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PENTECOSTAL BEGINNINGS IN RAJASTHAN, INDIA: Part One

Wessly Lukose

Pentecostal[1] Christianity is growing rapidly in India as in many parts of the world. Stanley Burgess observes that Indian Pentecostalism is the fifth largest sector of Global Charismatic Christianity.[2] Pentecostals are present in almost every part of India, including north-west region, where the Christian population is comparatively low. In Rajasthan, the largest state in India, the Christian message has had little impact. According to the 2001 government census of India, Rajasthan has a population of 56.51 million, but less than one percent is Christian. However, Pentecostalism is the fastest growing Christian movement in Rajasthan.

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[1] In the present study the terms 'Pentecostal' and 'Charismatic' are used interchangeably with the same meaning unless otherwise stated. The present study adopts a more inclusive definition of Pentecostalism, following Walter Hollenweger, Allan Anderson and Amos Yong. Such a definition embraces Classical Pentecostals, Charismatics and Neo-Pentecostals, who share a common emphasis on the experience of the Holy Spirit. See Walter J. Hollenweger, *Pentecostalism: Origins and Developments Worldwide* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1997), 1; Allan Anderson, *An Introduction to Pentecostalism: Global Charismatic Christianity* (Cambridge: CUP, 2004), 9-15. He calls them 'spiritual gifts' movements (p.14); Amos Yong, *The Spirit Poured Out on All Flesh: Pentecostalism and the Possibility of Global Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2005), 18-19. He aligns himself with *The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2002), xviii-xxi. In *Discerning the Spirit (s): A Pentecostal-Charismatic Contribution to Christian Theology of Religions* (Sheffield: SAP, 2000), 21, though he initially adopts a more exclusive definition, later he calls for a more inclusive approach (see pp. 149-61).

[2] Stanley M. Burgess, 'Pentecostalism in India: An Overview,' *AJPS* 4, no.1 (2001): 85.

This paper provides a historical and contextual study of Pentecostalism in Rajasthan. It begins by describing the origins and historical development of Pentecostalism, in order to understand the movement as an indigenous[3] initiative. In the present context of persecution and other related opposition, the relationship of Pentecostals with other churches is also studied.

1. The Objectives and Methodology

There is a popular notion in India that Christianity is an imported religion from the West. In many parts of the nation, including Rajasthan, Christianity is generally identified with colonization.[4] Furthermore, there is a misrepresentation of the origin and nature of Pentecostalism in India in general, and Rajasthan in particular, as it is viewed as a product of western Pentecostalism. Many from both within and outside the movement regard Pentecostalism in Rajasthan as an imported movement from South India, where Pentecostalism was supposedly brought from North America.

In contemporary India the whole issue of religious identity is a serious concern. The aforesaid notions about Pentecostals in India have some serious repercussions. Such a misrepresentation will cause others to view them as foreigners, and places them in a potentially vulnerable situation, which may lead to faith conflicts. Although all Christians are exposed to attack from Hindu militant groups, Pentecostals seem to be a particular target as they have been labelled as a proselytising group, even by other Christians. This misrepresentation of Pentecostal origins in Rajasthan may also cause internal struggles within the movement. Therefore, it is vital to investigate the problem of Pentecostal identity in Rajasthan.

This research intends to investigate the beginnings of Pentecostalism in Rajasthan by addressing the central question that has

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[3] Throughout this paper, the term 'indigenous' (people) is used to mean (people) belonging to from Rajasthan as well as other states of India. The terms 'Rajasthani/s,' 'local' (people) and 'native/s' are used interchangeably to mean people from Rajasthan, including both tribal and non-tribal. Wherever necessary, the term 'tribal' is used to show the difference. Moreover, if these terms are used differently, the distinction will be mentioned.

[4] For a detailed discussion, see Paul M. Collins, *Christian Inculturation in India* (Aldershot, Hampshire: Ashgate, 2007), 18-22.

directed this research, 'What is the origin and nature of Pentecostalism in Rajasthan?' This study will investigate whether there is any basis for believing that Pentecostalism in Rajasthan is an imported religion from South India.

One of the main objectives of this study is to make a North Indian contribution to Indian Pentecostal history. Although relatively little has been written on Indian Pentecostalism, there has been a growing interest in the subject in recent years.[5] However, thus far there has been no comprehensive history of Indian Pentecostalism that gives due representation to every region as most studies focus on South India.[6] Although Pentecostalism has not made as much impact in the north as in the south, North Indian Pentecostalism is over a hundred years old. It should also be noted that other forms of Christianity did not make much progress in North India in the early days.[7] At the same time, post-colonial North India has seen a number of Pentecostal missionaries working in the rural areas, and as a result, many indigenous Pentecostal churches have been formed. The dearth of material on North Indian

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[5] For example, see Sara Abraham, 'A Critical Evaluation of the Indian Pentecostal Church of God: Its Origin and Development in Kerala' (MTh thesis, Senate of Serampore, 1990); Saju Mathew, *Kerala Penthecosthu Charithram* [Kerala Pentecostal History] (Kottayam, India: Good News Publications, 1994); Sam Mathews, 'The Pentecostal Movement in South India: Relevance in Theological Education' (DMiss thesis, SAIACS, Bangalore, 1996); V.A. Varughese, 'A Historical Analysis of the Origin and Development of the Pentecostal Churches in Kerala with Special Reference to its View of Mission' (DMiss thesis, SAIACS, Bangalore, 1996); T.S. Samuel Kutty, *The Place and Contribution of Dalits in Select Pentecostal Churches in Central Kerala from 1922-1972* (Delhi: ISPCK, 2000); Yesunatha Das, 'An Evaluation of the History of Pentecostal Dalits in Kerala' (MTh thesis, SAIACS, Bangalore, 2001); A.C. George, 'Pentecostal Beginnings in Travancore, South India,' *AJPS* 4, no.2 (2001): 215-37; Paulson Pulikottil, 'As East and West Met in God's Own Country: Encounter of Western Pentecostalism with Native Pentecostalism in Kerala,' *AJPS* 5, no.1 (2002): 5-22; Paulson Pulikottil, 'Emergence of Indian Pentecostalism,' *Dharma Deepika* 6, no.2 (2002): 47-58; V.V. Thomas, 'Pentecostalism among the Dalits in Kerala from 1909 to the Present: A Subaltern Reading' (DTh thesis, Senate of Serampore, 2004).

[6] The best example is Michael Bergunder, *The South Indian Pentecostal Movement in the Twentieth Century*, Studies in the History of Christian Missions, ed. R.E. Frykenberg and Brian Stanley (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008).

[7] According to the 2001 India census, north Indian states have more than 650 million people, but only 2% of the total Christian population lives there.

Pentecostal history is apparent if we glance at the sources given in the *NIDPCM* for the history of Pentecostal movement in India.[8] Therefore, the current study aims to fill this gap to a certain extent.

