

Globethics Repository

The logo for Globethics, featuring the word "Globethics" in white sans-serif font on a blue rectangular background.

Critical Understanding of a Filipino Third Wave Signs and Wonders Theology: A Case Study of Hiram Pangilinan: Part 1

This page was generated automatically upon download from the Globethics Repository. More information on Globethics see <https://www.globethics.net>. Data and content policy of Globethics Repository see <https://repository.globethics.net/pages/policy>.

Item Type	Article
Authors	Embudo-Timenia, Lora Angeline
Publisher	Asia Pacific Theological Seminary (APTS)
Rights	All rights reserved
Download date	2026-09-10 16:09:28
Link to Item	http://hdl.handle.net/20.500.12424/170304

Critical Understanding of a Filipino Third Wave Signs and Wonders Theology: A Case Study of Hiram Pangilinan: Part 1

by Lora Angeline Embudo-Timenia

MTh (Cand.) is a member of the faculty of the Asia Pacific Theological Seminary in Baguio City, Philippines

Introduction

This paper is presented in two parts. After a review of the background and significance of this study in addition to the initial hypothesis, methodology and scope, Part 1 will discuss the life and ministry of Rev. Hiram Pangilinan, a Filipino Neoecharismatic minister, whose perspective on signs and wonders gives us a better understanding of third wave theology in a Filipino context. Part 2 will present a synthesis and critique of Rev. Pangilinan's theology as well as providing a summary, the author's conclusions and further implications of this study.

Background of the Study

The Neoecharismatic Movement swept through Western Evangelicalism, with its emphasis on supernatural phenomena attributed to the Holy Spirit before the end of the 20th century.¹ Some say it began in 1981, when John Wimber conducted a controversial course called "MC 510: Signs and Wonders and Church Growth" at Fuller Theological Seminary, and garnered mixed response from the wider evangelical

¹*Neoecharismatics* are Christians within globally broad and diverse movements comprised of independent, indigenous, and post-denominational groups that have Pentecostal-like experiences, but cannot be identified as either Pentecostal or Charismatic. Under this broad category is a movement coined by C. Peter Wagner as the *Third Wave* movement. Stanley M. Burgess, "Neoecharismatics," in *The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, revised and expanded ed., Eds. Stanley M. Burgess and Eduard M. Van der Maas (Grand Rapids, MI.: Zondervan Publishing House, 2002), xvii, xx, and 928.

community.² Though the course was later restructured, Wimber brought his teachings via non-denominational seminars around the North American circuit, as well as to different countries around the globe.³ His following increased into a widespread denomination called the Association of Vineyard Churches.⁴ His teachings on power evangelism, signs and wonders, healing and deliverance, etc., became some of the catalysts that started a movement, labelled by Dr. Peter Wagner as the Third Wave.⁵

Wonsuk Ma explains that the Third Wave movement used to “refer to various evangelical segments of the church that emphasize supernatural experiences in a believer’s life.”⁶ Their name implies that they are “heirs of two earlier spiritual renewal movements of the twentieth century: classical Pentecostalism (the “First Wave,” from the 1900s) and the charismatic movement (the “Second Wave,” from the 1960s).”⁷ Wimber, Wagner, Kevin Springer, John White, and Charles Kraft became some of the leading figures in this late 20th century Spirit renewal movement.

Although there is no seeming uniformity in the teachings of Third Wave congregations, they have in common a view of the present-day continuity of signs and wonders. In fact, this movement has often been described as a “Signs and Wonders Movement” because of their emphasis on supernatural manifestations attributed to the Holy Spirit’s activity.⁸

Their teachings on signs and wonders, though, have been considered controversial by many Evangelicals. Their overemphasis on the Spirit’s activity over and above the Word of God, sensationalistic tendencies, and uncritical acceptance of unusual phenomena became a topic of

²Coggins and Hiebert relay that “in 1981, Peter Wagner, the former chair of Church Growth at Fuller Theological Seminary, invited John Wimber to teach a course in the School of World Missions on the way in which miraculous works had led to rapid evangelization in the mission field.” This course became the MC510: Signs and Wonders and Church Growth. James R. Coggins and Paul G. Hiebert, “The Man, the Message, and the Movement,” in *Wonders and the Word: An Examination of Issues Raised by John Wimber and the Vineyard Movement*. Eds. James R. Coggins and Paul Hiebert. (Winnipeg, MB, Canada: Kindred Press, 1989), 15-22.

³Ibid, 20.

⁴Ibid, 21.

⁵C. Peter Wagner, “A Third Wave?” *Pastoral Renewal* (July-August 1983): 1-5.

⁶Wonsuk Ma, “A: ‘First Waver’ Looks at the ‘Third Wave’: A Pentecostal Reflection on Charles Kraft’s Power Encounter Terminology.” *Pneuma: The Journal of the Society for Pentecostal Studies*, Vol. 19, No. 2 (Fall 1997), 189.

⁷Wonsuk Ma, 189.

