

PENTECOSTAL-CHARISMATIC CHRISTIANITY IN KERALA:  
A SOCIO-HISTORICAL ANALYSIS OF ITS TRANSITION AND  
TRANSFORMATION

THESIS

SUBMITTED

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BY  
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#### DECLARATION

It is certified that I have personally worked on the research topic "Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity in Kerala: A Socio-historical Analysis of Its Transition and Transformation." The data mentioned in the manuscript have been generated during the research period are genuine. Information from data obtained from other sources has been duly acknowledged. None of the findings and information pertaining to this research has been concealed. The results embodied in this manuscript have not been submitted to any other university or institution for the award of any Degree or Diploma.

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## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

Table of Contents	i-vi
List of Abbreviations	vii
<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>1</b>
1. Statement of the Problem	3
2. Elaboration of the Problem	3
3. Objectives of the Research	5
4. Scope and Limitations	5
5. Methodology	6
6. Sources of Study	13
7. Structure of the Thesis	14

### **CHAPTER ONE**

<b>REVIEW OF LITERATURE</b>	<b>16-23</b>
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### **CHAPTER TWO**

#### **THE SOCIAL BACKGROUND OF PENTECOSTAL-CHARISMATIC CHRISTIANITY IN KERALA**

Introduction	24
2.1. The Social Context of Kerala in the 19 <sup>th</sup> Century	25
2.1.1. Social Structure: The Caste Based People Groups	26
2.1.1.1. Nambuthiris or Brahmins	26
2.1.1.2. Nairs	28
2.1.1.3. Parayars and Pulayars	29
2.1.1.4. Shanars in Tirunelveli and South Kerala	31

2.2. Socio-religious Movements and Kerala Society	34
2.2.1. The Upper-cloth Struggle among the Shanars	34
2.2.2. Chattampi Swamikal and the Nair Reform Movement	36
2.2.3. Sree Narayana Guru and the Social Movement among the <i>Izhavas</i>	38
2.2.4. Ayyankali and the renaissance among the Pulayars	39
2.3. The Social Context of Kerala in the First Half of the 20 <sup>th</sup> Century	41
2.3.1. The Growth and Impact of Social and Communal Organizations	41
2.3.2. The Prathyaksha Raksha Daiva Sabha and Dalit Christians	41
2.3.3. The Rise of Nationalism as an Influential Movement in Kerala Society	43
2.3.4. Temple Entry Movements	44
2.3.4.1. Vaikom Satyagraha	44
2.3.4.2. Guruvayoor Satyagraha	45
2.3.4.3. Temple Entry Proclamation	46
2.4. The Social Context of Kerala during the Middle Period of 20 <sup>th</sup> Century	46
2.4.1. Emergence and Impact of Marxism and Communist Ideologies in Kerala	47
2.4.2. The Growth of Communist Movement in Kerala	48
2.4.3. The Communist Movement and Its Impact on Dalits and Dalit Christians in Kerala	50
2.5. The Social Transformation of Kerala in the Last Decades of the Twentieth Century	53
2.5.1. Social Impact of Migration	53
2.5.2. Religious Impact of Migration	56
2.5.3. Economic Impact of Migration	57
2.5.4. Economic Transformation of Kerala Society	59
2.5.5. Impact of Television Media in Kerala Society	61
2.5.6. The Growth of Religiosity in Kerala Society	62
2.5.7. Kerala Society and its Emotional Challenges	62
Summary	64

## CHAPTER THREE

### THE INITIAL PHASE OF PENTECOSTAL-CHARISMATIC CHRISTIANITY IN KERALA: THE FORMATION OF CLASSICAL PENTECOSTAL DENOMINATIONS (FROM 1909 TO 1922)

Introduction	65
3.1. Ecclesiastical and Spiritual Background of the Initial Phase of Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity in Kerala	66
3.1.1. History of the Emergence and Development of Christianity in Kerala Up to the 19 <sup>th</sup> century	66
3.1.1.1. The Social Condition of Syrian Christians Before the 19 <sup>th</sup> Century	70
3.1.2. Anglican Mission and its Impact on Kerala Society and Christianity in the 19 <sup>th</sup> Century	71
3.1.3. Spiritual Reformation among the Syrian Christians in Central Kerala	73
3.1.4. John Christian Arulappan and the Revival of Christianity among the Shanars	75
3.1.4.1. Characteristics of the Revival among the Shanars	81
3.1.5. The Early Charismatic Revival Mission of John Christian Arulappan in Kerala and the Spiritual Awakening among the Syrian Christians	81
3.1.5.1. Primary Characteristics of the Spiritual Awakening among the Syrian Christians	86
3.1.5.2. Impact of Spiritual Awakening among the Syrian Christians	87
3.1.5.2.1. The Formation of Indigenous and Independent Congregations	87
3.1.5.2.2. Social Dimension of the Impact of Spiritual Awakening among the Syrian Christians	88
3.2. The Emergence and Growth of Classical Pentecostalism in Kerala	89
3.2.1. The Emergence of Classical Pentecostalism in North America	89
3.2.1.1. The ‘Bible Evidence’ or ‘Initial Evidence’ Doctrine of Classical Pentecostalism	94
3.2.2. The Arrival of Classical Pentecostalism in Kerala	95

3.2.2.1. The Confluence of Azusa Street Classical Pentecostalism with Indigenous Congregation	97
3.2.3 The Growth of Classical Pentecostalism in Kerala	99
3.2.4. The Growth of Classical Pentecostalism among the Dalits in Kerala	102
3.2.5. Re-reading the History of Spiritual Revival among the Syrian Christians as the Cause for the Beginning of Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity in Kerala	106
Summary	109

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **INDIAN AND INDEPENDENT PENTECOSTALISM: THE EMERGENCE AND GROWTH OF INDIGENOUS DENOMINATIONS (FROM 1923 TO 1977)**

Introduction	111
4.1. Transition and Transformation of Classical Pentecostalism in Kerala	112
4.1.1. The Growth of Keralite Classical Pentecostalism: The Formation of Indigenous Classical Pentecostal Denominations	112
4.1.2. Indigenous Leadership and Self Supportive Churches under the Assemblies of God	115
4.1.3. The Formation of the Assemblies of God District Council of South India Ceylon and Its Impact	118
4.1.4. A Great Schism in Malankara Pentecostal Church and its Impact	121
4.1.5. The Temperament of Biblio-centric Indigenous Classical Pentecostalism	123
4.2. Transitional and Transformational Growth of Classical Pentecostalism in the Social Context of Kerala	127
4.2.1. The Transitional Growth of Indian Pentecostal Church of God as an Indian Spiritual Movement	128
4.2.1.1. The Transformational Growth of Indian Pentecostal Church of God	131
4.2.2. The Transitional Growth of Assemblies of God under National Leadership	136

4.2.2.1. Indigenous Reasons for the Transformational Growth of Assemblies of God in Kerala	141
4.2.3. Transitional Growth of Malankara Full Gospel Church as an American Classical Pentecostal Denomination	144
4.2.3.1. Transformational Growth of Church of God in Kerala under Foreign Administration	145
4.3.4. Transformational Growth of Ceylon Pentecostal Mission with Sectarian Tendencies	148
4.4. A Major Transition of Classical Pentecostalism in Kerala: Emergence and Growth of Independent and Caste-based Pentecostalism	151
4.4.1. Independent Church of God in India: The Beginning of Dalit Pentecostalism in Kerala	151
4.4.2. Sharon Fellowship Church: An Association of Pentecostal Churches among the Syrian Pentecostals in Kerala	155
4.4.3. New India Church of God: A Pentecostal Denomination of Knanaya Syrian Christians	158
4.4.4. Church of God (Kerala Division): A Foreign-Funded Dalit Pentecostal Denomination	160
4.4.5. New India Bible Church: An Independent Pentecostal Denomination without Caste Discrimination	162
4.4.6. The Emergence of More Independent Pentecostal Denominations	164
4.5. Transformational Growth of Classical Pentecostalism in Kerala: Major Observations	166
Summary	172

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **CHARISMATIC PENTECOSTALISM: THE EMERGENCE AND GROWTH OF CHARISMATIC AND THIRD WAVE OR NEOCHARISMATIC CHURCHES (FROM 1978 TO PRESENT)**

Introduction	173
5.1. The Stagnation and Slow Growth of Classical Pentecostalism in Kerala	174
5.1.1. Conflict and Organizational Division within the Assemblies of God Churches	174

5.1.2. Organizational Pluralism within the Indian Pentecostal Church of God	179
5.1.3. The Ceylon Pentecostal Mission to ‘The Pentecostal Mission’	181
5.1.4. Church of God (State and Division) in Kerala with Different Leadership Dynamics	182
5.1.5. The Plurality of Indian and Independent Denominations	184
5.2. Emergence and Growth of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal Movement in Kerala	185
5.2.1. Catholic Charismatic Beginnings	185
5.2.2. Catholic Charismatic Beginnings in India	187
5.2.3. Catholic Charismatic Beginnings and Growth in Kerala	188
5.2.4. The Growth of Charismatic Movement in Kerala: Some Observations	191
5.2.5. The Absence of Charismatic Revival within the Syrian Christian Community and Protestant Churches in Kerala	192
5.3. The Emergence and Phenomenal Growth of Third Wave or Neo-charismatic Churches in Kerala	193
5.3.1. Third Wave or Neo-charismatic Beginnings	193
5.3.2. Emergence and Phenomenal Growth of Third Wave or Neo-charismatic Churches in Kerala	198
5.3.3. Salient Features and the Causes of Phenomenal Growth of Neo-charismatic Churches in Kerala	204
Summary	209
<b>CONCLUSION</b>	211
<b>APPENDIX A</b>	222
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>	224

## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

AG	Assemblies of God
CGI	Church of God in India
CMS	Church Missionary Society
CPI	Communist Party of India
CPM	Ceylon Pentecostal Mission
IPC	Indian Pentecostal Church of God
ISPCK	Indian Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge
LMS	London Missionary Society
MAL.	Malayalam
NBCLC	National Biblical Catechetical and Liturgical Centre
SAIACS	South Asia Institute of Advanced Christian Studies
SATHRI	South Asia Theological Research Institute
SIAG	South India Assemblies of God
SNDP	Sree Narayana Dharma Paripalana
TPM	The Pentecostal Mission
WME	World Missionary Evangelism

## **ABSTRACT**

The thesis entitled Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity in Kerala: A Socio-Historical Analysis of Its Transition and Transformation seeks to investigate the research problem of whether the social context and the socio-historical factors have contributed towards the transition and transformation of Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity in Kerala or not. The Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity began in Kerala in 1909 from a revival movement among a group of Christians in central Kerala. Later it became a prominent people movement or a socio-religious movement within the history of Christianity in Kerala in the last century. From a small revival movement among a group of Christians to widely noted Pentecostal-Charismatic denominations, this movement has transcended and emerged to become an active and influential Christian community in Kerala. Despite the significant presence of Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity in Kerala society, its history stands neglected in the annals of Christianity in Kerala, and there is a lack of attention paid to the social context and factors, which contributed to the transition of Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity in Kerala. It is significant to note that the history of the transition and transformation of Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity has not been the primary focus of the writers of the history of Christianity in Kerala or the Pentecostal historians who brought out the accounts of the history of Pentecostal denominations. Therefore, a study on the history of the transition of Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity seems integral to the history of Christianity in Kerala.

The thesis consists of five chapters excluding the Introduction and Conclusion. The Introductory part deals with Statement of the Problem, Elaboration of the Problem, Objectives of the Research, Scope and Limitations, Methodology, Sources of Study, and Structure of the Thesis. Chapter One reviews the publications and sources in the area of research. It indicates how the present research differs from all previous research works. Chapter Two attempts to trace the socio-historical background of the formation and development of Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity in Kerala. The objective here is to explore the social and spiritual environment or social and spiritual contexts of the adherents of Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity in Kerala. Chapter Three explains the ecclesiastical and the

spiritual background, and the history of the first phase of Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity in Kerala from 1909 to 1922. It covers the various efforts of missionaries from America's Azusa Street mission to establish Pentecostal denominations in Kerala with its institutionalized form and Classical Pentecostalism by the emphasis on doctrines. Chapter Four describes the history of the second phase of Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity in Kerala from 1923 to 1976. It reveals the remarkable transition of Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity in Kerala as indigenous, Indian, and independent as a movement, sparked by the formation of different autonomous Pentecostal denominations originated locally in Kerala. It also discusses the transition and transformation of Classical Pentecostalism during this period of study. Chapter Five deals with the history of the third phase of the Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity in Kerala from 1978 to the present. It examines the historical transition of the Pentecostal movement as Charismatic and neo-charismatic or neo-Pentecostal churches. In this chapter, the history of the Charismatic movement and the history of selected neo-charismatic or neo-Pentecostal churches are discussed. This chapter also deals with the history of transition and transformation of Classical Pentecostalism and indigenous, independent Pentecostalism in Kerala. A Conclusion is drawn based on the summary of the chapters and the findings of the research.

The major findings of this thesis are: The uniqueness of the origin of Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity in Kerala; that is, an indigenous, pre-Pentecostal or Pentecostal-like manifestation that paved the way for the arrival and growth of the Classical Pentecostal message in Kerala. Dalits' embrace of Classical Pentecostalism was against their struggle of caste discrimination and search for freedom, identity, and dignity due to the influence of the social movements in Kerala. The transition of Classical Pentecostalism to Indian Pentecostalism was due to the influence of nationalism, demand for home rule in India, the temple entry movements in Kerala. Indigenous leadership of Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity in Kerala was a product of Indian Pentecostalism and this happened due to the influence of nationalism and home rule movement. *Swadeshi* Church was developed as part of the transformational growth of Classical Pentecostalism under indigenous leadership and this happened due to the influence of the social context of freedom movement in Kerala. The transition of Classical Pentecostalism to independent Pentecostalism was due to the influence of social context of Kerala such as the

Communist ideologies and its demand for autonomy. Dalit Pentecostalism was a product of Independent Classical Pentecostalism, which happened due to the influence of the growth of Communism and trade union movements among the working class people. Organizational pluralism in Classical Pentecostalism was a phase of transition of Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity in Kerala in terms of splits, conflicts, leadership crisis, and internal fights. The social context of the migration of Pentecostals and its after-effects of economic transformation caused for splits and conflicts. Charismatic Christianity in Kerala was a movement of spiritual empowerment outside of Classical Pentecostalism, which developed due to the growing addiction of alcoholism among men and its psychological effects on families. The emphasis on personal wholeness and numerical growth of Neo-Charismatic Churches in Kerala was due to the challenges of alcoholism, impact of media, financial instability, and emotional challenges. Neo-Charismatic churches in Kerala are emphasizing 'Anointing' over 'Theological Education.'

## INTRODUCTION

Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity is a fast-growing social and spiritual movement of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. It has become a leading force worldwide with prominent characteristics. Allan Heaton Anderson observes that “Pentecostalism has experienced amazing growth from its humble beginnings with a handful of people at the beginning of the twentieth century to some half billion adherents at the end of the twentieth century.”<sup>1</sup> Since the twentieth century, India has witnessed the growth of Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity as it developed into many diverse church forms and varieties differing according to historical, religious, and socio-cultural contexts. According to Stanley M. Burgess, Indian Pentecostalism is the fifth largest sector of Global Charismatic Christianity.<sup>2</sup> Pentecostal-Charismatic Christians are largely present in south India, where Christian population is comparatively high. In fact, Kerala has the largest Christian population in South India,<sup>3</sup> such that the Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity has had a high impact on church and society.<sup>4</sup>

The earliest recorded Pentecostal-Charismatic experiences in Kerala dates from 1860 as it occurred in central Kerala among the Syrian Christians. However, this became a religious or spiritual movement and attained the structure of a church or denomination much later. The independent and indigenous movement of the spiritual revival of Christianity paved the way for the establishment and spread of global movement of Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity in Kerala. The Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity in turn became a prominent people movement or a socio-

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<sup>1</sup> Allan Heaton Anderson, *To the Ends of the Earth: Pentecostalism and the Transformation of World Christianity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 11.

<sup>2</sup> Stanley M. Burgess, ‘Pentecostalism in India: An Overview,’ *Asian Journal of Pentecostal Studies* 4, no. 1 (2001): 85.

<sup>3</sup> According to the 2011 Government census of India, Kerala has a Christian population of 19% of 33 million of the total population. ‘Data on Religion’ (Office of the Registrar General & Census Commissioner, India, 2011), [http://www.censusindia.gov.in/2011census/Religion\\_PCA.html](http://www.censusindia.gov.in/2011census/Religion_PCA.html).

<sup>4</sup> According to the study of Zachariah in 2016, there are 2,14,000 Pentecostal-Charismatic Christians (3.5 percent) in Kerala. Zachariah K.C., ‘Religious Denominations in Kerala’ (Centre for Development Studies, 2016).

religious movement within the history of Christianity in Kerala in the last century. From a small revival movement among a group of Christians to widely noted Pentecostal-Charismatic denominations, this movement has transcended and emerged to become an active and influential Christian community in Kerala.

Despite the significant presence of Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity in Kerala society, its history stands neglected in the annals of Christianity in Kerala, and there is a lack of attention paid to the social context and factors, which contributed to the transition of Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity in Kerala. It is surprising that the history of the growth and expansion of Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity has not been the primary focus of the writers of the history of Christianity in Kerala.<sup>5</sup> However, in the recent past, many accounts of the history of Pentecostal denominations and their growth in Kerala have emerged.<sup>6</sup> Therefore, a study on the

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<sup>5</sup> Research in the history of Christian denominations in Kerala such as Roman Catholics, Orthodox, Anglican and Church of South India has dramatically expanded. Some of them are as follows: Thomas, M.A., *An Outline History of Christian Churches and Denominations in Kerala* (Trivandrum: Thomas Press, 1977); Xavier Koodapuzha, *Christianity in India* (Vadavathoor: OIRSI, 1998); Susan Visvanathan, *Christians of Kerala, History, Belief and Rituals Among the Yakoba* (Madras: Oxford University Press, 1993); Titus V. Varghese and Philip, P.P., *Glimpses of the History of the Christian Churches in India* (Madras: The Christian Literature Society, 1983); Mathias Mundadan A., *History of Christianity in India: From the Beginning up to the Middle of Sixteenth Century*, vol. 1 (Bangalore: Theological Publications in India, 1984); Joseph Thekkedath, *History of Christianity in India*, vol. 2 (Bangalore: Theological Publications in India, 1984); Cherian C.V., *Orthodox Christianity in India: A History of Malankara Orthodox Church AD52-2002* (Kottayam: Academic Publishers, 2003); J. W. Gladstone, *Protestant Christianity and People's Movements in Kerala: A Study of Christian Mass Movements in Relation to Neo-Hindu Socio-Religious Movements in Kerala, 1850-1936* (Kannamoola: Seminary Publications, 1984).

<sup>6</sup> Varughese, V.A., 'A Historical Analysis of the Origin and Development of the Pentecostal Churches in Kerala with Special Reference to Its View of Mission' (D.Miss. Thesis, SAIACS, 1996); Yesunatha Das, 'An Evaluation of the History of Pentecostal Dalits in Kerala' (M.Th. Thesis, SAIACS, 2001); Sara Abraham, 'A Critical Evaluation of the Indian Pentecostal Church of God: Its Origin and Development in Kerala' (M.Th. Thesis, Senate of Serampore, 1990); Paulson Pulikottil, 'As East and West Met in God's Own Country: Encounter of Western Pentecostalism with Native Pentecostalism in Kerala,' *Asian Journal of Pentecostal Studies* 5, no. 1 (2002): 5–22; Thomas V.V., *Dalit Pentecostalism, Spirituality of the Empowered Poor* (Bangalore: Asian Trading Corporation, 2008); Saju Mathew, *Kerala Penthecosthu Charithram (Mal.) [Kerala Pentecostal History]* (Kottayam: Good News Publications, 1994); George, A.C., 'Pentecostal Beginnings in Travancore, South India' 4, no. 2 (2001): 215–37; Samuel Kutty T.S., *The Place and Contribution of Dalits in Select Pentecostal Churches in Central Kerala from 1922-1972* (Delhi: ISPCK, 2000); Mathew P. Skaria, 'An Evaluation of the History of the Assemblies of God Churches in Kerala and Proposals for the Unity among the Pentecostal Churches in Kerala' (M.Th. Thesis, Senate of Serampore, 1996); Mathew K.J., 'Denominational Pluralism among Pentecostals in Kerala, Causes and Responses, 1920 to the Present' (M.Th. Thesis, Senate of Serampore, 1993); Aleyamma Abraham, 'Pentecostal Women in Kerala: Their Contribution to the Mission of the Church' (DMiss Dissertation, Fuller Theological Seminary, 2004); Kunjappan C. Varghese, 'Reformation Brings Revival: A Historical Study of K.E. Abraham and His Contributions in the Founding of the Indian Pentecostal Church of God' (PhD Dissertation, Trinity International University, 1999); Abraham Thottumkal Pothen, 'The India Pentecostal Church of God and Its Contribution to Church Growth' (M.A. Missiology Thesis, Fuller Theological Seminary, 1988).

history of the transition of Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity seems integral to the history of Christianity in Kerala.

### **1. Statement of the Problem**

The Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity in Kerala emerged in 1909 and it has gone through different phases of transition and transformation till today. Despised and ridiculed by some people during its early years of existence, it has transformed itself to be recognized as a significant segment of Christianity with a denominational structure with an organizational strength in Kerala. The research problem to be investigated is whether the social context and the socio-historical factors have contributed towards the transition and transformation of Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity in Kerala or not.

Pentecostal historians and writers have although attempted to articulate the history of Pentecostal denominations in Kerala, they have neglected to include the socio-historical factors and their influences on the history of the transition and transformation of Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity in Kerala. Therefore, there is a need to examine the socio-historical context and the social factors to see if there are any influences that impacted the transitional and transformational phases of Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity in Kerala. Thus the questions that emerge from the research problem are: What are the transitional and transformational phases of Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity in Kerala? Are there any influences from the social context of Kerala towards the transition and transformation of Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity in Kerala? If so, what are the significant factors from the social context of Kerala that influenced the transition and transformation of Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity in Kerala?

### **2. Elaboration of the Problem**

The rationale of this research assumes the transition and transformation of Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity from 1909 to the present as they took place in the socio-historical context under frequent interrogation and impact of different social and historical factors, which influenced the movement in different periods. This process was though complicated, it transformed the whole movement.

The American Pentecostal missionaries made the earliest contact with Kerala in 1909. Then the Pentecostal mission gained impetus through different missionary

activities, which resulted in the formation of American Pentecostal denomination in Kerala. The missional and theological approach of the American Pentecostal missionaries who worked in Kerala were enabled in their attempt to shape the Pentecostal movement on the lines of American institutionalization and structure. In response to this institutionalized structure, (from the American Pentecostal denomination), the Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity in Kerala transformed itself into an indigenous church movement. From the indigenous church movement, the Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity had a transitional phase in terms of Indian and independent churches, as some were caste-based and community-based Pentecostal denominations. Since then, the Pentecostal denominations and its variants have continued to expand and grow in Kerala. Drawing upon the recent development of Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity that has emphasized neo-charismatic Christianity and the formation of Indian Charismatic Christianity, the charismatic revivals among the Roman Catholic and Orthodox/Jacobite Syrian Christians in Kerala after the 1990s, affirm its interaction with the social context of Kerala. Although organized Pentecostalism and the institutionalization of indigenous Pentecostalism were not always welcomed by the people, the unorganized or non-institutionalized Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity was quickly followed by the people.

The significant phases of transition and transformation of Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity lie in the transition and transformation of American Pentecostalism, the missionary leadership and classical Pentecostal movement leading to the formation and growth of indigenous Pentecostal movement, the emergence and growth of caste-based or community-based Pentecostal churches, the development of Catholic charismatic movement, and the development of Third Wave or Neo-charismatic churches. The issues of 'transition and transformation' are some of the challenging factors that are always daunting the history of Pentecostal-Charismatic Christians in Kerala. Due to the transitions in different periods, the transformation that took place in this movement tremendously influenced the identity of this movement. From an identity of the institutionalized denomination, the Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity had a transition to an identity of the indigenous movement, caste-oriented, independent, and finally, the movement transformed into a neo-charismatic movement with an identity influenced by the American 'third wave' or 'neo-charismatic' theology and spirituality. From the second half of the nineteenth century when Kerala was under the British colonial power, the formation, transition, and

transformation of Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity began in the light of the social background or the social and spiritual environment. In its developmental years, Kerala society underwent changes due to the influence of several transformational powers such as socio-religious movements, educational development, freedom movement, communism, Dalit movements, the emergence of independent political factors, and economical growth. The transitional and transformational phases of Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity in Kerala are the outcome of several factors that have been affected by the social background, global church, and global society. It appears that the social context of Kerala and the socio-historical factors from different periods of the social history of Kerala played a vital role in the phases of the transition and transformation of the Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity in Kerala. Therefore, it is vital to investigate the socio-historical background and the history of transitional and transformational phases of Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity in Kerala to find out the social context and the socio-historical factors that have influenced the phases of transition and transformation of Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity in Kerala.

### **3. Objectives of the Research**

- To explore the socio-historical and spiritual background of the formation, development, and the transition and transformation of Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity in Kerala.
- To delineate the history of the establishment of American Pentecostal denominations or institutions or Classical Pentecostalism in Kerala.
- To study the advent and growth of indigenous Pentecostalism in Kerala and to investigate the history of Indian and independent Pentecostalism in Kerala.
- To examine the history of the formation and growth of the Charismatic movement and neo-charismatic churches in Kerala.

### **4. Scope and Limitations**

This study is focused mainly on Kerala, situated in the southern part of India. Most districts in Kerala have a representation of Pentecostal-Charismatic Christians. However, for this study, the main focus will be on the south and central Kerala, which includes six districts of Kerala such as Trivandrum, Kollam, Kottayam, Pathanamthitta, Alappuzha, and Ernakulum. This study will focus on the period from 1909 until today, that is, from the arrival of the first American Pentecostal missionary

till the present growth of neo-charismatic churches. It is presumed that a socio-historical study of the transition and transformation of Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity cannot be separated from the historical study of the social and spiritual background of Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity in Kerala. Therefore, this study will take into consideration the history of the social and spiritual background from 1850 to 1909.

## 5. Methodology

This work was done within the framework of social history of the origin, development, and transitions of Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity in Kerala. The term ‘social history’ refers to an approach to history that focuses on the society at large. The social-historical approach had its origin and development in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, in the context of marginal and tentative origins of history. It experienced a dominant growth from the 1950s to the 1980s. It is a historical methodology dealing with the structures of societies and social change, social movements, groups and classes, conditions of work and ways of life, families, households, local communities, urbanization, mobility, and ethnic groups.<sup>7</sup> According to Thomas Welskopp, “social history offers historians a broader view of the past because it seeks to analyze cause and effect between economics, society, and politics.”<sup>8</sup> Social history challenges the dominant historical narratives, which are constructed around the history of politics and the state or the history of ideas. It always stresses social change as a core dimension around which historical synthesis and diagnosis of the contemporary settings should be organized. Social historians attempt to study human movements in the past and social structure and change. They analyze demographic, economic, and social processes and the ways they interacted. World-views, mentalities, and ‘cultures,’ standard of living and everyday life, the family, associations and other social groupings become objects of inquiry.<sup>9</sup> Social historians attempt to uncover the relationships between economic, demographic,

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<sup>7</sup> Conrad C., ‘Social History,’ in *International Encyclopedia of the Social and Behavioural Sciences*, ed. Neil J. Smelser and Paul B. Baltes (Amsterdam: Elsevier Science Ltd, 2001), 1429–30.

<sup>8</sup> Thomas Welskopp, ‘Social History,’ in *Writing History: Theory and Practice*, ed. Stefan Berger, Heiko Feldner, and Kevin Passmore (London: Hodder Arnold, 2003), 209.

