

SUBALTERN MOVEMENTS AND INDIAN CHURCHES OF INDIGENOUS ORIGINS

Roger E. Hedlund[■]

Introduction

A subaltern¹ approach to Christian studies seeks the viewpoint of the non-elite. In terms of Christian institutions in India, perspectives arising "from below", through local initiative, may be classed as subaltern. They were not imposed. They are the expression of local people, not so privileged, marginalized or oppressed. Whether this approach, in itself, is adequate or sufficient is open to question. Subaltern reconstructions of history tend to "deconstruct" all previous perceptions of history and to assume that they were deficient.² In point of fact, indigenous movements of Christianity in India have preceded, coincided, and followed events which occurred during the time of British rule. At the present time large numbers of people, attracted by the values of Christianity, are drawn into indigenous movements. Nor were such movements ever exclusively confined to exploited sections of society.

Studies of Christian subalterneity in India have tended to focus upon tribal and oppressed communities. One edition of *Religion and Society* entitled "Subaltern Identity"³ consists entirely of articles on tribal themes by tribal members from India's Central tribal belt,⁴ communities "whose main characteristic continues to be their subalterneity."⁵ In another article Saral Chatterji notes that indigenization efforts have concentrated almost exclusively on the "classical stream" to the exclusion of subaltern traditions.⁶

[■] Dr. Roger E. Hedlund, Director, Churches of Indigenous Origins Project, Chennai, India.

¹ Subalterneity in South Asian studies refers to the subordination of South Asian society under British colonial rule. Subaltern groups are those assigned inferior rank by the dominant group. See Ranajit Guha's "Preface" in *Subaltern Studies I*, 1982, p.vii, and various articles in the nine volumes in the *Subaltern Studies* series published by Oxford University Press, Delhi.

² Robert E. Frykenberg, *History & Belief, The Foundations of Historical Understanding*, 1996, p.294.

³ Vol. XXXVI, No.2, June 1989.

⁴ Lead articles were by Bishop S.A.B. Dilbar Hans of the Church of North India and Bishop Nirmal Minz of the Gosner Evangelical Lutheran Church.

⁵ Saral K. Chatterji, "Editorial," *Religion & Society*, June 1989, p.1.

⁶ Saral K. Chatterji, "Indigenous Christianity and Counter-Culture," *Religion & Society*

Brahmanical thought forms have preoccupied the theologians. Indian Christian theology has been shaped by Vedanta rather than by the popular folk religion of the masses. Theologians have been deluded by notions of a monolithic Hinduism. Chatterji charges that even as a Sanskritization process has served to absorb and suppress the minorities, so too "missionaries and churches have universalised Christianity to an extent where Dalits, tribals and others have been in danger of losing their identities instead of losing their chains."⁷ This was not so, however, in areas of tribal conversion to Christianity, such as Nagaland. There the outcome was a "Naganisation" of the Gospel and of theology.⁸ In Madras it was noted by Caplan⁹ that the theologians ignored the popular Hindu folk religion, whereas folk Christianity associated with newly-emerging indigenous Churches responded to these very points of need and penetrated local village-level culture. An indigenous theology and popular religious practice outside the Great Tradition mainstream is in fact the religion of the large mass of subaltern population.¹⁰

James Massey, on the other hand, has argued that in Punjab a distinctive Christian culture developed which was "Chaura" in character and outside the dominant Hindu culture.¹¹ *Punjabi* language and thought-forms, rather than Sanskritic terms, were used to express the Christian faith.¹²

Theodore Baskaran suggests that in South India the classical art forms, e.g. Carnatic music and Bharatanatyam, were not the art of most peoples and proved unsuitable for Christian communication.¹³ In contrast the folk music of the Little Tradition and practices of exorcism became marks of an authentic inculturation.¹⁴ In focusing on unmet needs in the realm of the "excluded middle"--the involvement of God in everyday human affairs, a realm of theology outside the Western worldview--churches of indigenous origins are able to fill a gap. There is a theology of God in cosmic history,

⁷ *Ibid.* p.10.

⁸ *Ibid.* p.14.

⁹ Lionel Caplan, *Religion and Power: Essays on the Christian Community in Madras*, 1989, p.50.

¹⁰ Chatterji *op.cit.* p.16.

¹¹ James Massey, "Christianity and Culture: Their Relationship in the 19th and 20th Centuries in Punjab," *Religion and Society*, December 1989, pp.18-32.

¹² *Ibid.* p.30.

¹³ S. Theodore Baskaran, "Indigenisation in South Indian Churches: Some Issues," *Religion and Society* December 1989, pp.34-35.

¹⁴ *Ibid.* p.37.

of God involved in human history, as well as a God of the natural order.¹⁵ Churches of indigenous origins utilize both the indigenous art forms (folk music) and practices of healing and exorcism. These churches thus respond to the culture of which they are part. They are *subaltern* in a double sense, pertaining to the weaker sections of society and arising spontaneously through indigenous initiatives.

The Churches of Andhra illustrate the tension between Great Tradition Christianity and subaltern "little traditions". Conversions in the Hyderabad area a century ago were drawn mainly from subaltern society, the so-called untouchables. There was a religion of village deities and goddess worship, ghosts and spirits, magic and witchcraft.¹⁶ But Churches of missionary Christianity were Churches of classical Great Tradition Christianity. Theology and liturgy were borrowed from the West. There was little cultural adaptation. Not surprisingly, Andhra Pradesh Christians continued syncretic practices.¹⁷

Premasagar's apparent approval of dual participation--liturgy and theology of a Great Tradition Christianity combined with Hindu folk religion (village goddess worship)--is an understandable reaction to a colonial mode of thinking. As Paul Hiebert observes, this "anticolonial reaction was a necessary corrective."¹⁸ Unfortunately the deconstructionist response often leads to theological relativism. Anticolonialism by itself brings no solution. "It lives in reaction, not proaction."¹⁹ A better way is the path of contextualization exhibited in some of the churches of indigenous origins. Inherent needs were not met by the "high" formal Christianity. It seems hardly incidental that in Andhra have come forth a large number of Churches of the Little Tradition.

From the subaltern communities a theology of the people is emerging. Indigenous theology may be defined as theological reflection organized in local categories and addressing local questions, i.e. it reflects the life and thought of the local Christians, without which the society cannot be

¹⁵ Paul G. Hiebert, *Anthropological Reflections on Missiological Issues*, 1994, pp.198-199. Hiebert points out that the central issue in spiritual warfare is not power but faithfulness to the Gospel, that the cross is central in a biblical theology of exorcism and healing. "God's omnipotence is never questioned in Scripture.... The issue is holiness and evil, righteousness and sin" (p.209). The battle continues in human lives and hearts, but "the focus of the gospel is not battle but reconciliation" (p.212).

¹⁶ P.Y. Luke and John B. Carman, *Village Christians and Hindu Culture*, 1968, pp.29,35.

¹⁷ Sometimes with the approval or encouragement of clergy. See "The Gods of our Fathers--Towards A Theology of Indian Religious and Cultural Heritage" by P. Victor Premasagar in *Asian Expressions of Christian Commitment* edited by T. Dayanandan Francis and Franklyn J. Balasundaram, 1992, pp.137-146.

¹⁸ Hiebert, *op.cit.*, p.63.

transformed.²⁰ Outsiders may have a role in the theologizing process, but the local Christian themselves are the ultimate formulators of indigenous Christian theology as is demonstrated by indigenous Christian movements and other developments.

It seems premature at this time to try to present an overview of the various indigenous Christian movements in India. For the most part little is known about such movements. It is believed that many exist and that they represent a significant expression of vibrant Christian faith in South Asia today. But documentation is lacking. Research is just beginning. A one-year academic research project, *CHURCHES OF INDIGENOUS ORIGINS, THE 'LITTLE TRADITION' IN INDIAN CHRISTIANITY*, began in August 1997, and is expected to yield considerable information.²¹ Therefore the present paper is but an introduction to the subject.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Although the subject has not been greatly studied in India, there is a considerable growing literature on indigenous Christian movements. Wherever the Gospel goes it takes root in the local culture. Indigenous movements are demonstrations of what Lamin Sanneh calls the "translatability" of the Gospel.²² Africa leads the way in sheer numbers of Independent Churches, denominations that are neither Catholic-Orthodox nor Protestant but distinctly African. Numerous critical studies of the

²⁰ Lois Fuller, "The missionary's role in developing indigenous Christian theology," *Evangelical Missions Quarterly*, October 1997, p.406.