⁸Vinson Synan, *The Century of the Holy Spirit: 100 Years of Pentecostal and Charismatic Renewal, 1901-2001* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 2001), 396; cf. Wonsuk Ma, “A First Waver Looks at the Third Wave,” *Pneuma*, 189.

scrutiny amongst church historians and concerned theologians.⁹ Though these issues, among others, became areas of concern for many Evangelicals, Wimber and the rest of the burgeoning Third Wave Movement continued to spread their teachings and experiential claims globally.

This movement reached the Philippines in the early 1990s, years after The Toronto Blessing (TTB) occurred. TTB developed out of the Third Wave Movement and Wimber's Vineyard Church seminars; it was a dramatic outbreak of charismatic phenomena at Toronto Airport Vineyard (now known as Toronto Airport Christian Fellowship).¹⁰ Interestingly, Margaret Poloma suggests that TTB somehow caused a reshaping of the Pentecostal/Charismatic Movement.¹¹ Individuals and groups encouraged by the TTB spread their experiences and teachings in their home churches and in different nations.

The Philippines, having an already established classical Pentecostal following since the early 1900s,¹² became a recipient of the TTB teachings through Third Wave literature as well as through the seminars and speaking engagements of visiting revivalists. The exact date this movement started in the Philippines is uncertain, but it is safe to point to the early 1990s as the beginning years of this movement in the country.¹³ Gradually, this movement began spreading its signs and wonders teachings through practical seminars and revival conferences amongst Evangelicals in the Philippines.¹⁴

Unfortunately, because of a lack of academic discussion on this issue in the Filipino context, many believers are experiencing confusion

⁹Wimber mistakenly equated critical thinking with unbelief, which is dangerous. Lewis comments that "Wimber's anti-intellectualism was reminiscent of nineteenth century American Revivalism which somehow disparaged God's gracious gift of the human mind and the ability to think critically." Donald M. Lewis, "An Historian's Assessment," in *Wonders and the Word*, eds. Coggins and Hiebert, 56-57.

¹⁰Margaret Poloma, "A Reconfiguration of Pentecostalism," in David Hillborn (ed.), *Toronto in Perspective* (Carlisle: Acute, 2001), 101-104.

¹¹*Ibid.*, 104.

¹²Wonsuk Ma, "Philippines," in *The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, revised and expanded ed., Eds. Stanley M. Burgess and Eduard M. Van der Maas (Grand Rapids, MI.: Zondervan Publishing House, 2002), 201.

¹³Because of a lack of resources on the Third Wave Movement in the Philippines, research on its formative years is still ongoing.

¹⁴Unfortunately, the Third Wave Movement in the Philippines does not have an organization or unifying network that represents the entire movement. Existing umbrella organizations like the World Council of Churches (WCC) Philippines, National Council of Churches in the Philippines (NCCP), the Philippine Council of Evangelical Churches (PCEC) and the Philippines for Jesus Movement (PJM) do not have a record of churches that identify themselves as Third Wavers. There are also no books or literature on the Historical Development of the Third Wave Movement in the Philippines. This makes research on their formative years challenging.

over Third Wave teachings and claims. Specifically, younger classical Pentecostals are confused about Third Wave teachings on unusual signs and wonders. These teachings are different from what they're used to; these phenomena are unheard of in classical Pentecostal circles.¹⁵ As a result, some classical Pentecostals have openly pursued the experience of Third Wave signs and wonders to the detriment of church or denominational relations, while others have strongly denounced these teachings and experiences as cultic to the detriment of authentic Spirit-empowered manifestations.

In light of this, a critical understanding of Third Wave signs and wonders theology is necessary to help understand this movement and to avoid the pitfalls of misguided spirituality for the classical Pentecostal in the Philippines. Also, it would be good to start a dialogue and foster rapprochement between classical Pentecostals and Third Wavers for posterity's sake.

Statement of the Problem

Due to the proliferation of signs and wonders teachings and practices, the Filipino classical Pentecostal must have a critical understanding of Third Wave theology. A grounded research of a Filipino Third Wave proponent would support this.

Significance of the Study

This research is conducted so that:

1. A Filipino Third Wave signs and wonders theology is presented and explained.
2. Assumptions and critiques about Third Wave theology are held in proper perspective.

¹⁵A Filipino Classical Pentecostal is a Filipino Christian who adheres to the basic doctrines of Evangelicalism, with the added Classical Pentecostal distinctives of: the doctrine of Holy Spirit baptism subsequent to conversion; the doctrine of tongues as initial physical evidence; and a belief in the continuation of miracles, signs and wonders, and all the spiritual gifts listed in 1 Corinthians 12:8-10. In this study, the Filipino Classical Pentecostals will be represented by the Filipino Assemblies of God (AG), which though greatly influenced by North American Assemblies of God missionaries, was still essentially formed by Filipino-American *balikbayans* (returnees). Their perspective differs in that inherent in their worldview is the acceptance of a supernatural/spirit world that can affect their "this-worldly" affairs. Conrado Lumahan, "Facts and Figures: A History of the Growth of the Philippine Assemblies of God," *Asian Journal of Pentecostal Studies* vol. 8, no. 2 (2005), 340-344. Rodney L. Henry, *Filipino Spirit World: A Challenge to the Church* (1986, repr. Manila: OMF Literature, 1989), 8, 13.