<sup>9</sup> Welskopp, 205.

psychological, and social processes and structures as well as their impact on political, social, and religious movements. Social history methodology has thus initiated the study of classes in history, especially the role of the working class in the development of a movement in the society.<sup>10</sup>

Christopher Lloyd has developed a methodological framework within which social history is being studied and written.<sup>11</sup> It is the relational-structurist approach.<sup>12</sup> It is a comprehensive framework of 'social history' methodology, which approaches the explanations of the persons or actions or society or time complex of interrelationships. According to relational-structurist approach the environment, which includes the geographical, social, intellectual, and cultural elements is the basis, as it sets the conditions for the operation of human structuring agency.<sup>13</sup> The relationship of human being to the environment contributes to the transformation of structures and the intended and unintended outcome of structural change, and the continuity is from the usual social processes. Lloyd's methodological approach identifies six streams, which are differentiated mainly according to their general concepts, uses of theory, and emphasis upon different aspects of the social totality. They are as follows:<sup>14</sup> The first stream emphasizes the mental or cultural structures of past social life, social practices, and an examination of the historical life of representative individuals, small groups, and social movements. The second stream intends to investigate the history of social, economic, and political structures along with the events and the actions of individuals, groups, and classes. The third stream is 'Marxist historical sociology' which theoretically studies the history of structures with little attention to the details of ordinary individuals and everyday events. The fourth stream is also highly theoretical and influenced by Weberian historical sociology. It deals with the objectivity of the social structures and the precise role of material, cultural and ideological influences in social change. The fifth stream centers on the

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<sup>10</sup> Welskopp, 205.

<sup>11</sup> Christopher Lloyd, 'The Methodologies of Social History: A Critical Survey and Defense of Structurism,' *History and Theory* 30, no. 2 (May 1991): 180–219.

<sup>12</sup> Lloyd, 212.

<sup>13</sup> Lloyd, 214.

<sup>14</sup> Lloyd, 215.

historical sociology, which constructs the ideal and the typical categories preferring the role of theories to compare social figurations. Also, the sixth and final stream is the action sociology and it emphasizes the interactive relationship between an action and structure. It is more relevant to narrate the history of contemporary new social movements by taking part in the spiritual or social movements themselves.

The first social history approach on the history of the origin and development of Pentecostalism was from a non-Pentecostal historian Robert Mapes Anderson in his essential work *Vision of the Disinherited* was published in 1979.<sup>15</sup> Anderson narrated the origin of Pentecostal movement as the psychologically unhealthy and socially dysfunctional religious response of marginalized poor farmers, working and lower class city dwellers, new immigrants, and black Americans to a rapidly industrializing and urbanizing America.<sup>16</sup> He is right, yet it is crucial to see that the differences based on the responses of people towards the growth of the movement were not controversies but ideological challenges about their positions in history. Grant Wacker, the Duke Divinity school historian, called this as a compensation model. According to him, “in this perspective, the movement is best understood as a substitute for the material comforts and social esteem that converts wanted but could not obtain.”<sup>17</sup> He further observes a functional model, and in his perspective, Pentecostalism used the social context as a creative resource for its development. According to him, “In the face of wrenching social changes, the argument runs, the Holy Ghost movement provided an island of stability in a sea of chaos. It offered respite from toil, release from loneliness, and comfort in the face of death.”<sup>18</sup> Wacker’s brilliant approach to the history of Pentecostalism with its positive functions suggests the social and cultural context and the attitude of early twentieth century American life reflected on the history of the development of American Pentecostalism. Wacker notes, Pentecostalism attempted to withdraw from modern

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<sup>15</sup> Robert Mapes Anderson, *Vision of the Disinherited: The Making of American Pentecostalism* (Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, 1979).

<sup>16</sup> Anderson, 223–40.

<sup>17</sup> Grant Wacker, *Heaven Below: Early Pentecostals and American Culture* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001), 10.

<sup>18</sup> Wacker, 10.

society and create its own social and religious space.<sup>19</sup> Wacker further sketched out the positive functions of early Pentecostalism as “its pragmatic outlook functioned in ways that allowed the movement’s members energetically and creatively to find ways to spread its message.”<sup>20</sup> Wacker’s methodological approach brings out the social history of the origin of early Pentecostalism as the early Pentecostal churches functioned as small communities where its members found refuge from modern culture, nourishment for the spirit, and an extended family-like social support network. Another historian Edith L. Blumhofer through her research attempted to reinterpret history, which brought out the connections of the broader economic and social milieu of the progressive era of America with the origin and development of Pentecostalism. Blumhofer observed that the poor and the marginalized early Pentecostals and their experiences in their social context allowed them to have a place in the history of the Pentecostal movement. According to her, “they reconsidered who they were from the perspective of participation in God’s divine plan, and in so doing, they discovered a new sense of purpose, importance, and identity.”<sup>21</sup> Harvey Cox also expressed his view on the social history of the origin and development of Pentecostalism. Cox highlighted the role of socio-cultural setting and the economic condition of the adherents towards the explosive growth of Pentecostalism in the world. According to him, considering the explosive growth of Pentecostalism worldwide especially among the marginalized people in the South Asian countries has motivated Pentecostal historians to seek and understand the origin and growth of Pentecostalism with its connections with social structure and history and its positive functions of Pentecostalism which provided to the society.<sup>22</sup> Anderson, Wacker, Blumhofer and Cox have attempted to connect the origin and development of Pentecostalism in the United States of America to its economic and cultural setting

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<sup>19</sup> Grant Wacker, ‘Playing for Keeps: The Primitive Impulse in Early Pentecostalism,’ in *The American Quest for the Primitive Church*, ed. Richard T. Hughes (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1988), 212–13.

<sup>20</sup> Grant Wacker, ‘Searching for Eden with a Satellite Dish: Primitivism, Pragmatism, and the Pentecostal Character,’ in *The Primitive Church in the Modern World*, ed. Richard T. Hughes (Urbana: The University of Illinois Press, 1995), 139.

<sup>21</sup> Edith L. Blumhofer, *The Assemblies of God: A Chapter in the Story of American Pentecostalism*, vol. 1-To 1941 (Springfield: Gospel Publishing House, 1989), 110.

<sup>22</sup> For example, see Harvey Cox, *Fire From Heaven: The Rise of Pentecostal Spirituality and the Reshaping of Religion in the Twentieth-First Century* (Cambridge: Da Capo Press, 1995).

and share with the multicultural interpretation of the history of Pentecostalism to evaluate its power to liberate and empower the farmers, workers, and minorities in the American society. James R. Goff who scholarly narrated the biography of Charles F. Parham, the holiness preacher and theological founder of Pentecostalism used the positive dimension of the social connections of the life of early Pentecostals and the origin and development of Pentecostalism. Goff attempted to bring out the interrelations of the teachings of Parham, as a founder of Pentecostal doctrines with the cultural ideology of the Kansas social context. As Goff observes, early Pentecostalism collectively met the social and spiritual needs of struggling farmers and urban workers; indeed, Pentecostalism was a “revolution of socio-religious significance.”<sup>23</sup>

The functional approach is a method of writing the history, development, and changes that took place in the Pentecostal movement worldwide. It highlights the sociological, economic, and psychological factors that contributed to the origin and growth of Pentecostalism worldwide. Augustus Cerillo further developed this approach as a full-fledged methodology of writing the history of Pentecostalism. According to him, “By seeking to connect Pentecostalism in a positive way to its economic and cultural setting, the socially-functional view avoids the crude determinism, religious and psychological reductionism, and wholly negative assessment of the consequences of Pentecostal religion for its followers that is characteristic of the socially-dysfunctional approach.”<sup>24</sup> It is a methodological approach of interpreting the history of the origin and development of Pentecostalism by evaluating the connection and influences of the structures of the society on the adherents of Pentecostalism. According to Cerillo, the functional approach demonstrates how even relatively poor and for the most part minimally educated American Pentecostals actively participated in the building of a Pentecostal subculture that both ideologically institutionally found a permanent place in an increasingly pluralistic American religious and social structure.”<sup>25</sup> Therefore, functional approach

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<sup>23</sup> James R. Goff, *Fields White Unto Harvest: Charles F. Parham and the Missionary Origins of Pentecostalism* (Fayetteville: The University of Arkansas Press, 1988), 16.

<sup>24</sup> Augustus Cerillo, ‘Interpretive Approaches to the History of American Pentecostal Origins,’ *PNEUMA: The Journal of the Society for Pentecostal Studies* 19, no. 1 (Spring 1997): 47.

<sup>25</sup> Cerillo, 52.

is a social history methodology, which attempts to seek the particular social influences of a theological or structural formulation of Pentecostalism and social and economical location of its leaders, and the social setting of its transition. Cerillo observes, the significant contribution of this approach towards the history of Pentecostalism will be, “by seeking to connect Pentecostalism to its cultural setting, and Pentecostals adherents to their place in the nations social and economic structure, the functional view rigorously attempts to understand Pentecostal thought and practice in order to learn why and how it appealed to those who joined the movement.”<sup>26</sup> It is true that the functional approach to writing the history of Pentecostalism will lead a historian to see Pentecostalism as a spiritual movement with the influences of the redeeming factors of the society. The vital role of functional approach in writing the history of Pentecostalism will be, analyzing the history of Pentecostalism along with the social and historical forces that contributed some factors, which have influenced the transition and growth of the movement.

Cerillo observes, a Pentecostal historian who studies the history of the movement through the lens of social history can have one of these views: One is, a historian can focus on Pentecostalism’s appeal as an escape for the psychologically unhealthy or socially dysfunctional members of the society, which tends to offer a negative view of Pentecostalism. Moreover, the other one is, to focus on the power of Pentecostalism to liberate and empower its followers who were usually marginalized in the society, which tends to offer a favourable view of Pentecostalism.<sup>27</sup> The second view is more appealing because the history of Pentecostalism in the world narrates that the early Pentecostal assemblies functioned as enclaves that provided Pentecostals a secure place in which to worship as they pleased and offered each other mutual support in a world assumed to be hostile.<sup>28</sup> It is important to note that, in this methodology of functional approach, Pentecostalism is a spiritual movement, which was positively influenced by some aspects of the social structure, which contributed towards the liberation of marginalized and struggling people. According to Cerillo

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<sup>26</sup> Cerillo, 44.

<sup>27</sup> Cerillo, 46–47.

<sup>28</sup> Augustus Cerillo and Grant Wacker, ‘Bibliography and Historiography,’ in *The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, ed. Stanley M. Burgess and Eduard M. Van Der Mass, Revised and Expanded Edition (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2003), 405.

and Wacker, the functional approach, in its socially positive form, opens up fresh lines of inquiry that start the note with the pre-1900 antecedents of Pentecostalism, but with the fact of the movement's existence and durability.<sup>29</sup> It is true that the definite form of the functional approach of the historiography of Pentecostalism can focus on the organizational structures and programs, the institutional side of the development and transition of the movement. Deborah Cole observes the application of the functional approach in the writing of the history of Asian Pentecostalism as the history by looking at the socio-economic and cultural aspects of Pentecostalism.<sup>30</sup> According to her, a historian of functional approach might ask several questions: What was the social context of early Pentecostals? Who was most receptive to the Pentecostal message and why? What was the church life in the body of Pentecostal believers? Did the church have genuine indigenous core values and beliefs as well as culturally appropriate organizational structures and programs? Alternatively, were they imported from somewhere else?<sup>31</sup>

The traditional Kerala social context is community-oriented society, which had experienced rapid socio-cultural changes. According to Sreedhara Menon, the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries witnessed the emergence of new social order in Kerala under the impact of diverse social, economic, and cultural influences.<sup>32</sup> In this context of social change, the Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity originated in Kerala at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Along with the context of social changes the Pentecostal-Christianity has grown and experienced some phases of transition and transformation. Therefore, the functional approach, which is one of the historiographical tools of analysis in Pentecostal historiography as the writing of the history of Pentecostalism from the socio-historical perspective to focus on the interrelations of the movement with the society, can be used to trace the history of the transition and transformation of Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity in Kerala. This dissertation uses the functional approach developed by Augustus Cerillo as a methodological tool for the writing and

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<sup>29</sup> Cerillo and Wacker, 405.

<sup>30</sup> Deborah Kaye Cole, 'Historiographic Approaches to Asian Pentecostalism,' *Asian Journal of Pentecostal Studies* 9, no. 1 (2006): 75.

<sup>31</sup> Cole, 75.

<sup>32</sup> A. Sreedhara Menon, *A Survey of Kerala History* (Kottayam: DC Books, 2007), 306.

the analysis of the history of Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity in Kerala to identify the local social contexts and influences, which were left out in the previous historical writings about Pentecostalism in Kerala. Therefore, I will build this historical writing on the socio-historical methodology and the functional approach of Augustus Cerillo to try to recount the story of inception and the development of Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity in Kerala, and also study the transitions and transformations within the movement and its connection with the society.

## **6. Sources of Study**

This research is located in the academic discipline of historical studies. It is a historical research, studying the social and spiritual background, the history of Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity, and the transition and transformation of the Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity in Kerala from 1909 to the present. Primary and secondary sources are used to study the social and spiritual background, the origin, development, and the transition and transformation of the Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity in Kerala. Primary sources are the unpublished original writings and documents of the early Pentecostal missionaries, which included papers, reports, letters, missionary documents, and diaries, and published biographies, letters, reports, and articles of early Pentecostal missionaries who worked in Kerala. Along with these, unpublished diaries, letters, papers of Keralite Pentecostal leaders and adherents, documents from the church offices, and published biographies, pamphlets, letters, reports, articles, and speeches of Pentecostal leaders and members are used in this study. Insights from the personal interviews of some of the founders, participants, and members of the Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity are also employed in this study. In order to gather the first-hand information, personal interviews of adherents with open-ended questions, which helped them to share their experiences as founders of the denomination or churches, as, participants of the churches are included. Published books, articles, souvenirs, websites, magazines, and pamphlets about the history of Pentecostal churches and neo-charismatic churches are used for analyzing the history and the present features of Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity in Kerala.

## **7. Structure of the Thesis**

**Chapter One** reviews the publications and sources in the area of research. The focus here is to provide an overview of published and unpublished materials in the history of Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity in Kerala to critically evaluate the current state of knowledge in the field of the history of Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity in Kerala. It indicates how the present research differs from all previous research works.

**Chapter Two** attempts to trace the socio-historical background of the formation and development of Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity in Kerala. The objective here is to explore the social and spiritual environment or social and spiritual contexts of the adherents of Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity in Kerala.

**Chapter Three** explains the ecclesiastical and the spiritual background, and the history of the first phase of Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity in Kerala from 1909 to 1922. It covers the various efforts of missionaries from America's Azusa Street mission to establish Pentecostal denominations in Kerala. The purpose of this chapter is to see the historical development of Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity in Kerala in its institutionalized form and Classical Pentecostalism by the emphasis on doctrines.

**Chapter Four** describes the history of the second phase of Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity in Kerala from 1923 to 1976. It reveals the remarkable transition of Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity in Kerala as indigenous, Indian, and independent as a movement, sparked by the formation of different autonomous Pentecostal denominations originated locally in Kerala. It also discusses the transition and transformation of Classical Pentecostalism during this period of study.

**Chapter Five** deals with the history of the third phase of the Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity in Kerala from 1978 to the present. It examines the historical transition of the Pentecostal movement as Charismatic and neo-charismatic or neo-Pentecostal churches. In this chapter, the history of the Charismatic movement and the history of selected neo-charismatic or neo-Pentecostal churches are discussed. This chapter also deals with the history of transition and transformation of Classical Pentecostalism and indigenous, independent Pentecostalism in Kerala.

**A Conclusion** is drawn based on the summary of the chapters and the findings of the research. The final section of this chapter ponders on the socio-cultural factors that influenced the transition and transformation of Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity in Kerala.

## CHAPTER ONE

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The first and comprehensive history of Pentecostalism in Kerala is in the form of an autobiography written by two pioneers of classical Pentecostalism in Kerala. They tried to write their stories and their involvement in the movement, which delineated the history of Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity in Kerala. Robert F. Cook's *A Quarter Century of Divine Leading in India* was an autobiography, which was the first attempt to trace the history of the Pentecostal mission in Kerala.<sup>33</sup> He primarily deals with revival meetings, which he conducted in different places in Kerala and the history of Pentecostal beginnings in Kerala. However, other than mentioning the people who gathered and received healing and took baptism in water, the author does not explicitly identify the social background of the participants nor highlight the social factors that marked the beginning of Pentecostalism in Kerala. K.E. Abraham's *Yesukristhuvinte Elliya Dasan* is another crucial document about the early expansion of Pentecostal-Charismatic spirituality in Kerala.<sup>34</sup> It is the earliest published autobiography of an indigenous Pentecostal leader in Kerala. Through recollections of events, thumbnail sketches of life stories, quotes, and comments, he attempted to unfold the history of the beginning of the indigenous Pentecostal mission in Kerala. Abraham sees 'his history is the history of Indian Pentecostal Church of God,' which was the first indigenous and independent Pentecostal denomination in India.<sup>35</sup> Though it is not a monograph on the history of Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity in Kerala, it is true that this work fairly and comprehensively surveys the history of the Indian Pentecostal Church of God up to the year 1965. He did not

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<sup>33</sup> Robert F. Cook, *A Quarter Century of Divine Leading in India* (Chenganoor: Robert F. Cook and The Church of God in India, 1939).

<sup>34</sup> Abraham K.E., *Yesukristhuvinte Elliya Dasan: Athmakadha, Pastor K.E. Abraham (Mal.) [Pastor K.E. Abraham: The Humble Servant of Jesus Christ, Autobiography, First Published in 1965 (Kumbanadu: K.E. Abraham Foundation, 2001).*

<sup>35</sup> Abraham K.E., i.

however outline the elements of social background that influenced the history of the origin and development of Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity in Kerala. Nevertheless, these writings do not claim to be written with any historical methodology or produced as a historical document. These writings are uncritical and based on ‘providential approach’<sup>36</sup> tradition as telling their stories from an insider’s perspective.

Abraham Thottumkal Pothen in his, *The India Pentecostal Church of God and its Contribution to Church Growth* studies the history of the origin and growth of Indian Pentecostal Church of God from the church-growth perspective.<sup>37</sup> It evaluates the role and contributions of the Indian Pentecostal Church as one of the Pentecostal-Charismatic Christian denominations to the church-growth movement in India. According to this thesis, the Indian Pentecostal Church of God grew extensively because of its indigenous leadership, well-trained laity and the mobilization of ‘power evangelism; that is the use of the gifts of the Holy Spirit in mission. This work argues that these theological factors are the significant elements in the growth of the Pentecostal movement in Kerala especially in the growth of the Indian Pentecostal Church of God. His contribution is noteworthy, but the focus is only on the theological factors, which contributed to the church growth whereas he failed to highlight the socio-cultural factors that contributed to the church-growth of Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity in Kerala.

Saju Mathew, a Pentecostal Christian and a follower of the providential approach, provides a chronological narrative of the Pentecostal movement in Kerala in his book entitled, *Kerala Penthecosthu Charithram (Mal.) [Kerala Pentecostal History]*.<sup>38</sup> He attempted to produce a microscopic study of the history of the beginnings and growth of Pentecostalism in Kerala. He interviewed vital Pentecostal

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<sup>36</sup> The providential approach of writing the history of Pentecostal movement seeks to find God’s sovereign role in the history of the movement with a particular focus on the work of of Holy Spirit in the life of people and their involvement in events related to the history of the movement. This traditional approach is based on a belief that Pentecostalism was spontaneous, providentially generated (worldwide), end-time religious revival, and a movement fundamentally discontinuous with 1900 years of Christian history. Cerillo, ‘Interpretive Approaches to the History of American Pentecostal Origins’; Cerillo and Wacker, ‘Bibliography and Historiography’; Cole, ‘Historiographic Approaches to Asian Pentecostalism.’

<sup>37</sup> Pothen, ‘The India Pentecostal Church of God and Its Contribution to Church Growth.’

<sup>38</sup> Mathew, *Kerala Penthecosthu Charithram (Mal.) [Kerala Pentecostal History]*.

pioneers, pastors, leaders, and believers and illustrated their socio-cultural connections. According to him, his effort was to produce the history of the Pentecostal community in Kerala rather than Pentecostal denominations.<sup>39</sup> Though his work is the history of the indigenous Pentecostal movement in Kerala, it has not explicitly studied on the socio-cultural background and factors that affected the beginning and growth of the Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity in Kerala.

Sara Abraham, in her work, *A Critical Evaluation of the Indian Pentecostal Church of God: Its Origin and Development in Kerala*;<sup>40</sup> 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*;<sup>41</sup> and Kunjappan C. Varghese, *Reformation Brings Revival: A Historical Study of K.E. Abraham and His Contributions in the Founding of the Indian Pentecostal Church of God*<sup>42</sup> have attempted to study the history of Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity in Kerala from the providential approach and missiological perspective. They are from the Indian Pentecostal Church of God, one of the leading indigenous Pentecostal denominations in India. They have discussed the origin and growth of the Pentecostal movement in Kerala from the perspective of denominationalism. These works highlight the various theological factors in the growth of the Indian Pentecostal Church of God especially the strategies used for evangelism and church planting of Indian Pentecostal Church of God in Kerala. However, these works did not attempt to bring out the role of social, cultural, and economical contexts in the development of Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity in Kerala.

K.J. Mathew in his, *Denominational Pluralism among Pentecostals in Kerala, Causes and Responses, 1920 to the Present*<sup>43</sup> and Mathew P. Skaria, *An Evaluation of the History of the Assemblies of God Churches in Kerala and Proposals for the Unity*

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<sup>39</sup> Mathew, 5.

<sup>40</sup> Abraham, 'A Critical Evaluation of the Indian Pentecostal Church of God: Its Origin and Development in Kerala.'

<sup>41</sup> Varughese, V.A., 'A Historical Analysis of the Origin and Development of the Pentecostal Churches in Kerala with Special Reference to Its View of Mission.'

<sup>42</sup> Varghese, 'Reformation Brings Revival: A Historical Study of K.E. Abraham and His Contributions in the Founding of the Indian Pentecostal Church of God.'

<sup>43</sup> Mathew K.J., 'Denominational Pluralism among Pentecostals in Kerala, Causes and Responses, 1920 to the Present.'

*among the Pentecostal Churches in Kerala*,<sup>44</sup> are from the Assemblies of God, one of the Pentecostal denominations in Kerala and they have attempted to write the history of the Pentecostal movement in Kerala to bring out the causes of divisions among the Pentecostals in Kerala. These Masters' dissertations provide a brief account of the history of the development of Pentecostal denominations in Kerala and then concentrate on the proposals for unity among the Pentecostal churches in Kerala. The methodological approach was "providential," and they attempted to provide the history of Pentecostalism in Kerala based on revival spirituality.

Yesunatha Das attempts to question the credibility of the outsider's view of the history of Pentecostalism from a Dalit perspective and present an insider's perspective in his writing *An Evaluation of the History of Pentecostal Dalits in Kerala*. This study focuses on the Pentecostal community as a whole for introspection, and challenges the history of the origin of Pentecostalism in Kerala. It describes some of the frustrations and unfulfilled hopes of Dalit Pentecostals throughout history as part of this movement. Apparently, as a Dalit historian, he suspects that the Syrian historians of Kerala Pentecostal Church are biased and prejudiced in their historical accounts. This study tries to highlight the role and contributions of Dalit Pentecostals from the Dalit perspective.

Samuel Kutty, in his book, *The Place and Contribution of Dalits in Select Pentecostal Churches in Central Kerala from 1922-1972* attempts to bring the comprehensive history of the contributions of Dalit Pentecostals in Kerala from 1922 to 1972.<sup>45</sup> This book analyses the contributions of Dalit Pentecostals from Pariah, Pulaya, and Kurava communities in three major classical Pentecostal denominations such as the Assemblies of God, Church of God, and the Indian Pentecostal Church of God in Kerala. Samuel Kutty, a Syrian Christian as an outsider, evaluates the role and contributions of Dalit Pentecostals towards the growth of the Pentecostal movement in Kerala.

V.V. Thomas' work on *Dalit Pentecostalism, Spirituality of the Empowered Poor* demonstrated an understanding of the history of Pentecostalism in Kerala from

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<sup>44</sup> Skaria, 'An Evaluation of the History of the Assemblies of God Churches in Kerala and Proposals for the Unity among the Pentecostal Churches in Kerala.'

<sup>45</sup> Kutty, *The Place and Contribution of Dalits in Select Pentecostal Churches in Central Kerala from 1922-1972*.

its inception till 2007 from a Dalit perspective.<sup>46</sup> He attempted to bring out the history of the Pentecostal experiences of Dalit Pentecostals as a separate entity different from Syrian Pentecostals. He tried to do an in-depth study of the history of Dalit Pentecostalism in Kerala from a Subaltern historiographical and Postcolonial perspective. He attempted to recover the history of the suppressed and forgotten role of the Dalit Pentecostals and their struggles to maintain their identity in the history of Pentecostalism in Kerala. As an outsider, Thomas argues that in the development of the Pentecostal movement in Kerala, the Dalits were not given their due place and Pentecostalism in Kerala is not just a revival movement, but a socio-religious and liberating movement.

In an article “Pentecostal Beginnings in Travancore, South India,” A.C. George attempts to trace the history of the Pentecostal movement in Kerala from its inception till the formation of denominations.<sup>47</sup> His focus was to bring out the biographies of certain American and national Pentecostal pioneers in Kerala to show the history of the Pentecostal movement in Kerala. George also attempts to sketch the history of Assemblies of God denomination in Kerala and the theological causes for its growth in Kerala. Though it reveals the history of the growth of Pentecostalism in Kerala, it ignored the influences of socio-cultural elements in the growth of the Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity in Kerala.

Stanley M. Burgess in his article “Pentecostalism in India: An Overview” also explores the history of the Pentecostal movement in Kerala.<sup>48</sup> His focus was to highlight the indigenous revival movement that occurred in Kerala before the arrival of Pentecostal missionaries to Kerala. He called those revivals as Pentecostal-like outpourings and observed that the Americo-centric historiographical approach of considering the origin of Pentecostalism in Kerala only after the arrival of American missionaries must be questioned. He presented three case studies from Kerala to narrate the history and growth of native leadership in Pentecostal denominations, the Charismatic movement, and neo-charismatic churches.

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<sup>46</sup> Thomas V.V., *Dalit Pentecostalism, Spirituality of the Empowered Poor*.

<sup>47</sup> George, A.C., ‘Pentecostal Beginnings in Travancore, South India.’

<sup>48</sup> Stanley M. Burgess, ‘Pentecostalism in India: An Overview’, *Asian Journal of Pentecostal Studies* 4, no. 1 (2001).

“As East and West Met in God’s Own Country: Encounter of Western Pentecostalism with Native Pentecostalism in Kerala” by Paulson Pulikottil is a highly excellent article related to the origin and growth of the Pentecostal movement in Kerala.<sup>49</sup> It elucidates the relevance of postcolonial historiographical approach to the origin and growth of Pentecostalism in Kerala. He argues that the postcolonial approach to the history of Pentecostalism in Kerala does help to look at the particular historical events from the perspective of natives.<sup>50</sup> He approached the history of the Pentecostal movement in Kerala from an indigenous perspective; however, his emphasis was to highlight the theological reasons for the growth of indigenous Pentecostalism in Kerala.

In his work, *The Origin and Development of the Pentecostal Churches among the Dalits in Kerala: A Critical Evaluation of the Missionary Methods of Robert F. Cook (1913-1950)*, Simon Karingottazhikathu John deals elaborately with the beginning of the Pentecostal movement in Kerala.<sup>51</sup> His emphasis was upon the missionary efforts of Robert F. Cook, the Pentecostal missionary from the United States of America to Kerala, especially his missionary work among the Dalits in Kerala. It gives a thorough treatment of how the underprivileged people in Kerala responded to the Pentecostal faith and theological views of Robert F. Cook. Though its contribution is noteworthy to bring out the social background of Dalits in Kerala, it is silent about the socio-cultural factors, which prompted the Dalits to accept Pentecostalism.

Biju M.’s work on *Change and Continuity in Pentecostal Churches’ Understanding of Mission in Kerala with Special Reference to the Sharon Fellowship Churches* is a significant contribution to the field of history of the mission of Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity in Kerala.<sup>52</sup> His insightful analysis highlights the

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<sup>49</sup> Pulikottil, ‘As East and West Met in God’s Own Country: Encounter of Western Pentecostalism with Native Pentecostalism in Kerala.’