²¹ This is a team Project supported by the Pew Charitable Trusts administered through the Overseas Ministries Study Centre. The Project is under the direction of Dr. R.E. Hedlund who will guide the research effort in South India, in North East India it is guided by Dr. O.L. Snaitang at Shillong.

²² Lamin Sanneh, *Translating the Message: The Missionary Impact on Culture*, 1991.

African Independent Churches provide a theoretical base for the investigation of a similar phenomenon in India.²³

The distinctive African experience has been thoroughly analyzed by scholars who have produced books and theses and numerous articles in the journal of the Southern African Missiological Society, *Missionalia*.²⁴ The AICs today comprise an important component of African missiology, "one of the most fruitful areas of missiological research in South Africa," states Prof. Dons Kritzinger.²⁵ A number of theses and dissertations dealing with AICs are produced at South African universities.

Indian Pentecostals are one part of the African Independent Church phenomenon which Oosthuizen believes holds greatest promise for the

²³ Important work on African Instituted Churches has been done by Barrett, Hayward, Oosthuizen, Sundkler, and Turner as well as others. See the following: David B. Barrett, *Schism and Renewal in Africa: An Analysis of Six Thousand Contemporary Religious Movements*, Nairobi, 1968; David B. Barrett & others (ed.) *Kenya Churches Handbook: The Development of Kenyan Christianity 1497-1973*, Kisumu, 1973; Victor E.W. Hayward (ed.) *African Independent Church Movements*, London, 1963; G.C. Oosthuizen, *Pentecostal Penetration into the Indian Community in South Africa*, Durban, 1975; G.C. Oosthuizen, *Afro-Christian Religions*, Leiden, 1979; G.C. Oosthuizen, *The Healer-Prophet in Afro-Christian Churches*, Leiden, 1992; G.C. Oosthuizen, "Indigenous Christianity and the Future of the Church in South Africa," *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* January 1997:8-12; Bengt Sundkler, *Bantu Prophets in South Africa*, 1961; Bengt Sundkler, "What Is At Stake" in Hayward *op.cit.*, pp.30-32; Harold W. Turner, *History of an African Independent Church I: The Church of the Lord (Aladura)*, Oxford, 1967.

²⁴ Among recent *Missionalia* articles may be mentioned the following: "Hermeneutics in African Instituted Churches in Malawi" by Hilary B.P. Mijoga, November 1996; "The Hermeneutical Processes of Pentecostal-type African Initiated Churches in South Africa" by Allan H. Anderson, August 1996; "Challenges and Prospects for Research into African Initiated Churches in Southern Africa" by Allan Anderson, November 1995; "African Independent Churches Face the Challenge of Environmental Ethics" by Prof. M.L. Daneel, November 1993; "Independency and Religious Change in Malawi" by C.M. Pauw, August 1993; "Frederick Modise and the International Pentecost Church: A Modern African Messianic Movement" by Allan H. Anderson, November 1992; "The African Independent Churches: Judgement through Terminology?" by Stephen Hayes; "The Liberation of Creation: African Traditional Religious and Independent Church Perspectives" by M.L. Daneel, August 1991; "The Understanding of Sin Among Some Members of the Zion Christian Church" by G. van der Merwe, November 1989; "The New Jerusalem: Eschatological Perspectives in African Indigenous Churches" by H.L. Pretorius, April 1987; "Conference on African Indigenous Churches: A Report" by G.C. Oosthuizen, November 1987; "Salvation in African Tradition Religions" by Simon S. Maimela, August 1985; "Re-thinking Animal Sacrifice: A Response to some Sotho Independent Churches" by Stan Nussbaum, August 1984; "The Contribution of Independent Churches to African Theology" by M.L. Daneel, August 1984; "The Challenge of the Independent Churches" by Bengt Sundkler, April 1984; "Historical Trends in Transkeian Zionism" by H.L. Pretorius, April 1984; "The Role of Women in African Independent Churches" by Mia Brandell-Syrier, April 1984.

²⁵ J.J. (Dons) Kritzinger, "The Past 25 Years of Missiology in South Africa," *Missionalia*, August 1994, p.158. Kritzinger is Director of the Institute for Missiological Research at the

future.²⁶ By early next century most African Christians will be members of AIC congregations.²⁷

WORLD PHENOMENON

Studies of African Independent movements serve as a backdrop for studying the Indian counterpart. The exceptional growth of the Church in the non-Western world during the twentieth century has been characterised by a diversity of localized cultural expressions. As Paul Hiebert states, "The emergence of independent churches around the world expressing indigenous forms of Christianity is undermining the equation of Christianity with Western culture."²⁸ Social accommodation and cultural assimilation of the Christian faith are part of an essential ongoing process everywhere.

The distinctive African experience finds parallels in Asia and Latin America. The emergence of "Grass-Roots" churches and *base ecclesial communities* are expressions of an indigenous subaltern movement comprising a vigorous Latin American spirituality.²⁹

Similar expressions can be found in every region of the world where Christianity has taken firm root, either as culturally adapted Great Tradition denominational Christianity or as marginal "fringe" groups of the Little Tradition. Major streams of the Christian tradition (Catholic, Orthodox,

²⁶ G.C. Oosthuizen, *Pentecostal Penetration into the Indian Community in South Africa*, Durban, 1975.

²⁷ G.C. Oosthuizen, "Indigenous Christianity and the Future of the Church in South Africa," *International Bulletin of Missionary Research*, January 1997, pp.8-12.

²⁸ Paul G. Hiebert, "Missiological Education for a Global Era" in *Missiological Education for the 21st Century* edited by J. Dudley Woodberry, Charles Van Engen and Edgar J. Elliston; Maryknoll, Orbis, 1996, p.36.

²⁹ See studies by Michel Bavarel, "Latin America: Ministers of the Word" in *New Communities, New Ministries*, 1980; Mike Berg and Paul Pretiz, *The Gospel People*, Monrovia, 1992; Mike Berg and Paul Pretiz, *Spontaneous Combustion: Grass-Roots Christianity, Latin American Style*, Pasadena, 1996; Clayton L. Berg, Jr. and Paul E. Pretiz, "Latin America's Fifth Wave of Protestant Churches," *International Bulletin of Missionary Research*, October 1996:157-159; Samuel Escobar, "The Training of Missiologists for a Latin American Context" in *Missiological Education for the 21st Century* edited by J. Dudley Woodberry, Charles Van Engen and Edgar J. Elliston, 101-111, Maryknoll, 1996; Eugene Nida, *Understanding Latin Americans*, Pasadena, 1974; Emilio Antonio Nuñez, C. and William David Taylor. *Crisis and Hope in Latin America: An Evangelical Perspective*, Revised, Pasadena, 1996; W.R. Read, V.M. Monterroso and H.A. Johnson, *Latin American Church Growth*, Eerdmans, 1969; Everett A. Wilson, "Identity, Community, and Status: The Legacy of the Central American Pentecostal Pioneers" in Carpenter and Shenk, *Earthen Vessels*, 133-151.

Protestant) comprise the Great Tradition in religious studies. Alongside the institutional religion of the Great Tradition may be found the popular "folk" religion of the Little Tradition. In North America the Great Tradition consists of Baptists, Mennonites and Methodists--denominations considered "sects" in Europe--as well as Catholics, Lutherans, and Presbyterians. Pentecostals, who originated in North America, were looked upon as sectarian, but have entered the mainstream of Church life in North America and are in process of doing so in South America and other regions of the world including Asia. Andrew Walls has remarked that the greatest missionary achievement of the 19th century was the Christianizing of the United States. The missionary spread of this indigenous Christianity resulted in other local expressions of Christianity in Africa, Oceania, Latin America, and Asia.³⁰

In Asia the translation of the Gospel proceeds in a vast plurality of cultures, languages, and competing ideologies. "The Church by inculturating itself becomes part of a culture."³¹ Contextualization or inculturation is an integral part of the process of Christianization. Da Costa's eulogy on the portrait of Robert de Nobili expresses the ideal of missionary accommodation: "Dost thou recognize, O Rome, thy Robert? Art thou going to despise thy son because he changed his dress, his language, nay almost his nature, to become a Tamilian, and thus bring Tamilians within thy fold?"³² More to the present issue is the incarnation of the Christian message into each segment of the Asian diversity. The Gospel not only transforms persons and cultures, it is itself culturally transformed in the process. The genius of the Gospel is that it is not tied to any one human culture. Lamin Sanneh speaks of this "translatability" as the "source of the success of Christianity across cultures."³³ He argues that the early Christians understood themselves "free to operate with multiple cultural forms as the natural mode of God's salvific activity in the world."³⁴ Christians of the modern era as well as those of New Testament times have learned that "encountering the reality of God beyond the inherited terms of one's culture reduces reliance on that culture as a universal normative pattern."³⁵ Translatability means that "the recipient culture is the authentic destination of God's salvific promise."³⁶

³⁰ "The American Dimension in the History of the Mission Movement" in *Earthen Vessels* edited by Carpenter and Shenk, 1990, p.8.