Another purpose of this study is to investigate the historical origins of Pentecostalism in Rajasthan, an area that has been totally ignored in attempts to write the history of Indian Pentecostalism. As stated earlier, there is a popular notion among Pentecostals and other Christians as well as non-Christians that Pentecostalism in Rajasthan was brought by missionaries from South India, particularly Kerala. There are vital links missing in previous studies related to Pentecostalism in Rajasthan, and it is one of the major purposes of this study to explore these missing links. It is anticipated that it will serve as an important chapter in the historiography of North Indian Pentecostal Christianity.

This study follows the voice of Allan Anderson, a leading voice in global Pentecostal historiography, in order to explain the history of Pentecostalism in India as it seems to be significant in the Indian context. According to him, rather than the 'history from above,' a 'new history' that is concerned with the 'history from below' from the perspective of those on the margins is necessary. Therefore, he suggests that 'in the writing of Pentecostal history, there needs to be "affirmative action" to redress the balance, where the contribution of national workers, pastors and evangelists is emphasized. We need to plumb the depths of oral histories and bring to light that which has been concealed for so long.'[9] Many mission historians like Wilbert Shenk[10] and Mark Hutchinson[11] emphasize the significance of such a new paradigm in the contemporary global historiography of mission. Therefore, in the current research on Pentecostalism in Rajasthan, the voices of the

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[8] G.B. McGee and S.M. Burgess, 'India,' in *The New Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, ed. S.M. Burgess and Van Der Mass (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002), 125-26.

[9] Allan H. Anderson, 'Writing the Pentecostal History of Africa, Asia and Latin America,' *Journal of Beliefs and Values* 25, no.2 (2004): 149. For more details, see pp.139-49. He used the same approach in his *Introduction to Pentecostalism*.

[10] Wilbert R. Shenk, 'Introduction,' in *Enlarging the Story: Perspectives on Writing World Christian History*, ed. Wilbert R. Shenk (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2002), xi-xvii.

[11] Mark Hutchinson, et al., 'The Ongoing Task: Agendas for a Work in Progress,' in *Enlarging the Story*, 115-23.

natives rather than those of South Indians are taken into account to get a better picture of the movement.

For the specific purpose of this study, research was carried out using a qualitative research approach. A combination of methods such as interviews, life histories and documentary analysis has been used.[12] Interviews were conducted with both Rajasthani and non-Rajasthani people of various categories such as Pentecostal leaders, pastors and lay people.[13] The interviewees included three elderly people in their late eighties, who have been members of the first Pentecostal church in Rajasthan since its inception, seven participants of local revivals who became Pentecostals, as well as three non-Pentecostal eyewitnesses of the revivals, and eighteen leaders and ten pastors from all the twelve major Pentecostal organizations.

In the process of data analysis, a balance between critical distance and sensitivity was maintained.[14] Realising the importance of different types of sensitivity in qualitative research, such as historical, cultural, political and contextual, efforts were made to become sensitive to meaning without forcing my own explanations on data.[15] A variety of sources such as both technical and non-technical[16] literature, personal and professional experiences and insights have been used as analytical tools.[17] Triangulation was used particularly to verify the data and analysis related to the early history of Pentecostalism in Rajasthan as well as the local revivals. Both *etic* (outsider) and *emic* (insider)

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[12] Mark J. Cartledge, *Practical Theology: Charismatic and Empirical Perspectives* (Carlisle: Paternoster, 2003), 69-74.

[13] For the importance of interviews in qualitative research see Tom Wengraf, *Qualitative Research Interviewing* (London: SAGE Publications, 2001), 1-70. Also Alan Bryman, *Social Research Methods*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: OUP, 2004), 318-44.

[14] Anselm Strauss and Juliet Corbin, *Basics of Qualitative Research: Techniques and Procedures for Developing Grounded Theory*, 2nd ed. (London: SAGE Publications, 1998), 42-48. They discuss 'a balance between objectivity and sensitivity.'

[15] John Swinton and Arriet Mowat *Practical Theology and Qualitative Research* (London : SCM Press, 2006), 57-58

[16] Non-technical literature consists of letters, biographies, diaries, reports, videotapes, newspapers, catalogues and other materials. See Strauss and Corbin, *Basics of Qualitative Research*, 52.

[17] Strauss and Corbin, *Basics of Qualitative Research*, 42-52.

approaches have been used in the analysis.[18] As Harvey Cox observes, it is important to listen both to 'inside' and 'outside' voices in order to have a comprehensive understanding of Pentecostalism.[19]

2. Christianity in Rajasthan

Pentecostalism is one of the most important expressions of Christianity in Rajasthan. In order to place it in context, it is important to trace the origins of Christianity in the state. When Christian missionaries entered Rajasthan, it was one of the princely states in India, and was known as *Rajputana*.

2.1. Early Christianity

Most works on Christianity in Rajasthan begin with Scottish Presbyterians Williamson Shoolbred and Thomas Blair Steele, the first Christian missionaries to Rajasthan in 1860 as will be discussed below.[20] However, there are allusions to an early Christian presence in the state. In James Tod's historical ethnographic account of Rajasthan, entitled *Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan*, there is a description of a

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[18] Kenneth Pike was the first to coin the terms '*etic*' and '*emic*.' See Kenneth Pike, 'Etic and Emic Standpoints for the Description of Behaviour,' in *The Insider/Outsider Problem in the Study of Religion*, ed. Russel T. McCutcheon (London: Cassell,1999), 28-36.

[19] Harvey Cox, 'Foreword,' in *Pentecostals after a Century: Global Perspectives on a Movement in Transition*, JPTS 15, ed. Allan H. Anderson and Walter J. Hollenweger (Sheffield: SAP, 1999), 12.

[20] For example, John Robson, *The Story of the Rajputana Mission* (Edinburgh: Offices of United Presbyterian Church, 1894); Ashcroft Frank, *Story of Our Rajputana Mission* (Edinburgh: Oilphant, Anderson and Ferrier, 1908); Willy Abraham, 'The Pauline Concept of Pastoral Commitment with Special Reference to the Church in Ephesus and Its Implications to the Filadelfia Fellowship Churches of India in North India' (MTh thesis, SAIACS, Bangalore, 1996); J. Samuel, 'A Study on the Influence of Rajasthan Pentecostal Church in the Socio-Economic Upliftment of the Bhil Tribes in Udaipur District' (MTh thesis, AIT, Bangalore, 2006); Abraham T. Cherian, 'Contribution of Churches and Missions to the Bhils of Rajasthan' (PhD thesis, AIT, Bangalore, 2005).

much earlier Christian presence.[21] As Denis Vidal has observed, until almost twenty years ago, Tod's work remained the basic text and standard reference work on Rajasthan for all historians.[22] Tod's study on the kingdoms of Rajasthan revealed the Persian ancestry of the Mewar Princes.[23] The kings of Udaipur were exalted over all other princes of the state. According to *Maaser-al-Omra,* a major source that Tod referred to in order to establish his argument, the kings of Udaipur received the title '*Rana,*' and were the descendants of Noshirwan-i-Adil. His son Noshizad, whose mother was the daughter of Caesar of Rome, embraced the Christian faith in the sixth century and entered Hindustan (India) with numerous followers. Although Noshizad was slain, his descendants remained in India, and from them were descended the *Ranas* of Udaipur. Thus, Tod concludes that being the seed of Noshizad, the Sesodia race of Rajasthan are the descendants of a Christian princess.[24] While Tod's hypothesis of the origins of the Rajputs kingdoms is not generally accepted, Vidal argues that it is rejected only because it did not fit into the nineteenth century colonial ideology.[25]

If the story of a Christian root of *Ranas* of Udaipur is true, this may explain why they showed favour towards foreign Christian missionaries. The *Ranas* were strong opponents of colonial powers, as Vidal shows in his study of the Serohi Kingdom.[26] However, it is significant to note that foreign Christian missionaries were welcomed, assisted, supported, protected and listened to by most of the *Ranas.*

George Carstairs' account of Christian activities in Rajasthan also suggests a Christian presence before the coming of Shoolbred.