<sup>50</sup> Pulikottil.

<sup>51</sup> Simon Karingottazhikathu John, ‘The Origin and Development of the Pentecostal Churches among the Dalits in Kerala: A Critical Evaluation of the Missionary Methods of Robert F. Cook (1913-1950)’ (M.Th. Thesis, School of Religion and Theology, University of KwaZulu-Natal, 2005).

<sup>52</sup> Biju M., ‘Change and Continuity in Pentecostal Churches’ Understanding of Mission in Kerala with Special Reference to the Sharon Fellowship Churches’ (M.Th. Thesis, Senate of Serampore, 2002).

changes that took place in the understanding of mission among the Pentecostal churches in Kerala. Though he narrated the condition of Pentecostals in Kerala at the beginning of the twenty-first century and argued for the need of the continuity of early understanding of mission, his emphasis was upon one of the Pentecostal denominations in Kerala. *Changes in the Understanding of Mission among the Pentecostals in Kerala with a Special Reference to the Indian Pentecostal Church of God Since 1934* by Sunil T. is another work which also falls on similar lines where he expressed the changes in the understanding of the mission of Indian Pentecostal Church of God in Kerala. However, his work is the elaboration of the perception and activities of the mission by Indian Pentecostal Church of God till 1950 and the changes in the perception of the mission since 1950. Both the works have not explicitly studied the social factors that influenced the changes of mission and the changes that took place in the Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity in Kerala.

*Pentecostal Women in Kerala: Their Contribution to the Mission of the Church* by Aleyamma Abraham discusses the history of Pentecostal denominations in Kerala. Her significant contribution is in bringing out the leadership role and the contributions of Pentecostal women as pioneers, partners, and co-founders of Pentecostal denominations in Kerala. It also reveals the history of the ministries of some of the native women Pentecostal evangelists and missionaries in Kerala. This study sheds light on the history of Women Ashram mission in Kerala and Pentecostal institutions, which promote women's ministry in Kerala.

In Chapter Two, Michael Bergunder's book, *The South Indian Pentecostal Movement in the Twentieth century* examines the history of the development of four major Pentecostal denominations and some independent Pentecostal denominations in Kerala.<sup>53</sup> It is a historical and systematic presentation of the Pentecostal movement in Kerala based on an extensive empirical research between 1993 and 1995. Bergunder argues that a new style of Pentecostal historiography used in the writing of this book where denominational perspectives and indigenous agencies were emphasized and frictions, splits, and conflicts were consciously brought into the focus of discussion.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> Michael Bergunder, *The South Indian Pentecostal Movement in the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2008).

<sup>54</sup> Bergunder.

His insightful analysis highlights the history of the development of Pentecostal denominations in Kerala and its vast global networks.

The above survey of the literature indicates that none of the works on the history of the Pentecostal movement in Kerala have dealt seriously concerning the history of the transition and transformation of the Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity in Kerala and the social and cultural factors that influenced the transition and transformation. These works portray the history of the Pentecostal movement in Kerala, its beginnings, growth, and contributions from a denominational perspective. However, these studies primarily used 'Providential approach' or 'Subaltern approach' as their methodology for writing. The history of the transition of Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity in Kerala from the socio-historical methodology has not been written or produced. This area has been neglected and overlooked in the field of the history of Pentecostalism in Kerala. It creates a gap, which exists in the writing of the history of Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity in Kerala. Therefore, there is a need to examine the socio-cultural factors that influenced the Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity in Kerala and to give particular attention to the transition and transformation of the Pentecostal movement in Kerala. The significance of this study is that it fills the gap in the existing historiography of Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity in Kerala by presenting the history of transition and transformation of Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity in Kerala from a socio-historical perspective. This study is also important because it brings out the transitions and transformation within the history of this movement and analyzes its connection with the socio-cultural changes in Kerala.

## CHAPTER TWO

### THE SOCIAL BACKGROUND OF PENTECOSTAL-CHARISMATIC CHRISTIANITY IN KERALA

#### Introduction

The socio-cultural and economic background of Kerala from the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and during the 20<sup>th</sup> century have played a significant role in the emergence, development, and shaping of Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity in Kerala.<sup>55</sup> The Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity was introduced and grew in Kerala at a time when Kerala was making a social transition under different local social reformers and movements. The social context of South and Central Kerala from the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century had an impact on the origin, spread, and growth of Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity in the 20<sup>th</sup> century in Kerala. From the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Kerala society had witnessed a period of considerable changes in the political, social, cultural, and religious life of the people of Kerala. The political relationships of the Monarchical powers of Kerala with the British East India Company, the educational and literary works of the missionaries of Church Missionary Society and London Missionary society made a renaissance in all the social spheres in Kerala. A brief analysis of the social and cultural background of

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<sup>55</sup> In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Kerala was known as Travancore. Travancore is the abbreviated English form of 'Tiru-Vithan-Kodu,' which is said to be a corruption of 'Sri-Vazhumkodu,' i.e., a place where the goddess of prosperity dwells. Travancore was also known by the names like 'Venadu,' Vanchi-Desam and Tiru-Adi-Desam. There is also another point of view that name Travancore comes from the Sanskrit word *Srivardhanapuri* which means the land where the goddess of prosperity resides. Travancore was surrounded by the sea on the Southwest, on the east by the range of Ghats and the north by the other small country, named Cochin. Until the accession of King Marthanda Varma in 1729, it was a small principality by the name Venadu. However, his successful military campaigns and administrative reforms expanded the Kingdom of Travancore, and it became one of the dominant princely states in India. During the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, this state had three revenue divisions and thirty Taluks. They were Northern, Central and Southern revenue divisions. South Travancore was a strip of land between the Western Ghats from Quilon to Cape Comorin. It combined in itself eight taluks of Thovalai, Agasteeswaram, Kalkulam, Vilavancode, Neyyattinkara, Trivandrum, Nedumangadu and Chiraiyinkeezhu. The central Travancore comprised the Taluks of Kottayam, Alleppey, and Cochin. See Nagam V. Aiya, *The Travancore State Manual* (Trivandrum: Government Press, 1906), 2; Shungoony P. Menon, *A History of Travancore from the Earliest Times* (Madras: Higginbotham and Co., 1878), 1; Ramanath Aiyar, *A Brief Sketch of Travancore the Model State of India: The Country, Its People and Its Progress* (Trivandrum: Western Star Press, 1903), 3.

Kerala in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries is preferred in this study because, the different phases of the transition and transformation of Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity in Kerala which are dealt with in the subsequent chapters, took place mainly in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The interaction of this movement and its social connections can be meaningfully understood only after studying the social, cultural, and spiritual contexts of Kerala in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.

### 2.1. The Social Context of Kerala in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century

The caste framework in all its inflexibility was a predominant element of Kerala society, as elsewhere in India in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. According to Elamkulam Kunjan Pillai, before the landing of the Aryans in the South, the standing framework of four Varnas and the hierarchy of castes were obscure in Dravidian culture.<sup>56</sup> Aryan intrusion and the following procedure of Sanskritization engendered caste framework as a way to oppress the first tenants of the land.<sup>57</sup> Kerala Society was partitioned into four *varnas*<sup>58</sup> viz as Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas and Shudras as the procedure of Aryanization advanced. The general population who were outside the pale of *varna* framework were considered as *Jati* or ‘avarnas’ or ‘untouchables.’ This sort of division of society brought about the development of a high standing ‘savarna’ overseeing class, which was considered as unadulterated, and a low station ‘avarna’ oppressed class considered as contaminated. Along these lines, the qualification of virtue and contamination set one area of the general population over the other segment, and in this manner, the contaminating standings were smothered by the supposed unadulterated standings. The ruling caste monopolized the assets, societal position, and power while the subjugated people led an existence of hardship and underestimation. After the Aryanization in Kerala between the 8<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> centuries A.D., “caste has been the dominant factor in the economic and cultural life of Kerala.”<sup>59</sup> In course of time, caste distinctions became a secure unit in the Kerala

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<sup>56</sup> Elamkulam Kunjanpillai, *Studies in Kerala History* (Kottayam: National Book Stall, 1970), 311; Sreedhara A. Menon, *Social and Cultural History of Kerala* (New York: Sterling, 1979), 65.

<sup>57</sup> ‘Travancore Census Report, 1891, Vol I’ (Government of India, 1961), 617.

<sup>58</sup> *Varna* and *Jati* are two terms used to explain the institution of caste. *Varna* means ‘colour,’ and *Jati* is from the Sanskrit word *Jan* means ‘birth.’ Cf., William Logan, *Malabar Manual*, First Published in 1887, vol. I (Madras: Government Press, 1951), 110.

<sup>59</sup> Kunjanpillai, *Studies in Kerala History*, 312.

society and all the social relationships were limited within the castes. The caste system segregated the economic functions of the Kerala society and became one of the active forces that kept many sections of the society in a state of social and economic backwardness.

### **2.1.1. Social Structure: The Caste Based People Groups**

Brahmins<sup>60</sup> otherwise called Nambuthiris or Nambuthiri Brahmins possessed the most prevalent position among the diverse castes in Kerala in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Their high societal position was joined with their custom virtue, riches, and political impact. In Kerala, they were viewed as the ceremonially blessed, having the sole status for the elucidation of the sacred writing and divine laws, which framed the premise of the rules, which everyone must follow. As a piece of religious obligation, Brahmins were given sustenance in independent places (*oottupuras*) all through the state. Brahmins were enormous proprietors who claimed vast zones of land and had massive riches. As religious masters, they separated the land among their nearby partners in the *Jenmi* landlord framework, the Nairs, who constituted the military castes. The lower caste *kudiyans* were helpless before the proprietors. Brahmins additionally employed massive political power and applied remarkable influence over Kings.

#### **2.1.1.1. Nambuthiris or Brahmins**

In Kerala, the Brahmins had two divisions. One was indigenous Brahmins, who were called Nambuthiris. The second division was immigrant Brahmins that migrated to Travancore from Karnataka, Tulu, Maharashtra, and Tamilnadu. The indigenous Brahmins or Nambuthiris were not numerous in South Kerala, but they chiefly inhabited the central and northern provinces of Kerala.<sup>61</sup> Both indigenous and immigrant Brahmins were lords of the soil and had a higher rank in the Kerala society. The King of Travancore, Marthanda Varma, by a religious ceremony in 1750, made Brahmins the stewards of the Sri Padmanabha Swami, the patron deity of

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<sup>60</sup> The word Brahmin comes from Brahma, as they claimed Brahma created them from his head and created all other caste people from his feet. James Hough, *The History of Christianity in India* (London: R.B. Seeley and W. Burnside, 1839), 220-223.

<sup>61</sup> Samuel Mateer, *The Land of Charity: A Descriptive Account of Travancore and Its People with Special Reference to Missionary Labour* (London: John Snow and Co., 1871).

Travancore and all others as servants ministering the Brahmins.<sup>62</sup> They had excellent control over the Kings, as they influenced the policies of the state.

The Brahmins lived in extremely segregated lives in Kerala, and many dedicated themselves to the routine of religious rituals linking with the temples. They were the primary participants in all the substantial religious celebrations of the King. The Brahmins were large landowners often possessed immense wealth and resided in great comfortable houses.<sup>63</sup> The family property was owned and enjoyed in common by all the members of the family. Division of the family property was forbidden.<sup>64</sup> The Brahmin women had no role in ritual practices, and they were considered inferior in the community. The Brahmins concealed their women from public gaze, and whenever they came out of their house, they used a large umbrella to cover themselves. They enjoyed the privilege of wearing gold bracelets.<sup>65</sup> To keep down the numbers of this caste, they allowed only the eldest son in the family to marry a female of this caste. Other men of the families made temporary connections, and they visited convenient Shudra females who considered it as a high honour to receive the visits of a Nambuthiri.<sup>66</sup>

The Nambuthiris dominated the social structure and functioned as the guardians of Hindu temples. The accumulation of wealth made them idle pleasure seekers, and unfit for hard work. They had the exemption from all social and religious disabilities, enjoying perfect freedom of living. However, this Brahmin domination in the society was the most significant stumbling block in the progress of the ordinary people in South and Central Kerala.

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<sup>62</sup> Hacker I. H., *A Hundred Years in Travancore 1806-1906: A History and Description of the Work Done by the London Missionary Society in Travancore, South India during the Past Century* (London: H. R. Allenson, Limited, 1908), 14.

<sup>63</sup> Mateer, *The Land of Charity*, 30.

<sup>64</sup> Aiyar, *A Brief Sketch of Travancore the Model State of India*, 78.

<sup>65</sup> Samuel Mateer, *The Land of Charity: A Descriptive Account of Travancore and Its People with Special Reference to Missionary Labour* (London: John Snow and Co., 1871), 40.

<sup>66</sup> Mateer, *The Land of Charity*, 40.

### 2.1.1.2. Nairs

In Kerala, in the social chain of the importance of the state, after the Brahmins, the Nairs<sup>67</sup> held a respectable position. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century social context of Kerala, the Nair took the place of Shudras.<sup>68</sup> According to Elamkulam Kunjanpillai, the Nambuthiris created this class of people with the help of Kings.<sup>69</sup> They had a significant position just below the Brahmins in society. They were the military class people, and administration of a more considerable portion of the land was in their hands. They were permanently officers prepared in the craft of fighting. The partnership of Nairs with Brahmins expanded their impact and the last delegated the Nairs as the caretakers and trustees of their property. They were the principal owners of the slaves and the ruling class in the society. The royal family was the members of this caste.<sup>70</sup> They had power based on the number of dependents and followers, and they offered military services to the King. Some of them worked as supervisors of the wealth of Brahmins.<sup>71</sup> The Nairs were subordinate to the Brahmins, but their association with the Nambuthiris helped them to dominate other castes. They collected bribes and offering from lower classes of people during festivals.<sup>72</sup> The Nairs of Nancinadu had a council called *Pidakakars* who exercised more authority over southern Kerala. This council took the law into their hands, and they were a terror to the people. Sometimes the council members marched through the towns, and

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<sup>67</sup> The term *Nair* or *Nayar* comes from *Pada Nayakar* means leader of soldiers. They were the leaders or chief of troops of King's army. Raghava Warriar and Rajan Gurukkal, *Kerala Charithram (Mal.) [History of Kerala] Part II* (Kozhikode: Vallathol Vidyapeetham, 2012), 147.

<sup>68</sup> The Shudras were one of the Aryan communities. There was a time when the Aryan society recognised only three Varnas, namely. Brahmins, Kshatriyas and Vaishyas. The Shudras did not form a separate Varna. They ranked as part of the Kshatriya Varna in the Indo-Aryan society. There was a continuous feud between the Shudra kings and the Brahmins in which the Brahmins were subjected to many tyrannies and indignities. As a result of the hatred towards the Shudras generated by their tyrannies and oppressions, the Brahmins refused to perform the Upanayana of the Shudras. Owing to the denial of Upanayana, the Shudras who were Kshatriyas became socially degraded, fell below the rank of the Vaishyas and thus came to form the fourth Varna. Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar, *Who Were the Shudras?: How They Came to Be the Fourth Varna in the Indo-Aryan Society* (Bombay: Thacker & Co. Ltd., 1946), iv–v.

<sup>69</sup> Elamkulam Kunjanpillai, *Studies in Kerala History*, 314.

<sup>70</sup> Mateer, *The Land of Charity*, 45.

<sup>71</sup> Shungoony P. Menon, *A History of Travancore from the Earliest Times* (Madras: Higginbotham and Co., 1878), 218-219.

<sup>72</sup> Warriar and Gurukkal, *Kerala Charithram (Mal.) [History of Kerala] Part II*, 147.

the people bowed and worshipped them.<sup>73</sup>

The Nairs practiced *Marumakkathayam* that is the matrilineal system of inheritance, and they had joint families called *Tharavad*. The family properties belonged to the women members of the family, and the eldest male member called *Karanavar* was the administrator of their wealth.<sup>74</sup> All the children of a typical female ancestor lived together as one family under the authority of a *Karanavar*. The Nair women exercised considerable liberty of action in their families. They enjoyed position in society because of their connection with the Brahmins.<sup>75</sup> Nair girls had a marriage custom called *tali*, and that is a marriage chain tied around her neck. *Tali* was a formality allowing her to exercise her liberty in her mature years.<sup>76</sup> In the presence of persons of higher rank or position and the royal family members, the Nair women had to follow the ancient custom of uncovering the bosoms and upper parts of their body. Otherwise, a Nair woman could wear a light cotton cloth loosely across the breast and cover one shoulder, generally known by the name of upper cloth.<sup>77</sup> To have an upper cloth was considered to be a privilege and no Nair tolerated a woman of the lower caste wearing it.<sup>78</sup>

### 2.1.1.3. Parayars and Pulayars

Parayars and Pulayars were the suppressed classes of people groups in Kerala society in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. They were the unprivileged, slaves, and untouchables. The Pariahs and Pulayars worked as laborers for the cultivation of the lands of *Janmis* or landlords. They did not have the privilege to buy lands, but they had to use lands only

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<sup>73</sup> Yesudas R.N., *A People's Revolt in Travancore: A Backward Class Movement for Social Freedom* (Trivandrum: Kerala Historical Society, 1975), 14.

<sup>74</sup> Agur C. M., *Church History of Travancore* (Madras: S. P. S. Press, 1903), 568-570.

<sup>75</sup> Robin Jeffrey, *The Decline of Nair Dominance: Society and Politics in Travancore 1847-1908* (New Delhi: Manohar Publishers & Distributors, 1994), 76.

<sup>76</sup> Yesudas R.N., *A People's Revolt in Travancore: A Backward Class Movement for Social Freedom*, 18.

<sup>77</sup> Mateer, *The Land of Charity: A Descriptive Account of Travancore and Its People with Special Reference to Missionary Labour*, 36.

<sup>78</sup> Yesudas R.N., *A People's Revolt in Travancore: A Backward Class Movement for Social Freedom*, 19.

on lease for the crop. They suffered much under the higher classes as slaves.<sup>79</sup> Their names were connected with every problem or sickness in society. The higher classes viewed the presence of slave class with a mixture of alarm and indignation, and they believed that the Parayars and Pulayars could defile the towns and markets through their presence.<sup>80</sup>

The Parayars were slaves of Brahmins. Mateer described the condition of them as “they were bought and sold like cattle, starved, flogged like buffaloes, made to work all day for a little rice and kept at a distance as polluted...”<sup>81</sup> They could not draw water from the wells of other castes; instead, they had their wells near their inhabitants. If a Paraya had to speak to a Brahmin, he or she had to hold his or her hand before the mouth to avoid polluting the Brahmin by his or her breath.<sup>82</sup> The Pulayars were the lowest of the slave castes who lived in South Travancore during the first half of the nineteenth century. Their work was exclusively in the rice fields – pumping them dry, making up embankments, hedging, manuring, ploughing, weeding, transplanting, and reaping.<sup>83</sup> They did not have permission from the higher castes to build their houses near the public roads and enter into the markets to sell their products. They had to stand apart from the markets at some distance and make purchases or sales.<sup>84</sup>

The Parayars had their own forms of worship. Their chief deities were *Madan* (the cow one), *Rathachamundi Mallan* (the giant), *Karumkali* (the black Kali), *Chavus* (the departed spirits), and *Bhutham* (the ghosts).<sup>85</sup> They also worshipped the souls of their deceased ancestors called *Marutta* for that they tied young coconut

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<sup>79</sup> The Pariahs and Pulayars were bought and sold like slaves. Mateer, *The Land of Charity: A Descriptive Account of Travancore and Its People with Special Reference to Missionary Labour*, 41.

<sup>80</sup> Kunjanpillai, *Studies in Kerala History*, 78-79.

<sup>81</sup> Conner P.E., ‘Extract from the General Memoir of the Survey of Travancore,’ *Madras Journal of Literature and Science*, no. 1 (October 1833), 4.

<sup>82</sup> S. Mateer, ‘The Pariah Caste in Travancore,’ *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland* 16, no. 2 (April 1884): 184.

<sup>83</sup> Edgar Thurston and Rangachari K, *Castes and Tribes of Southern India*, vol. Vol IV P TO S (Madras: Government Press, 1909), 78.

<sup>84</sup> Mateer, *Native Life in Travancore*, 41.

<sup>85</sup> Mateer, ‘The Pariah Caste in Travancore,’ 185.

leaves at the bottom of a tree and had a small shed erected on poles decorated with garlands and flowers. They offered parched rice, arrack, and blood of birds or animals.<sup>86</sup> Among the Parayars, some of them were sorcerers and dancers, and they exercised magic from their deities. The Nairs used them to exercise magic power over demons to search for and dig out magical charms buried in the earth by enemies, in cases of sickness to discover what demon has caused the affliction and what is to be done to remove it.<sup>87</sup>

A majority of the Pulayars were worshippers of Goddess *Bhagavathi*. However, some of them worshipped *Chathan* (demon) and the spirits of their ancestors (*Pretham*). They worshipped both male and female spirits of deceased ancestors and offered prayers to them to please them. The Pulayars believed that they could see the diseased spirits in dreams and could speak to them.<sup>88</sup> Their priests came from among their community, and they offered prayers and sacrifices, fruits and toddy.<sup>89</sup> The higher castes also used some of the Pulaya priests as they were exercising great authority in the spirit world to destroy their enemies or to restore their families from problems. To avoid the malignancies of demons, Pulayars adopted various methods of tying palm leaf around the neck, hanging baskets, or earthen pots containing offerings, and occasionally sacrifices performed for spirits.<sup>90</sup>

The social structure of South and Central Kerala and the superstitious beliefs and practices of the Parayarss and Pulayars pushed them into oppression. They did not have access to public officials and courts, the dwellings of higher castes, and temples. They suffered as slave class in Kerala in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

#### **2.1.1.4. Shanars in Tirunelveli and South Kerala**

The Shanars constituted a significant class of people in Tirunelveli and South Kerala. Shanar was an ancient name of a caste-based people group, and their principal livelihood was manufacturing and trading of an alcoholic beverage from the palm

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<sup>86</sup> Yesudas R.N., *A People's Revolt in Travancore: A Backward Class Movement for Social Freedom*, 35.

<sup>87</sup> Mateer, 'The Pariah Caste in Travancore,' 186.

<sup>88</sup> Mateer, *Native Life in Travancore*, 53.

<sup>89</sup> Thurston and Rangachari K, *Castes and Tribes of Southern India*, Vol IV P TO S: 86.

<sup>90</sup> Mateer, *Native Life in Travancore*, 54.

tree. They also used the title Nadar. Moreover, they had a social status below the Nairs and above all other castes.<sup>91</sup> During the 19<sup>th</sup> century, they occupied the highest division of the middle classes, and many of these people turned to different employment other than traditional work. The Shanars of South Kerala is the same class as those of Tirunelveli.<sup>92</sup> About their religion, Caldwell observed that they were not practicing traditional Brahmanical Hinduism.<sup>93</sup> The Shanar community engaged in the worship of spirits. The devils in their ideas connected to the spirits of the dead men and women or spirits remained alive and had full malignity and hatred towards humanity.<sup>94</sup> The Shanars worshipped with great fear the biggest demon called *Madan*, and they believed that he could strike men and women with a sudden illness.<sup>95</sup> They prayed to the evil spirits to prevent their evil works of diseases on individuals and cattle, failure in agriculture and trade, and accidents. The Shanars performed spirit worship in their houses.<sup>96</sup> In most of their houses, they had a separate small thatched shed for Spirit worship. Their worship included dancing before these spirit temples and sacrifice of animals. Otherwise, they had no access to the Hindu temples, and they could not walk on the roads leading to the temples.

The Shanars faced severe social oppression in South Kerala. They had to pay different oppressive and severe taxes imposed by the government such as capitation tax, head tax, house tax, festival tax, taxes on bows, iron and forges, boats and nets, hunting, music, and drumming.<sup>97</sup> They paid these taxes as monthly installments due to

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<sup>91</sup> By the official request of the Shanars, in 1921 the caste name *Shanar* was officially changed to *Nadar*. Robert Caldwell, *The Tinnevelly Shanars: A Sketch of Their Religion, and Their Moral Condition and Characteristics, as a Cast; with Special Reference to the Facilities and Hindrances to the Progress of Christianity Amongst Them* (Vepery: Christian Knowledge Society Press, 1849).

<sup>92</sup> Mateer, *The Land of Charity: A Descriptive Account of Travancore and Its People with Special Reference to Missionary Labour*, 41.

<sup>93</sup> Mateer, *The Land of Charity: A Descriptive Account of Travancore and Its People with Special Reference to Missionary Labour*, 41.

<sup>94</sup> Caldwell, *The Tinnevelly Shanars*, 15.

<sup>95</sup> Joseph Mullens, *Missions in South India: Visited and Described* (London: W. H. Dalton, 1854).

<sup>96</sup> Nagam V. Aiya, *The Travancore State Manual* (Trivandrum: Government Press, 1906), 395.

<sup>97</sup> Nagam V. Aiya, *The Travancore State Manual* (Trivandrum: Government Press, 1906), 395.

the torture and brutal way of collection. The Shanars who could not afford to pay the taxes had to face screwing of ears, hanging weight in ears for two hours, and keeping a great stone on back to stand in an unnatural position.<sup>98</sup> The Shanars also had to do voluntary services called *Uliyam* to the higher castes and government officials. They had to offer ‘gifts’ to the higher caste people at the festivals, occasions of birthdays, anniversaries, and marriages.<sup>99</sup> They had to give goods for the requirements of the temple, and they could not collect money.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century in Kerala society, the caste rules controlled the dress of the lower caste people according to the castes to which they belonged. Strict caste rules imposed restrictions for women on the mode of wearing the dress, wearing ornaments and wearing sandals. In southern India, the women used to wear a light piece of cloth called upper cloth across the breast and over one shoulder. According to the caste rules in south Kerala, if a lower caste woman covered her breast with a piece of cloth, it was considered as an insult to the people of higher castes. The upper caste men did not allow the lower caste women including Shanar women to wear anything above their waists.<sup>100</sup>

The social condition of Shanar women was so deplorable as they could not wear any clothing above their waist. To mark further degradation, they could not carry umbrellas, wear shoes or gold ornaments, carry pots of water on their hips, and milk cows.<sup>101</sup> The South Travancore society considered the uncovering of the upper part body of the Shanar women as a mark of respect and a form of salutation to their superiors in the society. The higher classes in the society strongly opposed any attempt of Shanar women to cover the upper part of their body. Even though the Shanars were industrious, religious, and hard workers, they were under severe caste-based oppression and could not make any progress because of the social structure. The marks of degradations on men and women and the caste rules imposed on women forced them to become subjects of exploitation for years.

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<sup>98</sup> Samuel Mateer, *Native Life in Travancore*, 292.

<sup>99</sup> Agur C. M., *Church History of Travancore*, 585-586.

<sup>100</sup> Agur C. M., *Church History of Travancore*, Appendix liii.

<sup>101</sup> Mateer, *The Land of Charity*, 41.

## 2.2. Socio-religious Movements and Kerala Society

### 2.2.1. The Upper-cloth Struggle among the Shanars

During the period of Colonel John Munro, the Resident, and Diwan of Kerala in 1812, the Shanar women expressed their social aspiration of wearing an upper cloth. However, the Nairs and Brahmins opposed and complained to the British government. As a result, the government issued an order in 1814 regulating the dress of women.<sup>102</sup> This order allowed Shanar women to wear jackets called *Kuppayam* like Syrian Christians.<sup>103</sup> This order did not encourage the Shanar women since Christianity did not influence them in south Kerala. After the founding of the London Missionary Society and the spread of Protestant Christianity in South Kerala, the Christian converts from Shanar community had the confidence to talk about wearing upper cloth. The support of the L.M.S. missionaries strengthened the Shanar Christian women to wear the upper cloth, and in May 1822 in Kalkulam and Erenial Taluks, they appeared in marketplaces with an upper cloth.<sup>104</sup> Meanwhile, the Nairs lodged a complaint to the court against the Shanar Christian women for wearing an upper clothe in public places. Many Nairs and higher caste men had hostile feelings against the missionaries and missionary wives for educating Shanar women to act contrary to the old rules and to begin to clothe themselves with an upper cloth.<sup>105</sup> In 1828, the Nairs and the Brahmins together organized an attack against Shanar Christian women. They harassed and molested Christian women in markets and public places. They stripped the Shanar women of their jackets, plundered their houses, and burnt down many schoolrooms and chapels.<sup>106</sup> The wealthy Nairs from many villages in South Kerala pooled in their contributions of money to build up a fund to organize violence against the Shanars and also to protect the perpetrators of crimes.<sup>107</sup> The higher caste men regularly gathered themselves at the marketplaces to attack Shanar women, and

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<sup>102</sup> Agur C.M., *Church History of Travancore*, appendix liii.