3. Filipino classical Pentecostals will have an informed understanding of the roots and rationales of this movement's teachings and claims on signs and wonders.

The growing Third Wave Movement in the Philippines needs critical understanding, proper documentation, and careful examination, especially since they have the potential for reshaping the Pentecostal/Charismatic Movement in the country. The proper unveiling of this movement's signs and wonders theology is also beneficial for guiding proper response and avoiding unnecessary misunderstandings.

Initial Hypothesis

As an initial hypothesis, this study posits that a critical examination of a Filipino Third Waver's background and theology will help Filipino classical Pentecostals to understand Third Wave teachings and claims of unusual signs and wonders. This examination will support proper responses to, and circumvent misunderstanding of, the Third Wave.

Methodology

The use of a single-case study method fits this research because it allows for the establishment of the "how and why of a complex human situation."¹⁶ It is also useful for cases like this where there are relatively few academic discussions or literature regarding these phenomena within the Filipino socio-religious context. Robert K. Yin did say that a single-case study method is conducive when it meets any of these three conditions:

1. Where the case represents a critical test of existing theory,
2. Where the case is rare or a unique event,
3. Where the case serves a revelatory purpose¹⁷

Most of Yin's cited conditions are met in this study because the topic has not been discussed in Filipino Pentecostal/Charismatic scholarship. Moreover, the main goal of the study is revelatory, that is, to critically explain the how and why of a Filipino Third Wave theology and to develop implications for further study.

¹⁶Robert K. Yin, *Applied Social Research Methods Series*, 2nd ed., vol. 5, *Case Study Research: Design and Methods* (Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 1994), 16.

¹⁷*Ibid.*, 44.

Specifically, I will try to answer two research questions. First, how did Pangilinan develop his signs and wonders theology? Second, why does he promote this theological perspective?

The steps involved in the study first included the identification of Hiram Pangilinan as the representative of the Filipino Third Wave Movement. I consider Pangilinan as the most appropriate representative for the Third Wave Movement in the Philippines because of his prolific publications and verbosity as a Third Waver. His parish, Church So Blessed, is a large Third Wave Church, having a mother church in Quezon City and some 100 satellite churches all over the country. Pangilinan has authored eight books on varying topics. The book that specifically highlights his view on unusual signs and wonders is *What if God Comes*, which was later reprinted as *Presence-Driven Church*.¹⁸ Pangilinan also acknowledged that their church is highly influenced by Peter Wagner's Third Wave theology and that their DNA is "signs and wonders."¹⁹ He and his church are affiliated with Harvest International Ministry (HIM), an international network led by Che Ahn, the current International Chancellor and President of Wagner University.²⁰

Scope and Limitations

Due to time and space constraints, this paper only focused on understanding the signs and wonders theology of Hiram Pangilinan within the Filipino socio-religious context. First, data gathering was limited to the objective and subjective information gathered from personal interview, direct and participant observation of church practices, and a review of his published literature. Second, due to lack of official data on the Filipino Third Wave movement, I will not be able to review or study other Third Wave pastors or churches in the

¹⁸For this study, I will only be dealing with these two editions because his other books, which deal with the occult, online gaming, healing and deliverance, do not discuss unusual signs and wonders. Hiram G. Pangilinan, *What if God Comes* (Quezon City, Philippines: Revival Publishing, 2011). Reprinted as *Presence-Driven: The Blessings of Hungering for God's Presence* (Quezon City, Philippines: HG Pangilinan Books Marketing, 2016).

¹⁹Hiram Pangilinan, interview by author, Baguio City, Philippines, February 27, 2018. Also, during my participant observation of their church, I personally heard Pangilinan proclaim that their church's DNA is signs and wonders. Timenia, observation, Quezon City, Philippines (2013).

²⁰Harvest International Ministry is an international network of apostolic training centers. Harvest International Ministries, <http://harvestim.org/> (accessed May 3, 2018); Wagner University, <http://www.wagner.university/> (accessed August 27, 2018).

Philippines.²¹ Finally, since I belong to the classical Pentecostal stream, conclusions and analyses will be coming from that perspective.

A Critical Understanding of the Background and Theology of Hiram Pangilinan

Personal background

Rev. Hiram Grospe Pangilinan is the youngest of four brothers. He was born into a Methodist family, his grandfather having been a pioneer Methodist pastor. Although born into a Protestant family, he admits that in his younger years he was not truly born again and that he had lived mischievously.²² It was only during his first year as a pre-veterinary student at the University of the Philippines-Diliman that he experienced a complete life-change. A classmate shared Campus Crusade for Christ's gospel tract, *The Four Spiritual Laws*, with him and Pangilinan was convicted of his sins and his need for a genuine spiritual rebirth.

By 1985, Pangilinan turned his life around and was born-again in Christ. Interestingly, Pangilinan's first Christian friends were Pentecostals. His elder brother (the third son in the family) was attending Asian Christian Charismatic Fellowship (ACCF), which by then was under the pastoral leadership of Jaren Lapasaran.²³ He joined his brother in that church and became friends with Pentecostals.

