable sects and splinter groups, glossolalia was most prolific.

Religion was at a low ebb during the early decades of the nineteenth century and people prayed for an "outpouring of the Holy Spirit". At this time the Irvingite movement began in England and

their strongest interest was in apocalyptic thought. Glossolalia was a common part of their worship at home and in churches. They distinguished between Pentecostal (languages) and Corinthian glossolalia (ecstatic and unknown speech). Since then Mormons, Gift Adventists in America, and Readers in Sweden manifested glossolalia.

Twentieth century Pentecostalism followed a period of practical problems, spiritual stagnation, moral lethargy and theological disputes. The Church became increasingly rich and institutionalized. To counteract this inertia and cold formalism which the Holiness folk called "modernism", they prayed, fasted and attended various Bible and prophetic conferences. Charles Parham and Richard Spurling were two prominent figures who were dissatisfied with the laxity in established churches and felt that only the power of the Holy Spirit could overcome the laxity in the church. Since then Pentecostalism has spread all over the world.

Though there are divergent groups among Pentecostals, the basic position that unites them is their belief in the "baptism of the Holy Spirit" and that "Glossolalia is the necessary evidence" for this baptism.

Glossolalia of the pre-Christian era and now has been explained in terms of "Spirit possession", where the super-natural "controls" and the individual "surrenders". Believers are convinced that since their religious experience involves the supernatural, unusual manifestations are proper. Most important of all is their belief that this is the "only means to save modern man."

Thus the history of Pentecostalism and Glossolalia indicate that the prevalent conditions at its inception have been personal, social, cultural, religious tensions and dissatisfactions, and that revivalism was directed toward producing the desired change. The transition experience was accompanied by highly charged emotional experiences like glossolalia, visions, ecstasy, prophecy etc.

The Theology of Pentecostalism and Glossolalia

The emphasis in the Pentecostal movement in the Protestant and Catholic churches, is to counteract "spiritual lethargy, intellectualism and cold formalism" within Christianity, and a return to the early

Christian life when the Spirit was an "experience" and not a mere "doctrine". Their distinctive teaching focuses on the supernatural influence of the Spirit. So powerful is this influence that it legitimizes extraordinary manifestations like speaking in tongues, interpretation, prophecy etc. which often project an image of exuberance, fantasy and ecstasy. It is their belief that these gifts must also be felt in community that Pentecostalism is the only means to salvation and therefore their urgency towards a world mission. Their expansion is a sign of God's blessing and approval and they use the classic text "by their fruit you shall know them" to affirm this. Though there is no evidence in the Scriptures that glossolalia is the "initial evidence" of the baptism of the Spirit nevertheless for them the events at the Pentecost (Ac. 2-4) "and they were filled with the spirit, and began to speak in tongues, as the spirit gave them utterance", is an important, testimony that glossolalia is not merely an event of the past but also a blueprint for the future and also the gateway into the whole realm of gifts of the Holy Spirit. Glossolalia for them is a non-complex, spirit-filled utterance, a heavenly language, which is at the same time ecstatic, and unlearnt. It symbolizes their break with the past, a conversion, abandonment to God, and also the freedom and spontaneity they are looking for in religion and society. Finally, they claim that their conversion is a felt religious experience that is at the same time pleasurable.

A Psychological Interpretation of Glossolalia

This phenomenon has been studied by linguists, anthropologists, psychologists and religious groups. Their specific definitions vary; however they agree that it is an unusual speech pattern manifested by the individual and/or group and glossolalists use it to find some pleasure and benefit from the experience.

It has been explained by research scholars as a prayer, a meaningless utterance that bears no resemblance to any natural language living or dead, a way of letting off superfluous spiritual and emotional steam, the result of psychological disturbance and emotional instability, linked to hysteria, catalepsy, similar to the utterances of schizophrenics, or an abnormal trance state, a kind of somnambulism, or multiple personality in which some centre other than the ego possesses the motor centres of the personality, a phenomenon, that can occur

prior to integration of personality, the result of excessive repression that stems from "intellectualization, institutionalization and sophistication", as regression in the service of the ego, and though glossolalia has a non-communicative role, it is expressive of affect and social sharing thus having a cathartic function.