<sup>103</sup> Aiya, *The Travancore State Manual*, 525.

<sup>104</sup> Gladstone, *Protestant Christianity and People's Movements in Kerala*, 83.

<sup>105</sup> Mackenzie G.T., *Christianity in Travancore* (Trivandrum: The Travancore Government Press, 1901).

<sup>106</sup> Agur C.M., *Church History of Travancore*, 826.

<sup>107</sup> Agur C.M., *Church History of Travancore*, 836.

this brutal attack repeated for weeks. Many Shanar men and women went to the mountainsides for safety and migrated to Tirunelveli.<sup>108</sup>

After 1858, when the British government took over the administration of India from the English East India Company, Queen Victoria made a proclamation that her government would pay due respect to the ancient rights and customs of India,<sup>109</sup> and once again the Shanar Christians faced severe persecution. Samuel Mateer observed that some of the expressions of the proclamation of the Queen were either erroneously or willfully misinterpreted by the higher castes, as forbidding missionary efforts and public proclamation of the Christian truth.<sup>110</sup> The organized Nairs under the leadership of local government officials, who were also Nairs, began to attack and assault the Shanar Christian women who were wearing an upper cloth in the public places. They stripped women who wore anything above their waist, plundered their homes and imprisoned their men. In spite of this, the Christian Shanar women showed courage to appear in public with their upper bodies covered. Christians received encouragement from the L.M.S. missionaries to cover their upper part of the bodies with jackets from mission centers. Even the non-Christian Shanar women wore coloured cloths and covered their upper part of the body. Many Shanar women went to the markets with their upper clothes, and the Nairs believed that they had the permission to strip off the Shanar women. However, the Nairs did not allow the Shanar women to present their complaints. The government proclaimed on 27<sup>th</sup> December 1858 with a strict warning against the Shanars, and left the Nairs untouched.<sup>111</sup> The proclamation of the government caused a severe revolt after January 1859 since the Shanar men and women decided to fight for the rights of their women to cover their body. The Shanar women continued to appear in markets and streets with their upper cloths.

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<sup>108</sup> Robert L. Hardgrave, *The Nadars of Tamilnad: The Political Culture of a Community in Change* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1969), 63.

<sup>109</sup> For a full text of the proclamation, see 'Proclamation by the Queen in Council, to the Princes, Chiefs, and People of India' (Governor-General at Allahabad, 1 November 1858); Cf., Chhabra G.S., *Advanced Study in the History of Modern India, Vol. II* (New Delhi: Lotus Press, 2011), 264.

<sup>110</sup> Mateer, *The Land of Charity: A Descriptive Account of Travancore and Its People with Special Reference to Missionary Labour*, 298.

<sup>111</sup> Yesudas R.N., *A People's Revolt in Travancore: A Backward Class Movement for Social Freedom*, 170.

Meanwhile, the news of the acts of Shanars to protect the rights of their women to cover the upper parts of their body reached outside South Travancore and the Shanars of Tirunelveli received this news with enthusiasm. The Shanars showed excitement to protect their women and prevent the violent activities of higher caste men against women.<sup>112</sup> The Shanar community of South Kerala solicited support from the Shanars of Tirunelveli to come and help them in their efforts to fight for their rights.<sup>113</sup> As a result, the Shanars of Tirunelveli gathered together to enter South Kerala to join the Shanar community to fight for their rights.<sup>114</sup> The Shanars of Tirunelveli prepared themselves to resist the outrages of the high castes of south Kerala.

The Governor of Madras Sir Charles Trevelyan ordered the Resident to force the Travancore government to change the existing rules for Shanar women due to this agitation. The Travancore government prepared a proclamation granting the Shanar women the liberty to cover the upper parts of their body. Accordingly, the Travancore government published the declaration of the rights of Shanar women to wear upper cloths on 26<sup>th</sup> July 1859.<sup>115</sup> Even though this proclamation did not fully satisfy the aspirations of the Shanar community, the people's revolt for the rights and privileges of women was a significant event in the social history of Kerala. After the proclamation, the Shanar women showed the boldness to obtain their rights to dress decently. The people's revolt for the right of women to wear clothes above their waists created the background for further social and religious changes in South Kerala and Tirunelveli.

### **2.2.2. Chattampi Swamikal and the Nair Reform Movement**

Chattampi Swamikal was a Hindu social and communal reformer of the 19<sup>th</sup> century who believed that women formed an integral part of the human society and

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<sup>112</sup> 'Rev. Baylis to Lieutenant General W. Cullen, British Resident,' 10 January 1859; Yesudas R.N., *A People's Revolt in Travancore: A Backward Class Movement for Social Freedom*, 181.

<sup>113</sup> Madhava Rao, 'The Dewan's Report to the Resident' (Trivandrum: Huzoor Cutcherry, 12 February 1859); Yesudas R.N., *A People's Revolt in Travancore: A Backward Class Movement for Social Freedom*, 209.

<sup>114</sup> 'W. Cullen to T. Pycroft, Chief Secretary to Government,' 18 January 1859; Yesudas R.N., *A People's Revolt in Travancore: A Backward Class Movement for Social Freedom*, 189.

<sup>115</sup> Mateer, *The Land of Charity: A Descriptive Account of Travancore and Its People with Special Reference to Missionary Labour*, 305.

must be given respect, dignity, and treated like the male counterparts or must be regarded as more pious than the males in the society. He started a social reform movement in Kerala amid the nineteenth-century social struggles in Kerala society. He was born in 1854 and brought up at Kollor town in South Kerala in the Nair community.<sup>116</sup> He was known as ‘Chattampi,’ which implies warrior or pioneer of the Reformation. He was a man of enlightenment, a researcher in Hindu theory and yogic practices and knowledgeable in different branches of learning like Mathematics, Ayurveda, and Music. He belonged to the Nair caste, and his vital concern was to develop the social and religious existence of the general population of his caste.<sup>117</sup> As a social and religious reformer, his primary accomplishment was that he could stir the social cognizance of the Nairs and influence them to battle against the social wrongs that had crawled into their rank. He was one of the early reformers who battled against the disasters of casteism and the dominance of Brahmanism to break the old traditions, social practices, and superstitions in the society through his writings. Chattampi Swamikal wrote and published *Vedadhikara Nirupanam*, and he shattered the myth of Brahmins right to the monopoly of Vedic learning and asserted the right of every Hindu, irrespective of caste, and to have free access to the treasures of the Vedic lore.<sup>118</sup> He argued against the supremacy of Brahmins in the society and encouraged the non-Brahmins to struggle to regain their past glory, power, and supremacy. He affirmed in his writings and talks that in Kerala, no community could regard itself superior to any other community and therefore caste feelings could have no recognition in Kerala.<sup>119</sup> According to Sreedhara Menon, his significant contribution was that “he could arouse the social consciousness of the members of his caste.”<sup>120</sup> Though he was against the work of Christian missionaries and the claims of Christianity, he had set up a background for the development of social change and

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<sup>116</sup> Vasudev P.G., *Maharshi Chattampi Swamikal-Biography* (Thuravoor: Sree Narasimhavelasom Book Depot, 1971), 11.

<sup>117</sup> Gladstone, *Protestant Christianity and People’s Movements in Kerala*, 214-215.

<sup>118</sup> Chattampi Swamikal, *Vedadhikara Nirupanam (Mal.) [A Critical Study on Vedas]* (Quilon: Panman Ashram, 1918), 23–25.

<sup>119</sup> Chattampi Swamikal, *Pracheena Malayalam (Mal.) [Ancient Malayalam]* (Quilon: Panman Ashram, 1913), 132–33.

<sup>120</sup> Menon, *Social and Cultural History of Kerala*, 202.

religious reformation. Most importantly, he had set up a positive connection with the marginalized castes especially the *Izhavas* in their social struggles.

### 2.2.3. Sree Narayana Guru and the Social Movement among the *Izhavas*

Sree Narayana Guru was a social reformer and religious teacher who worked for the social renaissance of *Izhava* community in Kerala. He instructed his community to maintain their self-dignity and avoid social flaws of addiction of alcoholism and gambling. He focused on condemning the division of people and society based on caste and the Brahmanical dominance of Hinduism. He was born to a family of *Izhavas* on 20 August in the year 1856 when there was a pre-dominance of caste culture in Kerala, and the *Izhavas* were considered to be *avarna* due to which Sree Narayana had to face a lot of discrimination and suffering.<sup>121</sup> Narayana Guru fought against all the unnecessary and meaningless customs, which were practiced among the *Izhavas*. The works done by Sree Narayana led to the initiation of the reform movement in Kerala, which was supported by a vast number of people not only from the *Izhava* community but other communities as well. Sree Narayana Guru did not accept the prevalence of caste system and dejected the notion of any kind of caste hierarchy in the society and tried to spread awareness among the people about the new values and morals that must be built within to improve the character of the individual, which propagates social equality, and freedom of spirituality.<sup>122</sup> Sree Narayana laid stress on the promotion and adaptation of spiritual approaches to bring about a change in the social paradigm. According to him, “the inclusion of spirituality will raise the intellectual levels of the individuals and they will be an affluent position to bring about positive changes in the society.”<sup>123</sup> Consequently, Narayana Guru initiated a movement of establishment and consecration of new temples beginning from Aruvippuram in South Kerala in 1887.<sup>124</sup> It was the privilege of Brahmins alone

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<sup>121</sup> Nataraja Guru, *The Word of the Guru: The Life and Teachings of Sri Narayana Guru* (Ernakulam: Palco Publishing House, 1963), 253–54.

<sup>122</sup> Mitra C.R., *Sree Narayana Guru and Social Revolution* (Cherthala: Mitraji Publications, 1979), 20.

<sup>123</sup> Viswambaran, M., *Narayana Guru: Biography* (Kottayam: National Book Society, 1980), 23.

<sup>124</sup> Velayudhan P.S., ‘Sree Narayana Guru: A Peep into Life and Work,’ ed. Priyadarshana G., *SNDP Yogam Platinum Jubilee Souvenir*, 2010, 3–4.

at that point to sanctify temples, and when Brahmins criticized the right of an *Izhava* to establish and consecrate a temple, Sree Narayana Guru established the *Izhava* Siva and not the Brahmin Siva.<sup>125</sup> It was a progressive demonstration in the social history of Kerala, indicating the restoration of contaminated castes.

In 1903, Sri Narayana Guru formed the Sri Narayana Dharma Paripalana Yogam. Narayana Guru through his socio-religious movement and works attempted to challenge the caste system in the society, and he made efforts to form a casteless society through this movement. It was solicited as a religious and social organization with Sri Narayana Guru as the lifetime president.<sup>126</sup> Teachings and efforts of Narayana Guru provided a strong foundation for the struggles for the socio-religious emancipation of the people in Kerala society. After assessing the contribution of Narayana Guru, Gladstone says of two significant impacts of this movement. First, the movement met with general success in their struggles for the socio-economic emancipation of the *Izhavas*. Secondly, it helped the *Izhavas* to remain within the fold of Hinduism at a time when there was a strong tendency to convert to Christianity.<sup>127</sup>

#### **2.2.4. Ayyankali and the Renaissance among the Pulayars**

Ayyankali was a revolutionary social reformer and the torchbearer of the oppressed classes of people and their protests in the state. Though he championed the struggle of Pulayars in Travancore primarily, he is counted as the leader of all untouchable Dalit castes in the social history of Kerala. He was born in a Pulaya family at Vengannoor in South Kerala in 1863.<sup>128</sup> He received no education as caste restrictions denied such rights to oppressed castes. From the age of thirty, he dedicated his entire life to fight for his people against their social disabilities through the ages and for their social advancement.<sup>129</sup> In his revolt against caste oppression and

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<sup>125</sup> Guru, *The Word of the Guru: The Life and Teachings of Sri Narayana Guru*, 140.

<sup>126</sup> Jayaprakash M.S., *A Study of the Izhavas in Kerala* (Kollam: Gurukula Publication, 1999), 71.

<sup>127</sup> Gladstone, *Protestant Christianity and People's Movements in Kerala*, 262-263.

<sup>128</sup> Chentharasseri, T.H.P., *Ayyan Kali: A Biography* (Trivandrum: Prabhath Book House, 1979), 42.

<sup>129</sup> A. Sreedhara Menon, *A Survey of Kerala History* (D C Books, 2007), 317.

social inequality, which existed in the Kerala society, Sri Narayana Guru and the *Izhava* movement profoundly influenced him.

Ayyankali, the action-oriented social reformer, often intervened in a dynamic way of confronting opposition and dared to employ even physical force in the unavoidable circumstances. He questioned the travel restrictions imposed on the Pulayas and other castes in the society.<sup>130</sup> The initial step that Ayyankali took in the battle for social reformation was to battle for the privilege of Pulayas and other untouchable castes to stroll along the open streets. In 1893, Ayyankali organized his first challenge by going in a bullock cart up and down an open street. He sorted out a gathering of young fellows from his locale and influenced them to go bullockcart ride along on the precluded open streets in South Kerala. Ayyankali's infringement of the deep-rooted bans met with fierce dissatisfaction by the upper castes. In 1898, a gathering of Pulayas drove by with Ayyankali along open streets in South Kerala, which violated the caste rules and caused bloody revolts throughout the state.<sup>131</sup>

Though he was not formally educated, he was fully conscious of the pulse of the social realities and processes. He had the firm opinion that if the oppressed classes of people were to have their rights, they must have a proper education. To educate his community, Ayyankali opened pre-primary schools in south Kerala. He formed a social organization with a firm objective for the emancipation of Pulayas by the name 'Sadhu Paripalana Sangham.'<sup>132</sup> It can be observed that the social praxis he developed was profoundly humanistic and democratic, though lacking in philosophical refinement. The movement he launched was rich in action. Subtly and without any fuss, confining the use of violence to the most unavoidable of situations, he infringed many a caste law and entered the public sphere of Travancore with the people of his caste.<sup>133</sup>

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<sup>130</sup> Appan Vanchiyoor, *Ayyankali* (Trivandrum: Kerala Harijan Sahitya Pravartaka Co-operative Society, 1984), 8.

<sup>131</sup> Chentharasseri, T.H.P., *Ayyan Kali: A Biography*, 15.

<sup>132</sup> Chentharasseri, T.H.P., 55.

<sup>133</sup> Saradamony, K, *Emergence of a Slave Caste: Pulayas of Kerala* (New Delhi: People's Publishing House, 1980), 147.

## 2.3. The Social Context of Kerala in the First Half of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century

### 2.3.1. The Growth and Impact of Social and Communal Organizations

The social and communal organizations such as Sri Narayana Dharma Paripalana Yogam, Nair Service Society, and Sadhu Jana Paripalana Sangham had critical roles in Kerala society since these movements in Kerala produced social and communal changes. In social change, the caste-affiliated organizations had more noteworthiness than the caste itself and the Kerala society in the beginning decades of the twentieth-century depicted an interactive exhibition hall of social changes.

Sri Narayana Guru Dharma Paripalana Yogam through the socio-religious lessons of Narayana Guru and the social works turned out to be a movement in the socio-religious and political situation of Kerala as some of the youngsters turned towards the reformatory snapshots of Sri Narayana Guru and voluntarily enabled the renaissance of the society.<sup>134</sup> After the establishment of the Shivagiri Matt at Varkala in the course of time, it formed into a place for pilgrimage, contemplation, and religious reformation. A.K. Pavitrana observes, “The Guru laid the axe at the dead root of tradition, which for over three thousand years has sapped the vigour and vitality of the people.”<sup>135</sup> The Nairs of South Kerala got involved in the reformation activities of the Nair society under the social organization of the Nair Service Society and worked for social change.<sup>136</sup> The Sadhu Jana Paripalana Sangham was a social reformation movement among the oppressed classes of people in Kerala. They strengthened the struggles of Pulayas in Kerala against the social oppression by the higher castes.

### 2.3.2. The Prathyaksha Raksha Daiva Sabha and Dalit Christians

The *Prathyaksha Raksha Daiva Sabha* (The Church of God of Visible Salvation) developed during the beginning of the twentieth century as a result of the impact of the social and religious organizations of Dalit Christians in Kerala. Poykayil Kumaran was born in a family belonged to *Paraya* community, and his parents and grandparents were laborers for a Syrian Christian landlord. At the age of five, young Kumaran was baptized in the Marthoma Syrian Church and renamed as Yohannan

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<sup>134</sup> Jayaprakash M.S., *A Study of the Izhavas in Kerala*, 81.

<sup>135</sup> Pavitrana A.K., *Narayana Guru and One World* (Madras: Narayana Gurukula, 1963), 20.

<sup>136</sup> Mannathu Padmanabhan, *Reminiscences of My Life*, Translated into English by Prof. P.C. Menon (Changanachery: Nair Service Society, 1998), 48.

(John).<sup>137</sup> At the age of nineteen, he experienced the existence of caste discrimination in the form of untouchability in the Marthoma church. On one occasion he witnessed that the Syrian Christians forced the Dalits to take away a decomposed body of a Dalit Christian from the graveyard of Marthoma Syrian Church.<sup>138</sup> Since he realized that the followers of his new religion declined to relate to the Dalit community, he decided to leave the Marthoma Syrian Church. Later he was attracted to the teachings of CMS missionaries, and he became an active preacher of the Anglican Church in Kerala.<sup>139</sup> However, he found caste discrimination within the Anglican Church; he left the CMS missionaries and the Anglican Church and joined the Brethren Mission in Kerala for some time.<sup>140</sup> Later he decided to start a Dalit Christian movement in Kerala.<sup>141</sup> The continuation of caste prejudice forced him to come out of all existing churches, and he started a Dalit movement. He took a group of Dalit Christians with him and started a Dalit liberation movement named *Prathyaksha Raksha Daiva Sabha* since then he preached the message of the Bible in villages.<sup>142</sup>

Yohannan's act of the formation of an independent and indigenous Dalit movement was a productive reaction against the aggregate caste discrimination in the society, which Christian churches, failed to make. Christian denominations could not protect its adherents against the hard practices with regards to untouchability and separation in the places of worship. Through *Prathyaksha Raksha Daiva Sabha*, Yohannan anticipated the liberation of the Dalit community in Kerala. He asserted

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<sup>137</sup> Vijayan Kangazha, *Sree Kumara – A Biography* (Thrissur: Gurudevan Publications, 1978), 8.

<sup>138</sup> Joseph P.C., *Poikayil Sree Kumara Guru: Jeevithavum Darsanavum (Mal.) [Poikayil Sree Kumara Guru: Life and Vision]* (Thiruvalla: Puzha Books, 1999), 48.

<sup>139</sup> Kangazha, *Sree Kumara – A Biography*, 10.

<sup>140</sup> Simon K.V., *Malankarayile Verpadusabhakalude Charithram (Mal.) [The History of Brethren Churches in Malankara]*, Reprinted (Thiruvalla: Satyam Publications, 1999), 115.

<sup>141</sup> 'Poikayil Yohannan,' *Travancore and Cochin Diocesan Record* XXII, no. 4 (April 1912): 8.

<sup>142</sup> Swamy V.V., *Kerala Navodhanavum Prathyaksha Raksha Daiva Sabhayum (Mal.) [Kerala Renaissance and The Church of Visible Salvation]* (Eraviperoor: Adiyar Deepam Books, 2010), 118.

that the salvation-based spirituality of Christianity must be instant, immediate, and one must realize the salvation and heaven on earth itself.<sup>143</sup>

### **2.3.3. The Rise of Nationalism as an Influential Movement in Kerala Society**

The impact of the formation of the Indian National Congress in 1885 contributed towards the spirit of patriotism and the growth of the Nationalist Movement in Kerala. As part of the organization of Indian National Congress in Kerala, the first meeting of the Council was held in Kozhikode in 1904. Political action in Kerala got another driving force with the flare-up of the First World War and the spread of the Home Rule Movement.<sup>144</sup> This movement, though was started in Bengal, Home Rule groups grew in many places in Kerala, and the exercises of Congressmen got active support from the general population. In 1916 and 1917, the yearly gatherings of the District Congress Committee were held with extraordinary exhibit under the name of the Malabar District Political Conference. Resolutions were embraced at these gatherings, requesting self-government for India and the release of political detainees. In Kerala, the activities of the Indian National Congress and the Home Rule movement created an eager political awakening.<sup>145</sup> The people who were influenced by the Home Rule movement in Kerala began to be involved in the political demonstration of demanding freedom from foreign rule. The people expressed the spirit of 'self-determination' and 'anti-British' feelings in the meetings. There was intense political agitation in Kerala expressing dissatisfaction with the British rule. During the period between 1920-21, there were two student strikes in the college at Kottayam and in the schools at Thrissur against the British controlled administration.<sup>146</sup> However, these strikes against the college and school authorities were the opportunity for the local people to come together in a spirit of nationalism.

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<sup>143</sup> Hunt W. S., 'Some Sects in Travancore,' *Travancore and Cochin Diocesan Record* XXIV, no. 2 (February 1914): 15.

<sup>144</sup> Patabhi P.B. Sitaramayya, *The History of the Indian National Congress*, vol. I (Mumbai: Padma Publications, 1946), 43–44.

<sup>145</sup> Menon P.K.K., *The History of Freedom Movement in Kerala*, vol. II (Trivandrum: Government Press, 1972), 66.

<sup>146</sup> Gladstone, *Protestant Christianity and People's Movements in Kerala*, 313–14.

### 2.3.4. Temple Entry Movements

In the beginning decades of the twentieth century, the temples in Kerala were considered as holy places, and the lower caste Hindus were not permitted to enter into the temple premises.<sup>147</sup> Lack of physical cleanliness and poverty disqualified the low castes from entering the prohibited area near the temples. The low castes Hindus were even not permitted to use freely the public roads and the roads leading to the temple premises.<sup>148</sup> The educated people of Travancore did not support the ill-treatment of the society at the negation of the right and privilege of the low caste people to worship and to walk on the streets with other Hindus. They also felt that the total exclusion of low castes people from the temple was a blow to their religion, Hinduism. Thus they advocated temple-entry as a means to remove untouchability.<sup>149</sup>

The movement of the temple-entry began in 1917 by the efforts of C. Raman Thampi, a retired judge of Travancore High Court. In a public meeting, he demanded the opening of all state temples to the *avarnas*.<sup>150</sup> In 1919 and 1920, T.K. Madhavan, the editor of the Malayalam weekly, *Desabhimani* and Kunju Panikar, the member of Sri Mulam Popular Assembly pleaded with the government to recognize the rights of the *avarnas* to enter all Hindu temples for worship. However, this plea was not considered initially. In 1923, in one of the sessions of the Congress Committee at Kakinada, they decided to form an Anti-Untouchability Committee for the upliftment of the marginalized classes of people. The formation of this committee and the support of the Congress leaders impacted the growth of Temple-entry movement in Kerala.

#### 2.3.4.1. Vaikom Satyagraha

The Vaikom Satyagraha was a reform movement to get entry into the temple at Vaikom in Central Kerala. At Vaikom, access to the temple had two streets, one for the high caste Hindus and the other for the *Izhavas*, *Pulayas*, and the low caste

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<sup>147</sup> Menon P.K.K., *The History of Freedom Movement in Kerala*, vol. II (Trivandrum: Government Press, 1972), 67.

<sup>148</sup> Aiya, *The Travancore State Manual*, 45.

<sup>149</sup> Thomas V. Samuel, *One Caste, One Religion, One God: A Study of Sree Narayana Guru* (New Delhi: Sterling Publishers, 1977), 23.

<sup>150</sup> Menon P.K.K., *The History of Freedom Movement in Kerala*, II: 67.

Hindus. However, the depressed classes of people could not enter a specific area, and entry further closer to the temple was restricted.<sup>151</sup> In 1924, under the leadership of the Congress party, the depressed classes demanded the permission to walk on the roads around the Vaikom temple. Under the capable initiative of T.K. Madhavan, on 30 March 1924, a Satyagraha began before the temple at Vaikom. Mahatma Gandhi supported the Vaikom Satyagraha movement and the depressed classes of people for their rights for worship.<sup>152</sup> Gandhi's involvement in the temple entry movement inspired the marginalized people to understand their rights and privileges in society and land.

#### **2.3.4.2. Guruvayoor Satyagraha**

Another significant social and religious movement happened at Guruvayoor in 1932. The discouraged classes like the *Nayadis*, *Pulayas*, *Cherumas*, and *Kanikkars* were not permitted to enter the temple at Guruvayoor, or the streets surrounding the temple.<sup>153</sup> K. Kelappan, who was a social activist at that time always looked to influence the general population to make them understand the refusal of necessary privileges of citizenship to worship. There were reports of ridiculous attacks on the marginalized classes by the individuals from the higher castes. The temple authorities set up prickly fences around the temple to keep away the depressed classes from entering the premises of the temple.<sup>154</sup> In this context, a Satyagraha was arranged; *avarna* volunteers were posted at each gate of the temple to try to enter into the temple. However, later the temple authorities began to use physical force and brutally beatup the *Saytagrahis*. The depressed classes of people then decided to enter the temple by force. Finally, the Zamorin of Calicut declined to open the temple to *avarnas* and ordered the temple to be closed down in 1932.

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<sup>151</sup> Ravindran T.K., *Eight Furlongs of Freedom* (New Delhi: Light and Life Publications, 1980), 53.

<sup>152</sup> Gladstone, *Protestant Christianity and People's Movements in Kerala*, 404.

<sup>153</sup> Menon P.K.K., *The History of Freedom Movement in Kerala*, II:266.

<sup>154</sup> Menon P.K.K., II:344.

### 2.3.4.3. Temple Entry Proclamation

The temple entry movement in Kerala warned the Hindu community that some of the members of the depressed classes of people would leave the Hindu religion and join Christianity if their demand was not met. The Sree Narayana Dharma Paripalana Yogam branches in Kerala passed a resolution to discard Hinduism and to execute the threat of mass conversion.<sup>155</sup> This resolution provoked the *savarna* Hindus for the renaissance of Hinduism in Kerala. Gandhi wanted to accommodate the depressed classes within the higher forms of Hinduism to put an end to their seeking Christianity.<sup>156</sup> He appealed to the higher caste Hindus to open temples to the *Harijans*, and made a strong plea to the government not to give state protection for untouchability. The King of Travancore then appointed a committee, and the committee made various proposals to permit *avarnas* to enter the temples and to give them free access to public roads and rest houses in Travancore. Finally, on 12<sup>th</sup> November 1936, the King of Travancore issued “the Temple Entry Proclamation.”<sup>157</sup>

## 2.4. The Social Context of Kerala during the Middle Period of 20<sup>th</sup> Century

Kerala society, during the middle of the twentieth century, experienced the dynamic and enormous commitment of some groups of people who had a radical ideology in reconstructing Kerala society. Historically, the dawn of the radical ideologies in Kerala can be traced to the epoch of socio-religious movements against the disgusting and discriminating social practices, which were common in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries in Kerala society. The social and reform movements that opposed the existing social structure such as the Nair Service Society, Sree Narayana Dharma Paripalana Yogam, and Ayyankali movement stirred the people and equipped the land for the larger socio-political movements which shaped the contours of the new structure of Kerala society. The socially reformed context of Kerala society resulted in a social transition that was, indeed, radical in the sense that challenged the previously existing social, religious, and political perceptions.

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<sup>155</sup> Philip P.O., ‘Unrest among the Ezhavas of Travancore,’ *National Council of Churches in India Review* IX, no. 3 (March 1936): 302.