Ministerial Background (1986-1989)

By 1986, Pangilinan recognized his vocational call for pastoral ministry. He quit his veterinary studies, and instead enrolled at Bethel Bible College of the Assemblies of God in Malinta, Valenzuela, Philippines. While studying at Bethel, the reading materials that interested him were from holiness and revivalist authors. He read articles featured by Keith Green of Last Days Ministry, which included materials

²¹Interestingly, The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements (TNIDPCM) records the existence of 7,624,730 Neoecharismatics in the Philippines, but does not discuss them. See Wonsuk Ma, "Philippines," in *The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, revised and expanded ed., Eds. Stanley M. Burgess and Eduard M. Van der Maas (Grand Rapids, MI.: Zondervan Publishing House, 2002), 201.

²²In the Filipino Christian understanding, being "born-again" means having a genuine personal conversion.

²³Asian Christian Charismatic Fellowship, <http://accfministries.com/accf-history/> (accessed May 6, 2018).

from Charles Finney, Leonard Ravenhill, etc.²⁴ His Methodist roots also led him to read books by John Wesley. Looking back, he sees his theological roots as being in the revival and holiness persuasion.

In short, when he entered the ministry in 1989 his perspective was greatly influenced by the revival and holiness movements.²⁵ By 1990, he completed his Bachelors of Arts in Biblical Studies. Later on, Pangilinan also graduated with a Master of Divinity (Summa Cum Laude) at Union Theological Seminary.²⁶

Early Years in Ministry (1989-1999)

He entered the ministry as a Methodist pastor, having a passion and a heart for revival and holiness. Ironically though, he struggled with personal sins, anger and bitterness. From 1989 to 1994, he yearned for holiness and revival, but was burdened by his personal sins. It was only in 1994 that he discovered the ministry of deliverance.²⁷ An intercessor named Ike introduced him to this ministry saying, “Deliverance is when we pray for people who are in bondage of sins [sic]. They may already be born again but they are still struggling with sins. Thus, there is a need to break the strongholds through the power and authority of Jesus.”²⁸ Pangilinan submitted to this ministry and received his personal deliverance.²⁹ As a result, from 1994 and onwards, Pangilinan became involved in this type of ministry. In fact, he identifies it as his first signs and wonders ministry. Unfortunately, as his ministry continued, some Methodist pastors did not like what he was doing in the church. They found that his ministry of deliverance and spiritual warfare, among other things, did not conform to Methodism.

²⁴Last Days Ministries, https://lastdaysministries.org/Groups/1000086189/Last_Days_Ministries/Articles/Articles.aspx. (accessed May 6, 2018).

²⁵Hiram Pangilinan, interview by the author, Baguio City, Philippines (February 27, 2018, transcript in the Asia Pacific Research Center, Baguio City, Philippines).

²⁶Pangilinan, interview by the author, Baguio City, Philippines (February 27, 2018).

²⁷Hiram Pangilinan, *Handbook on Deliverance* expanded ed. (Quezon City, Philippines: HG Pangilinan Books Marketing, 2016), 1-3.

²⁸Pangilinan, *Handbook on Deliverance*, 3; the idea for this was first popularized by Neil Anderson’s book, *Bondage Breaker*. Anderson explains that demonic strongholds can enter into a person’s life every time one commits sin. In order to break the strongholds, each instance of sin must be acknowledged and must be verbally renounced. Neil T. Anderson, *Bondage Breaker* (1990; repr. Eugene, OR: Harvest House Publishers, 2000).

²⁹In Pangilinan’s context, “personal deliverance” here meant freedom from personal bitterness, anger, and the bondage of sin that he felt was blocking his growth into holiness. Pangilinan, *Handbook on Deliverance*, 3.

From Jesus the Lord of Hosts Church to Church So Blessed International (1999-2006)

In 1999, Pangilinan made the tough decision to leave the Methodist denomination to independently lead a church. The church he pastored was initially named Jesus the Lord of Hosts (JLH). The church's name represented the militant name of God because in those days they were strongly into deliverance and spiritual warfare. They continued in this trajectory until 2001 when Pangilinan got connected with people in North America who were into revival.³⁰ These revival streams were connected to Randy Clark, Bill Johnson, Che Ahn, and so on.³¹

Wanting to flow in the same revival streams, he participated in the conferences of a group of revivalists called the Revival Alliance.³² He also applied to be a member of Che Ahn's Harvest International Ministry (HIM).³³ Part of the reason for his application was the need for his denominationally independent church to be covered by an umbrella organization. However, for unknown reasons, there was no response to his initial application.

By 2006, Pangilinan was asked to serve as a liaison for Che Ahn of Harvest International Ministry (HIM) and was able to receive assurance of membership into HIM.³⁴ Later on, he changed the name of his church to Church So Blessed International (CSBI) and embraced signs and wonders in its ministry.³⁵

Winds of Change (2007-onwards)

In 2007, Pangilinan joined the Revival Alliance Conference in America. He was able to receive prophetic words from conference speakers Jill Austin and James Goll. Austin laid her hands upon him and

³⁰Pangilinan identifies revival as God's manifest presence and as being in the midst of God's glory. Hiram G. Pangilinan, *What if God Comes* (Quezon City, Philippines: Revival Publishing, 2011), 17-20; Reprinted as *Presence-Driven: The Blessings of Hungering for God's Presence* (Quezon City, Philippines: HG Pangilinan Books Marketing, 2016), 20-24.