Likewise the glossolalists have been described as highly suggestible, submissive and dependent individuals who exaggerate any felt sensation. They come from disturbed homes, have a deep need for personal security, emotional and social acceptance, are narcissistic with weak egos, confused identities, with a high level of anxiety, and personal instability. New Pentecostals, often from the affluent middle class, suffer from emotional deprivation and for them glossolalia provides a form of release of long repressed religious emotion. The lower middle class demonstrate overt psychopathology of a sociopathic, hysterical or hypochondriacal nature.

There are a few studies that claim that glossolalia is a religious and psychological phenomenon that has a therapeutic function, it helps to reduce anxieties, cope with reality, facilitates the unconscious resolution to neurosis and integrates personality. The openness to the religious experience itself can be a means of healing mind and body. They refute that glossolalists suffer no damage to their ego, can differentiate between reality and the unreal both before and after the experience. Some attest that glossolalia is a religious experience that leads to a "rebirth of faith", that people speak in tongues because of the theological significance, namely, evidence of being filled with the Holy Spirit, that psychopathological explanations oversimplify religious glossolalia. Glossolalists have been found to be loving, sensitive, better adjusted, ethical, tolerant of others, less defensive, more spontaneous, interested in "the things of God" and are enthusiastic to share this experience with others. Further, perhaps the most recent "altered state of consciousness" to capture the interest of youth is a religiously induced state of glossolalia.

Finally, while it has been shown that glossolalia did no harm to the church neither has it contributed any particular value. It has been suggested that alternate modes of expressing "deeper repressed feelings" could be sought instead of it "erupting into turbulent upheavals". The relationship between glossolalia and mental illness is hard to establish since the latter is not a discrete state, there is a

continuous flow of function and dysfunction. Glossolalists have been shown to remain at the functional level though their behaviour at times appear bizarre to non-Pentecostals.

The above findings are varied; some reduce the phenomenon to a coping mechanism, and others emphasize the resulting catharsis. Psychologically, it is symbolic of their need to be controlled and yet be out of control, to be dependent, win attention and acceptance, change for the better, be healed and restore harmony within themselves. Participation in the movement therefore offers very definite benefits and the motivation and reinforcement are not merely religious as they might appear to be.

It has been pointed out that the psychodynamics and needs of the Pentecostals and glossolalists relate in many ways to the behavioural dynamics and needs of the hysterical personality type. Research findings have at times both supported and not supported this hypothesis.

A description of the hysterical personality type would be valuable for further comparison.

The Hysterical Personality

Laymen use the term "hysterical" to describe uncontrolled emotional displays. Hysteria is a term that Hippocrates associated with sexual difficulties. In the seventeenth century anesthetics and other symptoms found in this disorder were considered to be signs of witchcraft or possession by demons. Later, Jean Charcot classified those people who stimulated neurological symptoms as hysterics and stated that hysterical symptoms could be traced to a problem in human relationships. Bernheim believed these symptoms were produced by suggestion. Psychoanalysts regard hysteria as an unconscious type of counterfeit illness wherein the person gains release of repressed impulses. This idea is well accepted today. Fenichel attributes the symptoms to a compromise between drive and defence. Hysteria may denote a transient loss of affective and behaviour control often resulting from overwhelming stress.

The American Psychiatric Association Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders states that the hysterical personality type is characterized by "excitability, emotional instability, over-reactivity, self-dramatization, attention-seeking, immaturity, vanity, and unusual

dependence and physical complaints that are functional." The person attains both primary and secondary gains. The symptoms elicit attention and sympathy, and also exert control over others, and thus serve as a means of communication and control. Sullivan describes hysteria as a form of inverted sublimation, that is, a means of satisfying unacceptable impulses in a personally satisfactory way which exempts the individual from social blame. Freud, Abraham and Riech postulated that the hysterical personality disorder was the result of fixations at the levels of early oral and genital experience. Mackinnon and Michels (1971) point out some important differences in the symptoms for males and females. Male hysterics have a prominent admixture of obsessive traits; some show strong feminine identifications as in grossly effeminate men or passive homosexuals. They have sexual disturbances like impotence or an intense neurotic relationship with mother; often they exhibit pseudo-independent behaviour which can be recognized as a defence against feelings of excessive fear and anger.