<sup>156</sup> Gladstone, *Protestant Christianity and People’s Movements in Kerala*, 408–9.

<sup>157</sup> Menon P.K.K., *The History of Freedom Movement in Kerala*, II:344.

### 2.4.1. Emergence and Impact of Marxism and Communist Ideologies in Kerala

The writings of Karl Marx and Frederick Engels began to influence Indian intellectuals from the middle of the nineteenth century when they found Marx's and Engel's ardent interest in Indian political affairs against British rule in India.<sup>158</sup> In the first decade of the twentieth century, some of the Indians who were influenced by the writings of Marx and Engels attempted to introduce the theories and ideologies in India.<sup>159</sup> During the time of Bolshevik Revolution in Russia, some of the Indian radicals such as Abdul Sattar Khairi and Abdul Zabbar Khairi went to Russia to convey their solidarity with Lenin, which became a sensational news item for Indian intellectuals.<sup>160</sup> The inaugural session of the Communist International in Moscow in March 1919 and its aim of supporting national liberation movements of the oppressed peoples in the colonies to facilitate the breakdown of imperialism impacted many Indians. Thus a revolutionist leader like M.N. Roy established an Indian Communist Centre and a training school for Indian revolutionaries at Tashkent.<sup>161</sup>

The history of the emergence of Marxism and Communist ideologies in Kerala was linked with the national movement and the struggle against the British rule in India. It is imperative to see that the communist ideologies emerged in Kerala alongside non-cooperation movement against foreign rule.<sup>162</sup> As part of the national movement in Kerala, its leaders got involved in the activities of a social movement to help in the struggles of the agricultural workers who worked for the landlords as *Kudiyans or* tenants. The leaders of nationalism gathered the tenants in different places in Kerala and organized a Conference of Tenants at Ernakulum in April 1928. This conference demanded the enactment of Tenancy Protection Legislation Act in

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<sup>158</sup> *History of the Communist Movement in India*, vol. I (New Delhi: CPI (M) Publications, 2005), 7.

<sup>159</sup> An article in English with the names of Marx and Engels published in India in 1912 in the *Modern Review*. The biography of Marx also published in Indian languages 1912. Koteswara M.V.S. Rao, *Communist Parties and United Front Experiment in Kerala and West Bengal* (Hyderabad: Prajasakti Book House, 2003), 82.

<sup>160</sup> Rao, 82.

<sup>161</sup> Nossiter T.J., *Marxist State Governments in India: Politics, Economics, and Society* (London: Pinter Publishers, 1988), 14.

<sup>162</sup> Pradip Bose, *Communism and Communist Systems-Some Reflections* (New Delhi: Deep and Deep Publications, 1995), 346.

Kerala and decided to enhance the movement into the next phase as a mass movement.<sup>163</sup>

In the 1930s, many educated people within the national movement in Kerala came under the influence of Communist ideologies.<sup>164</sup> The national movement leaders in Kerala such as P. Krishnapillai, E.M.S. Namboodiripad, and A.K. Gopalan actively participated in the mainstream of national movement as ardent followers of the Indian National Congress as well as they practiced their ideological commitment to Marxism-Leninism.<sup>165</sup> According to Nossiter, Communism and its ideologies, emerged in Kerala due to the transformation of the Gandhian Congress into Congress Socialist and finally into Communism.<sup>166</sup> In that case, very few of the leaders who were from the very beginning associated with the movement had much knowledge about Marxist ideologies. However, communist ideologies had a firm grip in the Kerala society due to its long involvement in the political and social movements of the working classes of people. The communist movement began to grow in Kerala after the 1930s with an indigenous and social character.

#### **2.4.2. The Growth of Communist Movement in Kerala**

In 1931, a seven member 'Communist League' of educated young men of nationalists from Kerala who were fascinated by the socialist ideas gathered in Trivandrum. The members of this Communist League were Ponnara G. Sreedhar, N.P. Kurukkal, Tiruvattar Tanupillai, Sivasankara Pillai, R.P. Iyer, Taikkat Bhaskaran, and N.C. Sekhar.<sup>167</sup> They translated the *Communist Manifesto* and some portions of it into Malayalam, and published and distributed the same secretly among

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<sup>163</sup> Namboodiripad E. M. S., *Kerala: Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow* (Calcutta: National Book Agency Pvt. Ltd., 1968), 112.

<sup>164</sup> Sarvepalli Gopal, *Jawaharlal Nehru – An Anthology* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1980), 300.

<sup>165</sup> Kurup K.K.N., *Agrarian Struggles in Kerala* (Trivandrum: CBH Publications, 1989), 1.

<sup>166</sup> Nossiter T.J., *Communism in Kerala: A Study in Political Adaptation* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1982), 46.

<sup>167</sup> Sekhar N.C., *Agniveedhikal – Atmakatha (Mal.) [Firepath - Autobiography]* (Cannoor: North Kerala Printers and Publishing House, 1984), 190.

the locals.<sup>168</sup> The nationalists who were influenced by the Communist League criticized Gandhian methods of Satyagraha and the policies of the Indian National Congress; and considered those as regressive. Soon they began to develop an intellectual movement to fight against British imperialism in Kerala ideologically. More young men such as K.C. George, T.V. Thomas, M.N. Govindan Nair, and P.T. Punnose who were influenced by the Communist ideologies demanded a responsible people-elected government and a movement for the labour and working-class people to protect their rights.<sup>169</sup> In 1937, a nucleus of a Communist group in Kerala was formed, and they began to work secretly in Kerala to slowly impart the communist ideologies through their study classes.<sup>170</sup>

One of the crucial factors that contributed to the growth of Communism in Kerala was that Communist ideologies received acceptance among the labourers and workers in Kerala. That was the reason why the leaders of the national movement in Kerala could successfully mobilize the working classes of people against the existing social structure in Kerala. Robin Jeffrey observes that the social disintegration and the collapse of the matrilineal social system that governed the lives of most caste-Hindus in Kerala due to the development of education and new economic opportunities was another reason for the growth of Communism in Kerala.<sup>171</sup> It is apparent to see another significant reason for the growth of Communism in Kerala as the ordinary people considered the Communist movement as the continuation of social-reform movements in Kerala.<sup>172</sup> The Communist movement imbibed the tradition of social reform and motivated the suffering people of the society towards a people's struggle for the emancipation of the downtrodden classes of people in the Kerala society.

During the 1940s, the agricultural laborers in Kerala who were influenced by the ideologies of communism and socialism began a new movement called *Karshaka*

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<sup>168</sup> Namboodiripad E. M. S., *Kerala Society, and Politics: A Historical Survey* (New Delhi: National Book Center, 1984), 134.

<sup>169</sup> Namboodiripad E. M. S., 141.

<sup>170</sup> This group consisted of four members. They were P. Krishnapillai, E.M.S. Namboodiripad, N.C. Sekhar and K. Damodharan. Namboodiripad E. M. S., *How I Became a Communist* (Trivandrum: Chintha Publishers, 1979), 211.

<sup>171</sup> Robin Jeffrey, 'Matriliny, Marxism and the Birth of the Communist Party in Kerala, 1930-40,' *Journal of Asian Studies* XXXIII, no. 9 (November 1978): 79.

<sup>172</sup> Namboodiripad E. M. S., *Kerala; Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow*, 123.

*Thozhilaly Union* or 'Agricultural Labourers Union.'<sup>173</sup> Through this movement, they began to ask unanimously to redress their grievances to the landlords. Soon the workers in central Kerala who were working in the coir factories began to demand their rights and privileges from the factory owners.<sup>174</sup> In this context, the Kerala unit of the Communist Party of India officially emerged as a political and social movement.<sup>175</sup> From its emergence, the party took over the agitation and the struggles of labourers and working-class people in Kerala. The Communist ideologies of the perfection of humanity and classless society provided hope to the suffering and working class people.

#### **2.4.3. The Communist Movement and Its Impact on Dalits and Dalit Christians in Kerala**

A significant portion of the Dalit community who were labourers and working-class people from Kerala got attracted to the Communist movement. The people belonging to the *Izhavas*, *Pulayas*, and *Paraya* caste communities took part in different agitation movement against the landlords. The Communist movement in Kerala organized a revolt of the working class people in Central Kerala named Punnapra-Vayalar revolt which demanded the insurrection of the labour class and the agricultural community.<sup>176</sup> The communist cells in different places in Kerala among the working class people gathered the coir workers, rickshaw pullers, and employees of the common services in hotels in many places and organized trade unions. This trade union movement concentrated on the welfare of the members and demanded the rights and privileges of the workers. The Communist movement organized associations for toddy tappers, agricultural labourers, coir or rope workers, spinning and weaving mill workers, tea estate labourers, and oil mill workers and protested against their poor economic conditions and low-class working conditions. Thus, many

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<sup>173</sup> Namboodiripad E. M. S., *Kerala Society, and Politics: A Historical Survey*, 169.

<sup>174</sup> Namboodiripad E. M. S., *Keralthile Communist Prasthanam: Uthbhavaum Valarchayum (Mal.) [The History of Communist Movement in Kerala]* (Trivandrum: Deshabimani Book House, 1952), 15.

<sup>175</sup> The formation of the party was declared on January 26, 1940, through writing on the wall using tar. Krishnan T.V., *Kerala's First Communist: Life of Sakhav Krishnapillai* (New Delhi: National Book Center, 1971), 72.

<sup>176</sup> Oommen T.K., *From Mobilization to Institutionalization: The Dynamics of Agrarian Movement in Twentieth-Century Kerala* (Mumbai: Prakasham Publications, 1985), 75.

from the Dalit background embraced communism and became the members of the communist-favored associations. The Dalits and working class people wholeheartedly accepted Communism as an ideology for their transformation of life and transition of the society.

The Communist party focused on supporting the oppressed people groups within Hinduism and the suffering people of other religious minorities. In turn the leaders of the Communist party in Kerala sought to protect the weaker sections and backward caste people in their struggles for the emancipation of their future in the Kerala society.<sup>177</sup> The Communist party even concentrated on strengthening the different programmes to draw the attention of different sections of the people to experience unity and fight against oppression and exploitation in the society. Some of the Dalits who worked as bonded slaves or labourers to some of the landlords in Kerala gained inward courage to resist the exploitation and assert their rights through their participation in the 'labourers union' movement. According to K.N. Panicker, "modern education, ideas of individual liberty, democracy, liberalism, appearance of police and law courts and to a greater extent; the knowledge of the expanse of the world outside their cringing and precarious premises and crooked methodologies; and gradual embourgeoisement of these sections were essential causes of the Dalit movement towards Communism."<sup>178</sup> It is noticeable that the study classes of the Communist movement and the printed literature of Communist ideologies influenced the Dalits and Dalit Christians towards Communism and they became ardent members of the Communist Party in Kerala.

The Dalit Christians who were working for the Syrian Christian masters expressed their need to get justice against the exploitation and actively involved themselves in rebellion movements against the landlords. The Dalit Christians who were members of the Anglican Protestant Church in Kerala expressed their close-knit connection to Communism, and they became members of the Communist party in Kerala.<sup>179</sup> It was the time when the Anglican Church in Kerala was transferring the

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<sup>177</sup> Namboodiripad E. M. S., *Kerala; Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow*, 56.

<sup>178</sup> K.N. Panikkar, *Culture, Ideology, and Hegemony: Intellectuals and Social Consciousness in Colonial India* (New Delhi: Tulika, 1995), 36.

<sup>179</sup> Ninan Koshy, *Caste in the Kerala Churches* (Bangalore: Christian Institute for the Study of Religion and Society, 1968), 12.

leadership and administrative positions from the British missionaries to Indian leaders. When the Dalit Christians noticed that the Dalit leaders were sidelined in this and the Syrian domination in the new leadership and the Indian administration of the church would damage their identity, they showed their affinity towards Communism all the more.<sup>180</sup> Oommen observes, that the Dalit Christians support for the Communist movement and the trust they placed in local communist leaders can be seen as a new way of coming to terms with the shift that was taking place within the Anglican Church.<sup>181</sup> Since the Dalit Christian Community in Kerala realized that the Syrian Christian leadership in Syrian Orthodox Church and the Anglican and CMS churches would not help the Dalit community to eradicate the social exploitation, they wholeheartedly accepted Communism. According to M.M. Thomas, the Dalits received their motivation to struggle for their rights and privileges in the society not from the Church but from the Communist Party.<sup>182</sup> It is true that the Syrian dominated leadership of Christian churches in Kerala failed to address the oppression and the issues of marginalization faced by Dalits in the 1940s which resulted in the inclination of Dalits to Communism. Alexander agrees that the Dalit Christians' attraction towards the Communist party is because of the upper caste Christian community namely the Syrian Christian attitude towards the Dalits.<sup>183</sup> The result of Dalits involvement in the Communist party was that Dalits sensed a spirit of unity among them and experienced an identity of self-dignity in Kerala society. The changed attitude of Dalit Christians contributed towards their involvement in the struggle for the emancipation of justice and equality in the Christian community in Kerala. Soon the transformation of the society at this level impacted the Christian churches in Kerala where the Dalits received opportunities to articulate their voices.

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<sup>180</sup> Alexander P.T., *Towards Understanding the Kerala Background: Church Society and Caste in Kerala* (Bangalore: CISRS, 1960), 19.

<sup>181</sup> Oommen T.K., *From Mobilization to Institutionalization: The Dynamics of Agrarian Movement in Twentieth-Century Kerala* (Mumbai: Prakasham Publications, 1985), 393.

<sup>182</sup> Thomas M.M., *Abraham Malpante Naveekaranam Oru Vyakhyanam (Mal) [Reformation of Abraham Malpan: An Interpretation]* (Kottayam: Ashram Press, 1984), 59.

<sup>183</sup> Alexander P.T., *Towards Understanding the Kerala Background: Church Society and Caste in Kerala*, 19.

## 2.5. The Social Transformation of Kerala in the Last Decades of the Twentieth Century

Since the 1970s the economic, social, religious, and cultural spheres of Kerala changed dramatically. In the last decades of the twentieth century, Kerala society was in a state of cultural and social change during which it was corroding both private life and public institutions. According to Panikkar, “there is a chasm between the ‘modern life of an average Malayalee and the ‘modernism’ of her/his mind. The Physical exterior is highly deceptive as an obscurantist, and the conservative interior is concealed in it.”<sup>184</sup> As a result, personal life was marked by traditionalism and superstition, a pretentious pattern of utilization and insensitivity to social obligations. The public dealings mired in dishonesty, corruption, and violence. Almost all public institutions, which traditionally took care to defend and preserve healthy norms, now succumbed to external pressure.<sup>185</sup> This transformation took place since 1970 and created a long-lasting impact upon the state. The following seven factors played an essential role in this social change.

### 2.5.1. Social Impact of Migration

Migration of Keralites to the Arabian Gulf in large numbers for work took place after the 1970s following the oil price hike and the subsequent boom in oil production. The high density of population, high rate of unemployment and low rate of growth of productive sectors pushed the migrants to the Gulf countries. Rising demand for labourers and relatively elevated levels of wages were the most crucial pull factors behind the migration. Since then, the state of Kerala started to receive the prosperity of external remittances, and that was reflected in the social life of the people. The Gulf migration from Kerala accelerated after the 1980s, and the number progressively increased every year. A research study about Gulf migration sponsored by Centre for Development Studies and the Indian Council of Social Science Research, New Delhi says, “between 1988/92 and 1993/97 the number of emigrants

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<sup>184</sup> Panikkar K. N., *Essays on the History and Society of Kerala* (Thiruvananthapuram: Kerala Council for Historical Research, 2016), 306-307.

<sup>185</sup> Panikkar K. N., 307.

increased by 120%.”<sup>186</sup> This study shows that the estimate of the number of emigrants from Kerala in 1998 was 1.36 million.<sup>187</sup>

One economist says that the change in the standard of living and consumption among the people and in the essential character of the state’s economy is because of the external remittances from the Gulf.<sup>188</sup> Another economist who looks at the impact of Gulf boom on Kerala society opines, “The Gulf migrants make the same changes as made by the commercialization of agriculture in the social and educational sector in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.”<sup>189</sup> Gulf migration is one reason behind the social and cultural transformations that Kerala witnessed in the last two decades of the twentieth century. The impact of Gulf migration on Kerala society took place through remittances and their utilization. The households in Kerala received remittances from the members of the family, friends, and relatives. According to an economic research study, an estimate of the total cash remittances received by Kerala households during a 12-month period in 1998 was Rs. 35,304 million.<sup>190</sup> The total NRI bank deposits, which are made up of institutional remittances, were much more significant. Banking statistics indicate that the NRI deposits in Kerala in 1998 were Rs. 127,350 million.<sup>191</sup> A large number of Gulf immigrant households used a significant part of the remittances they received for the education of their children, to buy lands and also to build luxury/dream houses in Kerala. Gulf migration has changed the family composition in many households. Migration has increased the number of women-headed households and the number of married women living separately from their

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<sup>186</sup> Zachariah K.C., Mathew E.T., and Irudaya S. Rajan, “Impact of Migration on Kerala’s Economy and Society” *Working Paper, Centre for Development Studies, Thiruvananthapuram*, October 1999.

<sup>187</sup> Zachariah K.C., Mathew E.T., and Rajan, 22.

<sup>188</sup> Thomas T.M. Isac, ‘Kerala Vikasanam Annum Innum (Malayalam), [Kerala Development in the Past and Present],’ *Sastragathi Monthly* November (2005): 16–25.

<sup>189</sup> Bahaudheen, K.M., ‘Kerala Purogathiyil Gulf Malayalikalude Panku (Malayalam), [The Role of Keralites in Gulf Towards the Development of the State of Kerala],’ *Madyamam Daily* 09, no. November (2005).

<sup>190</sup> Zachariah K.C., Mathew E.T., and Rajan, ‘Impact of Migration on Kerala’s Economy and Society,’ 23.

<sup>191</sup> Zachariah K.C., Mathew E.T., and Rajan, ‘Impact of Migration on Kerala’s Economy and Society,’ 34.

husbands as the men work in a Gulf country.<sup>192</sup> These remittances, consumerist culture, and migration have had a considerable influence on the socio-cultural, religious, and political dynamics of Kerala.

Even though emigration to the Gulf has brought dynamic changes in the Kerala economy, the consequences of immigration are not uniform throughout Kerala because of the imbalanced distribution of emigrants in different districts of Kerala. One of the significant benefits of immigration is a reduction of unemployment through migration of unemployed labour force. According to a study, immigration has resulted in a decline of unemployment by about 32% and the unemployment rate by about 3% per points.<sup>193</sup> Though the emigrants also include underemployed and employed persons, the available pieces of evidence indicate that the migration has reduced the problem of unemployment to a great extent. Similar to unemployment, emigration has its beneficial effect on the incidence of poverty of the people. The proportion of individuals below poverty has declined by three percentage points annually as a result of remittances received by Kerala households from their kith and kin abroad.

There are studies, which establish that immigration has its implications for the demand for education, and health. Emigration has exposed the emigrants to the outside world, which has brought tremendous changes in their attitude towards the education of their children. The studies have found that the parents of migrants spent liberally on the education of their kids. Immigration led to the emergence and growth of technical and vocational training institutions in various trades in Kerala. Emigration helped to bring a pleasant change in the attitude of emigrants towards the education of their children, both boys, and girls.<sup>194</sup> Their aspirational level about the employment and social status of their kids went up consequent on their exposure to the broader world. The spread of English medium schools in the private sector in Kerala mainly attributed to the Gulf migration. Immigrant households spend more on education compared to non-emigrant households irrespective of the type of schools.

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<sup>192</sup> Zachariah K.C., Mathew E.T., and Rajan, 39.

<sup>193</sup> Zachariah K.C., Mathew E.T., and Rajan, 39.

<sup>194</sup> Zachariah K.C. and Irudaya S. Rajan, *Kerala's Gulf Connection, 1998-2011: Economic and Social Impact of Migration* (Hyderabad: Orient BlackSwan Pvt. Ltd., 2012), 35.

At the college level, immigrant families depend on private colleges to a greater extent than non-migrant households.<sup>195</sup> The growth of private hospitals and other paramedical institutions in the private sector in Kerala indicates the influence of immigration on health care. The vast majority of migrants depend on the allopathic private hospitals for treatment to a greater extent than non-emigrant households. The study by Zachariah, et al., found that immigrant households spent more on hygiene and sanitation and health care than non-emigrant households since the immigrant families maintain high living standards due to the remittances.<sup>196</sup>

### **2.5.2. Religious Impact of Migration**

The Gulf migration and remittances impacted strongly on the sacred space of Kerala society. According to Ginu Zacharia Oommen, “the most transparent impact of migration is in the realm of religion and a new religious market has emerged in Kerala through social remittances.”<sup>197</sup> Gulf immigrants from Kerala showed more interests towards religious activities to get rid of the anxiety and stress of their new circumstances and also to achieve social recognition. Hirschman argues that “for immigrants who separated from their homeland and many relatives, religious membership offers refuge in the sense that it creates a sense of belonging and participation in the face of loss and the strains of adjustment.”<sup>198</sup> It is true that the prayers, rituals, and religious practices reinforced the homeland ties of the Keralite immigrants in the Gulf. According to Ginu, “in the case of Syrian Christian immigrants, the transnational religious institutions are operating as one of the viable networks connecting sending and receiving countries. Moreover, the unique social situation in the GCC region has reshaped their religious and ritual practices and

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<sup>195</sup> Zachariah K.C., Mathew E.T., and Rajan, ‘Impact of Migration on Kerala’s Economy and Society,’ 35.

<sup>196</sup> Zachariah K.C. and Rajan, *Kerala’s Gulf Connection, 1998-2011: Economic and Social Impact of Migration*, 36–37.

<sup>197</sup> Ginu Zacharia Oommen, ‘Gulf Migration, Social Remittances and Religion: The Changing Dynamics of Kerala Christians - Research Paper, Senior Fellowship Programme, 2015’ (India Centre for Migration, Ministry of External Affairs, 2016), 12.

<sup>198</sup> Charles Hirschman, ‘The Role of Religion in the Origins and Adaptation of Immigrants Groups in the United States,’ *International Migration Review* 38, no. 3 (2004): 1228.

reinvigorated community/denominational centered identity.”<sup>199</sup> Oscella observes, “In Kerala, the Gulf returnee frequently spends a substantial amount of money in becoming patrons of religious activities—a culturally approved way of transforming wealth into political power and social status.”<sup>200</sup>

### 2.5.3. Economic Impact of Migration

However, there are some adverse effects of migration despite its various beneficial effects on the economy. Oil boom and the associated increase in income of the Gulf countries took off a large number of labourers from Kerala. The emigration and foreign remittances have created another construction boom in Kerala as the significant share of the payments are spent on building and repair of houses and buildings. As such, there are shortages of labourers in particular sectors of the economy due to emigration. The immigration to Gulf caused an increase in the wage rate in the construction industry, which has resulted in a movement of workers from non-construction work to construction work and it has led to an increase in the wage rate in both the construction and agricultural sectors. Moreover, emigration has created a lack of interest among the educated youth towards manual work, and this has attracted workers from neighboring states to Kerala, and thus Kerala itself is converted into a ‘Gulf,’<sup>201</sup> recently, as a large-scale replacement migration in immigration centered areas of Kerala happened.

The hike in the price of land, commodities, and services due to the inflow of remittances has affected the distribution of income favouring some sections of the people while affecting the others adversely. Studies show that the inflow of remittances had pushed up prices of land in urban and rural areas in those districts where the intensity of migration was high.<sup>202</sup> The hike in the land price adversely affected the poor, middle class and the fixed income groups although the owners of the property got a windfall gain when they disposed of their land. Besides the land

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<sup>199</sup> Oommen, ‘Gulf Migration, Social Remittances and Religion: The Changing Dynamics of Kerala Christians - Research Paper, Senior Fellowship Programme, 2015,’ 2.

<sup>200</sup> Filippo Oscella and Oscella Caroline, ‘Migration and the Commoditisation of Ritual: Sacrifice, Spectacle, and Contestations in Kerala, India,’ *Contributions to Indian Society* 37 (2003): 13.

<sup>201</sup> Prakash B.A., ‘Gulf Migration and Its Economic Impact: The Kerala Experience,’ *Economic and Political Weekly*, 3210, 33, no. 50 (December 1998): 4.

<sup>202</sup> Prakash B.A., 13.

price, Gulf migration has caused increase in the price of construction materials, consumer goods, and food products, rent rates and increase in the charges of health, education, and transportation. Due to Gulf migration, people began to experience a steady fall in their purchasing power and welfare as a result of the price hike. The study by Zachariah and Rajan, noted, “direct beneficiaries of immigration are a relatively small minority in Kerala, but the vast majority of the households in the state are suffering the ill effects of immigration such as the continuous rise in the price level of all sorts of commodities in Kerala.”<sup>203</sup> The fact authenticates that only 17.1% of Kerala households benefited from immigration, but the vast majority of the households (82.9%) had not benefited from foreign remittances.<sup>204</sup> The study by Harilal and Joseph assert that immigration has adversely affected the productive sectors of the Kerala economy. According to their observation, immigration and consequent foreign remittances have resulted in a decline in the share of agricultural sector in the Net State Domestic Product and stagnation in the proportion of the manufacturing sector while there is a considerable rise in the higher suicide rates in the tertiary sector to the Net State Domestic Product.<sup>205</sup>

As emigration to the Gulf region is a contract type migration, definitely there is the possibility of return migration. However, return migration is creating severe socio-economic problems in the economy; especially since it increases the rate of unemployment in the state. Although there are many reasons behind the return migration, the global financial crisis, and related job loss is the primary reason behind the recent return emigration. Even though there are various problems faced by the return emigrants, unemployment is the major issue among them. As per one study, unemployment rate is very high among the return emigrants compared to the non-emigrants.<sup>206</sup> Similarly, the work participation rate among the return emigrants and the share of the returnees engaged in economically active works are also meager.

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<sup>203</sup> Zachariah K.C. and Rajan, *Kerala's Gulf Connection, 1998-2011: Economic and Social Impact of Migration*, 39.

<sup>204</sup> Zachariah K.C., Mathew E.T., and Rajan, ‘Impact of Migration on Kerala’s Economy and Society,’ 36.

<sup>205</sup> Harilal K.N. and Joseph K.J., ‘Stagnation and Revival of Kerala Economy: An Open Economy Perspective’ (Centre for Development Studies, Thiruvananthapuram, August 2000), 67.

<sup>206</sup> Zachariah K.C., Mathew E.T., and Rajan, ‘Impact of Migration on Kerala’s Economy and Society,’ 41.

Also, a vast majority of return migrants suffer financial difficulties, as remittances were the largest source of their income.<sup>207</sup>

#### 2.5.4. Economic Transformation of Kerala Society

The analysis of the state-level performance regarding gross domestic product under economic reforms (1980-1998) indicates that the state of Kerala belongs to the group of seven states with an accelerated growth in the 90s.<sup>208</sup> Analysis of the state-level performance regarding gross state domestic product (in constant prices) shows that the growth rate (exponential) of Kerala has accelerated from 3.6% in the 80s to 5.6% in the 90s.<sup>209</sup> The highest record of per capita consumer expenditure among Indian states, which has been progressively increasing since 1993-1994, Kerala has entered a high growth regime primarily triggered by the service and construction sectors.<sup>210</sup>

Four sub-sectors have contributed to the accelerated economic growth in the State of Kerala are: (1) development of transportation facilities; (2) communication; (3) trade, hotel and restaurants; and (4) health and education services. It is true that the revival and its acceleration of the regional economic development in the 90s are mainly helpful to the growth and the apparent change in the consumer expenditure. Pushpangadan observes that “the acceleration in the growth of the telecommunication sector is the result of the economic reforms initiated in the 90s and the communication needs of the migrants’ and return migrants’ households.”<sup>211</sup> The result of this economic growth was that the middle class primarily engaged in personal improvement, and started their career under the sponsorship of liberal principles,

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<sup>207</sup> Zachariah K.C. and Rajan, *Kerala’s Gulf Connection, 1998-2011: Economic and Social Impact of Migration*, 69.