³¹ S.M. Michael, "Beyond Contextualization." *Vidyajyoti Journal of Theological Reflection* January 1990, p.7.

³² A. Saulière, *His Star in the East*, p.452.

³³ *Translating the Message: The Missionary Impact on Culture*, p.51.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p.65.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p.25.

This rather wordy excursion on mission as translation is to introduce the subject of Asian incarnations of the Gospel embodied in indigenous movements of the Continent. A great deal has been written from the perspective of Asian theology, which, however, is beyond the purview of this paper.³⁷ Studies of contemporary Asian Christian movements of indigenous origins have been relatively few.

Swanson's study of two Independent Churches in Taiwan is of particular interest because of the high percentage of membership in the Independent Churches.³⁸ These include a large number of "local" churches as well as the Assembly Hall Church and the True Jesus Church denominations.

The True Jesus Church has a distinctive understanding of Christ which is somewhat less than Trinitarian but which stresses the unity of God and the full deity of Christ and his unity with the Father. "Christ is the central theme of salvation and the Baptism in the Holy Spirit is valid only if it serves to further glorify Christ as Savior."³⁹ The True Jesus Church is Taiwan's third largest denomination.

The Assembly Hall Church is the second largest Protestant denomination in Taiwan.⁴⁰ Theologically the Assembly is both millenarian and Trinitarian with its own distinctive interpretation of the Trinity according to which Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are identical but revealed consecutively not simultaneously so that God is at one time either Son or Father or Spirit.⁴¹ A strict millennial outlook tends to an other-worldly separatism.

The Assembly Hall and the True Jesus Church are two contrasting indigenous Church movements in Taiwan. Despite their differences, both have grown, states Swanson, because they practice the priesthood of all believers and are concerned to share their life in Christ with others and

³⁷ Asian and Indian theologies are many. A few may be noted: A.J. Appaamy, *The Theology of Hindu Bhakti*; K.C. Abraham, ed., *Third World Theologies*; Kaj Baago, *Pioneers of Indigenous Christianity*; Robin Boyd, *Kristadvaita: A Theology for India*; Horst Bürkle & Wolfgang M.W. Roth, eds., *Indian Voices in Today's Theological Debate*; M.E. Prabhakar, ed., *Towards a Dalit Theology*; Sunand Sumithra, *Christian Theology From an Indian Perspective*; M.M. Thomas, *The Acknowledged Christ of the Indian Renaissance*; G.W. Trompf, ed., *The Gospel Is Not Western: Black Theologies from the Southwest Pacific*; Felix Wilfred, *Beyond Settled Foundations*.

³⁸ Allen J. Swanson, *The Church in Taiwan: Profile 1970*. Pasadena, 1981, p.39.

³⁹ Allen J. Swanson, *Taiwan: Mainline vs. Independent Church Growth*, Pasadena, 1970, p.186.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p.189.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p.211.

because "they are churches of the soil belonging to the Chinese and served entirely by the Chinese."⁴²

In addition to these two indigenous denominations, Taiwan has a large number of Independent "local" churches with no outside affiliation or mission relationships.⁴³ These too are a significant part of the Christian expression in Taiwan, somewhat parallel to present developments in South India.

Autonomous indigenous church movements are a worldwide phenomenon. In the Philippines, one such is the *Iglesia Ni Cristo*. Tuggy's conclusion, based on a scholarly investigation characterized by meticulous research, is that despite what may be viewed as sub-Christian doctrines and practices, it is an independent church "obviously meeting felt needs in the lives of its many Filipino members."⁴⁴

Of particular interest to the present paper is that the *Iglesia* membership is drawn from the "masses" not the "classes."⁴⁵ Spurned by "Great Tradition" Protestants and Catholics as a heretical sect, the *Iglesia* is a contemporary subaltern movement in the Philippines. In common with other independent churches worldwide, the *Iglesia* is culturally adapted, and has grown vigorously. With 300,000 members at the time of Tuggy's study it was larger than any single Protestant denomination in the Philippines, the largest independent church in Asia.⁴⁶ In contrast to much of the present independent church movement in India, the *Iglesia* is not a "charismatic" church. There is no emphasis on healing, spiritual manifestations or special revelations. The Bible is central, but the founder claimed special insight and authority for interpreting the Bible which sets the *Iglesia* apart from all other churches.⁴⁷

Other Asian countries also manifest indigenous church movements. Japan has its Spirit of Jesus Church which in less than twenty years in the post-War period grew to the second largest Protestant Church stressing lay witness and house meetings.⁴⁸ In Korea, where Christianity entered the core

⁴² *Ibid.*, p.218.

⁴³ Swanson, *The Church in Taiwan*, p. 39.

⁴⁴ A.L. Tuggy, *Iglesia Ni Cristo: A Study in Independent Church Dynamics*, Quezon City, 1976, p.15.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p.13.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, pp.239-244. The *Iglesia* was twice the size of the largest African Independent Church.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, pp.242-244. According to *Iglesia* teaching, Felix Manalo was the Messenger of God (in fulfillment of a Bible prophecy in Revelation 7:2-3 concerning an angel) commissioned to call people into the *Iglesia Ni Cristo* out of other religions and churches (*Ibid.*, pp.117-119).

⁴⁸ Neil Braun, *Lay Mobilized: Reflection on Church Growth in Japan and Other Lands*, 1971,

of Korean culture, Christianity came to be identified with nationalism.⁴⁹ Korea which has been styled a land of explosive church growth has produced the world's largest Christian congregations.⁵⁰ Korean Christianity is predominantly Presbyterian, but according to Connor it is more Confucian than Presbyterian.⁵¹ Outwardly "Western" in ornate basilicas with pipe organs and vested choirs, Korean Christianity has its own distinctive indigenous forms including a proliferation of break-away Presbyterian denominations and other local expressions.

The case of China is a fascinating study in subalterneity. Cut off and under persecution for forty years, the Church in China has become fully indigenous and during the past two decades has experienced explosive growth.⁵² The reason for the growth, according to Covell, is the very "Chinese-ness" of the Church but especially the fact that they no longer have any foreign connections.⁵³ In parts of China where Christians were few during the missionary era, today tens of thousands of Christians are reported.⁵⁴ While the visible Church disappeared under the Cultural Revolution, the Christian faith survived in small house group meetings. House churches had also been characteristic of earlier, pre-revolutionary indigenous movements such as the True Jesus Church, the Little Flock, the Independent Church, and the Jesus Family.⁵⁵ Under repression, the house churches proved flexible and became the training ground for an emerging lay leadership of the indigenous Chinese Church.⁵⁶

Coming closer to India, the entire Church in Nepal is an indigenous Church having emerged within the past 50 years through Nepali initiative

⁴⁹ John H. Connor, "When Culture Leaves Contextualized Christianity Behind," *Missiology*, January 1991, p.25.

⁵⁰ The world's largest Baptist, Methodist, Pentecostal and Presbyterian congregations are located in Korea. Various aspects are discussed in *Korean Church Growth Explosion* edited by Ro Bong-Rin and Marlin L. Nelson, 1983.

⁵¹ Connor, *loc. cit.*

⁵² Tony Lambert, *The Resurrection of the Chinese Church*, London, 1991, pp.113,263.

⁵³ Ralph Covell, *Mission Impossible: The Unreached Nosu on China's Frontier*, 1990, p.297.

⁵⁴ David H. Adeney, *China: The Church's Long March*, 1985, p.144.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p.146.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, pp.151,161.

despite persecution and repression.⁵⁷ The Nepali Church is completely indigenous with no foreign missionary connections.⁵⁸

CHURCHES OF INDIGENOUS ORIGINS IN INDIA

India has seen a number of attempted incarnations of the Christian faith, some highly successful, others less so. According to Barrett,⁵⁹ from 1858 to 1975 India had more than 150 Hindu-Christian movements or churches as well as modern Neo-Hindu groups of devotees of Jesus who explicitly acknowledge Jesus, and a number of more strictly Christian movements. At the completion of the present Project it should be possible to have a more exact understanding of indigenous Christianity in India. Thirty years ago Baago stated that indigenization of Christianity in India has only just begun.⁶⁰ If so, the study of Churches of indigenous origins is timely and promising.