The female has partial frigidity and sexual inhibitions which are reactions to fear of sexual feelings. The sexually responsive often have masochistic fantasies. Promiscuity is a means of attracting and controlling men. Her attitude towards men is more paternal and one that will not make demands on her. Because of her oedipal strivings she might marry outside her social, cultural and religious circle and marry older men to avenge her father.

Both sexes are vivacious, warm, imaginative, charming, dramatic, exhibitionistic in their speech, more so among females. In general, they are attractive people who add much to their environment. Both sexes are strongly interested in style and fashion that draw attention to their appearance. In the woman there is an over-dramatization of femininity, in the man there may be excessive masculinity.

The hysterical personality has difficulty experiencing real feelings of love and intimacy in spite of their charming ways. Their emotional responses are labile and at times excessive. Their seductive behaviour is a striving for personal rapport, love and approval. This creates an aura of egocentricity, narcissism, vanity and low self-image. They adopt particularly helpless attitudes toward their parents, physicians, therapists or any authority figures, who are all viewed as omnipotent and capable of solving all their problems. When dependency needs are not met, they become angry, demanding and coercive. They cope

with their low frustration tolerance with impulsive infidelity, guilt and depression.

Somatic complaints involving multiple organ systems usually begin during adolescence and continue throughout life. In persons with more ego pathology there may be frequent hospitalization and surgery. The symptoms are a cry for help. Hysterical character traits are more common among the over-protected or under-protected, youngest, only or sick child, to manipulate parents, win sympathy, avoid punishment or play one parent against the other.

The Hysterical personality types are found among men and women. However, it has been more associated with the highly emotional and excessively feminine women, and with male homosexuals.

Hysterical personality disorders originate early in life, are well established by the mid-twenties and early thirties, and persist throughout life. As beauty and sexuality show signs of decline, depression, anxiety, physical complaints, and other conversion reactions increase.

Glossolalists and the Hysterical Personality Type

Research about glossolalia and glossolalists repeatedly indicate that "religious experience" alone is not the motivating factor for their religious affiliation. Personality types, physiological, psychological, and socio-cultural factors could explain their existence.

The description of hysterical personality types and research findings about glossolalists show that they have much in common. They have a preference for feeling over thought, are emotionally deprived, emotionally unstable and therefore the need for love, security and attention. Their behaviour includes the unusual and extraordinary, like histrionic behaviour, self-dramatization, and hypochondriacal conversion symptoms. They have a low frustration tolerance, are nervous, excitable, highly anxious and unstable. Poor parent-child relationship and unresolved oedipal conflicts during early years give rise to sexual disturbances, seductive behaviour, perversions, marital problems and other sexual deviations. They have self-aggrandizing, narcissistic tendencies, weak egos, poor superego functioning, and are egomaniacs in claiming spiritual excellence. They are suggestible, submissive and dependent. Common defences among both groups are

repression, regression, denial, identification, conversion symptoms, externalization and dependence. In spite of these similarities glossolalists need to be re-tested with more objective measures available for psychological research to ascertain their personality type.

Personality theorists have already established the fact that there exists a relationship between one's personality and choice of religious affiliation. More recently, specific research about glossolalists by Lapsley and Simpson (1952), Vivier (1960), Wood (1965), Alland (1967) and others have reaffirmed directly and indirectly this fact.

This study, therefore, begins with the premise that one's religious behaviour is in some knowable and measurable way associated with one's personality, and that the study of one aspect will lead to insights about the other.

Since Pentecostalism emphasizes "emotional experience" and since the personality type that manifests a basic need for "emotional expression and satisfaction" is the hysterical personality, this study is an empirical investigation of the relationship between the religious behaviour of charismatics, especially glossolalists and the hysterical personality type. More specifically, it will proceed to examine what glossolalia means to them and how it affects their lives. The study further will make an enquiry as regards the motivating factors for their choice and participation in an "emotional" religion and the need gratification if any.

Research Methodology

In order to pursue the relationship between charismatics who are glossolalists and the hysterical personality, the following four null hypotheses were set up :

1. There is no difference between charismatic glossolalists and charismatic non-glossolalists in hysterical personality traits.
2. There is no difference between charismatics and non-charismatics in hysterical personality traits.
3. There is no difference between charismatic men and women glossolalists in hysterical personality traits.
4. There is no difference between charismatic nuns and lay glossolalists in hysterical personality traits.