<sup>208</sup> Pushpangadan, K., ‘Remittances, Consumption and Economic Growth in Kerala: 1980-2000’ (Centre for Development Studies, Thiruvananthapuram, March 2003), 23.

<sup>209</sup> Montek S. Ahluwalia, ‘State-Level Performance under Economic Reforms in India,’ in *Economic Policy Reforms and the Indian Economy*, ed. Anne O. Krueger (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2002), 91–128.

<sup>210</sup> Oommen M. A., “Reforms and the Kerala Model,” in *Kerala Economy and Its Emerging Issues*, Edited by V. Mathew Kurian and Raju John (Thiruvananthapuram: Sahithya Pravarthaka Co-operative Society Ltd., 2014), 21.

<sup>211</sup> Pushpangadan, K., ‘Remittances, Consumption and Economic Growth in Kerala: 1980-2000,’ 24.

which enabled them to advocate and set certain moral and ethical standards in public and private life.

According to Panikkar, “The development of the capitalist order and the linkages with the global market as a consequence of liberalization helped to stimulate their ambitions. Their unbridled quest for pleasure and power has created a cultural vacuum in their lives, leading to a crisis which they find difficult to resolve.”<sup>212</sup> It is true that almost everybody, including the lower sections of the society, tried to follow the economic changes, which led to frustration, discontent, jealousy and often violence. This typical scenario was an impact of economic growth that has highlighted the social crisis in a manner that there is an overall decline in moral and ethical values. The effects of remittances on consumption would be more significant as the bulk of the emigrants from Kerala were from low-income households. Studies on the utilization pattern of payments show that immigrant families spent a dominant share of their income on consumption, education, health, and entertainment. The study by the Directorate of Economics and Statistics (DES) showed that Keralites used 36% of the remittances for construction purposes. At the same time, they spent another 22% on the purchase of land and 21% used to buy gold, repayment of loans and education of the children.<sup>213</sup> Another study observed the significant differences in the expenditure pattern between emigrants and non-emigrants. Household amenities like electrified houses, flush-out toilets, and the use of LPG for cooking, were higher in the immigrant's households compared to the non-immigrant's households. The use of consumer durables like television sets, refrigerators, washing machines, telephones, and vehicles was higher in the emigrant's households compared to non-emigrants households. The study also found that more the extended stay abroad, greater the possession of consumer durables in the homes.<sup>214</sup> There is a considerable increase in the assets like land, building, gold ornaments, and motor vehicles of immigrant households than the non-emigrant households.

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<sup>212</sup> Panikkar K. N., *Essays on the History and Society of Kerala*, 311.

<sup>213</sup> ‘Directorate of Economics and Statistics: The Survey on the Utilization of Gulf Remittances in Kerala, Report, Trivandrum’ (Directorate of Economics and Statistics, 1987), 26.

<sup>214</sup> Zachariah K.C., Mathew E.T., and Rajan, ‘Impact of Migration on Kerala's Economy and Society,’ 68.

### 2.5.5. Impact of Television Media in Kerala Society

Television channels are an essential part of the mass media in Kerala. The public and private television channels emerged in Kerala in the last two decades of the twentieth century to cater to the diverse needs of the people. Doordarshan was the only public sector broadcaster of Kerala inaugurated on January 1, 1985. They aired programs like news, serials, and sports.<sup>215</sup> Later, the private television channels emerged after 1993 and offered vast varieties of programs in different areas. More channels emerged because of the open policy of the Indian Government on satellite and cable TV in the middle of 1990. This new policy created a media explosion in India and a number of News channels and entertainment channels emerged and the Indian satellite and cable market blossomed into a full-fledged industry.<sup>216</sup> In the year 1993, Asianet the first private television channel entered the world of broadcasting in Kerala. Later in 1998, Surya TV started their operations. Following this in the year 2000, Kairali TV started broadcasting programs for the people according to their needs. These channels broadcasted three categories of programs such as news, entertainment, and religious programs.<sup>217</sup> The liberalization of India's uplinking policies helped Indian religious institutions and religious agencies from the U.S.A. to set up religious television channels from India. In Kerala, the private television channels began to broadcast Christian programs in the prime time slots in their channels. The media in Kerala, which has a high sense of involvement with public affairs, is perhaps the best example of the all-around social transformation. The bulk of the space and time of the Kerala television media spent in projecting and promoting consumption as a symbol of status and attempted to popularize the corrupt and dishonest society through different programs.<sup>218</sup>

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<sup>215</sup> 'Doordarshan Kendra Thiruvananthapuram,' accessed 11 September 2016, [http://ddktvm.gov.in/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=15&Itemid=28](http://ddktvm.gov.in/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=15&Itemid=28).

<sup>216</sup> Jonathan D. James, *McDonaldisation, Masala McGospel, and Om Economics: Televangelism in Contemporary India* (New Delhi: SAGE Publications India, 2010), 100.

<sup>217</sup> 'Media In Kerala,' accessed 11 September 2016, <http://www.indfy.com/kerala/media.html>.

<sup>218</sup> Panikkar K. N., *Essays on the History and Society of Kerala*, 307.

### 2.5.6. The Growth of Religiosity in Kerala Society

The last two decades of the twentieth century witnessed that in Kerala, religion is no more a personal matter, with worship conducted inside the homes and temples. More than the influence of spirituality, religiosity has increasingly occupied the secular space. In this process, a commoditized religion, which accounts for large religious gatherings and the development of the pilgrimage center, became stronger in Kerala.<sup>219</sup> The state of social consciousness enabled the emergence of a group of religious leaders and god-men and god-women who have turned religion into a commercial venture. To begin with, there were only a very few ‘spiritual leaders’ parading their prowess. However, in the wake of the cultural crisis of the middle class generated by liberalization, their numbers have swelled. They have successfully used their clout to amass money and invest them in high yielding enterprises like health and education.<sup>220</sup>

### 2.5.7. Kerala Society and its Emotional Challenges

Kerala society in the last two decades of the twentieth century and the beginning decade of the twenty-first century shows severe drawbacks about mental health, though Kerala society has achieved developments in all other areas. The high suicide rate in Kerala is one indicator of the mental health. With annual suicide rate of 27/100,000 population, Kerala represents one of the geographical areas with the highest rate.<sup>221</sup> Clinical conditions (Eg: Depressive Disorder), Socio-Economic Factors (Eg: migrations, debt traps) and Socio-Cultural settings (Eg: disintegrating traditional support systems in the society, aspirations of people that are disproportionate to resources) are the significant factors that contribute to suicide intentions. Primary recorded reasons for attempting suicide among men are a disappointment in life and financial crisis, physical illness, psychiatric illness, marital disharmony, and alcoholism. Among females, psychiatric illness, marital disharmony, financial crisis, physical illness, broken love affair, failure in exam, death of a family

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<sup>219</sup> Panikkar K. N., *Essays on the History and Society of Kerala*, 318.

<sup>220</sup> Panikkar K. N., *Essays on the History and Society of Kerala*, 318-19.

<sup>221</sup> Praveenlal K., ‘Family Suicide in Kerala: An Explorative Study into Pattern, Determinants, and Consequences’ (Kerala Research Programme on Local Level Development, Centre for Development Studies, Thiruvananthapuram, 2000), 4.

member, family conflict, and marriage not getting fixed. Praveenlal observes, “The gender difference in the causes is evident as financial and occupation-related problems contributing to male suicides, while that role is for interpersonal problems in case of females.”<sup>222</sup>

Another crucial issue observed is that farmers were in debt, and they left the farming works.<sup>223</sup> Because of the unemployment and financial crisis, many had bad habits. “The statistics revealed by the National Crime Records Bureau showed that Kochi is the most dangerous city affected by crime and Kerala was the most crime-prone state of India ahead of Uttar Pradesh and Delhi.”<sup>224</sup> Drinking alcohol after sunset is a regular phenomenon and beating of women is almost a common issue in Kerala society. Dowry, and the caste system is another severe problem in Kerala society. The chronic unemployment problem has been the bane of the state eclipsing all its other achievements. The unemployment problem in Kerala is more for the educated as a whole. Unemployment rates for the educated in Kerala are the highest for both rural and urban areas among the primary states. The rate of unemployment among the educated persons in the countryside of Kerala was 29.6% against the all India figure of 8.5%. The level of unemployment among educated women in the rural areas was 53.3% against the all India average of 23.1%. Educated female unemployment in urban Kerala was the highest among these states. The problem of unemployment would have threatened to become socially explosive but for the large-scale migration of Malayalees to other regions of the country and also to other nations particularly to the Arabian Gulf countries, that have been resolving this issue. The growing disparities in income and poverty between different socio-economic categories and the high overall inefficiency to cope up with the situation may reflect the context of the increasing incidence of suicide, family violence, reported growth of

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<sup>222</sup> In the 70s the suicide rates in Kerala were 14.4 to 19.8. In the 80s the suicide rates in Kerala were 14.9 to 24.5. In the 90s the rates for Kerala varied between 26.3 and 30.5. The figures show an increase in the last two decades of the twentieth century. Praveenlal K., 5.

<sup>223</sup> Shankar Chatterjee and Murthy, DSR, ‘Issues Related to Kerala’s Development,’ *Asia Pacific Journal of Marketing & Management Review* 2, no. 6 (June 2013): 90–94.

<sup>224</sup> Deeptimaan Tiwary, ‘Kerala Is Country’s Most Crime-Prone State, NCRB Statistics Show - Times of India,’ *The Times of India*, 24 June 2012, <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/Kerala-is-country-s-most-crime-prone-state-NCRB-statistics-show/articleshow/14364473.cms>.

mafia gangs, daylight robbery, criminalization, alcoholism and so on.<sup>225</sup>

### **Summary**

In the history of Kerala society, the 19<sup>th</sup> century was an era of considerable changes in the political, social, religious, and cultural aspects in the life of the people. It was the period of renaissance, which occurred in all the spheres of the land. The second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century witnessed a transition in the social condition and the awakening of the backward communities through different indigenous socio-religious organizations. The Upper cloth revolt of the Shanar women in Kerala was a major social crisis for the equal right and dignity of women in Kerala society. The reform movements of Chattampi Swamikal, Sree Narayana Guru, and Ayyankali emphasized the message of the dignity of people, justice, and equality in Kerala society. The later part of the nineteenth century and the twentieth century witnessed the oppressed people's movements for their rights and privileges. The temple entry movements and the labour movements in Kerala influenced the people to understand the importance of the longing for better life. Communist ideologies influenced the people in Kerala society. The spirit of nationalism and demand for the privileges through union activities became a part and parcel of the culture of the people in Kerala. The last decades of the twentieth century witnessed economic development due to migration and economic remittance. At the same time, the Kerala society faced challenges due to the negative impact of migration and economic growth. Suicide, alcoholism, and a higher rate of crime were the significant issues that the Kerala society faced in the last decades of the twentieth century.

It was in this context of changes and challenges that Kerala society was facing in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, a new form of Christianity, the Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity emerged and grew. Along with the changes that took place in the Kerala society, due to social movements, the Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity experienced a transition and transformation, which we shall explore in the following chapters. Against this background study of the social context in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and twentieth century, the discussion will continue on the ecclesiastical and spiritual background of Kerala and the initial phase of the emergence and growth of Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity in Kerala in the next chapter.

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<sup>225</sup> Oommen M. A., 'Reforms and the Kerala Model,' 9.

## CHAPTER THREE

### THE INITIAL PHASE OF PENTECOSTAL-CHARISMATIC CHRISTIANITY IN KERALA: THE FORMATION OF CLASSICAL PENTECOSTAL DENOMINATIONS (FROM 1909 TO 1922)

#### Introduction

This chapter provides a historical account of the initial phase of Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity in Kerala. It begins by describing the ecclesiastical and spiritual background of Kerala and the spiritual awakening that took place among the Syrian Christians<sup>226</sup> in Kerala during the second half of the nineteenth century and the first decade of the twentieth century. Through outlining the historical development of the spirituality of Christians, it attempts to comprehend the different aspects of the establishment of Classical Pentecostalism<sup>227</sup> in Kerala. It also describes the history of the growth of Classical Pentecostal denominations in Kerala. It is indispensable to

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<sup>226</sup> One of the Christian communities in Kerala who is known, as ‘Syrian Christians’ or ‘Thomas Christians’ with their living tradition are believed to have been the descendants of the first converts of apostle Thomas in the first Century A.D. They are regarded as traditional Christians, whose forefathers were members of the Persian Church in Kerala, who maintained an ecclesiastical relationship with the churches in Persia. Mundadan, *History of Christianity in India: From the Beginning up to the Middle of Sixteenth Century*, 1:2; Mathias Mundadan A., *Indian Christians Search for Identity and Struggle for Autonomy* (Bangalore: Dharmaram Publications, 1984), 1.

<sup>227</sup> Roman Catholic scholar Kilian McDonnell coined the term “Classical Pentecostalism” in 1968. See, Kilian McDonnell, ‘Holy Spirit and Pentecostalism,’ *Commonweal*, 6 November 1968, 198–204. Classical Pentecostalism denotes the ‘Pentecostals’ after the Azusa revival, which considered themselves as a movement concerned primarily with the experience of the working of the Holy Spirit and the practice of the spiritual gifts. Therefore the Classical Pentecostals considered themselves as Pentecostals based on their doctrine of ‘initial evidence.’ Classical Pentecostals believe in the two distinct doctrines of ‘consequence’ or ‘initial evidence,’ which means speaking in tongues is the consequence or primary evidence of Spirit baptism, and ‘subsequence’ that is Spirit baptism is a definite and subsequent experience to conversion. The doctrine of ‘consequence’ or ‘initial evidence’ was first formulated and made the theological link between tongues speaking and Spirit baptism in 1901 by Charles Parham. The Azusa street mission emphasized this doctrine, and it became the characteristic of North American Pentecostalism. The publications of Azusa Street Mission promoted this doctrine as the fundamental belief of classical Pentecostal denominations. Allan Anderson, *An Introduction to Pentecostalism: Global Charismatic Christianity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 14, 190-191.

show how Classical Pentecostalism emerge in the United States as a movement and later it grew as an organization which came to India in general, to Kerala in particular with its unique features, faced stark encounters from the social context but well established impressively. Though Classical Pentecostalism has an imported branch, it was well associated with Kerala society and transformed the indigenous revival Christian spirituality into the Classical Pentecostal denominations. In a way, this chapter also attempts to show how the spiritual background of Kerala adopted the features of Classical Pentecostalism to build the spiritual movement into organizational heights.

### **3.1. Ecclesiastical and Spiritual Background of the Initial Phase of Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity in Kerala**

#### **3.1.1. History of the Emergence and Development of Christianity in Kerala up to the 19<sup>th</sup> century**

The emergence of Christianity in Kerala is shrouded in mystery. Traditions trace the initial phase of the emergence of Christianity in Kerala to the visit and preaching of Thomas, the disciple of Jesus. The Thomas tradition details that Apostle Thomas landed at the port of Malabar or Malankara called Muziris in A.D.52.<sup>228</sup> The apostolic origin of Christianity in Kerala is very strong, and it is deep-rooted among the native Christians.<sup>229</sup> It is very significant that the Christians in Kerala tenaciously

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<sup>228</sup> Malabar or Malankara was the traditional name of the narrow strip of land and in the southwest coast of India. At the beginning of Christian era, its boundaries were extended from Cape Comorin in the South to Ezhimala in the North. This geographical unit later became the state of Kerala. Muziris was the Greek name of the ancient city of Mahadevapattanam, later known as Kodungallur or Cranganore, a place 20 miles north of the city of Cochin in Kerala. According to the Thomas tradition, the Apostle came by sea from Arabia, and then he landed on the historic seaport of Kodungallur. Robert Eric Frykenberg, *Christianity in India: From Beginnings to the Present* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 92.

<sup>229</sup> The Syrian Christians with their living tradition claim that they are the descendants of the first converts made by the Apostle to India. Oral traditions, palm-leaf manuscripts, copper-plate epigraphy, and stone inscriptions, many of which remain preserved by leading families who have claimed descent from Brahmin and Nair lineages, give details which, by tradition, describe the many travels, habitations, and places visited by the Apostle. Frykenberg, 100–101; According to Podipara, an authoritative scholar in the study of Thomas tradition, many Thomas Christian families of Kerala, still trace the original conversion of their community to the time of the Apostle. Placid J. Podipara, *The Thomas Christians* (Bombay: St. Paul's Publications, 1970), 15.

maintain the active, living and long tradition regarding the apostolate of Thomas and they bitterly resent any expression of doubt regarding it.<sup>230</sup>

This early Christian community in Kerala was primarily of the same faith and practice of other Christian communities, which were established in the world during the same period.<sup>231</sup> It had the Christian faith, a form of worship, a code of moral conduct, a ministry, and a method of gospel proclamation.<sup>232</sup> The similar situation of the early Christian communities in the Roman world could be seen among the Christians in Kerala also.<sup>233</sup> According to T.I. Varghese, “it is probable that to the communities in India the apostle would have entrusted with a tradition of worship, faith, and discipline, a set-up very much similar to be found among other apostolic communities.<sup>234</sup> Simon Samuel observes that, as a member of the twelve, he was a participant of the experience the ‘day of Pentecost’ of the disciples of Jesus and a

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<sup>230</sup> See, Mackenzie Esquire, ‘History of Christianity in Travancore,’ in *Travancore State Manual* (Trivandrum: Government Press, 1906); Perumalil A.C., *The Apostles in India* (Patna: Xavier Teachers’ Training Institute, 1971); Mundadan, *History of Christianity in India: From the Beginning up to the Middle of Sixteenth Century*; Thekkedath, *History of Christianity in India*; Visvanathan, *Christians of Kerala, History, Belief and Rituals Among the Yakoba*; Philip T.V., *East of the Euphrates: Early Christianity in Asia* (Delhi: ISPCK, 1998); Koodapuzha, *Christianity in India*; Cherian C.V., *Orthodox Christianity in India: A History of Malankara Orthodox Church AD52-2002*; James Kurikilamkatt, *First Voyage of the Apostle Thomas to India: Ancient Christianity in Bharuch and Taxila* (Bangalore: Asian Trading Corporation, 2005); George Nedungatt, *Quest for the Historical Thomas Apostle of India: A Re-Reading of the Evidence* (Bangalore: Theological Publications in India, 2008).

<sup>231</sup> It is believable that, if Thomas came to Kerala, he must have established the Christian communities in ancient Kerala with the same features of first-century churches in the Roman Empire. According to K. N. Ganesh, Thomas established not the churches in Malabar but Christian congregations in different places, because the first century Christians never had institutionalized churches. Ganesh K.N., *Keralathinte Innalakai (Mal.) [The Past Days of Kerala]* (Thiruvananthapuram: Department of Cultural Publications, Government of Kerala, 1997), 241.

<sup>232</sup> The New Testament writings provide some insights into the basic nature of the early Christian communities which were formed within the Roman Empire, especially in the South-West Asian regions. See Acts 2:42-47, 4:31-33, 20:7-8.

<sup>233</sup> The ancient Christian communities in the Roman Empire were formed out of the members converted from Jews and Non-Jews. The similar situation can be found in India, and some writers suggest the possibility of the existence of Jewish colonies in the Malabar Coast in the first century A.D. This might have attracted Thomas, the disciple of Jesus to come to Malabar. Varghese T.I., ‘Life and Ministry of Church of the Thomas Christians during the Pre-Portuguese Period,’ in *Joint International Commission for Dialogue Between the Catholic Church and the Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church*, ed. Xavier Koodapuzha and John Panicker (Kottayam: Joint International Commission for Dialogue, 2001), 216–18; Thomas Puthiakunnel, ‘Jewish Colonies of India Paved the Way for St. Thomas,’ in *St. Thomas Christian Encyclopaedia of India*, ed. George Menachery, vol. II (Thrissur: The St. Thomas Christian Encyclopaedia, 1973), 26–27.

<sup>234</sup> Varghese T.I., ‘Life and Ministry of Church of the Thomas Christians during the Pre-Portuguese Period,’ 219.

witness and practitioner of the experience and expressions of the early Christian communities.<sup>235</sup> Therefore, there is no reason to suspect the possible apostolic or New Testament type Christianity in Kerala during the initial phase of the emergence of Christianity in Kerala.

The early Christians of Kerala had an ecclesiastical relationship with the Persian<sup>236</sup> Church from the very early centuries and this relationship continued until the arrival of Portuguese priests in the 16<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>237</sup> The hierarchical dependence of the Kerala Christians on the Persian church made a tremendous impact upon the ecclesiastical and social life of the Christians in Kerala. The prolonged relationship brought new vigor to the Kerala Christians.<sup>238</sup> The Bishop and the clergy, who came from Persia, organized the Kerala church and they introduced the Syrian liturgy in the church.<sup>239</sup> Therefore, along with the apostolic spiritual tradition, the Kerala Christians experienced the Persian or East Syrian spiritual tradition.

At the beginning of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, Christians of Kerala made contacts with the most advanced form of Christianity in the world in that time, the Portuguese.<sup>240</sup>

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<sup>235</sup> Simon Samuel, 'The Charismatic and Pentecostal Movements and Their Commitments to the Social Demands of the Gospel,' *Doon Theological Journal* 9, no. 2 (September 2012): 222.

<sup>236</sup> Some of the different names of Persian Church are, the Church of Seleucia–Ctesiphon or Seleucian Church, the Babylonian Church, the Assyrian Church, the East Syrian Church, and the Chaldean Church.

<sup>237</sup> The contacts and relationship between the Persian churches and Christians in Kerala was developed after the immigration of Persian Christians to Kerala. From the 8<sup>th</sup> century A.D., some direct ecclesiastical and hierarchical relationship began between both the churches. The Persian Patriarch Sliba Zcha (AD 714 – 728) elevated the Indian church to the metropolitan status, and the Patriarch Timothy I (AD 780-823) took the Indian Church and placed it directly under him. As a result, the Kerala church had several bishops from Mesopotamia and a metropolitan from Persia. The title of the Metropolitan of India was the Metropolitan and the Gate of all India. William G. Young, *Hand Book of Source Materials for Students of Church History* (Delhi: ISPCK, 1999), 29; Mundadan, *History of Christianity in India: From the Beginning up to the Middle of Sixteenth Century*, 1:90, 103, 138; Placid J. Podipara, *The Hierarchy of the Syro-Malabar Church* (Alleppy: Prakasam Publications, 1976), 27, 31, 32.

<sup>238</sup> According to P. Thomas, the Malabar Christians initiated some of the Syrian customs such as using carpets and curtains in the houses and, wearing turbans and robes, after the contact with Persians. Thomas P., *Christians and Christianity in India and Pakistan* (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1934), 33.

<sup>239</sup> The Persian Christians introduced liturgical and theological books among the Kerala Christians and never translated them into the local language. James Aerthayil, *The Spiritual Heritage of the St. Thomas Christians* (Bangalore: Dharmaram Publications, 2001), 22.

<sup>240</sup> The discovery of a new sea route to India by Vasco da Gama in 1498 paved the way for the Portuguese and Roman Catholic Mission among the Christians in Kerala. Initially, the Kerala Christians welcomed the newly arrived Portuguese with great joy and enthusiasm and considered them

The Portuguese missionaries attempted to bring Kerala Christians under Portuguese *Padraodo* and to introduce radical changes in their liturgy, discipline, theology, spirituality, administrative system and traditions.<sup>241</sup> The impact of this dynamic relationship was the introduction and vigorous enforcement of Roman Catholic veneration of images in the churches of Kerala Christians; the doctrine of the perpetual virginity of Mary, the doctrines of the real presence, purgatory, invocation of saints, indulgence, and veneration of relics. The Christians in Kerala under the Portuguese responded against the imposition of Latin rule and the Portuguese ecclesiastical domination with the *Koonen Kurisu* Revolt. The Kerala Christians gathered at Mattancherry, tied ropes to the cross in all directions, each touched the rope and swore to break free from the Portuguese ecclesiastical oppression and to end the supremacy of the Roman Catholic Church arbitrarily foisted upon the Church in Kerala.<sup>242</sup> The consequence of the *Koonen Kurisu* oath was the division of Kerala Christians into two different fractions.<sup>243</sup> Later, because of the influence of Dutch power in Kerala after 1663, the Portuguese priests and bishops left Kerala, and the one faction of the Kerala Christians who were called *Puthenkur* attempted to re-

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as their brethren in Christ. However, later Portuguese missionaries attempted to change the ancient faith of Kerala Christians. In the beginning, the mutual relations of the Kerala Christians with the Portuguese were very cordial, and it continued for two decades. However, the Portuguese found out that the faith and practice of the Kerala Christians did not conform to theirs. Therefore, they wanted to make the Kerala church conform to that of the Roman Catholic Church. Mundadan, *History of Christianity in India: From the Beginning up to the Middle of Sixteenth Century*, 1:265–66; Mundadan, *Indian Christians Search for Identity and Struggle for Autonomy*, 31.

<sup>241</sup> The culmination of the efforts of Portuguese to bring the Kerala Christians entirely under Portuguese jurisdiction and Latinize them, the Portuguese arranged the Synod of Diamper in 1599. The results of the Synod of Diamper were appointments of a Latin bishop over the Kerala Christians, an extension of the Portuguese *Padraodo* over the Kerala Christians, and the introduction of ecclesiastical doctrines of Roman Catholic Church. See Decrees of the Synod of Diamper, *History of Christianity in India: Source Materials* (New Delhi: The Senate of Serampore College & ISPCK, 1999), 39–43; Xavier Koodapuzha, *Christianity in India* (Vadavathoor: OIRSI, 1998), 92–94.

<sup>242</sup> The *Koonen Kurisu* oath took place on January 3, 1653. The Oath was an outward expression of the grave, painful experience of distortion of the identity and loss of autonomy of Kerala Christians. The independent nature of ‘Thomas Christians’ is also a revolt against foreign domination. It was a clear indication that the church wanted to become free of foreign control. Cherian C.V., *Orthodox Christianity in India: A History of the Malankara Orthodox Church AD 52-2002* (Kottayam: Academic Publishers, 2003), 199; Koodapuzha, *Christianity in India*, 97.

<sup>243</sup> One faction showed allegiance to Rome and came under the supremacy of Roman Catholic. They called themselves *Pazhayakur* (Old Group) or Syro-Malabar Church. Roman Catholic called the other faction is *Puthenkur* (New Group) who regained their lost ecclesiastical connection with Persian Church or Eastern Christianity. Cherian C.V., *Orthodox Christianity in India: A History of the Malankara Orthodox Church AD 52-2002*, 199.

establish their relationship with the Persian Church. They revived their relationship with Eastern Christianity, and they contacted the Jacobites of Antioch.<sup>244</sup> This section of the early Christian community continued their ancient faith and identity as *Malankara Syrian Church* or *Syrian Christians*.<sup>245</sup>

### 3.1.1.1. The Social Condition of Syrian Christians before the 19<sup>th</sup> Century

The social condition of Syrian Christians in Kerala society till the 19<sup>th</sup> century was relatively high, and they followed the customs and practices of the high caste Hindus in Kerala. The Syrian Christians were then considered next to Brahmins, and their social life was similar to that of the Brahmins and the Nairs.<sup>246</sup> It is important to note that, their social life was attached to the Hindu way of life and they continued to follow the social customs, diet, and inter-dining, and ritual purity of the higher caste.<sup>247</sup> L.W. Brown observes the reason given for the Syrians' observance of untouchability. It was pure expediency so that the caste people would trade with them and give land on rent to the Christians.<sup>248</sup> The Hindu Kings made Syrian Christians live near their palace in order to profit by their service in getting defiled articles purified. Thus the Syrians were keen on preserving their high status in society, and on maintaining their social exclusiveness. According to S.G. Pothan, the Christians in Kerala were proud of the apostolic origin of their church, but they did not attempt to evangelize.<sup>249</sup> They preserved their faith but did not send any apostle to preach this faith to others.

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<sup>244</sup> In 1664 Mar Gregorios, the bishop of Jerusalem arrived, and he consecrated Marthoma I like the first Indian Metropolitan of these Christians. C. P. Mathew and M. M. Thomas, *The Indian Christians of St. Thomas* (Delhi: ISPCK, 1967), 38.