In India the earliest example of an indigenous Christian movement is found in six Syrian Christian denominations, all of which claim and accept the St. Thomas apostolic tradition as to the origins of Christianity in India. These include the Orthodox Syrian Church (in two sections), the Independent Syrian Church of Malabar (Kunnamkulam Diocese), the Mar Thoma Church, the Malankara (Syrian Rite) Catholic Church, the (Chaldean) Church of the East, and the St. Thomas Evangelical Church (two factions) as well as a section (CMS) of the Church of South India. "The Syrian Church in India is purely indigenous. Its men and money are Indian. It is born and brought up on Indian soil. It is nurtured in the Indian culture and Indian traditions. It always tries to interpret the cause of Christ in a way that Indians can understand.... In dress, food and living, the Syrian Christians are Indian and indigenous."⁶¹ The Mar Thoma Syrian Evangelistic Association, founded in 1888, is an indication of the vigour and vitality of the tradition. Its 180 mission stations, run on the pattern of ashrams, engage in various forms of service among the lower castes throughout India.⁶²

Certainly as to history, uniqueness and influence the Thomas Christians are most significant for the study of indigenous Christianity. A number of similarities can be seen to Hinduistic movements such as the Brahma Samaj established by Ram Mohan Roy in Calcutta in 1828 as a renewal movement

⁵⁷ Cindy Perry, *A Biographical History of the Church in Nepal*, 1989. "The Church in Nepal" by Ramesh Khatri in *Church in Asia Today* edited by Saphir Athyal, 1996.

⁵⁸ Jan Minderhoud, "The Christian Presence in Nepal Before 1951," *Indian Church History Review* 24,2, December 1990, 144-164.

⁵⁹ David B. Barrett, *World Christian Encyclopedia*, Nairobi, Oxford, 1982.

⁶⁰ Kaj Baago, *Pioneers of Indigenous Christianity*, 1969, p.85.

⁶¹ P.P. Abraham, "Patterns of Church Growth in India," p.52.

among the classes. To a large extent inspired by Christianity, yet derived from the Upanishads and the Gita, theistic and hostile to the Vedanta of Sankaracharya, the Brahma Samaj may be understood as a Hindu revival movement.⁶³ The present investigation does not focus upon such Hinduistic groups, but it is important to note their presence. Neither they nor the Syrian Christians comprise subaltern movements.

The existence of numerous "Messianic" movements in tribal and other subaltern communities is a vital subject with a number of interesting parallels bearing on our subject,⁶⁴ but this too is outside the scope of this paper.

Our subject has much more to do with Hindu *Christian* movements some of which exist as organized groups outside the Church or as numbers of individual Hindu devotees of Christ. Here one thinks of E. Stanley Jones whose evangelistic influence attracted followers of Christ far beyond the organized Church. India has produced a number of thinkers and leaders with a broad "Indian" perception of the Church, e.g. Sadhu Sundar Singh, Nehemiah Goreh, Brahmabandhab Upadhyaya, A.J. Appasamy, P. Chenchiah, V. Chakkarai, Manilal C. Parekh, M.M. Thomas, and others.⁶⁵

One remarkable Hindu believer in Christ at Madras was O. Kandaswamy Chetti, founder of the Fellowship of the Followers of Jesus, who openly confessed his faith in Christ as the only Saviour but declined baptism. His aim was to strengthen the unity of those among the Hindu community who shared an attachment to Christ whom he regarded as the fulfillment of history and of human cultures. He believed that the followers of Christ within Hindu society would "prepare the way for a movement from within Hindu society toward a Christ who shall fulfil India's highest aspirations and impart that life of freedom for which she has been panting for ages."⁶⁶

⁶³ Nicol Macnicol, *The Living Religions of the Indian People*, London, 1934.

⁶⁴ Stephen Fuchs, *Rebellious Prophets: A Study of Messianic Movements in Indian Religions*. New York, 1965. India has been fertile soil for messianic movements, especially among tribes. Many movements are named in this state by state coverage. See also by the same author *The Gond and Bhumia of Eastern Mandla*, Bombay, 1968, pp.196-198, for an example of a Hindu reform movement aimed at absorbing the Gonds.

⁶⁵ Philip Daniel, "Theology of Conversion in the Indian Context."

⁶⁶ "Why I Am Not A Christian" by O. Kandaswami Chetti, a personal statement read as a paper at the Madras Missionary Conference in 1915. Reprinted in Baago, *Pioneers of Indigenous Christianity*, pp.207-214.

From time to time one hears reports of secret Christians at various locations such as a group of women in South India, at Sivakasi, who for various reasons are not able to practice their faith openly but who continue for years, even decades, as fervent though secret believers. Meeting together at considerable risk, they are "Christians of a very clear character, who live daily the teaching that they have been given," for whom prayer, sacraments, and the Bible are vital,⁶⁷ a basic community sustaining and passing on the faith from generation to generation. At Madras a survey conducted through the Research Department of the Gurukul Lutheran Theological College concluded that Madras has a large number of secret believers, persons not yet baptized, at least equal to the size of the Christian community in the City.⁶⁸ While not identifiable as "church," this category forms a significant component of South Indian religious life and represents one aspect of the indigeneity of Christianity.

A more prominent feature is the existence of various independent churches and indigenous movements. We will look more closely at some of these. A number of religious revitalization movements occurred during the 19th century in Kerala. An indigenous Christian Revival Movement was founded by Justus Joseph, a Brahmin convert. Converted through reading the Bible, the family members were baptized in 1861. Ordained to the Anglican (CMS) ministry in 1869, he became a popular preacher. Thousands were stirred in the revival at Travancore under his ministry. Joseph however sought a wider scope for dissemination of his views. This led to conflict with the missionaries. Joseph wanted to work within the Church but was suspected of propagating heresy: he expected the Second Coming in 1881. Joseph separated and established the Kanneett Revival Church in 1875. This was a clearly indigenous structure with duties for members, revised rituals, direct revelations, innovative interpretations. All members were expected to obey the Church regulations.

The Revival Church in 1881 became *Yuomayam*. Completely separate from any Christian denomination, it now considered itself the fulfillment of Christianity and all religions. After the death of the founder in 1887, the movement declined under his successors (his son and his brothers), then dwindled to a few persons in a few locations. This movement was the product of ferment created by the translation and publication of the Bible in Malayalam. The founder was always regarded as Christian, his lyrics and

⁶⁷ Andrew Wingate, "The Secret Christians of Sivakasi, Tamil Nadu: One Pattern of Conversion in a South Indian Town." *Religion and Society*, March 1986, pp.73-87.

⁶⁸ Herbert E. Hoefler, *Churchless Christianity: a report of research among non-baptised believers in Christ in rural and urban Tamilnadu, India, with practical and theological reflections.*

hymns found in the hymnals of the Syrian Church. A century ago his was an example of contextualization.⁶⁹

Turner lists a Church of Revealed Salvation, or Pratyaska Raksha Sabha, in the early 1920s, among the outcastes in Travancore,⁷⁰ clearly a subaltern movement. As the traditional home of Christianity in India it is expected that a number of independent movements should be found in Kerala.

Tamil Nadu also has a large number of independent church movement. In Tirunelveli a schism took place at Nazareth in 1857 led by one Arumainayagam Sattampillai following the disciplinary action against a catechist by SPG missionary Caemmerer who previously in 1850 had dismissed Sattampillai from Mission employment. Sattampillai led several congregations to break away and established a separate church at Prakasapuram, one mile from Nazareth. A church building was erected in the pattern of a Jewish temple. A number of Old Testament practices were incorporated such as observing Passover, worship on the seventh day, washing feet and legs before worship, offering frankincense. Some Hindu rites were accepted as well as Hindu marriage law and inheritance law. The Hindu Church of Lord Jesus is also known as Jehovah Messianism, Sattampillai Vedam, Nattar Sabai (meaning "National Church"), and Hindu Christian Church.⁷¹

After Sattampillai's death the Church split, declined from 6,000, then dwindled and died. According to Hardgrave only the site remains. That, however, is only part of the story and not entirely correct. Thangaraj records that the split occurred when the founder donned High Priestly garments and decreed that the Church should offer animal sacrifices. The community reacted vehemently and most of the members separated to form the Hindu Christian Community.⁷² This community still exists today known as the Indian Church of the Only Saviour. Its Christology is quite orthodox, but Judaistic influence has led to some doctrinal peculiarities. The historic

⁶⁹ Information about *Yuomayam* is from Joseph Chakko Kurundamannil, "Yuomayam : A Messianic Movement in Kerala, India," 1979.