³¹Randy Clark, Bill Johnson, and Che Ahn are some of the most famous Third Wave speakers and leaders in the world. They are part of the Revival Alliance.

³²Revival Alliance is a network of apostolic and prophetic leaders who come together to promote global and personal revival after the Toronto Blessing. Revival Alliance, <http://revivalalliance.com/> (accessed May 6, 2018).

³³Harvest International Ministry (HIM) is a worldwide Third Wave apostolic network of churches in over 60 nations. Harvest International Ministry, <http://harvestim.org/> (accessed May 3, 2018).

³⁴Hiram Pangilinan, interview by the author.

³⁵Church So Blessed International, <http://churchsoblessed.org/> (accessed May 6, 2018).

prophetically declared: “Winds of Change!” When she uttered those words, Pangilinan fell to the floor and saw visions of himself praying for healing for people. Later, by divine connection, Goll prophesied over him saying, “I release upon you anointing for national revival!” Both prophecies were staggering for Pangilinan, yet he received them with gladness.

Finally, in 2008 Pangilinan served as a liaison to globally renowned signs and wonders missionary Heidi Baker.³⁶ He rented a coliseum for Baker’s Sunday conference, and by Monday brought her to his church. During Heidi Baker’s ministry in Pangilinan’s church, members testified to seeing gold dust for the first time.³⁷ Seeing the curiosity of his church members, Pangilinan encouraged them using Acts 19:11: “God did extraordinary miracles through Paul.” He explained that the mention of the word “extraordinary” served to differentiate common miracles from the “extraordinary” ones. Common miracles, according to Pangilinan include those we can read in the Bible (like healing the blind, mute, deaf, etc.). While “extraordinary” miracles are those truly wild and unusual, like instant height increase, gold dust, instant slimming, etc. Pangilinan used the testimonies of Argentinian Revivalist Carlos Annacondia as examples of these “extraordinary” miracles.³⁸ Hearing his message, the church’s enthusiasm for unusual miracles was raised to a fever pitch. They started praying for instant height increase during that service, and some church members testified to receiving the said miracle.³⁹ From then on, Pangilinan testifies to having entered into the realm of unusual signs and wonders.

³⁶Tim Stafford, “Miracles in Mozambique: How Mama Heidi Reaches the Abandoned” *Christianity Today*, May 18, 2012, 18, <https://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2012/may/miracles-in-mozambique.html> (accessed February 23, 2018).

³⁷The phenomena of seeing gold dust is much-heard of within Neocharismatic circles. They say that appearances of gold dust are a sign of God’s glorious presence, and results in wondrous praise from the people. Ruth Ward Heflin discusses this phenomenon in her book by calling it the golden glory, a visible representation of God’s presence. Ruth Ward Heflin, *Golden Glory: The New Wave of Signs and Wonders* (Hagerstown, MD: McDougal Publishing, 2000), 13.

³⁸Carlos Annacondia, “Power Evangelism, Argentine Style,” Eds. C. Peter Wagner and Pablo Deiros, *The Rising Revival: Firsthand Accounts of the Incredible Argentine Revival—and How it can Spread throughout the World* (USA: Renew Books, 1982), 57-74. Cf. C. Peter Wagner, *the Third Wave of the Holy Spirit*, 87-108.

³⁹Hiram Pangilinan, interview by the author.

Socio-Religious Background

Based on data gathered by personal interview and a review of his books, the overlapping relationship of Pangilinan's socio-religious background is illustrated by the diagram below.

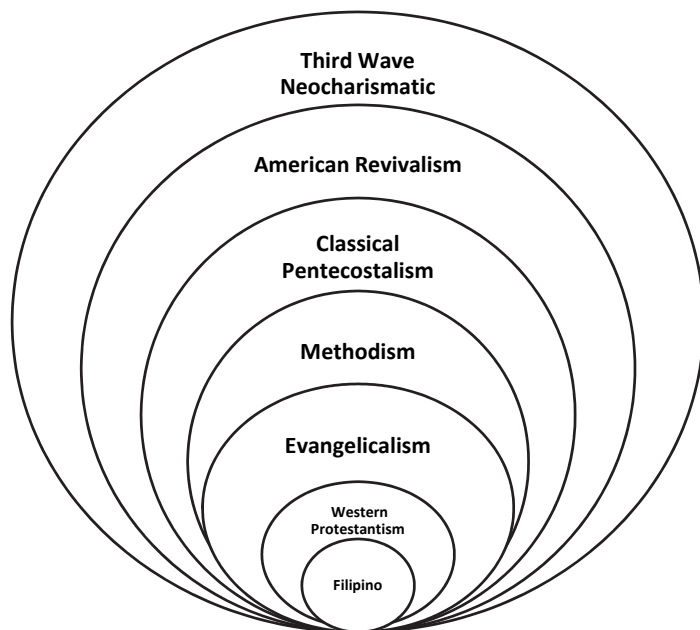


Figure. 1. Stacked Venn diagram of Pangilinan's socio-religious background.