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[21] James Tod, *The Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan or the Central and Western Rajpoot States of India*, vols 1-2 (n.p., 1832).

[22]Denis Vidal, *Violence and Truth: A Rajasthan Kingdom Confronts Colonial Authority* (Delhi, India: OUP, 1997), 24.

[23] Tod states that he builds up his argument mainly on the basis of a number of sources like, *Maaser-al-Omra* written in 1204. The writer explains the lineage of the Ranas of Mewar, while giving account of Sivaji, the founder of Maratta Kingdom. He argues that Sivaji is also a descendant of the Mewar Ranas. For more details of the discussion, see Tod, *Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan*, 242-50.

[24] Tod, *Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan*, 246, 48-49.

[25] Vidal, *Violence and Truth*, 29.

[26] Vidal, *Violence and Truth*.

Although there have been no records of the conversion of indigenes, Carstairs' story gives the impression that there was a small Christian community centred on the British cantonment at Nasirabad. There is a suggestion that there was a chapel for the British army as he mentions that the church building at Naisrabad was burned along with the bungalows during the Sepoy Mutiny in 1857,[27] and it is believed that the church service was conducted in English for the small English community.[28] The history of Christianity possessed by the local Christians[29] at Beawar also supports an early account of Christian origins.[30] Nevertheless, it is likely that evangelistic activities began in Rajasthan only with the coming of Scottish missionaries.

Christian missionaries came to Rajasthan soon after the Sepoy Mutiny.[31] In 1859, Shoolbred and Steele were sent as missionaries to Rajasthan by the United Presbyterian Church (UPC) in Scotland. Unfortunately, due to the adverse climate conditions Steele fell ill on the way, and on 10 February 1860 he died of a liver abscess.[32] Although Shoolbred was shaken by the death of his companion, he continued his journey along with Dr. Wilson from Bombay and reached Beawar, a small town, 33 miles west of the city of Ajmer, on the 3rd March, where he began his mission. Shoolbred was involved in various missionary activities in later years. Firstly, he opened a school at Beawar, and at the same time he held evangelistic services on Sundays at his residence. Interfaith debate and street preaching were regular

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[27] In 1857, for the first time, Indian nationals began to show their opposition to British rule in India in an organized way. Indian soldiers in the British army began to fight, and thus created a considerable tension in the army. The event was known as the Sepoy Mutiny.

[28] George Carstairs, *Shepherd of Udaipur and the Land He Loved* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1926), 46-48.

[29] During field research, I was quite surprised to find that elderly Christians in many places kept a record of their history in the Hindi language. For example, Mallu Sardar, *Banaswara Mission Ka Itihas* [History of Banaswara Mission] (Ratlam/India: L. Maida, 2000).

[30] I have interviewed a few elderly Christians in their late eighties from Beawar. One of them is a retired advocate. Although not published, they kept a written record of the Beawar Christian History in Hindi, the national language.

[31] Carstairs concludes that the Mutiny served as a stimulant and caused the UPC to embark upon a fresh missionary enterprise in India in 1858. See Carstairs, *Shepherd of Udaipur*, 42.

[32] Ashcroft, *Rajputana Mission*, 29-30.

practices, and Shoolbred continued his missionary activities until his death in 1896.

Many other Scottish missionaries followed Shoolbred, and almost all of them engaged in similar missionary activities as him. Most of them began their mission with a school, and others came as medical missionaries and later established hospitals and medical schools.

The CMS and the Canadian Presbyterian Mission were also involved in missions in Rajasthan. The CMS initiated their mission in 1880, mainly focusing on the Udaipur district, and all their mission stations had a Christian congregation as well as a school. The United Church of Canada Mission began their work in 1914 by concentrating on Banaswara in south Rajasthan. It was an Irish Presbyterian mission, a branch of the Canadian Protestant Mission Society.[33] P.C. Jain claims that although many Bhils accepted the Christian faith because of Christian preaching, the mission had taken the 'form of a socio-economic movement.'[34] Later in 1970, the Canadian Mission had brought itself under Church of North India (CNI), the newly constituted indigenous organization, with Nagpur as its headquarters.[35] The Banaswara Mission was transferred to Banaswara-Bhopal Diocese, and later in 1981 to Ajmer Diocese.

The Roman Catholics (RC) were late-comers to the state. They began their mission in Banaswara, Rajasthan in 1921 with Father Daniel, who came with churchmen from Thandla Mission, Madhya Pradesh. However, the RC Mission gained momentum with the coming of the French missionary Father Charles, who also came from Thandla Mission in 1933 with a band of four assistants.[36] Usually an RC mission station included a school, a hostel, a dispensary, a social work centre and a church.

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[33] Shyam Lal, *Tribals and Christian Missionaries* (Delhi, India: Manak Publications, 1994), 44.

[34] P.C. Jain, *Christianity, Ideology and Social Change among Tribals: A Case Study of Bhils of Rajasthan* (Jaipur: Rawat, 1995), 115.

[35] The Church of North India, *The Constitution of the Church of North India and Bye-Laws: As Amended up to 21 October 2005* (Delhi: ISPCK, 2006), 39.

[36] For more details, see Lal, *Tribals and Christian Missionaries*, 45; Jain, Christianity, Ideology, 50.