Tools

The instruments used to investigate the above hypotheses included the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (MMPI) Hysteria Subtle Scale (HyS) Participant Observation, Interviews and Case Histories. The MMPI HyS consists of a total of 28 items and the Means for males and females are 12.76 and 13.18, respectively. Participant Observation is when the researcher is involved in the process under observation, and is more likely to gain first-hand insight into the feelings and reactions of the subjects. It legitimates the observer's presence and acceptance of the researcher will cause less change in what is being observed. The emphasis is on realism and natural process. Among the observational approaches, it is the most subjective, and an excellent way to establish rapport with subjects and gain understanding of social meaning during a social experience. Participant observation could be valuable to obtain information about participants which may not be available through the MMPI HyS.

In this study the researcher was not a charismatic, and thus reduced the possibility of biased inferences due to emotional involvement.

The one-to-one approach used in interviews and case histories were procedures to be more directly involved with the respondents to obtain a description of their personalities and to investigate how religious preference and behaviour relate to the psychodynamics and needs of the individual. The tools used for the interviews and case histories consisted of selected questions from the Projective Religious Questions by Draper and others (1965), and the Christensen Outline for Case Histories.

Sample

In order to determine if there existed a relationship between personality type and religious preference, it was necessary to choose a sample from among those who claimed to be 'religious' or practising their belief.

The selection of the sample for this research began with a pilot project. The main study (glossolalist), and control (non-glossolalist) groups were obtained from two charismatic prayer units in the suburbs

of Evanston and Wilmette, Illinois and the comparison group had for its members theological students and nuns not involved in charismatic movement in the same geographical area. The participants were all white, middle class, American men, women and religious women (nuns).

Assuming that the charismatics would respond better to their leaders, the data were collected with their co-operation. It was explained to them that the study involved the "Understanding of the Theology and Psychology of Glossolalia" and the relationship, if any, between these two factors. Each leader was given 20 copies of the MMPI HyS, stating merely that it was a personal attitude questionnaire, to be administered to volunteers only. They were assured of anonymity treating the responses as confidential. The researcher was present during the testing sessions.

The charismatic participants were separated into the main study and the control groups. Each group was further sorted out into subgroups based on sex and religious vocation. The Means and T-Scores for 5 members in each of the subgroups were determined. The MMPI HyS Means and T-Scores were also obtained for the members of the comparison group. The Means and T-Scores of the subgroups in the main study, control and comparison groups were then compared.

The Means and T-Scores showed marked differences among the charismatic glossolalists and non-glossolalists and non-charismatics. Differences between women and men glossolalists, and between religious (nuns) glossolalists and lay glossolalists were observed.

Based on these results of the pilot study, a larger sample was chosen from among ten Catholic charismatic prayer groups within a fifty mile range from Evanston, Illinois, to enable the researcher to participate in and collect data.

The sample was composed of volunteers, all of them white, adult (25-65 years) middle class Americans of varied professions like businessmen and women, doctors, professors, teachers, nurses, secretaries and university graduate students. The prayer groups under observation were also located in the wealthy suburbs of the near-Chicago area, where the population for the most part has been exposed to college or university education.

Results and Discussion

This study has directed its attention more specifically to determining whether or not there was a relationship between the personality traits of charismatics, glossolalists included, and the hysterical personality type.

MMPI HyS Test Results and Implications

The MMPI HyS test Means for men and women are 12.76 and 13.8 respectively. The test results for the sample were: [G = Glossolalist, N.G. = Non-Glossolalist, C = Charismatic, N.C. = Non-Charismatic]

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|------------------|---|----------------|
| G. C. | = | 20.3 |
| N. G. C. | = | 17.98 |
| N. C. | = | 15.08 |
| G vs N. G. men | = | 19.5 vs 16.71 |
| G vs N. G. women | = | 21.4 vs 18.8 |
| G vs Nuns | = | 20.35 vs 18.45 |
| C vs N. C. men | = | 19.15 vs 15.00 |
| C vs N. C. women | = | 20.1 vs 15.65 |
| C vs N. C. nuns | = | 19.4 vs 14.6 |

In order to determine the significance of the differences observed in the various comparisons, an analysis of variance was done. The ratio indicated the significance of the difference to be at the 0.01 level. This meant that all the four null hypotheses could be rejected.