<sup>245</sup> From this period, especially after the Dutch invasion, the one faction of Kerala Christians who were associated with Jacobites is called as Syrian Christians. See Punnen T.I., 'Christians in Malabar in Dutch Times,' in *The St. Thomas Christian Encyclopedia of India*, ed. George Menachery (Thrissur: The St. Thomas Christian Encyclopaedia, 1973), 44.

<sup>246</sup> Cherian C.V., *Orthodox Christianity in India: A History of the Malankara Orthodox Church AD 52-2002*, 112.

Paul Thenayan, *The Missionary Consciousness of the St. Thomas Christians* (Cochin: Vani Publications, 1982), 18–19.

Brown L.W., *The Indian Christians of St. Thomas. An Account of the Ancient Syrian Church of Malabar* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1956), 74.

<sup>249</sup> S. G. Pothan, *The Syrian Christians of Kerala* (Bombay: Asia Publishing House, 1963), 54.

### 3.1.2. Anglican Mission and its Impact on Kerala Society and Christianity in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century

The Anglican missionaries from the Church Missionary Society<sup>250</sup> arrived in Kerala in 1816 to work among the Syrian Christians.<sup>251</sup> The C.M.S. Mission began to work in Central Kerala, which lasted for two decades.<sup>252</sup> Different aspects of the work of C.M.S missionaries<sup>253</sup> such as the establishment of a college in Kottayam, English medium grammar schools, native education schools, Bible translation, and other literary works, and the establishment of a printing press made tremendous impact on the Kerala Christians and on the Kerala society, which finally culminated in the social, cultural and spiritual renaissance in Kerala. The three-dimensional system of education, the college, Grammar School and Parochial Ordinary School, from the C.M.S. missionaries in Kerala, made a cultural impact upon the society.<sup>254</sup> Education

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<sup>250</sup> CMS was a society organized by some members of the Church of England in 1799 to help the propagation of the gospel in Africa and in the East. Eugene Stock, *The History of the Church Missionary Society: Its Environment, Its Men and Its Work* (London: Church Missionary Society, 1899), 1; Hunt W. S., *The Anglican Church in Travancore & Cochin 1816-1916: Operations of the Church Missionary Society in South-West India* (Kottayam: Church Missionary Society Press, 1920), 55.

<sup>251</sup> Thomas Norton, the first missionary from Church Missionary Society, settled at Alleppy. He had a meeting with the metropolitan of Kerala Christians, Mar Dionysius III, and discussed the relation, which should be developed between Syrian Church and Church Missionary Society. Norton endeavored to convince the Syrian metropolitan in the presence of several clergies that, the C.M.S mission would not have any objective other than the benefit of the Syrian Christians. From the letter of Thomas Norton, it is apparent that he made vigorous attempts to clarify the apprehensions, which existed in the minds of metropolitan and the Syrian clergy regarding the relationship. 'Letter of Thomas Norton,' *Missionary Register*, March 1818, 98. Later, Benjamin Bailey, Joseph Fenn, and Henry Baker arrived in Kerala.

<sup>252</sup> Because of the differences of opinion that arose between the missionaries and the Syrians, a Synod was convened by the Syrian bishop at Mavelikara in 1836 and resolved to dissolve the partnership in mission with the C.M.S. Then the CMS mission turned to the non-Christians. Stock, *The History of the Church Missionary Society: Its Environment, Its Men and Its Work*, 250.

<sup>253</sup> See details: "Madras and South India Mission," *Proceedings of the Church Missionary Society 1818-1819* (London: S. B. Seely, 1819), 169, "Foreign Intelligence," *Missionary Register* (September, 1816): 453, "Foreign Intelligence," *Missionary Register* (January, 1816): 37, "Madras and South India Mission," *Proceedings of the Church Missionary Society 1816-1817* (London: S. B. Seely, 1817), 103.

<sup>254</sup> "Madras and South India Mission," *Proceedings of the Church Missionary Society 1836-1837* (London: S. B. Seely, 1837), 49, "Madras and South India Mission," *Proceedings of the Church Missionary Society 1819-1820* (London: S. B. Seely, 1820), 171, "Madras and South India Mission," *Proceedings of the Church Missionary Society 1821-1822* (London: S. B. Seely, 1822), 150, "Madras and South India Mission," *Proceedings of the Church Missionary Society 1825-1826* (London: S. B. Seely, 1826), 101, "Madras and South India Mission," *Proceedings of the Church Missionary Society 1836-1837*, 49.

helped the Christians and other communities like Nairs, Shanars or Nadars, Parayas, and Pulayas. These communities showed much enthusiasm to get the education to improve their prospects.<sup>255</sup> The C.M.S. missionaries appointed the educated people of Kerala as English teachers in different places and the people who learned and completed the courses in the college got good jobs in the state government.<sup>256</sup>

The education of the backward classes of people and the admission of students to schools irrespective of their castes brought a social transformation in Kerala society. The educational programmes of C.M.S. missionaries provided a sense of self-identity and awareness of their dignity in the society. The oppressed classes or slave classes of the people in Kerala society received education in English, Sanskrit, and Malayalam.<sup>257</sup> The education they received resulted in getting awareness about their equal rights and privileges in the society.

The introduction of the printing press and the printing of books in Malayalam by the C.M.S. missionaries made a tremendous impact on the Malayalam language. Education and printing press acted as complementing each other, which helped the people to read and understand the Word of God, finally resulting in a spiritual transformation among the Christians in Kerala.<sup>258</sup> When Bailey started to translate the Bible, he used the English prose style as a model for translating the Malayalam Bible and provided a new mode of Malayalam prose, and this was a new method in Malayalam literature. That means the Malayalam prose, which was developed through

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<sup>255</sup> The Missionary Register observes that Nairs and other caste people with much pleasure welcomed the ordinary educative revolution among the ordinary people. "Madras and South India Mission," *Proceedings of the Church Missionary Society 1826-1827* (London: S. B. Seely, 1827), 138; "India Within the Ganges," *Missionary Register* (September 1829), 61.

<sup>256</sup> English education provided the natives with good jobs in other places like Cochin. In 1855, Henry Baker wrote that the merchants from Cochin required good educated young men from Central Travancore for working with them and they were offered good salaries. The English education provided opportunities for the local people to work outside India also. In 1856, Rev. Peet wrote from Kerala, "Some of the believers... have gone for work in Cochin, Mauritius, and Ceylon." The education provided an economic improvement among the natives especially among the Christians of Kerala. "Report of the Societies," *Missionary Register* (October 1819): 428; "Report of the Societies," *Missionary Register* (October 1855): 419; "India Within the Ganges," *Missionary Register* (December 1856): 389.

<sup>257</sup> "Madras and South India Mission," *Proceedings of the Church Missionary Society 1834-1835* (London: S. B. Seely, 1835), 62.

<sup>258</sup> "Foreign Intelligence," *Missionary Register* (March, 1818): 103, "Reports of Societies," *Missionary Register* (October, 1819): 428, "India within the Ganges," *Missionary Register* (December, 1821): 518, "Madras and South Indian Missions," *Proceedings of the Church Missionary Society 1825-1826* (London: S. B. Seely, 1826), 46, 103.

the translation of the Bible, developed more to a position that it could accommodate any writing.<sup>259</sup> Even though the Bible was translated for religious purposes, it made a new reading sensation to the people of Kerala in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The circulation of the Holy Scripture and the reading of it improved the faith of Christians, which contributed to a revival of spirituality. A new spiritual sensation thus occurred among the Syrian Christians, and they showed some concerns to hear the Word of God, attend the church regularly, and initiate weekly prayer meetings.

### 3.1.3. Spiritual Reformation among the Syrian Christians in Central Kerala

Syrian Christians were greatly influenced by the facilities of education, availability of printed materials, and the Malayalam Bible, which resulted in a spiritual awakening among them. One group of the Syrian Christians, who could not any longer conscientiously participate in the worship of the Syrian Church and to all its teachings, joined the Anglican Church. At the same time another group of Syrians who were influenced by the studying of the Bible, but were keen to continue in the Syrian Church, attempted to reform the Syrian church. The leader of this reform movement was Abraham Malpan,<sup>260</sup> the teacher in the Seminary of Kottayam and the priest of the Syrian church at Maramon. In 1836, he opposed the metropolitan of Syrians and proposed to take reform actions in his church at Maramon.<sup>261</sup> He popularized the Bible teaching, preaching and conducted prayer meetings in different places on Sundays.<sup>262</sup> People from his local church and other places came to attend his Bible classes and sermons. Perhaps the most significant change that he introduced

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<sup>259</sup> “Foreign Intelligence,” *Missionary Register* (March, 1818): 103, “Madras and South Indian Missions,” *Proceedings of the Church Missionary Society 1819-1820* (London: S. B. Seely, 1820), 123, “India within the Ganges,” *Missionary Register* (December, 1821): 517, “Madras and South India Mission,” *Proceedings of the Church Missionary Society 1819-1820* (London: S. B. Seely, 1820), 170, “India Within the Ganges,” *Missionary Register* (September, 1824): 61.

<sup>260</sup> Malpan means a Syriac teacher of the Seminary.

<sup>261</sup> He translated the Syrian liturgy into Malayalam and arranged regular Sunday services in Malayalam. From the liturgy, he eliminated the doctrines of Transubstantiation, prayers for the dead, Mariolatry and such practices. Moreover, in the reformed liturgy, the people were given an intelligent share in the services, and their position as worshippers were improved. He destroyed a wooden image of a sacred person named Muthappan, which had been preserved in his parish church for many years and in whose honour it was usual to hold annually a grant festival, which brought in considerable revenue to the church. Agur C.M., *Church History of Travancore*, 127.

<sup>262</sup> Cherian P., *The Malabar Syrians, and Church Missionary Society 1816-1840* (Kottayam: Church Missionary Society Press, 1935), 290.

was the regular reading and sharing of the Scripture passages from the Old and New Testaments in the Malayalam language during the services.<sup>263</sup> He invited the C.M.S. missionaries and lay preachers named *upadesis* to preach in his church. He instructed the lay preachers in the Bible and encouraged them to become effective in their witness.

However, the Syrian Metran, Mar Dionysius IV, who was the supreme head of the Syrian Church in Kerala at that time, was not pleased with the activities of Abraham Malpan. He issued an order to all churches that they should not listen to the reformation teachings of Abraham Malpan and insisted that the Scripture must be read only in Syriac. He excommunicated the entire congregation of Maramon and disqualified the deacons and priests who were the followers of Abraham Malpan.<sup>264</sup> Abraham Malpan reacted to this action of Mar Dionysius IV, by sending his nephew deacon Mathew or Mathen, to Mardin, Syria, the seat of the Patriarch of Antioch to be consecrated as the bishop. The Patriarch of Antioch consecrated him as the Metropolitan of Malabar for Syrian Church with the title Mathews Mar Athanasius.<sup>265</sup> In 1843, he came back to Travancore as the new Metropolitan of Syrian Church in Kerala.<sup>266</sup> Later he continued the reformation in the Syrian Churches in Kerala.

The reformation within the Syrian Church influenced the entire families in the Church to perceive the errors and corruptions prevailing in their community. The sound revival of Christian faith had come to set a very high value on the daily reading and study of the Bible, and to accept the Bible as the primary authority in doctrinal matters. The distribution of the Holy Scripture and the adoption of scriptural methods promoted the spirit of reformation within the church.<sup>267</sup> Bible reading, family worship, and personal devotions became an indispensable part of their daily Christian life. In the public worship of the church, on Sundays and other important days, a

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<sup>263</sup> Previously the practice was to read the scripture in Syriac language. Cherian P., 291.

<sup>264</sup> Chacko T.C., *Malankara Marthoma Sabha Charitra Sangraham (Mal.) [Brief History of Malankara Marthoma Church]* (Thiruvalla: Marthoma Church, 1936), 13.

<sup>265</sup> Cherian P., *The Malabar Syrians and Church Missionary Society 1816-1840*, 291.

<sup>266</sup> Joy K.T., *The Marthoma Church: A Study of Its Growth and Contribution* (Kottayam: Good Shepherd Press, 1986), 31–32.

<sup>267</sup> ‘Madras and South Indian Mission,’ in *Proceedings of the Church Missionary Society, 1837-1838* (London: S.B. Seely, 1838), 59.

sermon got a particular place in the worship. The reformation of their spiritual life paved the way for the people to come and hear the Word of God, from nearby places.<sup>268</sup> Thus a sermon in a worship service was a custom during the period of the reformation of the Syrian Church. The reformation also influenced the Syrians to have a concern for the souls, and they prayed for the people.<sup>269</sup> There were hopeful signs of spiritual awakenings aroused among the Syrians in different parts of Central Kerala. The reformed Syrian congregations emerged as a pattern for a spiritually renewed people. They conducted meetings on Sunday afternoon for detailed instruction in the Word of God and prayer. The C.M.S. missionaries remarked on the meetings, “You may see, not only in the houses of our converts but in the Syrians, posted up in some conspicuous part, a prayer for the Holy Spirit.”<sup>270</sup> Therefore, reformation in the Syrian Church by Abraham Malpan, the open use of Bible, prayer meetings, and sermons influenced the Syrian Christian Community a spiritual revival in Kerala. As a result, the Syrian Christian Community was sustained by a series of spiritual revivals, which continued throughout the last quarter of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century.

#### **3.1.4. John Christian Arulappan and the Revival of Christianity among the Shanars**

John Christian Arulappan was born in 1810 in Ukirankottai in Srivilliputtur Taluk, now in Virutunakar District, in a Lutheran Christian family.<sup>271</sup> He studied under the Christian missionaries in C.M.S. boys’ school<sup>272</sup> moreover, acquired knowledge of the English language. At the age of fifteen, Arulappan joined the CMS

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<sup>268</sup> ‘Travancore and Cochin Mission,’ in *Proceedings of Church Missionary Society, 1859 – 1860* (London: S.B. Seely, 1860), 149.

<sup>269</sup> Chacko T.C., *Malankara Marthoma Sabha Charitra Sangraham (Mal.) [Brief History of Malankara Marthoma Church]*, 38.

<sup>270</sup> ‘Madras and South-India Mission: Travancore,’ *Church Missionary Record* VII (1858): 276.

<sup>271</sup> His grandfather was a Roman Catholic, but later he was brought to the Protestant faith by Dr. Schwartz, a Lutheran German missionary who worked in Tranquebar and Tanjore. Lang G.H., *The History and Diaries of An Indian Christian: J.C. Aroolappen* (Suffolk: Walsham - Le -Willows, 1939), 9.

<sup>272</sup> In 1818, James Hough started this C.M.S. English medium school in Tirunelveli. Cruickshanks W., ‘Report of the C.M.S. Native School’ (Tirunelveli, March 1852).

seminary in Tirunelveli, led by the German C.M.S. missionary C.T.E. Rhenius. On June 21, 1821, Rhenius started this Seminary for the Tamil youth to be prepared for employment as Catechists or Evangelists for South India. He selected youth from the children of members from the Lutheran and Anglican congregations.<sup>273</sup> There were thirteen boys of whom two were Shudras; eight were Shanars and three Parayas. The caste problem persisted in the seminary, and the missionaries had to struggle to continue the work of the seminary excluding caste.<sup>274</sup> A report of the “Half Yearly Examination of the Male Seminary” of Rhenius describes that on one occasion Arulappan ran away from the Seminary with other students and later he was reinstated.<sup>275</sup> After his return, Arulappan showed good progress and maintained his Christian character.

In 1833 Anthony Norris Groves, British Brethren missionary visited Rhenius, and he took Arulappan for his preaching journeys.<sup>276</sup> Groves emphasized a non-denominational, indigenous, native mission work in India.<sup>277</sup> Arulappan was influenced by the teachings of Groves, left Rhenius and went from Tirunelveli with Groves in December 1833. The next four years Arulappan was with Groves, and this acquaintance provided Arulappan to thoroughly learn the Scripture and skills to

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<sup>273</sup> J. Rhenius, *Memoir of C.T.E. Rhenius, Comprising Extracts from His Journal and Correspondence with Details of Missionary Proceedings in South India by His Son* (London: James Nisbet and Co., 1841), 208.

<sup>274</sup> From the first meal in the Seminary, Rhenius faced the issue of caste discrimination that the Shudra students considered others as lower castes, refused to sit down with other students to have meals. The parents of Shudra students pleaded to construct walls with mats within the seminary so that the Shudras can be away from the presence of the Shanar and the Paraya students. Rhenius declared the boys could not remain in the seminary with observing caste distinction and the work of the Seminary was discontinued after four days. This seminary was re-established in October 1822, and twenty-two boys began to study under Rhenius. Rhenius, 208–9.

<sup>275</sup> The running away of Arulappan could be because of the caste distinction in the seminary, and he was being a Shanar faced caste problems from the Shudras in the seminary. Rhenius, C.T.E, ‘Account of the Half Yearly Examination of the Male Seminary,’ 1826, CMS.

<sup>276</sup> Groves was a Dentist and gave up his profession to become a missionary, worked in Persia from 1828 to 1833. He was powerfully evangelical, non-sectarian, he considered Bible being the Word of God, is alone of authority in all matters of faith, worship, service, and personal life. Lang G.H., *The History and Diaries of An Indian Christian: J.C. Aroolappen*, 23.

<sup>277</sup> He taught that, whenever Christians assemble for worship or edification, they should give to the Spirit of God, as acting head of the church, leader of the proceedings, waiting upon Him to inspire worship and supply ministry, without individual programme or regulations. A distant missionary committee did not control all the activities and works of Groves, and he believed in the right appointment and direction of Lord Jesus Christ, the head of the Church. Lang G.H., 24.

develop an indigenous missionary work. He did not receive regular financial support from any mission agency, but he depended upon God for all supplies. Once when a non-Christian criticized Arulappan about his regular salary as an interpreter from the missionary, he refused to take a salary in any form or remuneration for his labour in translating for Groves, and he began to live by faith.<sup>278</sup> In 1837, Arulappan left Groves and determined to go on his own for missionary journeys covering some districts of Tamilnadu such as Madurai, Thrissinappally, Arcot, and Chittoor.

In 1840, Arulappan established a Christian settlement near his native place called Christianpettai.<sup>279</sup> Within two years he transformed it into a self-supporting agricultural village that included a church, a boarding school, a printing press, and a centre for Bible training and conventions. He was an itinerant preacher, and he passionately preached the gospel of Jesus Christ.<sup>280</sup> In his sermons, Arulappan emphasized the subjects of the appearance of Lord Jesus Christ, the Day of the Lord, and the expectation of receiving Him.<sup>281</sup> According to Gary B. McGee, the Assemblies of God historian, Groves, who was a member of the Plymouth Brethren instructed Arulappan about the millennial eschatology of the Plymouth Brethren – the imminent coming of Christ, hope for the outpouring of Holy Spirit, spiritual gifts, and an egalitarian concept of ministry.<sup>282</sup> The next twenty years Arulappan and his local leaders visited and preached thirty-five villages surrounding to Christianpettai and established congregations in these villages. These congregations were among the Shanar community, independent, self-supportive, and locally managed. These churches were the first independent churches in India. He practiced the early ‘apostolic’ pattern of the church, which included breaking of bread and a simple biblical exposition. Arulappan taught the church members to expect the gifts of the

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<sup>278</sup> Anderson, *To the Ends of the Earth: Pentecostalism and the Transformation of World Christianity*, 19.

<sup>279</sup> *Pettai* in Tamil means Village. Lang G.H., *The History and Diaries of An Indian Christian: J.C. Aroolappen*, 33.

<sup>280</sup> Lang recorded some of the sermons of Arulappan from his diary. Lang G.H., *The History and Diaries of An Indian Christian: J.C. Aroolappen*.

<sup>281</sup> Lang G.H., *The History, and Diaries of An Indian Christian*, 38.

<sup>282</sup> Gary B McGee, ‘Pentecostal Phenomena and Revivals in India: Implications for Indigenous Church Leadership,’ *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 20, no. 3 (July 1996): 113.

Holy Spirit and encouraged them to exercise the gifts for the profit of all.<sup>283</sup> Arulappan wrote in his diary on April 17<sup>th</sup>, 1858 that he encouraged his colleagues to teach the Shanar Christians about the faith and power of God.<sup>284</sup> He instructed his followers to memorize Scripture portions from the Gospels and Epistles and preserve the scripture with them through the help of the Holy Spirit. When they learned the Word of God, they gave up their customs of drunkenness and practicing caste differences.

In the school started by Arulappan in Christianpettai, children learned Scripture lessons in Tamil and the explanation of the Scripture. They also learned the English language and had to read one or two texts of the Gospels every day. Arulappan purchased a wooden printing press from London Missionary Society at Nagercoil in 1855, and printed and freely distributed Christian literature from Christianpettai. After 1857, he published a “Compendium of the Bible” and translated and published some tracts and hymns from English to Tamil.<sup>285</sup>

Arulappan had learned the reports of Christian revival movement that had occurred in the United States and England from the *Missionary Reporter*, and he became a supporter for a similar revival. He set aside his time for prayer and encouraged his fellow believers to seek God and expect the visitation of the Holy Spirit in Tirunelveli. He wrote that “when I heard about the great revival in America and Europe, I believe that the people of India will have soon ‘a loving mind,’ as in the Apostolic times, to love one another as their brethren.”<sup>286</sup> He exhorted the catechists, schoolmasters, and the church members on three subjects, “to abhor sin”<sup>287</sup> and leave them off at once, secondly “to meditate on the Scriptures night and day,” and thirdly, “to love the Lord Jesus Christ.”<sup>288</sup> Male and female believers came to Arulappan’s

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<sup>283</sup> Henry Groves, ‘Tinevelly Revival,’ *Indian Watchman*, July 1860, 2.

<sup>284</sup> Lang G.H., *The History and Diaries of An Indian Christian: J.C. Aroolappen*, 93.

<sup>285</sup> He initially published four tracts, “The Grace of God,” “The Tamil Spelling Book,” “The Explanation of the Bible,” and “The Milk of the Word of God.” Lang G.H., 120.

<sup>286</sup> J.C. Arulappan, Letter to Groves, March 2, 1859, compiled in *Memoir of Anthony Norris Groves, Compiled Chiefly From His Journals and Letters By His Widow*, Third (London: James Nisbet and Co., 1969), 593.

<sup>287</sup> According to Arulappan sin is the thoughts and actions of humans, which are contrary to the will of God. Lang G.H., *The History, and Diaries of An Indian Christian: J.C. Aroolappen*, 142–43.

<sup>288</sup> Lang G.H., 140.

house, cried with groans and tears, and asked him to pray for them to receive the Holy Spirit. He prayed for them, taught them from the Scripture, and he said: “Do not look at us, we are sinners; but look for the Holy Spirit.”<sup>289</sup> The people confessed their sins, the Holy Spirit convinced their sins, and they sought redemption through Jesus Christ. Some of the ladies and girls removed their jewels and offered the same to help the poor Christians. Three daughters of Arulappan offered their silver ornaments when they collected fund to help the poor people. In Arulappan’s words: “I found that my warnings and exhortations had [had] no effect about the jewels, but the Spirit works among them wonderfully and turns the hearts at once to leave out all things which are contrary to the will of God.”<sup>290</sup> It is notable that Arulappan prepared his people for a spiritual revival through instructing, praying, and helping the poor in their community. Henry Groves, son of Anthony Groves, wrote in *Indian Watchman* “two native women received visions, which led to days of deep conviction of sin, after which they found peace in their life.”<sup>291</sup> He knew the social stigma of the oppression of Shanar women in the society, which was attached to his community, but he attempted to overcome that through the revival of Christianity among them.

Arulappan and Shanar Christians in Christianpettai and surrounding places had the experience of the manifestation of Holy Spirit from May to August 1860.<sup>292</sup> Arulappan described the characteristics of these revivals. He wrote: “...the Holy Ghost was poured out and openly and wonderfully. Some prophesied and rebuked the people: some beat themselves on their breasts severely, and trembled and fell through the shaking of their bodies and souls. They wept for their sins and confessed their sin, and they saw some signs in the air.”<sup>293</sup> Henry Groves reported that “the day following Arulappan was engaged in Prayer, he says, the spirit of prophecy was given to some there...some men and women came from the village, beating their breasts in great fear

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<sup>289</sup> Lang G.H., 141.

<sup>290</sup> Lang G.H., 143.

<sup>291</sup> Groves, ‘Tinnevelly Revival,’ 3.

<sup>292</sup> *The Revival in North Tinnevelly: Reprinted from the Church Missionary Intelligencer for August 1860* (London: Church Missionary House, 1860), 12.

<sup>293</sup> Lang G.H., *The History, and Diaries of An Indian Christian*, 144.

and alarm of conscience, they fell and rolled on the ground.”<sup>294</sup> He further wrote that “the Lord met most of my people by pouring out of His Holy Spirit...some of our people praised the Lord by unknown tongues, with their interpretations.”<sup>295</sup> The C.M.S. missionaries, who were working in North Tirunelveli during this time, were Ashton Dibb, David Fenn, and W. Gray and they were critical about the new awakening in North Tirunelveli.<sup>296</sup> However, after they had visited the villages and personally witnessed the experiences of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, they reported differently about the revival in *Missionary Intelligencer*, 1860. Ashton Dibb wrote that, “...there were certain marks of a revival among the people...their doctrine is sound and pertinent, exhibiting a right practical understanding both of law and Gospel.”<sup>297</sup> David Fenn reported, “The Lord has begun to bless North Tinnevelly indeed. The shower has begun to fall.”<sup>298</sup> W. Gray observed, “The outward symptoms attending these awakenings, have, for the most part, been of the same kind. Generally, the subject of the affection assumes, as if under some uncontrollable influence, the kneeling position, begins to sob bitterly, and to cry out for help against the overwhelming power of sin, sways the body with more or less violence to and fro, grasps, as it from suffocation, sometimes rolls the eyes wildly.”<sup>299</sup> These C.M.S. missionaries accepted the extraordinary nature of the revival at Tirunelveli even though the Church of England’s clergy were backward in accepting these natures. A letter from Madras published in the *Bombay Guardian* reported: “It is indeed a new era in Indian Missions, that of lay converts going forth without purse or scrip to preach the gospel of Christ to their fellow-countrymen, and that with zeal and life we had hardly thought them capable of.”<sup>300</sup> It is true that later, many of the Protestant

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<sup>294</sup> Groves, ‘Tinnevelly Revival,’ 7.

<sup>295</sup> Lang G.H., *The History, and Diaries of An Indian Christian*, 144–45.

<sup>296</sup> ‘The Revival in North Tinnevelly,’ *Church Missionary Intelligencer* XI (December 1860): 265–68.

<sup>297</sup> *The Revival in North Tinnevelly: Reprinted from the Church Missionary Intelligencer for August 1860*, 13.

<sup>298</sup> Lang G.H., *The History and Diaries of An Indian Christian: J.C. Aroolappen*, 162.

<sup>299</sup> Lang G.H., *The History, and Diaries of An Indian Christian*, 163.

<sup>300</sup> Quoted by Lang G.H., *The History, and Diaries of An Indian Christian*, 165.

missionaries accepted the missionary nature and excellent characteristics of North Tirunelveli revival.

#### **3.1.4.1. Characteristics of the Revival among the Shanars**

The revival in Tirunelveli had the feature of a missionary and social renaissance. In Arulappan's words: I am thankful to the Lord, who is pleased to pour His Spirit upon poor sinners without distinction of white or black, rich or poor...<sup>301</sup> This revival impacted people equally irrespective of their caste, class, gender, or economy in Tirunelveli. After the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in Christianpettai, Arulappan, his son, three daughters, and a few others visited the villages under Church Missionary Society. They proclaimed the gospel, distributed tracts, conducted revival meetings, and instructed people from the Scripture. The remarkable use of some of the women in leadership and mission was an outstanding characteristic of this revival because this was most unusual in Tirunelveli where Shanar women were ill-treated and marginalized.<sup>302</sup> Another essential characteristic of this revival was the confession of sin and an emphasis on holiness. As part of this revival, there was a strong sense of unity and fellowship among the Shanar Christians. They practiced the life of the first century Christians. They had meals together in one place.<sup>303</sup>

#### **3.1.5. The Early Charismatic Revival Mission of John Christian Arulappan in Kerala and the Spiritual Awakening among the Syrian Christians**

John Christian Arulappan visited Kerala in 1860<sup>304</sup> with his three catechists from Tirunelveli. The Syrian Christians in Kerala, who already had the reformation experience under Abraham Malpan and Mathews Mar Athanasius, the Metropolitan of the Syrian Christians, received Arulappan and allowed him to teach from the Bible in their prayer meetings. Arulappan's great devotion to the Word of God and his straightforward style of conveying the gospel message ingratiated the spiritual

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<sup>301</sup> Lang G.H., 140–41.