2.2. Contemporary Christianity

The post-Independence era saw a great number of indigenous mission agencies coming to the state to be involved in various forms of Christian mission. Abraham T. Cherian gives a list of various Christian missions including Pentecostals in Rajasthan.[37]

The CNI is the most prominent Christian church in Rajasthan as in many other Nnorth Indian states. It was constituted on 29 November 1970 at Nagpur, Maharastra by the union of six churches: The Council of Baptist Churches in Northern India, The Church of Brethren in India, The Disciples of Christ, The Church in India, The Methodist Church (British and Australian Conference) and The United Church of Northern India.[38] Although the CNI does not have a wholly local origin, it has become an indigenous church, and it has mostly continued the work that the foreign missions began. Cherian's study reveals that CNI chiefly concentrated on socio-educational developments of their followers, rather than on evangelistic activities.[39]

Missionaries began to come to Rajasthan from other states of India from the second half of the twentieth century. Many South Indian missionaries came to the state to engage in evangelistic activities. In 1960, four Kerala graduates from the Hindustan Bible Institute, Chennai, Tamil Nadu, visited Rajasthan and distributed Christian literature, but were beaten badly by Hindu religious fanatics. One of the graduates was M.A. Thomas, a Baptist. He later established the Emmanuel Mission International (EMI) in Kota. It is one of the most significant non-Pentecostal organizations in the state. EMI places emphasis on education, and it encourages the graduates from its Bible Schools to establish a school everywhere they work.[40] It is likely that EMI has contributed more towards the field of education than any other Protestant segment in Rajasthan. It has also established the only Protestant hospital in the state.[41] The Rajasthan Bible Institute (RBI),

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[37] For details of their works, see Abraham T. Cherian, 'Contribution of Churches and Missions to the Bhils of Rajasthan' (PhD thesis, AIT, Bangalore, 2005),' 101-02, 115-128.
[38] Church of North India, *Constitution of the Church*, 39-40.
[39] Cherian, 'Contribution of Churches,' 101-02, 115-116.
[40] Cherian, 'Contribution of Churches,' 123.
[41] T.K. Rajalakshmi, 'A Saffron Assault,' *Frontline* 22, no.7 (12-25 March 2005), under 'Communalism,'

founded in 1970 with Jaipur as its headquarters by Anand Choudhary from Bihar, Nnorth India, who has a Brethren background, is another prominent organization in Rajasthan. Choudhary was inspired by M.A. Thomas to work in Rajasthan.[42] RBI is the first established theological institute in the state and it concentrates on church-planting.

Both Thomas and Choudhary came after the introduction of the Pentecostal message to the state. However, Pentecostals were not well organized when Thomas arrived. Later, para-church organizations like the India Every Home Crusade (IEHC) and Operation Mobilization (OM) were involved in non-church-planting evangelistic activities.[43] However, today there are more Pentecostal than non-Pentecostal organizations working, and many other organizations have been influenced by the Pentecostals in various ways, as will be discussed later. Most non-Pentecostals are aware of the significance of charismatic experiences such as healing, exorcism and the like in their church-planting ministry in Rajasthan. Many plainly admit that Pentecostal effectiveness in spite of the hard context of Rajasthan has prompted them to rethink their church-planting strategy.

3. Pentecostal Beginnings in Rajasthan

Current research reveals that Pentecostals entered Rajasthan in the first half of the twentieth century. They were one of the pioneer messengers of the Christian message in many parts of the state. Although early Pentecostals could not establish themselves as an organization, the Pentecostal message came to Rajasthan prior to the coming of many other Protestant churches. The present study questions the validity of two major myths. First, Pentecostalism in Rajasthan is the product of South Indian Pentecostals. Second, Pentecostalism is a post-independence event in the state. The present research argues for an early advent of Pentecostals, much earlier than is generally believed by both non-Pentecostals and Pentecostals alike.

Previous studies argue that Pentecostalism was brought to Rajasthan by Pentecostal missionaries from South India, particularly

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http://www.frontlineonnet.com/fl2207/stories/20050408001104000.htm (accessed 12 July 2007).

[42] Anand Choudhary, interview by author, Jaipur, Rajasthan, 09 May 2006.

[43] However, IEHC has begun church planting missions in the state very recently.

Kerala.[44] According to them, K.V. Philip was the first Pentecostal missionary and Thomas Mathews the second. These studies focus exclusively on the role of South Indians, and have created the impression that Pentecostalism originated from South India. Anderson discusses two major reasons for the neglect of the contributions of indigenous workers in the historiography of Pentecostalism outside the Western world. According to him, one of the chief 'reasons for the distorted picture we have of Pentecostal history is the problem of available documentary sources.' The early Pentecostal history of the non-Western world entirely depends on the writings of western missionaries, and subsequently the national workers are not represented adequately. Another major reason is that a number of 'people responsible for the grassroots expansion of the movement have passed into history forgotten and their memory is difficult to recover.' Therefore he urges that 'this may be one of the most important reconstructions needed in Pentecostal historiography.' However, Anderson further comments that it is almost impossible to reconstruct Pentecostal history from written sources alone, and he emphasises the significance of 'retrieving oral traditions.' Therefore he insists that 'we must record for posterity the stories of those still living who remember the past.'[45]

The current research observes that these two issues, as raised by Anderson, are relevant in the writing of Pentecostal history in Rajasthan. All the above-mentioned studies on Pentecostalism without exception have been carried out by South Indians, and that is likely to be the reason for the neglect of the contribution of North Indians in the making of Pentecostalism in Rajasthan. The pioneers who brought the Pentecostal message to the state have passed away, and so writers have ignored their story, thus making it difficult to retrieve their history. This research is not claiming to completely correct the distortion of Rajasthan Pentecostal history, but attempts to redress the balance.

This study employs the poly-centric theory to give a better understanding of the origin of Rajasthan Pentecostalism. It is an

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[44] For example, Johny P. Abraham, 'The Study of the Life and the Missionary Methods of St. Paul to the Present-Day Church Planting Ministry in North India and Its Application to the Ministry of Filadelfia Fellowship Church of India in Rajasthan' (MTh thesis, AIT, Bangalore, 2004); W. Abraham, 'Pauline Concept'; J. Samuel, 'Study on the Influence.'

[45] Allan Anderson, *Spreading Fires: The Missionary Nature of Early Pentecostalism* (London: SCM, 2007), 8-10.

alternative in the historiography of Pentecostalism, and will help to correct the general misunderstanding, particularly in Rajasthan, that all Pentecostals are South Indians. For example, according to D.K. Samanta, Pentecostals are mostly migrants from South India and they speak their own language like Malayalam (the state language of Kerala) and Tamil (the state language of Tamil Nadu).[46] Pentecostals are called '*Madirasis*,'[47] which means people of Madras.[48] There is a misunderstanding that all Pentecostals belong to Ceylon Pentecostal Mission (CPM) with Ceylon as its headquarters. The best example of this is seen in the work of Shyam when he discusses Pentecostal missions in Banaswara. He comments, 'The parent body of this sect [Pentecostals] in India is in Madras; abroad it is in Ceylon. In Banaswara district, this was started in 1968 at Banaswara town by pastor Thomas Mathews.'[49] However, the reality is that Mathews was from Kerala, and he came from an Indian Pentecostal Church of God (IPCoG) background with Kumbandu, Kerala its headquarters, and later, he became the founder of the Native Missionary Movement (NMM). Therefore, in the present research, Pentecostal missionaries from both North and South Indian states as well as the local revivals and missionaries find their place in the making of Pentecostalism in Rajasthan.

3.1 The Arrival of the Pentecostal Message

The Pentecostal message was brought to Rajasthan for the first time by Pentecostal missionaries from other states of North India. One of the greatest impacts of early Pentecostal revivals in India, as in most parts of the globe, was its missionary passion. The Pentecostal spirit took its people beyond their boundaries. In *Spreading Fires*, Anderson researches the missionary nature of early Pentecostalism. He concludes that missionary fervour was a significant feature of early Pentecostal missionaries. Thus, the missionary waves from various revivals like Mukti, Kerala, and, others impelled the people to be witnesses of the Pentecostal message in many parts of North India, including Rajasthan.