⁷⁰ *Bibliography of New Religious Movements in Primal Societies, Volume 4, Europe and Asia*, p.99.

⁷¹ Robert L. Hardgrave, *The Nadars of Tamilnadu: The Political Culture of a Community in Change*, 1969.

⁷² M. Thomas Thangaraj, "The History and Teachings of the Hindu Christian Community Commonly Called Nattu Sabai in Tirunelveli." *Indian Church History Review*, June 1971, pp.43-68.

causes of the original schism, i.e. conflict with the foreign missionaries, led to a strong nationalistic spirit "rejecting all Western and missionary influence."⁷³ Its worship has been described as a combination of Jewish and Christian practices which appears "more Indian than the worship in other Churches" with the singing of South Indian classical tunes by a congregation standing with folded hands.⁷⁴

According to Hardgrave, the schism in the Tinnevely church had a strong influence on the emergence of the Nadar caste as a self-conscious community. Sattampillai attempted to establish the claims of the Nadar community to higher status "through the mythological reconstruction of a kingly past."⁷⁵ Based on Hindu mythology, the Nadras (Shanars) were denied entrance to Hindu temples. The Tinnevely schismatic mixed Hindu and Christian creation notions to establish *divine status* for Nadars who claimed to be Northern Rajputs as well as descendents of Noah!⁷⁶ The Hindu Church of the Lord Jesus is part of the turbulent story of the rise of a caste from low status to prominence. It is a clear example of a subaltern movement.

More recently in 1925 one hears of a schism in the CMS Tinnevely Mission by a group of pastorates who declined to accept the new diocesan structure which took place when CMS and SPG were merged to form an episcopal Church.⁷⁷ The schism grew to involve 10 pastorates and circles calling itself the "Tinnevely CMS Evangelical Church" (CMS Suthangh Suvisesha Sabai). It retained the rituals and traditions of the CMS.⁷⁸

Madras and Tamil Nadu have experienced numerous break-away movements and independent church activities. Caplan makes the interesting observation that "theologians display an almost palpable reluctance to engage the beliefs and practices of ordinary Hindus" whereas it is this folk religion perspective which is addressed by the popular Christianity which is prevalent today in a large number of Pentecostal and other South Indian independent churches.⁷⁹

The Apostolic Christian Assembly is one of the prominent indigenous Church bodies of Madras. Founded as an autonomous church in Madras

⁷³ *Ibid.*, p.57.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, p.65.

⁷⁵ Hardgrave *op.cit.* p.78.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p.89.

⁷⁷ Hugold Grafe, *History of Christianity in India, Vol.IV, Part 2, Tamil Ndu in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*, 1990, p.78.

⁷⁸ Gordon Hewitt, *The Problems of Success, A History of the Church Missionary Society 1910-1942*, London, 1977, p.75.

City by the late Pastor G. Sundram who had left the exclusivist Ceylon Pentecostal Mission, this church has a strong appeal for Hindus. Many well-educated Hindu observers participate in the worship, and a large number are publicly baptized in weekly baptismal services. Worship is bilingual in Tamil and English, but combines a number of features familiar to Hindus and in harmony with Tamil religious tradition.⁸⁰ Much of the worship is devoted to congregational singing, and Hindu converts have compared this to Saivite devotional hymn-singing of their past. A second similarity is an intense personal experience of the grace of God, testimonies of which reflect the pattern of the Saivite saints. Third was the attraction of the saintly Pastor Sundram as a religious *guru*. He exercised little churchly authority in a form familiar to Western Christians, "but the fascination of the congregation with his saintliness and their willingness to accord him authority over their daily lives is a pattern that has a strong tradition in Tamil religious history."⁸¹

The same spiritual attraction is found in the present leader, Senior Pastor M.K. Sam Sundaram. Today (1996-1997) the main church at Purasawalkam has a membership of 12,500. There are 144 branch churches in India with a total of 17,600 believers.⁸² The Apostolic Christian Assembly is a vibrant model of a South Indian indigenous church.

Another indigenous model is the Laymen's Evangelical Fellowship begun by Bro. N. Daniel on 15 July, 1935, in Madras. Daniel, whose life has been described as a sequel to that of Sadhu Sundar Singh, was a revivalist whose ministry was characterised by faith and holiness which was reflected in the lives of many young converts. One of the innovative methods of the Fellowship is its Gospel Clinic where thousands of patients receive help. Dedicated doctors, nurses, teachers, lecturers, engineers and other professionals devote themselves to developing disciples.⁸³

Today the Laymen's Evangelical Fellowship is led by the eldest son of Bro.N. Daniel, Joshua Daniel,⁸⁴ who is senior pastor at the headquarters church. About 3,000 attend the Sunday morning services conducted in English, Tamil and Telugu. There are 30 worship centers in Madras City with a total membership of about 10,000. Another key leader is the Rev. Dr.

⁸⁰ Paul Younger, "Hindu-Christian Worship Settings," 1989, pp.195-196.

⁸¹ *Loc.cit.*

⁸² Apostolic Christian Assembly, *Annual Report, 1996-1997*, Chennai, 1997.

⁸³ Joshua Daniel, *Another Daniel*, Madras, 1980.

⁸⁴ Joshua Daniel, *Get Set...Go*, South Bend, 1989.

Whitson Paul who directs the Fellowship Training Centre which offers a four-year B.Th. course for training cross-cultural missionaries.

A growing missionary vision has led to establishing more than 400 main Fellowship Centres spread across Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, and several North India and North Eastern states. With several satellite centres around each of the main Centres, LEF has become a significant denomination in India.⁸⁵

Madras has numerous independent churches, Pentecostal and non-Pentecostal, as is noted in studies by Caplan, Grafe, Hedlund, Hoerschelmann, Nelson, and other sources.

Probably more than Madras, Andhra Pradesh is the main centre of indigenous Christian movements in India today. Among these stand the Assemblies of Bro. Bakht Singh. Bro. Bakht Singh began his ministry in Madras among the various denominational churches where he stressed the importance of the Bible as the Word of God. Some remarkable conversions are recorded.⁸⁶ The first assembly, Jehovah Shammah, began at Madras in 1941 as a "true testimony" for the Lord among people "dissatisfied with the denominational Churches."⁸⁷ Today assemblies are found in many parts of India from Kalimpong to Kanyakumari, but especially in Andhra Pradesh. The main centre is in Hyderabad at Hebron which is also the resting place of the aged Bro. Bakht Singh.

Statistical information is difficult to obtain, but the assemblies are widely dispersed in India, especially in Andhra Pradesh. Earlier they saw a great growth. In addition a large number of independent assemblies and churches have spun off which have no present relationship with the assemblies of Bro. Bakht Singh.

Other well-known indigenous church movements of Andhra include the Bible Mission of Fr. M. Devadas as well as the movement around Subba Rao, the Christ-centred Hindu healer. The latter which was studied by Kaj Baago and others appears to have largely dissipated since the death of Subba Rao. The Bible Mission is well-described in a Birmingham thesis by P.Solomon Raj⁸⁸ and is active and vigorous with a large annual convention attracting more than 20,000 at Guntur. The history and teachings of the

⁸⁵ S. Subramaniam, "Strategy to Reach Greater Madras," 1996, p.64.

⁸⁶ R.R. Rajamani, *Monsoon Daybreak*, Bombay, 1971.

⁸⁷ Edwin Samuel, *In the Day of Thy Power*, 1983, pp.126-127.

Bible Mission are summarized in an article by K. Devasahayam.⁸⁹ The published writings of the founder are available in English translation.⁹⁰

Andhra has numerous indigenous Pentecostal churches and denominations. Among them the Andhra branch of the IPC (Indian Pentecostal Church of God) is prominent. Started at Eluru by P.M. Samuel who came there from Kerala in 1932, the IPC has spread over much of the state which is divided into Regions under the area pastors. Today there are hundreds of IPC churches in the major centers of Andhra Pradesh.⁹¹ Pastors are trained at the Zion Bible College which was started in 1940 at Vijayawada. Hyderabad has a fellowship of 75 different Full Gospel groups as well as other churches of indigenous origins.