It can therefore be inferred from the statistical evaluations that there is significant evidence from the MMPI HyS test results, that charismatics are more likely to be of the hysterical personality type than the non-charismatics. The evidence was greater for the charismatic glossolalists than for the charismatic non-glossolalists.

Within the limits of this study, it can be inferred that persons with similar personality make-up have a tendency towards similar religious preferences. A corollary from this is that there could be psychologically based reasons for one's religious preference.

This is in keeping with Wood's findings (1965) that personality types participating in highly 'emotional' religions will vary in some

way from types participating in more 'sedate' religions. He, and later Alland (1967), also added that there may be psychologically based reasons for the individual's participation in an emotional religion like Pentecostalism.

Participants Observation, Interview, and Case History Results and Implications

The analysis of Participant Observation and Interviews sought the emphasis within the charismatic movement, and reasons for their religious preference.

It was found that the movement advocated an encounter with the supernatural, with the promise of a changed and new life that is at the same time religious, emotional, liberating and healing. God is somebody who sought and saved the lost, who carried the unbearable burdens of mankind, and also the problem-solver. Since their concept of God is that of a "super power" who is omnipotent at the same time indulgent and protective, it is not surprising that the content of their prayers is need-based. They are "totally dependent" on and submissive to this power, in order to be "guided, led, controlled and empowered." It is possible that their relationship with God is a very gratifying experience, since they could, for a change, be passive and dependent.

Their prayers, religious rituals and inter-personal relationships within the setting of the sessions, reflected their need for love, security, approval, caring and support, and they hoped to receive these from each other, from their leaders, or through the miraculous intervention of the supernatural. Charismatics emphatically hold that no psychological intervention can give them the "freeing, gratifying and healing experience" they receive in the movement. Healing is a focus in their religious behaviour. Almost always the object of their healing is a physical condition possibly a conversion symptom, or a psychological problem.

Speaking in tongues, and other "gifts of the Spirit" symbolize their post-conversion status and their spiritual and social superiority. It gives them a much longed-for identity. From a stage of being "nobody" they have emerged into being "somebody" to be noticed and acknowledged.

Participants also admit that one of the motives for their membership is the dissatisfaction they experienced in their main-line religious groups. The membership is a melting pot of discontented immigrants from several Christian groups and denominations. Their most common complaints are intellectualism, sophistication, authoritarianism, ritualism, institutionalism and formalism within their setting. They find these factors very stifling and blame the church or group for the stagnation in their lives. In this respect, one would wonder if there is not an element of denial of the cause of their problems and a defensive attitude of externalization.

The religious behaviour of the charismatics is indicative of their psychodynamics, needs, defenses and efforts to adjust. When compared with the hysterical personality type it can be concluded that they have much in common, especially with regard to dependency, emotional and social acceptance, desire for a healing and changed life. It is true to a great extent that people tend to base their choice of a religious group on the extent to which they can achieve a satisfactory gratification of their needs within that religious environment.

A few case histories of charismatic glossolalists were analysed and diagnosed in terms of Tupin's Clinical Data to Identify Hysterical Personality Types, and Mackinnon and Michels' description of them. The analysis was done to determine the level of hysteria among these cases, if any.

The background of the glossolalists indicates that in the family, they hold a favoured ordinal position of being the oldest or youngest. The parent-child relationship during the earlier stages of development was such that oedipal conflicts remain unresolved which contributed to their sexual and marital maladjustment. All have a distant, obsessive, domineering, disciplinarian for a father which forced them toward a passive and dependent relationship with mother. Their backgrounds also indicate a variety of physical, psychological, social and marital problems which interfered with healthy inter-personal relationships within the family. All the cases demonstrated a fairly high level of emotional and social deprivation though they belong to the affluent middle class group. The cases also indicate a later identification with the aggressive parent.

The above findings are in keeping with those of Oates (1967) and Vivier (1960) who state that Pentecostals do tend to be members of the

affluent middle class, suffer from emotional deprivation, and come from disturbed homes that have marriage and other psychopathological problems.