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[46] D.K. Samanta, 'Christian/ Pentecostals,' in *People of India (Rajasthan)*, vol. 38, part 2, ed. B.K. Lavania, et al. (Mumbai: Popular Prakashan, 1998), 247.
[47] Not only Pentecostals, but South Indians are generally called as *Madirasis* in most North Indian states.
[48] Madras is the old name of the city of Chennai, Tamil Nadu.
[49] Lal, *Tribals and Christian Missionaries*, 58-59.

The present research found that a Mr. and Mrs. Jiwa brought the Pentecostal message to Rajasthan for the first time in the 1930s. The message came to the district of Banaswara. Pentecostal and non-Pentecostal Christians alike in Banaswara interviewed during the fieldwork affirm that the Jiwas were the first carriers of the Pentecostal message to this place.[50] This introduction of Pentecostalism to Rajasthan in the first half of the twentieth century was directly linked to the Mukti Revival. Mr. Jiwa was a native of Jawara, Piplod, in Madhya Pradesh state, who married a girl from the Mukti Mission run by Pandita Ramabai. She had an experience of the Holy Spirit baptism with speaking in tongues. The Jiwas were working in Uttar Pradesh before they came to Rajasthan. According to Malaya Sardar, a local Christian in his early nineties and author of *Banaswara Christian Mission*, when they came to Banaswara, the Jiwas were allowed to work with the Canadian Presbyterian Mission.[51] However, they were not given full freedom to teach about water baptism and the Holy Spirit baptism within the church. They did not plant any Pentecostal churches, but were involved in vigorous evangelistic activities. Although the Jiwas did not have a significant Pentecostal impact, they are known as *pavitratma vala* (Holy Spirit people- those who were filled with the Holy Spirit) and *dubki vala* (immersion people - the people who were advocating and practicing adult baptism by immersion). Mrs. Jiwa was known by local people as *anya bhasha vali* (tongue-speaking lady) and *hallelujah vali* (hallelujah-speaking lady). It is significant that Mrs. Jiwa is known and talked about more than Mr. Jiwa by local people, even today.[52] Although Sardar still remains a non-Pentecostal, his interest in Pentecostalism grew after his wife was filled with the Holy Spirit during a local revival, as will be discussed later. Until her death, she attended a Pentecostal church. Sardar still keeps a group photo of the young Mrs. Jiwa in the Mukti Mission along with Pandita Ramabai and other girls of Mukti.

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[50] Mallu Sardar as well as other prominent Pentecostal leaders from Banaswara, like Tajendra Masih, Valu Singh and Pathras Masih acknowledged this fact during interviews.

[51] Sardar, interview by author, Banaswara, Rajasthan, 13 May 2006.

[52] It is common even today in many villages in north India that the name of women were not known to the public much, but referred as *unki avurath* (his lady- that means the wife of so and so), and so in many instances, it is not easy to identify the name of women.

It is probable that a picture can be drawn regarding the Indian revivals in the light of Anderson's account in *Spreading Fires*. His chapter on Indian Pentecostalism discloses the fact that there were many young boys and girls who went as missionaries as the result of these indigenous revivals. According to him, 'both Mukti and Dhond missions continued to be main centres for Pentecostal mission.' The young men at Albert Norton's Dhond Mission married young women of Ramabai's Mukti mission, and many of these young people went as missionaries to various parts of North India, including Gujarat and UP.[53] Thus it is likely that Mr. Jiwa came from the Dhond mission and he married Mrs. Jiwa from the Mukti mission, and after their marriage they went to Uttar Pradesh as missionaries and later moved to Rajasthan in the early 1930s. Whether there is a connection between Mr. Jiwa and Dhond mission or not, which is yet to be established, the significance of the above discussion is that the Pentecostal message was brought to Rajasthan for the first time by a product of Mukti, an indigenous Pentecostal revival in India, not by foreign Pentecostal missionaries or their products.

The second event regarding the coming of the Pentecostal message to Rajasthan took place in the next decade. Peter Lal, a native Pentecostal missionary from UP, came to work in the district of Ajmer in 1942. He was sent as a missionary from the *Dua ka Ghar* (House of Prayer), Lalbagh, Lucknow, UP. *Dhua ka Khar* is an indigenous Pentecostal church established by a local Pentecostal minister, B.M. Chand, in 1942 at Nishadganj, Mahanagar in Lucknow. It was the vision of the founder of *Dhua ka Khar* that it would be an independent church from the very beginning, and the church still retains this vision.[54]

Although Peter Lal began his preaching in the Methodist Church (now CNI church), he soon started to work independently along Pentecostal lines. He came to Rajasthan at the invitation of Miss Pindi Das, who was the principal of a mission school for girls in Ajmer. She was a lady of prayer from Punjab and a member of the Methodist Church. In an interview, Lal's wife Mary Athena Lal said that even

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[53] Anderson, *Spreading Fires*, 86, 100-01.

[54] B.M. Chand's son is the pastor of the church today. B.M. Chand served as the Secretary of Northern Region of the All India Pentecostal Fellowship. B.M. Chand, 'All India Pentecostal Fellowship: Northern Region,' *Cross and Crown* 5, no.4 (1975): 18-19.

though she was a member of the Methodist Church, she came to a personal experience of Christian conversion only after hearing the first sermon by Lal in the Methodist Church.[55] Mary's parents were interested in the young preacher from Uttar Pradesh and wanted to have him as Mary's future husband. However, her grandfather opposed, saying, 'we will not give our daughter to a wanderer,' as Lal was an independent missionary with no financial support. Therefore, they insisted that he should search for some secular job employment alongside his preaching ministry. Later, he was employed by the Indian Railway as a Divisional Officer before marrying Mary in 1945. He received Rs.30.00 as his salary, and he used to travel and preach, supporting himself financially. After the marriage, they began cottage meetings, and two years later established a local church at Christian Ganj, Ajmer, in the house of Mr. Alexander. It was called 'Bethesda Church,' and it was the first Pentecostal church in Rajasthan. Mary received the Holy Spirit baptism in 1948, and she saw a vision of Jesus taking her to the river. She immediately underwent water baptism because she believed that the Lord was speaking to her about this. Although they did evangelistic work among non-Christians, their major work was among the existing Christians.

Samuel Nur Massey, a railway traffic officer, was a member of Bethseda Church from its beginning. His aunt, Mrs. Blessy Lazarus, and her husband N. Lazarus, who was the railway stationmaster of Ajmer, received a Pentecostal experience and became members of Bethseda Church. When Samuel's wife received the Holy Spirit, she received the gift of prophecy as well.[56] They described the way that many people came to hear Lal's preaching and received the Holy Spirit baptism. According to Rev. Jordan Emmanuel Ramble, a retired Evangelical Director of the Methodist Church in the Diocese of Rajasthan, although there was missionary passion and enthusiasm in prayer among the existing churches, there was no teaching on the exercise of spiritual gifts.[57] There was much opposition from the Methodist church when Lal began to administer water baptism. However, many were baptised, and the church continued to grow.[58]

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[55] Mary Athena Lal, interview by author, Ajmer, Rajasthan, 19 May 2006.