Filipino Supernatural Worldview

First, just like every Filipino, Pangilinan's spirituality has roots in an animistic worldview.⁴⁰ The Filipino worldview recognizes the spirit-world, and is open to supernatural manifestations, not only in religious

⁴⁰ Although a majority of Filipinos are now Christians, historically, animism was in existence before Spanish times. Even today, a closer look into Filipinos' daily life reveal that their religiosity still hinges on a belief that the supernatural, or spirit world, can affect their "this worldly" experiences. Rodney L. Henry, *Filipino Spirit World*, 8, 13.

settings but also in everyday life.⁴¹ It was only when Spanish colonials came onto the scene that Christianity, in the form of Catholicism, was acculturated into the Filipino tradition.⁴² However, Catholic missionaries did not eradicate folk animistic practices, retaining them instead.⁴³ The Protestant missionaries, who arrived during the North American colonial era, tried to correct the syncretistic practices that developed during the Spanish era, but were limited by the blind spots of their western culture and theology.⁴⁴ Thus, in the Philippines one can see an open-mindedness and easy acceptance of the supernatural worldview. Dave Johnson states, “. . . the average Filipino’s daily activity reflects a deeply ingrained indigenous consciousness which bears little resemblance to biblical Christianity.”⁴⁵

In Pangilinan’s case, Western Protestantism replaced Filipino Catholicism as their family’s religion. His grandfather served as one of the pioneers of Methodism in Central Luzon, Philippines.⁴⁶ With Protestantism came his rejection of the Catholic Church as the sole teaching authority of Christian truths.⁴⁷ Also, with Protestantism came his rejection of syncretistic practices that involved worshipping saints, the Virgin Mary and Catholic relics. Protestantism, especially Evangelicalism, also paved the way for Pangilinan to uphold the supremacy of Scripture, the grace of Jesus, the need for evangelism, and the general priesthood of believers.⁴⁸ Having a personal conversion experience, or being born again, was a crucial moment for Pangilinan. It solidified what Protestant Evangelicalism innately taught him regarding the importance of a voluntary and personal relationship with God.

Suffice it to say, just like every Filipino, at the heart of Pangilinan’s religiosity is a worldview that accepts both the natural and the supernatural; the latter having influence not only in “other worldly” spiritual/religious matters, but also in “this worldly” pragmatic/mundane concerns.⁴⁹ Hence, it was easy for him to accept that signs and wonders

⁴¹Ibid, 30-31.

⁴²Ibid.

⁴³In Spanish Catholicism Filipino tradition and folkways can be maintained. Ibid, 17.

⁴⁴Charles Kraft explains that the characteristics of the Western worldview make it difficult for them to understand those having a supernatural perspective. Charles Kraft, *Christianity with Power: Your Worldview and Your Experience of the Supernatural* (Manila, Philippines: OMF Literature, Inc., 1989), 26-35.

⁴⁵Dave Johnson, *Theology in Context: A Case Study in the Philippines* (Valenzuela City, Philippines: APTS Press, 2012), 1.

⁴⁶Hiram Pangilinan, interview by the author.

⁴⁷For a full discussion of Protestant reformation history read, Mark A. Noll, *Protestantism: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 10-28.

⁴⁸ Noll, *Protestantism*, 29-42.

⁴⁹ Henry, 30-32.

continue today through the supernatural work of God through the Holy Spirit.

Western Theological Influences

Secondly, the greatest western theological influence for Pangilinan is Methodism. Though he admits to being nominal when he was young, it seems that the doctrine of Christian perfection, that is, entire sanctification and a life of holiness took root in his heart and has been a core value for him and the church he leads.⁵⁰ This is evidenced by the value he places on personal and corporate holiness. Their deliverance ministry has at its heart the desire to be free from sinful bondages and to be free to live a holy and righteous life. Pangilinan even encourages Church So Blessed pastors and church members to undergo deliverance at least once a year, for spiritual cleansing and renouncing of sins.⁵¹ It must be noted though, that his idea of annual cleansing is neither accepted by traditional Methodism nor classical Pentecostalism.⁵²

Interestingly, after his “born again experience” Pangilinan found himself attracted to a Pentecostal fellowship. It is worth noting that Methodism’s, especially John Wesley’s, and later on John Fletcher’s theology of entire sanctification as a second blessing, have been recognized as two of the roots of Western Pentecostalism.⁵³ Perhaps Pangilinan recognized a kindred spirit with Pentecostalism, what with the Pentecostal emphasis on the Bible (which remains a historic focus of Protestant Evangelicalism) and the Pentecostal ideals of Christian holy

⁵⁰ Wesley’s Doctrine of Christian Perfection upholds that by sanctification we are restored in the image of God. It is both gradual (beginning at the moment of justification) and instant (a second blessing wherein the heart is cleansed from sin and filled with pure love for God and man). Sermon 85, “On Working Out Our Own Salvation,” pt. 2, sec. 1 in Thomas Jackson, ed., *The Works of the Rev. John Wesley A. M.* (London: John Mason, 1829), 6.