Throughout coastal Andhra are found numerous indigenous Pentecostal and other Independent Church movements. At Chirala the Gospel Band is one such. Another is the Independent Christian Believers Gospel Fellowship at Ramachandrapuram in East Godavari. At Panguluru it was the India Fellowship of Bible Churches. Vizag is reportedly the home of several movements including 1000 house churches. Bheemunipatnam is the headquarter of the New Testament Church in India founded by Dr. P.J. Titus who also heads the COTR Seminary.⁹² Vijayawada has its Gospel Association of India⁹³ and other indigenous movements. Rajahmundry, Guntur, Visakapatnam and Vijayawada all are hubs of Independent Church animation. The full extent is yet to be ascertained and the implications considered. Whatever else may be shown, it is evident that indigenous Christianity is much more vigorous in Andhra than government and other statistics would indicate.

What Saldhana states of India is particularly true in Andhra: the Dalit conversions of a century ago were movements of revolt against an oppressive socio-religious system.⁹⁴ Numerous subaltern movements and other contemporary expressions of indigenous Christianity have developed from that beginning.

⁸⁹ K. Devasahayam, "The Bible Mission," *Religion and Society*, March 1982, pp.55-89.

⁹⁰ M. Devadas, "Mithra, The Friend: God's Great Plan of Salvation for all Mankind Revealed," Guntur, 1995. "Maxims to Rebuke Satan," Guntur, 1996. "Praising God for His Divine Qualities," Guntur, 1997.

⁹¹ Information provided by Dr. P.J. Titus in a letter to Roger E. Hedlund, November 15, 1997.

⁹² Barbara Oldfield, *Dr. P.J. Titus, God's Man for India*, Visakhapatnam, 1996.

⁹³ Yesupadam Bandela, "The Gospel Association of India," 1974.

⁹⁴ Julian Saldhana, "Patterns of Conversion in Indian Mission History," pp.80-81.

Findings from other regions of India will broaden our understanding of the subject. In Bombay the New Life Fellowship is an example of an Indian urban movement which began in 1968 and by 1994 had grown to 1450 house churches in Bombay and more than 2000 throughout India.⁹⁵ Other independent movements in Bombay include the Cornerstone Fellowship and the City of the Lord Church as well as other ministries among poor and downtrodden peoples.⁹⁶

In Pune out of ten urban churches studied in a recent Ph.D. thesis,⁹⁷ three appear to be indigenous in character. One is a tri-lingual charismatic house fellowship of mostly young adults. Another is an independent charismatic fellowship of 250 members with converts from Hindu, Muslim, and Sindhi backgrounds. The third is a Brethren-style group of 120 worshipers. Three-hour services seem to be characteristic of these lively Pune churches.

In Punjab the Agape Fellowship group of churches flourishes throughout Punjab as well as in some neighbouring states.⁹⁸ Not without significance, Punjab was an area of Dalit conversion movements in which subaltern communities sought a social-religious identity not dependent upon the elite and privileged.⁹⁹

In North Gujarat an *Isupanthi* movement discards caste but retains its original cultural identity and avoids a separate political or civic identity.¹⁰⁰ The converts are neither deculturized nor denationalized.

Conversion movements in India not infrequently have been movements of social protest, the response of dalits and the poor to the call to a counter-culture in quest of dignity and equality.

CONCLUSION

Indeed Christianity has not only an ancient tradition in India, it is an active force in society and in the lives of many people today. Christians are a respected community making significant contributions to India's development.¹⁰¹ Indigenization of the Faith is a topic of ongoing debate in

⁹⁵ S. Subramaniam, *op.cit.*, p.65.

⁹⁶ Viju Abraham, Letter to Roger E. Hedlund, 22 July, 1997.

⁹⁷ David W. Bennett, "Perspectives of Biblical Pastoral Leadership: A Case Study of Ten Churches in Pune, India," 1990.

⁹⁸ Viju Abraham, *op.cit.*

⁹⁹ John C.B. Webster, *The Dalit Christians: A History*. Delhi, 1994, p.55.

¹⁰⁰ Joseph Mattam, "Indian Attempts Towards A Solution to the Problems of Conversion," p.124.

historic Catholic and Protestant Churches.¹⁰² Indigeneity is a natural quality of the Independent Churches of the "Little" Tradition. Expressions of faith are found not only in worship styles but in the lives of the worshippers. The impact of the indigenous churches upon the larger society may be more difficult to document. But it is here that the witness of the Gospel will make a lasting imprint. The social significance of indigeneity, the imprint of the Gospel's inculturation in society, is yet to be recorded.

Subaltern categories appear inadequate for the broad sweep of diversity found in India's indigenous Christian movements. Nevertheless in India today, in North as well as in South, subaltern movements are taking place in which oppressed peoples are finding dignity in a new identity as disciples of Jesus Christ. David Barrett postulates that at present India might have several hundred Independent Church movements and that these may mushroom in the next 10 or 20 years.¹⁰³ If so, Ralph Winter's preposterous speculation about an explosion of faith in Christ among Hindus¹⁰⁴ might not be so absurd after all. There is much to investigate, much to hope and anticipate.

Christianity has proven to be culturally translatable. Christ is found in an Indian robe in Indian Churches of the "Little Tradition." From her perception of Christ, India has much to teach the world.

BIBLIOGRAPHY OF SOURCES CONSULTED

SUBALTERN PERSPECTIVE

BASKARAN, S. Theodore. "Indigenisation in South Indian Churches: Some Issues." *Religion and Society* XXXVI, 4, December 1989:33-37.

CAPLAN, Lionel. *Religion and Power: Essays on the Christian Community in Madras*. Madras: CLS. 1989.

¹⁰² See the articles "Can We Speak of Indigenisation of the Catholic Church in India during the 19th Century?" by Achilles Meersman, pp.75-82, and "Indigenization--A Critical Review of the Discussion in India 1942-65" by U. Meyer, pp.91-120, *Indian Church History Review* December, 1973.

¹⁰³ David B. Barrett, letter to Roger Hedlund, 24 October, 1997.

¹⁰⁴ Ralph D. Winter, "Editorial Comment," *Mission Frontiers Bulletin*, September-October 1996, pp.2-11.

CHATTERJI, Saral K. "Indigenous Christianity and Counter-Culture." *Religion and Society* XXXVI, 4, December 1989:3-17.

FRYKENBERG, Robert Eric. *History & Belief: The Foundation of Historical Understanding*. Grand Rapids/Cambridge: Eerdmans. 1996.

FULLER, Lois. "The missionary's role in developing indigenous Christian theology." *Evangelical Missions Quarterly* 33, 4, October 1997:404-409.

GUHA, Ranajit (ed.) *Subaltern Studies I: Writings on South Asian History and Society*. Delhi: Oxford University Press. 1982.

HANS, S.A.B. Dilbar. "The Rice Plant Will Grow Above Flood Waters." *Religion and Society* XXXVI, 2, June 1989:3-11.

HIEBERT, Paul G. *Anthropological Reflections on Missiological Issues*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books. 1994.

LUKE, P.Y. and John B. Carman. *Village Christians and Hindu Culture*. London: Lutterworth Press. New York: Friendship Press. 1968.

MASSEY, James. "Christianity and Culture: Their Relationship in the 19th and 20th Centuries in Punjab." *Religion and Society* XXXVI, 4, December 1989:18-32.

MINZ, Nirmal. "Meaning of Tribal Consciousness." *Religion and Society* XXXVI, 2, June 1989:12-23.

PREMASAGAR, P. Victor. "The Gods of our Fathers--Towards A Theology of Indian Religious and Cultural Heritage" in *Asian Expressions of Christian Commitment* edited by T. Dayanandan Francis and Franklyn J. Balasundaram, pp.137-146. Madras: Christian Literature Society, 1992.

SANNEH, Lamin. *Translating the Message: The Missionary Impact on Culture*, Maryknoll: Orbis Books. 1991.

GENERAL & THEORETICAL BASE

BAAGO, Kaj. *Pioneers of Indigenous Christianity*. Madras: Christian Literature Service. 1969.

BARRETT, David B. (ed.) *World Christian Encyclopedia*. Nairobi: Oxford University Press. 1982.

BAVAREL, Michel. *New Communities, New Ministries: The Church Resurgent in Africa, Asia, and Latin America*. Maryknoll: Orbis Books. 1983.

BROWN, Leslie. *The Indian Christians of St. Thomas*. Reprint. Madras: B.I.Publications. 1990.

CAPLAN, Lionel. *Religion and Power: Essays on the Christian Community in Madras*. CLS. 1989.

CHOPRA, P.N. (ed.) *Religions and Communities of India*. New Jersey: Humanities Press. 1982.