[56] She is in her late eighties today. She prayed for me and gave a prophetic message when I finished the interview with her.

[57] Jordan Emmanuel Ramble, interview by author, Ajmer, Rajasthan, 19 May 2006.

[58] S.N. Massey, interview by author, Ajmer, Rajasthan, 19 May 2006.

Although Pentecostal ministers, like Robert Clove (from Jaipur) and O.J. Wilson (from Jabalpur, Madhya Pradesh), used to come and help the congregation, the Bethseda church in Ajmer did not survive for long after the death of Lal on 08 October 1966.

Many later Pentecostal leaders from South India questioned Lal's ministerial credentials when he joined the railway. They hesitated to call him a Pentecostal missionary, because Indian Pentecostals, particularly in the south, have a general belief that a pastor or minister committed to full-time ministry should not have a secular job. However, in an interview, Lal's wife Mary related stories of Lal's extensive travelling and preaching of the Pentecostal message in various parts of the state, such as Jodhpur, Jaipur, Kota and Udaipur, while continuing in secular employment. She said that there were many occasions when he went away to preach leaving her and their children in Ajmer alone for days.

3.2. Local Revivals

The current research found that revivals in the existing churches played a significant role in the development of Pentecostalism in Rajasthan. *Atma ka gagruti* (Spirit revival) occurred in a few places in Rajasthan, during which people witnessed new and unusual spiritual experiences in the mainline churches. However, they did not recognize it as revival, nor did they compare it with any Pentecostal revivals, as they were unaware of them. These local revivals took place without any external influence as there were Holy Spirit outpourings among the local Christians in Rajasthan. These Rajasthani revivals have many parallels with other revivals in India like Tirunelveli, Kerala and Mukti.[59]

It appears that the first Spirit revival in Rajasthan took place in Udaipur in 1959-60 in the Shepherd Memorial Church, then a Methodist and now a CNI church. According to John Masih, a chief participant of these spiritual happenings, a spiritual thirst and hunger developed among many members of the church after Emmanuel Loel made several visits to the church in 1959. Loel was an Air Force officer from Jabalpur, Madhya Pradesh, and had a Pentecostal experience.

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[59] For a discussion of these revivals, see Wessly Lukose, 'A Contextual Missiology of the Spirit: A Study of Pentecostalism in Rajasthan, India' (PhD thesis, University of Birmingham, 2009), 76-87.

Many people in the church began to gather for prayer in the church and in various houses of church members. There was definitely an increasing desire for prayer, and some spent extensive hours in prayer. In these prayer meetings people had many spiritual experiences including speaking in tongues and falling on the ground in the presence of God. People left behind their bad habits and showed a missionary zeal to be witnesses of Jesus and thus developed a great desire for spiritual gifts. However, they did not recognize it as a revival. According to J. Masih, it was only when K.V. Philip arrived from Kerala in 1960 that people were able to understand that their experience was 'in accordance with the experience of the first century Christians in Acts.'[60] As Doulat Masih, the local CNI priest, was very much influenced by this spiritual ministry, Philip received a favourable reception during his first visit to Udaipur. This welcoming atmosphere is probably the reason why he selected Udaipur as his base and decided to establish a Pentecostal ministry there.

Although the Pentecostal message came to some places in Rajasthan from other states, there is no report of a fully-fledged local Spirit revival as such until there was an outpouring of the Holy Spirit in 1965-67 in Banaswara. This Spirit revival had almost all the Pentecostal characteristics. It is significant that it took place in Banaswara, the place where the Pentecostal message was first introduced in the state through the Jiwas more than thirty years previously. Many prominent local Pentecostal leaders of the state, including Tajendra Masih, Pathras Masih and Valu Singh Geraciya, are the products of this Rajasthani revival. They are some of the most influential indigenous Pentecostals leaders in Rajasthan today. The first event took place on 26 December 1965 in a medical store run by Mr. Praveen. Some young people, including Praveen, Tajendra Masih and Sohan Lal from the CNI church met in the medical store. After having a conversation about Christ's death and resurrection they began to pray. Suddenly, the Holy Spirit came upon them. Tajendra describes the event:

> We were just making an ordinary prayer when the Spirit of the Lord came upon us, and we all fell down from our chairs, and we began to speak in other tongues. It was in a market place. All the people who came to the market began to come to the store when they heard the loud voice. They began to ask,

[60] John Masih, interview by author, Udaipur, Rajasthan, 15 May 2006.

> "what happened? What is it?" We could not control our voice, and even we did not know what was happening. Then came, Rev. Jethanji, a local priest from the Canadian Church, and he prayed for us. I just opened the Bible, and my eyes fell on Act 1:8.[61]

From then onwards they began to gather every night in the CNI Mission hostel for young boys between the ages 10-20, for all these young men were residents of this hostel. More people began to receive the power of the Holy Spirit. Pathras Masih was another young man who received the Holy Spirit baptism. Later this revival spread to the girls' hostel as well. Although there was strong opposition from the CNI church, such meetings continued for two years. Valu Singh, another participant of the revival has said that he was shocked to see that the girls who spoke in tongues were beaten by the Canadian Presbyterian missionaries who were in charge of the hostel.[62]

The Banaswara revival seems to be similar to many other Indian revivals. One of the most important features of it was that there was no external influence or connection; rather it was believed to be a direct outpouring of the Spirit of God on the natives. It is significant that it took place among the young people in the hostel, as happened in Mukti and Dholka. As in many other places, such as Tirunelveli, the people who experienced the revival faced strong opposition from the existing church leadership. There were visible manifestations of the Spirit in this revival, including speaking in tongues, singing in tongues, falling down, visions and dreams, confession of sins, and shaking of body, as occurred in many Indian revivals. Another important fact is that those who experienced the revival did not recognize what was happening as it was an entirely new experience for them. They began to talk about the 'new words and phrases' they uttered when they became 'out of control' in prayer. Tajendra Masih, who participated in the revival, says,

> We knew that something spiritual was happening as there were obvious changes in our behaviour, but could not realize it as the Holy Spirit baptism until when Pr. Thomas Mathews came from Udaipur to Banaswara, and taught us from the Scripture. We heard for the first time that it was a Pentecostal

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[61] Tajendra Masih, interview by author, Udaipur, Rajasthan, 23 May 2006.
[62] Valu Singh, interview by author, Banaswara, Rajasthan, 12 May 2006.