⁵¹Hiram Pangilinan, interview by the author, Baguio City, Philippines, February 28, 2018.

⁵²This teaching goes against the Classical Pentecostal doctrine of eternal security, whereby those who are saved have the Holy Spirit as the “strong man” in their life and thus can no longer be demonized. Opal Reddin, et. al. (eds) *Power Encounter: A Pentecostal Perspective*, Revised ed. (Springfield: MO, Central Bible College Press Publishers, 1999), 2-3.

⁵³Donald Dayton points out that John Wesley’s theology of Christian Perfection became one of the roots of Western Pentecostal theology. Wesley himself did not promote the Pentecostal experience. But when John Fletcher, a Methodist theologian, shifted Wesleyan theology from a teleological process into a more instantaneous crisis experience brought about by a special work of the Holy Spirit, the idea of a Pentecostal sanctification started to develop. Holiness Revivalists, and later the Holiness Pentecostals, were greatly influenced by this idea of a Pentecostal sanctification. For a more comprehensive discussion, read Dayton, *Theological Roots of Pentecostalism*, 35-80.

living, which was initially promoted by Wesley's holiness teachings.⁵⁴ It is safe to say that Western Pentecostalism played an important role in Pangilinan's formative years as a minister. Among other things, Pentecostalism strengthened the value he placed on the Bible, the continued miraculous work of God through the Holy Spirit, the eschatological urgency of last-days ministry, and the richness of the Spirit-led life.

However, despite studies at an Assemblies of God Bible College, Pangilinan, for undisclosed reasons, never became a Classical Pentecostal. He remained an Evangelical Protestant under the Methodist denomination. Also, he maintained an Evangelical (non-Classical Pentecostal) view of the Holy Spirit and the Spiritual Gifts, which has a more Pauline (non-Lukan) perspective.⁵⁵

Nonetheless, one strong feature of classical Pentecostal theology that he maintained is a Christocentric full gospel, with Jesus at the center and the Holy Spirit being relationally subordinate to him.⁵⁶ Pangilinan agrees with and promotes this Christocentric theological ideal, emphasizing that the works of the Holy Spirit must always point back to Jesus.⁵⁷

Finally, the influence of North American revival literature also played a key role in the developing theology of Pangilinan. During his Bible college years, Pangilinan admitted to being engrossed in books and

⁵⁴Noll, *Protestantism*, 3; cf. Dayton, *Theological Roots of Pentecostalism*, 35-54.

⁵⁵The difference between a Pauline perspective and a Lukan perspective of Spirit-empowerment is a crucial divide between Classical Pentecostals and Third Wavers. For Classical Pentecostals, the Holy Spirit empowers believers subsequent to conversion, with the evidence of tongues, for last-days witness. Their basis is Luke's Pneumatology, which is more missiological/prophetic in focus. For Third Wavers, the Holy Spirit indwells believers and endows them with spiritual gifts (tongues among them) upon conversion to edify the church and enrich Christian life. Their basis is Paul's Pneumatology, which is more soteriological/ethical in focus. It's worth noting that in recent years, Pentecostal scholars have pointed out that Paul and Luke's pneumatologies are distinct yet complementary to each other. William W. Menzies and Robert P. Menzies, *Spirit and Power: Foundations of Pentecostal Experience* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2000), 121-130, 189-200.

⁵⁶The Classical Pentecostal (Keswick) full-gospel has four core doctrines: Christ as Savior, Baptizer, Healer, and Soon Coming King. The Classical Pentecostal (Holiness) full gospel adds a fifth, Christ as Sanctifier. Steven J. Land, *Journal of Pentecostal Theology. Supplement Series*. vol. 1, *Pentecostal Spirituality: A Passion for the Kingdom* (Sheffield, England: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993), 18. In retrospect, I think Pangilinan agrees more with Holiness Pentecostals in their five-fold gospel.

Also, Western Pentecostals are firm believers of the relational subordination of the Spirit, that is, His voluntary subordination to the Father and the Son that permits the accomplishment of the divine purpose in the economy of God. Steven M. Studebaker, ed., *McMaster Divinity College Press Theological Studies Series*, vol. 1, *Defining Issues in Pentecostalism: Classical and Emergent* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2008), 95.

⁵⁷Pangilinan, *What if God Comes*, 194.

articles on revivals. Some of the authors he read, as mentioned earlier, were Keith Green, Charles Finney, Leonard Ravenhill, and the like. By 2001, his cursory knowledge of revivals was expanded to that of a Third Wave understanding with his exposure to the teachings and practices of Third Wave revivalists like Che Ahn, Randy Clark, and Bill Johnson.