DROOGERS, André. "Syncretism: The Problem of Definition, the Definition of the Problem" in *Dialogue and Syncretism, An Interdisciplinary Approach* edited by Gerald

Gort, Hendrik Vroom, Rein Fernhout & Anton Wessels, 7-25. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans. Amsterdam: Editions Rodopi. 1989.

ELLISTON, Edgar J. "Moving Forward from Where We Are in Missiological Education" in *Missiological Education for the 21st Century* edited by J. Dudley Woodberry, Charles Van Engen and Edgar J. Elliston, 232-256. Maryknoll: Orbis. 1996.

GRAFE, Hugald. *The History of Christianity in Tamilnadu*. History of Christianity in India. Vol.4, Part 2. Bangalore: Church History Association of India. 1982

HEDLUND, Roger E. "The Biblical Approach to Other Religions." Paper presented at the Fellowship of Indian Missiologists Seminar, Pune, 30-31 August, 1992. Revised. 1992

HEWITT, Gordon. *The Problems of Success, A History of the Church Missionary Society 1910-1942. Volume Two: Asia; Overseas Partners*. London: SCM Press. Published for the Church Missionary Society. 1977.

HIEBERT, Paul G. "Missiological Education for a Global Era" in *Missiological Education for the 21st Century* edited by J. Dudley Woodberry, Charles Van Engen and Edgar J. Elliston, 34-42. Maryknoll: Orbis. 1996.

HOLLENWEGER, Walter J. *The Pentecostals*. London: SCM. 1972.

MUNDADAN, A.M. *From the Beginning Up to the Middle of the Sixteenth Century*. History of Christianity in India. Vol.1. Bangalore: Church History Association of India. 1989

RAJAMANICKAM, S. *Roberto de Nobili on Indian Customs*. An Introduction by S. Rajamanickam and Translation of His *Informatio*, a Report about some Indian Social Customs. Palayamkottai: De Nobili Research Institute, St. Xavier's College. 1989

REDFIELD, Robert. *The Little Community and Peasant Society and Culture*. University of Chicago Press. 1967.

SANNEH, Lamin. *Translating the Message: The Missionary Impact on Culture*. Maryknoll: Orbis. 1991.

SAULIÉRE, A. *His Star in the East*. Revised & Re-edited by Fr. S. Rajamnickam. Anand: Gujarat Sahitya Prakash. 1995.

SINGER, Milton. *When a Great Tradition Modernizes: An Anthropological Approach to Indian Civilization*. New York: Praeger Publisher. 1972.

STAFFNER, Hans. *Jesus Christ and the Hindu Community: Is a Synthesis of Hinduism and Christianity Possible?* Anand: Gujarat Sahitya Prakash. 1988

INDIA

ABRAHAM, Plammoottil Pothen. "Patterns of Church Growth in India." M.Th.Missiology thesis, Fuller Theological Seminary. 1980.

ABRAHAM, Thottumkal Pothen. "The Indian Pentecostal Church of God and Its Contribution to Church Growth." M.A. Missiology thesis, Fuller Theological Seminary. 1988.

AERTHAYIL, James. *The Spiritual Heritage of the St. Thomas Christians*. Bangalore: Dharmaram Publications. 1982.

BAAGO, Kaj. *The Movement Around Subba Rao: A Study of the Hindu-Christian Movement around K. Subba Rao in Andhra Pradesh*. Madras: CLS. 1968.

BANDELA, Yesupadam. "The Gospel Association of India." M.A. Missiology research project, Fuller Theological Seminary. 1974.

BENNETT, David W. "Perspectives of Biblical Pastoral Leadership: A Case Study of Ten Churches in Pune, India." Ph.D. dissertation, Fuller Theological Seminary. 1990.

BOYD, Robin. *Introduction to Indian Christian Theology*. Madras: CLS. 1991.

CAPLAN, Lionel. "Popular Christianity in Urban South India." *Religion and Society* Vol.XXX, No.2 (June 1983):28-44.

DANIEL, Joshua. *Another Daniel*. Madras: Laymen's Evangelical Fellowship. 1980.

DANIEL, Joshua. *Get Set ...Go, An Autobiography*. South Bend: Laymen's Evangelical Fellowship International. 1989.

DANIEL, Philip. "Theology of Conversion in the Indian Context." D.Miss. dissertation, Fuller Theological Seminary. 1984.

DEVADAS, St. M. "Mithra, The Friend: God's Great Plan of Salvation for all Mankind Revealed." Guntur: Bible Mission. 1995.

DEVADAS, St. M. "Maxims to Rebuke Satan." Guntur: Bible Mission. 1996.

DEVADAS, St. M. "Praising God for His Divine Qualities." Guntur: Bible Mission. 1997.

DEVASAHAYAM, K. "The Bible Mission." *Religion and Society* Vol.XXIX, No.1 (March 1982):55-89.

FARQUHAR, J.N. *Modern Religious Movements in India*. 1967. First Indian Edition. Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal.

FUCHS, Stephen. *Rebellious Prophets: A Study of Messianic Movements in Indian Religions*. Bombay: Asia Publishing House. 1965.

GOKHALE, Balkrishna Govind. "Dr. Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar: Rebel against Hindu Tradition" in *Religion and Social Conflict in South Asia* edited by Bardwell L. Smith, 13-23. Leiden: E.J. Brill. 1976.

HARDGRAVE, Robert L. *The Nadars of Tamilnadu: The Political Culture of a Community in Change*. Berkley and Los Angeles: University of California Press. 1969.

HEDLUND, Roger E. "Church Planting in Selected Indian Cities." *Evangelization and Church Growth Issues from the Asian Context*. Madras: CGRC. 1992.

HOEFER, Herbert E. *Churchless Christianity: a report of research among non-baptised believers in Christ in rural and urban Tamilnadu, India, with practical and theological reflections*. Madras: Gurukul Lutheran Theological College Department of Research & Publications. 1991.

HOERSCHELMANN, Werner. *Christliche Gurus: Darstellung von Selbstverständnis und Funktion indigenen Christseins durch unabhängige, charismatisch geführte Gruppen in Südindien*. Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang. 1977.

Indian Missiological Review. The Adivasis of Jharkhand and Evangelization. Vol.19, No.2, June 1997.

JYOTHIRAO, P.A.D. "The Etrnal Gospel of Jesus Christ." Author manuscript. Kazipet. 1992.

JYOTTHIRAO, P.A.D. "Nahayim Gospel Church." Various papers. Warangal. n.d.

KURUNDAMANNIL, Joseph Chakko. "Yuomayam: A Messianic Movement in Kerala, India." Doctor of Missiology Dissertation. Fuller Theological Seminary, School of World Mission. 1978.

LIPNER, Julius. "A Modern Indian Christian Response" in *Modern Indian Responses to Religious Pluralism* edited by Harold G. Coward, 291-314. 1987. Albany: State University of New York Press.

LUKE, P.Y. and John B. Carman. *Village Christians and Hindu Culture*. New York: Friendship Press. 1968.

MACNICOL, Nicol. *The Living Religions of the Indian People*. London: SCM. 1934.

MATHEW, Samuel. "Biblical Leadership: A Theology of Servanthood for the Church in India." M.Th. Missiology thesis, Fuller Theological Seminary. 1989.

MATTAM, Joseph. "Indian Attempts Towards a Solution to the Problems of Conversion" in *Mission and Conversion: A Reappraisal* edited by Joseph Mattam and Sebastian Kim, pp.101-127. Mumbai: St. Pauls. 1996.

MEERSMAN, Achilles. "Can We Speak of Indigenisation of the Catholic Church in India During the 19th Century?" *Indian Church History Review* 7,2, December 1973, 75-82.

MEYER, U. "Indigenisation--A Critical Review of the Discussion in India 1942-1965." *Indian Church History Review* 7,2, December 1973, 91-120.

NINAN, Thomas. "New Forms of Ecclesial Communities in India--An Ecclesiological Perspective." Ph.D. thesis, University of Mysore, Department of Studies in Christianity. 1997.

OLDFIELD, Barbara. *Dr. P.J. Titus, God's Man for India*. Visakhapatnam: COTR Publications. 1996.

PULLAPILLY, Cyriac K. "The Izhavas of Kerala and their Historic Struggle for Acceptance in the Hindu Society" in *Religion and Social Conflict in South Asia* edited by Bardwell L. Smith, 24-46. 1976. Leiden: E.J. Brill.

RAJAMANI, R.R. *Monsoon Daybreak*. Bombay: Gospel Literature Service. 1971.

RICHARD, H.L. "K. Subba Rao: The Christ-Centred Hindu Healer of Andhra Pradesh." Unpublished research paper. 17 pp. nd. ca1994.