> revival. However, by the time he came in 1968, many of those people who experienced this Pentecostal revival went back due to severe opposition from the Presbyterian Church.[63]

Thomas Mathews and his first Pentecostal convert in Rajasthan, Samson Wilson, stayed in Banaswara for a while and taught people the Pentecostal message. This produced a number of indigenous missionaries like Tajendra Masih, Pathras Masih, and Valu Singh and who were sent to Itarsi Bible College in Madhya PradeshMP for theological training. Mathews left his colleague Wilson to work there. These three men later became known as the Banaswara trio and are among the most influential indigenous Pentecostal leaders today. Consequently, Banaswara has a large number of followers of Pentecostalism.

3.3. South Indian Pentecostals and the Pentecostal Movement

The greatest impact of Pentecostalism in Rajasthan was brought about by Ssouth Indian Pentecostals. As has been seen, people were experiencing manifestations of the Spirit in the existing churches in various places, but there were not many Pentecostals to explain what was happening. As Pentecostalism was brought to Rajasthan by North Indian Pentecostals from outside the state, the non-Rajasthani Pentecostals have a major role in the origin and growth of Pentecostalism in Rajasthan. However, the contribution of South Indian Pentecostals was vital, as with their coming there was a new vigour, passion and meaning to these spiritual experiences of Rajasthanis. The Pentecostal missionaries from South India took this indigenous revival to further heights, and thus made it a movement in Rajasthan.

South Indian Pentecostals used to come and preach from the beginnings of Pentecostalism in Rajasthan. K.E. Abraham, the founder of IPCoG, stated in his autobiography that he visited Rajasthan in 1944.[64] Although he was working in Delhi, Pastor M.K. Chacko, a pioneer Kerala Pentecostal missionary to North India, engaged in evangelistic activities in Rajasthan. In December 1963, he concentrated

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[63] T. Masih, interview, 23 May 2006.

[64] K.E. Abraham, *Yesukristhuvinte Eliya Dasan* [The Humble Servant of Jesus Christ- Autobiography of Pastor K.E. Abraham], 3rd ed. (Kumbanad, India: K.E. Abraham Foundations, 2001), 371. It was first published in 1965.

on his work in Jaipur, the capital of the state, for six months and thus established the first Pentecostal church in the city.[65] A few months later, one of Chacko's north Indian disciples, Claude Roberts from Delhi, took charge of this church, which was called the 'Full Gospel Church',[66] and he still continues as the senior minister of the church. Kurien Thomas, the founder of Itarsi Fellowship,[67] used to visit Rajasthan from 1961.

From the early 1960s, more missionaries from Kerala began to come to Rajasthan with the Pentecostal message. K.V. Philip was the first, followed by Thomas Mathews, both of whom were from the IPCoG background but came as independent missionaries. Both were the product of Shalom Bible School (Kottayam, Kerala), founded by P.M. Philip, a well-known missionary leader of IPCoG. After them, there were a number of missionaries from Kerala as well as Tamil Nadu. In the initial stages of their ministry, Kerala Pentecostals used to preach in the annual convention conducted by Philip and Mathews. The coming of South Indian missionaries added new momentum to the Pentecostal movement in Rajasthan, and it has resulted in the formation of many churches and missionary organizations.

There were five missionaries who came with Philip when he visited Rajasthan for the first time, and they stayed in Udaipur and ministered in the CNI church for one month. Many healings were reported during these spiritual revival meetings conducted by Philip and his team. John,[68] a participant of these meetings, has described with enthusiasm the many healings that took place, such as the complete healing of the blind and deaf. His wife's grandmother was one of those who received sight. These healing events enabled Philip to receive a warm welcome in the church. After a month-long visit, Philip left Udaipur but came back a few months later to establish his Pentecostal mission in Udaipur. As mentioned earlier, Doulat's family was very much influenced by this Pentecostal message and experience, and so the situation was conducive for Philip to spread Pentecostalism among these existing Christians in the initial period of his ministry. However,

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[65] M. Oommachan, *Pr. P.M. Chacko: A Humble Servant of Jesus Christ* (Bhopal, India: The Good News Centre, 1978), 32.

[66] Claude V. Roberts, 'Defender of Faith Gone Home,' *Cross and Crown* 15, no. 5 (February 1985): 8-9.

[67] Itarsi Fellowship is one of the oldest and largest independent Pentecostal churches in north India with its headquarters at Itarsi, Madhya Pradesh.

[68] J. Masih, interview, 15 May 2006.

when Devadasan from Uttar Pradesh came and preached about water baptism after an invitation from Philip, the situation began to change. The church came to know that Philip was also a '*dubki vala*,' and that is why they began to oppose him until he moved to Jodhpur. John says that he went to Jodhpur to take baptism under Philip on 07 October 1963. Although Philip moved to Jodhpur, the CNI people, particularly the young men and women at the mission compound, continued prayer meetings every evening.

Philip continued his ministry in Rajasthan until his death in 1979 when he was in his early forties. He established a Pentecostal congregation in Jodhpur, and it was affiliated withIPCoG. P.M. Thomas, his son-in-law, is currently serving as the pastor of this congregation. Philip used to travel to various places spreading the Pentecostal message. Thomas Mathews' words illustrate his commitment to the North Indian mission:

> He [Philip] loved north Indians and lived for them. For that he picked up Hindi and was very proficient in that. He had adapted himself totally to the north Indian way of life- a phenomenon rarely found among missionaries coming up from south India…. He was many times beaten by enemies of the Gospel; had starved many times in his early days. His memory will always be a challenge to all serious Christians and ministers of this country.[69]

Apparently, the greatest contribution of Philip to Pentecostalism in Rajasthan is that he inspired Mathews to commit himself to the mission in Rajasthan, and thus, Mathews later became the most prominent Pentecostal missionary to Rajasthan. Mathews himself says that it was 'Philip who challenged me at Shalom in 1962 to choose the most backward and hostile state for my pioneer Gospel work and I have never regretted my decision to come over here.'[70]

With the coming of Mathews from Kerala to Rajasthan on 27 April 1963, Pentecostalism took a new turn. As Anand Choudhary has commented, Mathews made Pentecostalism a movement in the state.[71] He was one of the most effective South Indian missionaries to

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[69] Thomas Mathews, 'Two Grains of Wheat in the Desert Land,' *Cross and Crown* 15, no. 7 (1985): 21. This article is written six years after the death of Philip, and soon after the death of his wife in 1985.
[70] Mathews, 'Two Grains of Wheat,' 20.
[71] Choudhary, interview, 09 May 2006.