Their histories also indicate poor object relations. They appear to be confronted in their adult life with a great many unresolved conflicts that centre around trust-mistrust, love-hate, identity-confusion, and intimacy-alienation struggles. There seems to be a high level of anxiety in their lives, and they are to a great extent problem-oriented, using much of their energy coping with them. However, they look for answers outside themselves. They are very dependent on their mothers, or some authority figures like teachers and leaders to solve their problems or bail them out of their crises. When this failed they have sought solutions through supernatural intervention. The case data show they are passive-dependent types, with unstable and immature personalities.

Lapsley and Simpson (1952), Vivier (1960), and Oates (1967) came to similar conclusions in their research. Their findings indicate that Pentecostals and glossolalists are "very troubled people" who exhibit "high levels of anxiety", "nervous breakdowns", "confused identities" and generally "unstable personalities". Kildhal (1972) found in his study that glossolalists were "more submissive, suggestible and dependent in the presence of authority figures" when compared to non-glossolalists.

Regarding their defence mechanisms, all four cases used repression, selective regression, histrionic behaviour, day-dreaming and/or fantasy, identification, denial, externalization and conversion symptoms to deal with their tensions and conflicts. They claim their involvement in the charismatic and glossolalic religious experience acts as a preventive measure from further deterioration, and helps them maintain a functional level. All claimed a change for the better.

Lapsley and Simpson (1952) reported similar findings when they stated that involvement in the movement did cause the "lessening of inner conflict, the practice (of glossolalia) has proved to be beneficial in some cases." Kelsey (1961) likewise affirms that though Pentecostals, glossolalists and hysterics, do have the element of emotionality in common, the Pentecostals and glossolalists showed a greater "ability to cope with reality" than the hysterics. Kildhal (1972) observed that

glossolalists attributed their state of well-being to their participation in the movement. According to his findings, glossolalists described themselves as "more sensitive, loving, better adjusted in sexual and marital adjustment, and ethically responsive" when compared to non-glossolalists. Similarly, Goodman's study (1972) reported that Pentecostals and glossolalists went through a conversion experience, a before-after phase from the sinner stage to that of being saved, their life being very different now.

The psychodynamics manifested by the cases indicated unresolved childhood and oedipal conflicts, poor object relations strong superego functioning, guilt feelings and weak ego functioning. Their self-concept was low and there were times when they showed confusion between internal and external reality. These findings have been supported by Lapsley and Simpson (1952), Vivier (1960) and Oates (1967).

On the basis of the above analysis the cases in this study, have been diagnosed to be more of the passive-dependent, hysterical personality types, than any other personality. They not only have character traits in common, their motivation for their religious preference has been to a great extent need-based. Finally, they had psychological reasons for their participation in the Pentecostal experience. That Pentecostals and glossolalists have a great deal in common with schizophrenics and hysterics, has been supported by Mackie (1921) and Cutter (1927). Wood (1965) and, later, Alland (1967) have indicated the possible relationship between personality types and one's choice of a religious affiliation, and that there could be psychologically-based reasons for participation in an 'emotional' religion like Pentecostalism.

Summary

Thus far, the results from the MMPI HyS tests, Participant Observation, Interviews, and Case Histories, do confirm the assumption that charismatics and glossolalists have much in common with the hysterical personality type.

More specifically, the results of the MMPI HyS test reject the four hypotheses set up in this study. Therefore, it can be concluded that there is a difference between charismatic glossolalists and non-glossolalists in the MMPI HyS. Difference is also observed among charismatic glossolalists and non-charismatics. Further, among the

glossolalists themselves, there is a difference on the basis of sex and vocation.

Since these differences are very significant statistically, it could be inferred that while all charismatics do tend to resemble the hysterical personality, the tendency is greater in the case of the glossolalist.

While a good many Pentecostals and glossolalists do have much in common with the hysterical personalities, their religious behaviour is no criterion for their degree of mental health or illness. The depth of unresolved conflicts and fixations, their needs, frustrations and defences vary from person to person. In a large population, there will always be cases that range from mild to severe who manifest varying levels of function and dysfunction. However, it would not be valid to assume that all glossolalists and charismatics because of their choice of an "emotional" religion like the Pentecostal movement, are hysterical personality types. The findings of this study are limited to this group and need to be retested on other larger samples of different socio-economic strata.