It must be noted though, that the definition of the term ‘revival’ from Third Wave revivalists is relatively different from the definition originally used by Western Evangelicals. Initially, from 1620-1858 (the years which Iain Murray marked as the last general religious awakening in North America) revival was understood as an “unprompted, surprising, and special season” where God sovereignly awakened the hearts of people resulting in conviction of sin, spiritual prosperity and conversion.⁵⁸ It was only in the last 40 years of the 19th century that a new understanding of revival began to displace the old, brought about by ministers of the “new measures,” whose teachings may have been influenced by Charles Grandison Finney.⁵⁹ In this new understanding, revival became an exciting religious event deliberately organized to renew Christian spirituality and consequently, to secure converts.⁶⁰ “It no longer became a surprising or unprompted season of God, instead it became an event that could be announced in advance, in the form of ‘revival meetings.’”⁶¹ There were then developed systems and methods used to secure a revival popularized by “revivalists,” which was later identified as revivalism.⁶² By the 20th century, especially with the modern Pentecostal/Charismatic movement, the terms “revivalism” and “revival” had become almost synonymous.⁶³

⁵⁸Iain Hamish Murray, *Revival and Revivalism: The Making and Marring of American Evangelicalism 1750-1858* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1994), xvii, 19-21.

⁵⁹*Ibid.*, xviii, 237-250.

⁶⁰It is important to note that Finney was promoting a form of Arminianism, as opposed to the prevailing Calvinistic theology of his time. For Arminians, man has the free will to resist or respond to God’s grace. Which was why, for Finney, public response is necessary in evangelism. He then became known as a famous promoter of emotional Christianity. Murray, xix.

⁶¹Murray, xvii.

⁶²John Kent, *Holding the Fort, Studies in Victorian Revivalism* (London: Epworth Press, 1978) 367, quoted by Murray, *Revival and Revivalism*, xix; The main contention behind these two rival thoughts was the promotion of emotion, excitement, and sensationalism to induce a revival. Although previous revivals, like the Great Awakening, did have scenes of people crying loudly, falling prostrate (or being slain), moaning and groaning, dancing, jerking, and the like, the ministers of old revivals claimed they never practiced methods to cause these displays. Murray, 163-250.

⁶³At the close of the 19th century, the term “revival” was used to describe the renewal among Christians who had lapsed into spiritual indifference. These events encouraged experiential piety. Gary B. McGee, *American Society of Missiology Series*, vol. 45, *Miracles, Missions, and American Pentecostalism* (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 2010), 27-28.

Today the type of revival that Third Wavers espouse is basically a form of revivalism. This is evidenced by the fact that revival meetings or revival conferences are announced in advance by revivalists. Methods are observed to receive a word from the Lord or to experience God's manifest presence. For Third Wavers, revivals can be expected by organizing a worship-filled climate.⁶⁴

Hence we see that Pangilinan's revival theology stems from American Revivalism, the likes of which were introduced by Finney, and concretized by a Continuationist view of miracles as promoted by the 20th century Pentecostal/Charismatic movement.⁶⁵ These Third Wave revivals are primarily about experiencing, or soaking in, God's "presence" for the purpose of renewing their spirits and reenergizing them for ministerial work.⁶⁶ For the Third Wave, these also involve the experience of supernatural phenomena like entering into the glory zone (holy zone), seeing angels at work, and experiencing a foretaste of heaven's realities (like seeing gold dust and gemstones).⁶⁷

The Gestalt: A Filipino Neocharismatic

Altogether then, Pangilinan's theology is better understood as that of a Filipino Neocharismatic. His Filipino worldview allows for the existence of the supernatural world. His Protestant Evangelicalism has developed in him an innate love for, and trust in, the Bible; the centrality of Jesus Christ; and in-breaking of the Kingdom of God. His roots under the Methodist denomination opened him to the teachings of Christian perfection (holiness), and later on to Pentecostal sanctification. It also indirectly contributed to his openness to the continued work of the Holy Spirit beyond holiness and into a dynamic Spirit-filled life, which was augmented by his fellowship with Western Pentecostalism.

Finally, his exposure to Third Wave revivalism solidified his understanding of signs and wonders as an expected phenomenon in worship settings. This ultimately led him into the fold of the Third Wave Neocharismatics who, among others, believed in the following: the reception of the Holy Spirit and Spiritual gifts upon conversion, the need

⁶⁴ According to Pangilinan, worship is like a micro-climate conducive for prompting a revival. Pangilinan, *Presence Driven*, 32.

⁶⁵ Continuationism adheres to the continuation of miracles and signs and wonders till the present age. This view was ardently proclaimed by the Pentecostal/Charismatic Revival of the 20th century. The Third Wavers, like the first two waves, are Continuationists. Richard B. Gaffin and Wayne A. Grudem, *Are Miraculous Gifts for Today? Four Views, Counterpoints* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan Pub., 1996), 173-175.

⁶⁶ Pangilinan, *Presence Driven*, 20-24.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

for personal deliverance, and for revival (which in the Third Wave definition is being in the midst of God's glory).

In Part 1, I have reviewed the background and significance of this study in addition to the initial hypothesis, methodology and scope. The life, ministry and signs and wonders theology of Hiram Pangilinan was also presented in order to enable us to gain a better understanding of this third wave theology in a Filipino context. In Part 2, a synthesis and critique of Pangilinan's theology of signs and wonders will be presented as well as providing a summary, conclusions and further implications of this study.