Rajasthan.[72] He was known as the 'Apostle of the Desert' among Pentecostals and non-Pentecostals alike, and that is why Thomas Thonnakkal, the writer of Mathew's biography, gave the book the title, *Marubhoomiyile Apostalan* (The Apostle of the Desert).[73] His outstanding ministry of evangelism and church-planting among unreached people groups in North India won him the William Carey Award in 2002.[74] His sacrificial service to the Indian church caused *World Christian Encyclopaedia* to list Mathews along with other renowned Christian leaders in India such as St. Thomas, C.F. Andrews, Francis Xavier and Bakt Singh.[75]

Pentecostalism in Rajasthan owes much to Mathews as he made some valuable contributions to the movement. His greatest contribution was to contextual mission. Mathews realized over the years that he had to translate himself to the particular North Indian context for an effective Christian mission. Consequently, he made necessary changes to aspects like food habits and language for example. He gave up his interest in rice and Malayalam to adopt *chappathi* and Hindi. Later, '*chaval aur* Malayalam *chodo, chappathi aur* Hindi *apnavo*' (give up rice and Malayalam, accept *chappathi* and Hindi instead), became his slogan.[76] He was one of the most effective Christian orators in Hindi. Another contribution was to church-planting as he advocated producing worshipping, caring and witnessing churches in every village of North

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[72] For more details on Mathews' contribution to north Indian mission, see Wessly Lukose, 'Dr. Thomas Mathews and His Contribution to Indian Missions,' *Cross and Crown* 36, no. 1 (March 2006): 24-27, and Finny Philip, 'The Thomas Mathews Revolution,' *Cross and Crown* 36, no. 1 (2006): 18-20.

[73] Thomas Thonnakkal, *Marubhoomiyile Aposthalan* [The Apostle of the Desert: A Biography of Thomas Mathews] (Udaipur, India: Cross and Crown, 2004).

[74] This is a prestigious award given by the Indian Evangelical Team during their Silver Jubilee celebrations to the most effective cross-cultural missionary in north India.

[75] Bruce Graham, et al., 'India,' in *World Christian Encyclopaedia: A Comparative Study of Churches and Religion in the Modern World*, vol. 1, 2nd ed., ed. David B. Barrett, George T. Kurien, and Todd M. Johnson (Delhi, India: OUP, 2005), 363.

[76] Rice is a usual South Indian food and chappathi, a North Indian item. Malayalam is the state language of Kerala and Hindi is the national language of India, and the commonly used language in North India.

India.[77] This emphasis on church-planting seems to be the chief reason for the rapid growth of Filadelfia Fellowship Church of India (FFCI).[78] More than a thousand churches were established in thirteen states of North India during his 42 years of ministry. This means that at least two new churches were formed every month.[79] Donald McGavran wrote a note of appreciation about the fascinating growth of FFCI churches in Mathews' Bible, 'Donald McGavran, with high appreciation for the church multiplying which Rev. Thomas Mathews is doing in Udaipur. The Garasiyas and Bhils are loved by God, Christ intended for them to become followers of the Saviour, and a liberated people.'[80]

Moreover, Mathews thought that there should be an emphasis on cross-cultural mission in North India when he entered into Christian service, and he himself was a cross-cultural missionary from South India. However, he recognized the importance of equipping the natives rather than focusing on cross-cultural missionaries. He found that native missionaries are more effective, fruitful and acceptable in North India, and that is why he formed NMM. Furthermore, although hundreds of churches were established all over North India under the banner of FFCI, Mathews gave freedom to each church to function in its own cultural and indigenous way. He wanted churches to be self-governing with a freedom to raise funds, train leaders, construct buildings, and using indigenous means in worship.

Community Development was another important feature of his vision. As a conventional Pentecostal missionary, Mathews was not interested in the social aspects of mission in the initial years of his ministry. Nevertheless, he became conscious of the significance of becoming involved in the development of communities, and consequently, schools, orphanages, hostels and vocational training were established in various places. A careful observation shows that Mathews' was a progressive missiology as he realized that he needed to change the means and methods of mission in the light of the changing

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[77] For more details on Mathews Church-planting Movement, see Philip, 'Thomas Mathews Revolution.'

[78] FFCI is one of the largest indigenous Pentecostal churches in North India, and is the largest Pentecostal Church in Rajasthan.

[79] This does not mean that Mathews himself had established these churches, but his vision and motivation were key factors behind the growth of FFCI.

[80] Thonnakkal, *Marubhoomiyile Aposthalan*, 3. MacGavran made this note of appreciation in Mathews' Bible on 17 December 1980.

context. Such a progressive missiology caused him to become one of the most effective Pentecostal missionaries in the history of the Indian Church. Although his death on 24 November 2005 was unexpected, he has had a lasting impact in Rajasthan.

Later, many other missionaries came from South India states like Kerala and Tamil Nadu. K.V. Abraham, the present vice-president of FFCI, Peter Kuruvila, the founder President of Agape Fellowship Church, Gladis Iswar Raj (Tamil Nadu), who took over the first Pentecostal church after the death of Peter Lal, and Y. Yohannan, the founder President of Bethel Fellowship, are some of the leading missionaries who came from South India. Many who came for secular employment later resigned their jobs and entered into full-time ministry after receiving a call. These include K.O. Varghese (the present General Secretary of FFCI), Johnny P. Abraham (the state secretary of FFCI) and A.M. Joseph (former vice-president of FFCI).

An analysis of the early issues of *Cross and Crown*, the first Pentecostal periodical from Rajasthan, shows that there was a strong connection between Pentecostals in Rajasthan and South Indian Pentecostals, at least in the early years. There was regular report of what was happening among Pentecostals in Kerala, including reports on the deaths of Kerala Pentecostal pastors and preachers.[81] There were also special articles and issues published in memory of Kerala Pentecostal preachers.[82]

Anderson's observation regarding the link between Pentecostalism and the existing churches is true in Rajasthan also. According to him, 'Pentecostal missionaries almost invariably started their work within the framework of existing missionary networks, both evangelical and mainline mission.'[83] Most pioneer South Indian missionaries were working among Christians at least at the start of their ministry. Many of their first converts were already Christians in various existing churches, mostly 'mission churches,' when they became

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[81] For example, see Thomas Mathews, 'Pastor Abraham: Now Belongs to History,' *Cross and Crown* 5, no. 4 (1975): 14-15; 'Pastor T.M. Varghese Promoted to Glory,' *Cross and Crown* 15, no. 9 (1985): 6-8.

[82] See for example, Thomas Mathews, 'The Late Pastor Abraham: End of an Epoch…? Or the Beginning,' *Cross and Crown* 5, no. 4 (1975): 16-18. This was published soon after the death of K.E. Abraham. *Cross and Crown* 15, no. 5 (1985) was a memorial issue on Pastor M.K. Chacko, who was called the 'lode-star of the Pentecostal Movement in North India,' by Kerala Pentecostals.

[83] Anderson, *Spreading Fires*, 8.

Pentecostals. However, later South Indian Pentecostals became involved in educational and community development programmes along with the expansion of evangelistic and church-planting activities. Theological institutes were established to train the local ministers. Funds were raised to build churches in many parts of Rajasthan. Evangelistic activities were accelerated through various means, including modern means of communication such as radio, TV and other audio-visual devices, along with spiritual resources like healing, exorcism and miracles. All these activities resulted in the multiplication of native Pentecostal believers, missionaries, pastors, leaders, churches and organizations. Thus in brief, the South Indian missionaries, particularly those from Kerala, have played a pivotal role in making Pentecostalism a movement, and thus Pentecostalism in Rajasthan has become a significant chapter of Indian Pentecostalism. However, as will be discussed later, Pentecostalism became a predominantly tribal religion in the state as more tribal people became involved in the movement.