It is the opinion of this researcher that a psychological understanding of a religious behaviour like glossolalia within Pentecostalism is but one explanation of the phenomenon. Glossolalia has been studied and explained by anthropologists, linguists and social scientists. A comprehensive interpretation of glossolalia is best obtained by integrating the findings of these various disciplines.

Conclusion

The Pentecostal experience with its extreme religious behaviour especially glossolalia, has been the subject of much attention, speculation, criticism and research for more than half a century. Research indicates that it symbolizes power and possession, dependence and control, dissatisfaction and change, deprivation and gratification. It also stands for an experience that is at the same time God-centred, euphoric, and liberating, so much so that it has an aggressive urge to proselytize the world to its experience.

Pentecostalism looms large in the contemporary religious scene as a controversial movement because of what it claims to be, and for what it promises to its members. It claims that the movement is an

effort to "revitalize Christianity" and to "save modern man from the crises that surround him". They explain this "revitalization" as the restoration of a dormant if not lost "emotional experience" in religion, and identify the "crises" as the "intellectualism, institutionalism, moralism and formalism" in the Church. Pentecostalism offers its participants "instant salvation" from repressive forces. The movement also legitimizes through its teaching their extreme religious behaviour. Their religious experience is so unique and powerful an encounter with the supernatural, that mysterious and extraordinary manifestations like speaking in tongues, ecstasy, prophecy, healing, miracles, visions discernment, etc., are appropriate. Their conversion experience has helped them to move from the level of sinner to that of being saved, and this wins for them both a spiritual and social superiority.

On a more mundane plane Pentecostalism is a search for meaning and value in life. From what Pentecostals report, they are a troubled people, overcome by personal problems and disturbed times. They have been victims of emotional and social deprivation and now have an unresolved need for security, love, attention, and approval. They would like to emerge from these crises situations unscathed, but it is their belief that only a "super power" could set things right once again. Pentecostalism offers just that, Members are shown a way out to cope with the complexities that surround them, if only they would allow the supernatural to take over, lead and heal them. Whether the healing is temporary or lasting, there is a concerted effort in the movement through its rituals and fellowship to keep alive the change in them. Participants claim that the movement has done something for them which they could not do for themselves.

Observations of charismatics today indicate that history repeats itself. Like the Huguenots of the seventeenth century, and the Quakers, Ranters, Irvingites, Shakers, Mormons and Readers of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, charismatics express their needs and tensions in their religious cult. Pentecostalism then and now is symbolic of personal, religious, social and cultural discontent and a need for change. To a great extent, it reflects the response of a group to repressive elements in themselves, their religion and their culture. It is a way out from the bondage of their own inadequacies, failures and guilt; hierarchical domination, doctrinal emphasis, traditionalism, ritualism, moralism and formalism within religion; and it is a reaction

to cultural stress on progress, perfection, rapid change, and perhaps moral breakdown. It would appear, therefore, that the movement represents an effort to cope with life's problems and search for new meanings.

In addition to its value to the scientific academic community, a project of this kind has its value for those involved in the Pentecostal movement, and other religious groups. If religious behaviour is indicative in part of one's psychological make-up and status, then it could be a creative means for personal introspection and change. Religious behaviour can also serve as an effective diagnostic tool. A study of religious behaviour can also be a valuable means by which the symbols in religious beliefs and behaviour can be questioned, evaluated, changed and adapted so that at any time in one's life or history of a religious group they can become an integrative force.

If personality is the manifestation of the life of the whole organism, understanding the needs and goals of the person reveals the dynamic forces which make people what they are. The problem of illness and health, religion and salvation, revert to the direction and manner in which a person's goals and needs are satisfied or frustrated. Meaning or value is the centre around which personality becomes organized. One's religious belief almost always represents one's search for meaning, and attempt to create a way of life based on the resulting insights. The extent to which they succeed in providing a basis for the integration of personality and society, it is an index of personal and social well-being. Therefore, religious belief cannot be totally divorced from function and structure in personality, and the study of the one will lead to insights about the other.

Finally, this study indicates that the disciplines of religion and psychology can meet at the cross-roads to explain human behaviour, also prevent a pathology and provide an index for well-being.