RICHARD, H.L. *Christ-Bhakti: Narayan Vaman Tilak and Christian Work among Hindus*. Delhi: ISPCK. 1991.

RICHARD, H.L. *R. C. Das: Evangelical Prophet for Contextual Christianity*. Confessing the Faith in India Series. Delhi: ISPCK. 1995.

ROY, Frank L. "Is An Explosion of Faith Coming In India?" *Mission Frontiers Bulletin* September-October 1996, 10-11.

SALDANHA, Julian. "Patterns of Conversion in Indian Mission History" in *Mission and Conversion: A Reappraisal*, edited by Joseph Mattam and Sebastian Kim, pp.79-97. Mumbai: St. Pauls. 1996.

SAMUEL, Edwin (ed.) *In the Day of Thy Power*. Compiled from the Messages of Bro. R.R. Rajamani and Bro. Bakht Singh. Reprint. Madras: Jehovah-Shammah. 1983.

SCOTT, David C. (ed.) *Keshub Chunder Sen*. Madras: Christian Literature Society. 1979.

SOLOMON RAJ, P. *A Christian Folk Religion in India: A Study of the Small Church Movement in Andhra Pradesh, with a Special Reference to the Bible Mission of Devadas*. Frankfurt: Peter Lang. 1986.

SUBRAMANIAM PILLAI, S. *Strategy to Reach Greater Madras*. Madras: DAWN International Network. 1996.

SUMITHRA, Sunand. *Christian Theology from an Indian Perspective*. Bangalore: Theological Book Trust.

THANGARAJ, M. Thomas. "The History and Teachings of the Hindu Christian Community Commonly Called Nattu Sabai in Tirunelveli." *Indian Church History Review*, Vol.V, No.1, (June 1971):43-68.

TIRKEY, C.A.B. "The Tana Bhagat Movement: The Uraons Quest for Liberation." *Indian Missiological Review* Vol.19, No.2 (June 1997):27-32.

TURNER, Harold W. *Bibliography of New Religious Movements in Primal Societies Volume 4: Europe and Asia*. 1991. Boston: G.K. Hall.

WARD, William. *History, Literature and Mythology of the Hindoos. Vols.I-IV. 3rd Edition. 1817-1820*. Reprint of the Serampore original by Low Price Publication, Delhi, 1990.

WEBSTER, John C.B. *The Dalit Christians: A History*. Delhi: ISPCK. 1994.

WINTER, Ralph. "Editorial Comment." *Mission Frontiers Bulletin* September-October 1996, 2-6.

YOUNGER, Paul. "Hindu-Christian Worship Settings in South India" in *Hindu-Christian Dialogue: Perspectives and Encounters* edited by Harold Coward, 191-197. Maryknoll: Orbis. 1990.

ASIA

ADENEY, David H. *China: The Church's Long March*. Eastbourne: MARC. 1988.

BRAUN, Neil. *Laity Mobilized: Reflections on Church Growth in Japan and Other Lands*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans. 1971.

CONNER, John H. "When Culture Leaves Contextualized Christianity Behind." *Missiology* January 1991: 21-29.

COVELL, Ralph. *Mission Impossible*. Pasadena: Hope. 1990.

KHATRY, Ramesh. "The Church in Nepal" in *Church in Asia Today* edited by Saphir Athyal. Singapore: Asia Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization. 1996.

LAMBERT, Tony. *The Resurrection of the Chinese Church*. London: Hodder & Stoughton. 1991.

MINDERHOUD, Jan. "The Christian Presence in Nepal Before 1951." *Indian Church History Review* 24,2, December 1990:144-164.

PERRY, Cindy. *A Biographical History of the Church in Nepal*. Wheaton: Wheaton Graduate School. 1989.

SWANSON, Allen J. *Taiwan: Mainline vrsus Independent Church Growth, A Study in Contrasts*. Pasadena: William Carey Library. 1970.

SWANSON, Allen J. *The Church in Taiwan: Profile 1980*. Pasadena: Wm. Carey Library. 1981.

TUGGY, A. Leonard. *Iglesia Ni Cristo: A Study in Independent Church Dynamics*. Quezon City, Philippines: Conservative Baptist Publishing. 1976.

PACIFIC REGION

MAELIAU, Michael. "Searching for a Melanesian Way of Worship" in Trompf 1987:119-127.

POKAWIN, Polonhou S. "Interaction between Indigenous and Christian Traditions" in Trompf 1987:23-31.

TIPPETT, A.R. *Solomon Islands Christianity: A Study in Growth and Obstruction*. London: Lutterworth. 1967.

TROMPF, G.W. ed.) *The Gospel Is Not Western: Black Theologies from the Southwest Pacific*. Maryknoll: Orbis. 1987.

WHITEMAN, Darrell. *Melanesians and Missionaries*. Pasadena: William Carey Library. 1983.

NORTH AMERICAN INDIGENOUS CHRISTIANITY AND CHURCHES

CARPENTER, Joel A. and Wilbert R. Shenk (eds.) *Earthen Vessels: American Evangelicals and Foreign Missions, 1880-1980*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans. 1990.

DAYTON, Donald W. and Robert K. Johnston (eds.) *The Variety of American Evangelicalism*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity. 1991.

HANEGRAAFF, Hank. *Counterfeit Revival: Looking for God in All the Wrong Places*. Dallas, Texas: Word Publishing. 1997.

NOLL, Mark A., Nathan O. Hatch, George M. Marsden, David F. Wells, John D. Woodbridge (eds.) *Eerdmans' Handbook to Christianity in America*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans. 1983.

OSBORN, Ronald E. *The Spirit of American Christianity*. New York: Harper & Brothers. 1958.

SHELLEY, Bruce L. *The Gospel and the American Dream*. Portland: Multnomah. 1989.

WALLS, Andrew F. "The American Dimension in the History of the Missionary Movement" in Carpenter and Shenk, 1-25.

AFRICAN INDEPENDENT CHURCHES

BARRETT, David B. *Schism and Renewal in Africa: An Analysis of Six Thousand Contemporary Religious Movements*. Nairobi: Oxford. 1968.

BARRETT, David B., George K. Mambo, Janice McLaughlin, and Malcolm J. McVeigh (eds.) *Kenya Churches Handbook: The Development of Kenyan Christianity, 1498-1973*. Kisumu, Kenya: Evangel Publishing House. 1973.

HAYWARD, Victor E.W. (ed.) *African Independent Church Movements*. 1963. London: Edinburgh House Press.

OOSTHUIZEN, G. *The Pentecostal Penetration of the Indian Community in South Africa*. Durban: Human Sciences Research Council. 1975.

OOSTHUIZEN, G.C. *Afro-Christian Religions*. 1979 Leiden: E.J. Brill.

OOSTHUIZEN, G.C. *The Healer-Prophet in Afro-Christian Churches*. Leiden: E.J. Brill. 1992.

OOSTHUIZEN, G.C. "Indigenous Christianity and the Future of the Church in South Africa." *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* January 1997:8-12.

TURNER, Harold W. *History of an African Independent Church I: The Church of the Lord (Aladura)*. Oxford: Clarendon Press. 1967.

LATIN AMERICAN 'GRASS-ROOTS' CHURCHES

BERG, Mike and Paul Pretiz. *The Gospel People*. Monrovia: MARC World Vision. 1992.

BERG, Mike and Paul Pretiz. *Spontaneous Combustion: Grass-Roots Christianity, Latin American Style*. Pasadena: William Carey Library. 1996.

BERG, Clayton L. Jr. and Paul E. Pretiz. "Latin America's Fifth Wave of Protestant Churches." *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* October 1996:157-159.

ESCOBAR, Samuel. "The Training of Missiologists for a Latin American Context" in *Missiological Education for the 21st Century* edited by J. Dudley Woodberry, Charles Van Engen and Edgar J. Elliston, 101-111. Maryknoll: Orbis. 1996.

NIDA, Eugene. *Understanding Latin Americans*. Pasadena: William Carey Library. 1974.

NUÑEZ C., Emilio Antonio and William David Taylor. *Crisis and Hope in Latin America: An Evangelical Perspective*. Revised. Pasadena: William Carey Library. 1996.

READ, W.R., V.M. Monterroso and H.A. Johnson. *Latin American Church Growth*. Eerdmans. 1969.

WILSON, Everett A. "Identity, Community, and Status: The Legacy of the Central American Pentecotal Pioneers" in Carpenter and Shenk, *Earthen Vessels*, 133-151.