<sup>302</sup> 'Revival Movement in North Tinnevely,' *Proceedings of the Church Missionary Society for Africa and the East*, 1861 1860, 23.

<sup>303</sup> *Memoir of Anthony Norris Groves, Compiled Chiefly From His Journals and Letters By His Widow*, 270.

<sup>304</sup> According to C. M. Agur, his first visit to Kerala was in 1853. Arulappan experienced the revival in Tirunelveli in 1860 and in the same year he visited Kerala with the revival message. Agur C.M., *Church History of Travancore*, 918.

interests of reformed Syrian Christians. The themes of his messages were the crucifixion of Jesus Christ, the second coming of Christ, the rule of antichrist, millennium and eternal life. He was a millenarian, and for the first time he taught in Kerala the personal reign of Christ on earth for a thousand years.<sup>305</sup> Arulappan preached in the prayer meetings, which were conducted in different places in Central Kerala during that period, and this resulted in a spiritual awakening and revival among the Syrian Christians of Central Kerala.<sup>306</sup> According to Sadhu Kochukunju Upadesi, the 20<sup>th</sup>-century revival preacher, one of the catechists and a disciple of Arulappan named Pandikkaran Mathai Upadesi continued the revival of 1860 in Central Kerala. Pandikkaran Mathai Upadesi, from Tamil Nadu who did not have proper education, accompanied Arulappan in Kerala. Later he stayed in Chenkulam, south Kerala and traveled to different places in Central Kerala and preached the Word of God. Kochukunju Upadesi writes “the outpouring of the Holy Spirit occurred among the people so wonderfully during this time. People confessed their sins and experienced a change in their spiritual life.”<sup>307</sup>

The impact of this revival continued for many decades. The significant effect of the spiritual awakening of Syrian Christians in Central Kerala was that many families deepened the Christian experience through learning of the Scripture and became active members of the Church. Another effect of the revival was the progress of mission among the non-Christians that many Syrians became missionaries and they taught the Scripture to many and made them part of the Church. The Syrians took the initiative to teach the oppressed and suffering people groups in the society.<sup>308</sup>

In the year 1874, there was a revival among the Syrian Christians of Kerala accompanied by physical manifestations. It occurred in the first place at Kannit, a town in the southern part of Kerala, and then spread in Central Kerala under the leadership of Yustus or Justus Joseph. He was the eldest of six Brahmin brothers who were brought into the Church and were baptized by J. Peet, a C.M.S.

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<sup>305</sup> Agur C.M., 918.

<sup>306</sup> Sadhu Kochukunju Upadesi, *Malankara Sabhyum Atmeeya Unarvum (Mal.) [Malankara Church and Spiritual Revival]* (Kottayam: C. M. S. Press, 1924), 9.

<sup>307</sup> Upadesi, 10.

<sup>308</sup> David Fenn, ‘South India Mission: Travancore, A Report of David Fenn,’ *Church Missionary Record* IV (April 1874): 90.

missionary.<sup>309</sup> After their acceptance of Christianity, they attended the revival meetings of Pandikkaran Mathai Upadesi, the disciple of Arulappan. The eldest of the brothers, Joseph was skilled in music, and profound speaking was known by the nickname ‘*Widwan Kutty*’ which means ‘the wise child.’ He wrote new songs according to the situations and sang at the meetings. He had excellent knowledge of Greek and English languages, which helped him in the interpretation of the Scripture. As a result, thousands of people were spiritually awakened by his songs and preaching in different places.<sup>310</sup> Joseph and his family had the zeal for the mission, and they were involved in preaching and teaching of the gospel. The Syrian Christians extended hospitality when Joseph and his family arrived in different places as part of their preaching tours.<sup>311</sup>

His careful reading and interpretation of the scripture and the true spirit of prayer invited many ordinary people to this revival. It is reported that there was an intense sorrow over sin, repentance of sinners, and a feeling of compassion for the people, which represented the work of the Holy Spirit. The revival preacher Joseph asserted that when the work of the Holy Spirit is conducted, it is usual for God to grant unique gifts. To prove this, he used eloquent sermons that the prophecy of Joel quoted by Peter must be fulfilled as part of the revival. He quoted the scripture, which says, “These signs shall follow them that believe,” and he looked forward to extraordinary gifts.<sup>312</sup> Owing to this a great many people prayed and waited for these gifts from above. As a result, people received visions, revelations, and dreams and some even received the gifts of prophecy.<sup>313</sup> According to David Fenn who witnessed this revival reported, in a sizeable Syrian Church in Chengannur, "we heard strange sounds proceeding from it, and within found a congregation of above 200 persons... some were flinging their arms into the air, uttering passionate cries, others shaking

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<sup>309</sup> Speechly J.M., ‘Report from Travancore,’ *Church Missionary Record* VII (1862): 286.

<sup>310</sup> Kuruvilla K.K., *Keralathile Athmeeya Unarvu (Mal.) [Studies on Revival in Kerala Churches]* (Thiruvalla: The Malayalam Christian Literature Committee, 1942), 40.

<sup>311</sup> In Central Kerala places like Maraman, Kozhenchery, Kuriannore, Chengannur, Niranam, Anaprampal, Mepral, and Thumpamon were deeply awakened by revival meetings conducted by him. Fenn

<sup>312</sup> Fenn, 93.

<sup>313</sup> ‘The Revival in Travancore,’ *Madras Church Missionary Record* XI (March 1875): 93.

and trembling in every limb, others throwing their bodies about strangely and unnaturally, while the tears were running down their cheeks."<sup>314</sup>

However, reform spirit very soon received a deathblow when Justus Joseph organized a new revival church, later it was known as 'Yuyomayam' or 'Six Years Party.'<sup>315</sup> In 1875 a man named, Thommen Koodarappallil from Kottarakara came to Justus Joseph and said to him that the second coming of Christ would happen after six years. That is to say that there are only six years from 1875 for the second coming of Christ.<sup>316</sup> Justus Joseph joined with him and started to proclaim this new teaching. Due to this heretical teaching, Justus Joseph's license as a missionary was canceled by the C.M.S Church Council. This event caused a decline in the revival movement for a short period.

In 1894, a significant revival movement swept over Central Kerala under the leadership of two preachers from Sri Lanka named V.D. David (popularly known as Tamil David) and L.M. Wadsworth. Some spiritually awakened people among the Syrian Christians like Archdeacon Umman Mammen and Cheruckol C. Chacko had invited them to conduct revival missions in Central Kerala. These two lay brethren, without any ecclesiastical letters or any particular preparation being made for the mission, began quietly, in earnest prayer and faith.<sup>317</sup> The Spirit of God worked through the Tamil evangelists from the very beginning of this revival and carried on a most successful mission among the Syrian Christians. They exposed and denounced with high power and clarity, common native sins such as lying, love of money, quarreling, false witness and impurity.<sup>318</sup> They told the people plainly that if they

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<sup>314</sup> 'The Religious Awakening in Travancore: Report of the Rev. D. Fenn, Secretary of the Madras Corresponding Committee,' *Church Missionary Intelligencer* X (June 1874): 91–92.

<sup>315</sup> 'Justus Joseph to the Bishop in Madras,' August 1875, Gary McGee Collection, Box 2, File 6, Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center; Caley J., 'Disturbed State of the Syrian Christians,' *Madras Church Missionary Record* XLIII (June 1876): 369–72.

<sup>316</sup> 'Justus Joseph to Joseph Caley,' 26 May 1875, Gary McGee Collection, Box 2, File 6, Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center; 'Justus Joseph to Rev. W.J. Richards,' 20 July 1875, Gary McGee Collection, Box 2, File 6, Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center; Caley J., 'Disturbed State of the Syrian Christians,' 369.

<sup>317</sup> 'Past and Present of the Travancore and Cochin Mission,' *Church Missionary Intelligencer* XLVII (1896): 763.

<sup>318</sup> 'J.H. Bishop to Syrian Christians: Tamil Evangelists in Travancore,' 27 February 1895, File 23, Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center.

remained in sins, they could not be called as Christians and it was their privilege to be saved right off at once from all sin, from its guilt and power, and henceforth to walk as God's dear children.<sup>319</sup> The preaching of these missionaries attracted the people and influenced the spiritual aspects of their lives. They arranged conventions, quiet days, prayer meetings and Sunday schools, and circulated devotional literature and regularly attended Holy Communion and church services. The changed spiritual life situation of the people provided them with an earnest desire to pray for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. From the children to the old people, all started to think about 'salvation' and the baptism of the Holy Spirit.<sup>320</sup>

As an impact of the spiritual awakening among the Syrian Christians in Central Kerala, the next significant revival movement among them took place at the beginning of the twentieth century. In 1906, Puchamannil Mammen Upadesi turned to be instrumental in bringing this revival among the Syrian Christians of Kerala.<sup>321</sup> He had studied only up to the third standard, and his reading was practically confined to the Bible. One day in 1906, he heard a voice calling for preaching the Word of God. In response to this call, he began to preach the Word. People from different parts of Kerala gathered around him to hear the Word.<sup>322</sup> He started the revival preaching at a place called Kattanam in Central Kerala. The people who attended this meeting experienced the work of the Holy Spirit amongst them. Many people confessed their sins and became more spiritually awakened persons.<sup>323</sup> This revival continued for four years. *Malankara Sabha Tharaka* reported the news of this revival spread over to every nook and corner of Central Kerala.<sup>324</sup> In Mavelikkara, this revival influenced

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<sup>319</sup> 'Past and Present of the Travancore and Cochin Mission,' 764.

<sup>320</sup> Kuruvilla K.K., *Keralathile Athmeeya Unarvu (Mal.) [Studies on Revival in Kerala Churches]*, 68.

<sup>321</sup> 'Editorial,' *Malankara Sabha Tharaka* IV, no. 4 (September 1907): 1.

<sup>322</sup> Kuruvilla K.K., *A History of the Marthoma Church and Its Doctrines* (Madras: CLS, 1951), 47.

<sup>323</sup> 'Kattanathe Unarvu (Mal.) [Spiritual Revival in Kattanam],' *Malankara Sabha Tharaka* IV, no. 5 (October 1907): 14.

<sup>324</sup> 'Editorial,' 1-2; 'Kattanathe Unarvu (Mal.) [Spiritual Revival in Kattanam]'; 'Melukara Athmeeya Unarvu (Mal.) [Spiritual Revival in Melukara],' *Malankara Sabha Tharaka* IV, no. 5 (October 1907): 16-17; 'Mallappally Unarvu (Mal.) [Spiritual Revival in Mallappally],' *Malankara Sabha Tharaka* IV, no. 6 (December 1907): 6-7.

many people, and they experienced the presence of the Holy Spirit in their midst. One among the members, a retired government officer T.I. Cherian had a new vision of fire, and he received the gift of prophecy after the vision.<sup>325</sup> Some Christians and Hindus saw visions like the wounded hands of Jesus Christ and fire, which resulted in experiencing the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Some people danced with personal happiness in the revival meetings, and it was advised not to hinder it.

### **3.1.5.1. Primary Characteristics of the Spiritual Awakening among the Syrian Christians**

The revival preachers in Central Kerala concentrated their sermons on the themes of the second coming of Christ, heaven, hell, sin, repentance, and baptism of the Holy Spirit. They preached on the way of salvation, which is only through Jesus Christ. The preachers emphasized the conception of a transforming mind, that is, regeneration or conversion of the mind of the people. The emphasis was on a transformation of life or regeneration of human being as a necessary condition to enter the kingdom of God. Genuine repentance, open confession, and immediate restitution created a new spiritual atmosphere among the people. This spiritual atmosphere resulted in the ending of all animosities, the settling of all social quarrels, and reconciliation in personal, congregational, and public disputes. People asked for forgiveness publicly and even to their slaves or members of the society. There was a significant change in the reading of the Scripture among the Christians. At one place, a Syrian woman came running to get a Bible. She cried, "I want a Bible, I have no money. However, I have a silver ornament, which I will sell to buy a Bible. I do not want ornaments any longer."<sup>326</sup> Besides, she did as she said and bought a Bible. They were thus diligent in attending the divine services and new prayer meetings at different places in Central Kerala.

The revivals were often accompanied by bodily manifestations like jumping, singing, dancing, beating of breasts and weeping. The excessive crying and distortions of head and body and extreme enthusiasm were part of these revivals as mentioned

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<sup>325</sup> Mammen V.P., 'Nammude Sabhayile Unarvu (Mal.) [The Revival in Our Churches],' *Malankara Sabha Tharaka* IV, no. 5 (October 1907): 78–80.

<sup>326</sup> 'Revival in Travancore,' *The Travancore and Cochin Diocesan Record* XVII, no. 6 (December 1907): 91.

earlier. Some saw visions, prophesied and even ecstatically spoke some languages other than they knew.<sup>327</sup> It was beyond doubt that these kinds of extravaganza were adequate signs of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon the people. The greatness of these revival movements of Kerala was that they were indigenous. It marked the beginning of the rise of indigenous lay ministry in Kerala and upheld the role of laymen and women in preaching the Word of God. At many places in the neighborhood of Mavelikkara and Thiruvalla, the revival influenced many non-Christians like *Izhavas*, Pulayas, Parayars, and Kuravars as they attended the meetings, and they were awakened socially by the revival sermons.

### **3.1.5.2. Impact of Spiritual Awakening among the Syrian Christians**

#### **3.1.5.2.1. The Formation of Indigenous and Independent Congregations**

During the period of these revivals, the Spirit of God was poured out openly upon the congregations, which resulted in long-lasting charismatic manifestations in Kerala. Revival movements among the Christians paved the way for a new dimension in the spiritual life, and many people experienced genuine repentance in their lives. Consequently, this became a new sensation and a new spiritual and a social movement of the people.

In the light of the history of revivals mentioned above among the Syrian Christians in Central Kerala, a reference to people's response to the spiritual awakening is essential. In at least some instances a few Syrian Christian families named Vallivilayil, Chakkalayil, and Thekkeveetil in Thuvayoor in Central Kerala,<sup>328</sup> appeared to have responded positively to the wave of revivalism. Members of Vallivilayil family, Thomas Geevarghese, Koshy Varghese and their sons, Koshy Mathai, and Koshy Chacko constructed a separate chapel and arranged spiritual prayer meetings in it.<sup>329</sup> Another significant development was that a few more brothers from the Syrian Christian community named Kunjummen Varghese, Deacon Umman Mammen from the C.M.S. church, Pandalam Mathai Upadesi, John Esow,

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<sup>327</sup> Upadesi, *Malankara Sabhyum Atmeeya Unarvum (Mal.) [Malankara Church and Spiritual Revival]*, 18.

<sup>328</sup> They were the members of Kadambanadu Valiyapalli, the prominent Church of Kadambanadu. Now it is known as St. Thomas Cathedral.

<sup>329</sup> Habel G. Varghese, *Ekanai...Kalnadayayi...(Mal.) [The Life Story of Pastor T. K. Varghese]* (Trivandrum: Christian Literature Service, 2003), 28.

Enjackal Chacko Koshy, Adoor Konkayil Kochu Koshy Kunju, David Upadesi, and Paruthuppara Kunjachan Upadesi extended their support and actively involved in, independent prayer meetings at Thuvayoor. Adoor Paruthuppara Thomas Ummachen, a revival preacher of the C.M.S. church, who was trained by the Brethren Church, was invited to provide leadership to this independent congregation.<sup>330</sup>

Some other independent revival congregations began to emerge in different places like Mulakkuzha, Pennukkara, and Budhanoor in Kerala during the year 1907 whereas the Syrian Church remained firm and robust even in the midst of the outbreak of the revival movements. However, some of its adherents like Malayil Kunju, Malayil Eappechan, Thundilethu Thomachan, Kaliyikkathundiyl Lukochan, Charivil Chandichan, Yohannachan, and Kakkattu Thomachan while identifying with the revival movements gave leadership for independent prayer meetings. They called these congregations as ‘Sabha’ or ‘Church’ and named this movement ‘Viyojitha Sabha’ or ‘Separatist Movement.’<sup>331</sup> They were new groups professing evangelical faith that emerged among the Christian community of Kerala.<sup>332</sup> The Anglican missionaries criticized the features of this separatist movement. Some Syrians did not accept it because the spiritually awakened Syrians accepted the members of non-Christian background as brothers and sisters in Christ.

### **3.1.5.2.2. Social Dimension of the Impact of Spiritual Awakening among the Syrian Christians**

The revival movement and the emergence of the new congregations within its contexts provided the people a spirit to accept all human beings in the society without discrimination. It seems that the economically sound Syrian Christians in the new congregations during this period maintained a ‘brotherly’ attitude to the Dalits in the community. One member of these independent congregations, T.K. Varghese, showed genuine interest in the emancipation and upliftment of Dalits in the society. As an indigenous missionary from the Thuvayoor Church, he visited the Dalit communities

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<sup>330</sup> Varghese, 52–56.

<sup>331</sup> Abraham K.E., *Yesukristhuvinte Eliya Dasan: Athmakadha, Pastor K.E. Abraham (Mal.) [Pastor K.E. Abraham: The Humble Servant of Jesus Christ, Autobiography]*, 39–40.

<sup>332</sup> James Edwin Orr, *Evangelical Awakenings in Southern Asia* (Minneapolis: Bethany Fellowship, 1912), 138–39.

of nearby places of Thuvayoor, like Iverkala, Mannadi, Kunnathoor, and Kannimala. The Dalits in these areas were slaves working in the houses of high caste Hindu people. His concern was not only sharing of the gospel but also emancipation of the Dalit community.<sup>333</sup>

For the liberation of the Dalit communities in this region, T.K. Varghese established some elementary schools with the intention of giving primary education to the Dalit communities. In 1910-1911, he established a school in Poothuchira nearby Thuvayoor. As a missionary, the social renaissance and the revival movement influenced him, and his missionary intention was to make them read the Bible.<sup>334</sup> In the initial period, his educational mission was not a success because of the problems created by the slave owners. The slave owners were reluctant to educate their slaves. They thought that the educated slaves would disobey them. Moreover, they would become more aware of their rights, and they cannot be exploited easily. It was a successful mission, with 80 students regularly attended classes in this school.<sup>335</sup> In addition to this school, he established schools in other places like Iverkala and Mannadi.

### **3.2. The Emergence and Growth of Classical Pentecostalism in Kerala**

#### **3.2.1. The Emergence of Classical Pentecostalism in North America**

The emergence of Classical Pentecostalism was an impact of Topeka and Azusa Street revivals in the United States of America. The revival in Topeka, Kansas, in early 1901, was the product of the ministry of Charles Parham, an independent Kansas preacher who resigned from the Methodist church in 1895.<sup>336</sup> Parham experienced healing from the consequences of Rheumatic fever and heart disease in 1898 and began a healing ministry through Bethel Healing Home after that.<sup>337</sup> Later Parham opened Bethel Gospel School in 1900 in Topeka, Kansas and enrolled thirty-

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<sup>333</sup> Varghese, *Ekanai...Kalnadayayi...(Mal.) [The Life Story of Pastor T. K. Varghese]*, 53.

<sup>334</sup> Varghese, 64.

<sup>335</sup> Varghese, 79.

<sup>336</sup> James R. Goff, 'Topeka Revival,' in *The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, ed. Stanley M. Burgess and Eduard M. Van Der Mass (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2003), 1148.

<sup>337</sup> Goff, *Fields White Unto Harvest: Charles F. Parham and the Missionary Origins of Pentecostalism*, 40.

four students. Anderson observes, their study on the Book of Acts as a subject with particular importance given to the question of Biblical evidence of the Baptism of the Holy Spirit and its answer as speaking in other tongues influenced the students to pray for the experience of the gifts of Holy Spirit.<sup>338</sup> A revival broke out when on the 1<sup>st</sup> January as they prayed and waited to receive the gifts of Holy Spirit. One student, Agnes N. Ozman requested Parham to lay hands on her and pray specifically for her that she receives the Holy Spirit as she hoped to go as a missionary.<sup>339</sup> According to Hollenweger, the publicity concerning this revival and news reports about the strange tongues generated the attention of the people, and in many towns, Parham held large meetings in which, the participants were converted, sanctified, baptized with the Spirit and healed from sickness.<sup>340</sup> As he was at the height of the influence, several thousand people received Spirit baptism in this new movement called ‘Apostolic Faith.’ Parham formulated the ‘evidential tongue’ doctrine and insisted on the belief that tongues were authentic languages given for the proclamation of the gospel in the end times and glossolalia as the ‘evidence’ of Spirit baptism.<sup>341</sup>

The Azusa Street revival in Los Angeles, the United States of America, took place as an impact of Topeka revival of America. William Joseph Seymour, an African American preacher, had the opportunity to listen to Parham's lectures in Parham's short-term Bible school in Houston.<sup>342</sup> In early 1906, Seymour came to Los Angeles and preached ‘the tongues was a sign of Spirit baptism’ in a small African American Holiness church, but they locked the church building against him.<sup>343</sup> Later members of this church and others organized a cottage prayer meeting with Seymour in Richard and Ruth Asberry’s house in Bonnie Brae Street. In this meeting, seven

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<sup>338</sup> Anderson, *An Introduction to Pentecostalism: Global Charismatic Christianity*, 34.

<sup>339</sup> Parham reported that after a brief prayer a glory fell upon her, a halo seemed to surround her head and face, and she began speaking in the Chinese language and was unable to speak English for three days. Charles Parham, ‘Editorial,’ *Apostolic Faith* 2, no. 6 (July 1926): 2.

<sup>340</sup> Walter J. Hollenweger, *The Pentecostals* (London: SCM Press, 1976), 22.

<sup>341</sup> Charles Parham, ‘A Critical Analysis of the Tongues Question,’ *Apostolic Faith*, no. 5 (June 1925): 2–3.

<sup>342</sup> Steve Durasoff, *Bright Wind of the Spirit - Pentecostalism Today* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1972), 49.

<sup>343</sup> ‘Pentecost Has Come: Los Angeles Being Visited by a Revival of Bible Salvation and Pentecost as Recorded in the Book of Acts,’ *The Apostolic Faith* 1, no. 1 (September 1906): 1.

people including Seymour received the experience of speaking in tongues.<sup>344</sup> Seymour then rented an old Methodist church at 312 Azusa Street; soon the house attracted large crowds and became the center of the Apostolic Faith Movement. In the services that followed, demonstrations of speaking in tongues were so powerfully pronounced that huge crowds began to attend the meetings. Seymour began preaching in the surrounding places of Azusa and scores of people began to fall under the power of the Holy Spirit and arose speaking in other tongues. Anderson observes, “Seymour’s core leadership team was fully integrated with black and white men and women being responsible for various aspects of work, but Seymour remained in charge.”<sup>345</sup>

The Azusa Street Mission offered a summary statement of the movement in the third issue of their *Apostolic Faith* periodical: “We are not fighting men or churches, but seeking to displace dead forms and creeds and wild fanaticism with living practical Christianity.”<sup>346</sup> The dominant characteristic of the Azusa Street revival was that it was free from racial discrimination, which was the general order of the day. Azusa Street revival was a meeting together of blacks, whites, Mexicans, and Asians. They worshiped together, and they shared responsibilities crossing the barriers of race, and gender.<sup>347</sup> According to Durasoff, the people who came to Azusa Street revival found no segregation of blacks, whites, Mexicans, and Chinese and they sat together to worship and participate in shouting, dancing, falling into trances, weeping, speaking and singing in tongues, and interpret these utterances in English.<sup>348</sup> Unlike the churches of that day, the Azusa Street revival freely integrated all racial segregation, and they stayed there for an extended period. It attracted many people - skeptics, seekers, and church leaders alike from around the world, people of all colours and from all stations of life.<sup>349</sup> Other essential features of the Azusa revival

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<sup>344</sup> ‘Pentecost Has Come: Los Angeles Being Visited by a Revival of Bible Salvation and Pentecost as Recorded in the Book of Acts,’ 1.

<sup>345</sup> Anderson, *An Introduction to Pentecostalism: Global Charismatic Christianity*, 40.

<sup>346</sup> ‘Untitled Item,’ *The Apostolic Faith* 1, no. 3 (November 1906): 2.

<sup>347</sup> ‘Pentecost Has Come: Los Angeles Being Visited by a Revival of Bible Salvation and Pentecost as Recorded in the Book of Acts,’ 3.

<sup>348</sup> Durasoff, *Bright Wind of the Spirit - Pentecostalism Today*, 49.

<sup>349</sup> ‘Bible Pentecost: Gracious Pentecostal Showers Continue to Fall,’ 1.

were impulsiveness and ecstasy in worship, being short of ecclesiastical or pastoral supervision, and a break of ethnic, denominational, socio-economic, and gender boundaries. The significant characteristic of this revival is related to its teaching about the baptism of the Holy Spirit and the gift of tongues. From the beginning of this revival, Seymour taught baptism in the Holy Ghost and fire meant 'to be flooded with the love of God and Power for service.'<sup>350</sup> Seymour taught the gift of tongues as a sign that would follow the baptism of the Holy Spirit. The emphasis on the power of speaking in tongues played a significant role in the life of the Azusa Street revival, and this influenced the people to go to the evangelistic or mission field.<sup>351</sup> According to Allan Anderson, the Azusa Street revival marks the beginning of Classical Pentecostalism and twenty-six different denominations trace their Pentecostal origins to Azusa Street.<sup>352</sup>

At the same time, Pentecostal Scholars have had difficulty in explaining the history and reasons for the origin of the title 'Pentecostalism,' which is connected with the Azusa Street mission. The two main views commonly held among the scholars about the origin of modern Pentecostalism are the classical or conventional view and the societal view.<sup>353</sup> The classical or conventional view holds the idea that Pentecostalism was an outcome of the religious aspirations of the people, and the societal view emphasizes that the socio-religious and economic struggles of the people produced this movement. According to the classical or conventional view, the Modern Pentecostal movement began on the New Year Day in 1901, in the Bethel Bible School, and Charles Fox Parham, the white American Holiness preacher, was considered as the founder of the modern Pentecostal movement. James R. Goff who wrote the most thorough and well-documented biography of Parham portrayed him as the authentic father of the worldwide Pentecostal movement and his Bible school in Topeka, Kansas, as the birthplace of the Classical Pentecostal movement.<sup>354</sup>

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<sup>350</sup> 'Pentecost Has Come: Los Angeles Being Visited by a Revival of Bible Salvation and Pentecost as Recorded in the Book of Acts,' 2.

<sup>351</sup> 'Untitled Item,' 1.

<sup>352</sup> Anderson, *An Introduction to Pentecostalism: Global Charismatic Christianity*, 42.

<sup>353</sup> See details, Thomas V.V., *Dalit Pentecostalism, Spirituality of the Empowered Poor*.

<sup>354</sup> Goff, *Fields White Unto Harvest: Charles F. Parham and the Missionary Origins of Pentecostalism*, 7.

Pentecostal scholars like Klaude Kendrick, John Nichols, Donald Dayton, Gary McGee, and Grant Wacker supported the above view through their writings.<sup>355</sup> The societal view states that the worldwide Pentecostal movement originated in 1906, in a marginalized and suffering context, at Azusa Street in Los Angeles under the leadership of William J. Seymour, an African-American Holiness preacher.<sup>356</sup> This view was proposed by the Pentecostal historian, Walter Hollenweger and then by other scholars such as Leonard Lovett, Douglas J. Nelson, and Ian MacRobert. These historians suggested the importance of William Seymour over Charles Parham in the emergence of the Classical Pentecostal denominations.<sup>357</sup>

According to Vinson Synan, “Although many persons had spoken in tongues in the United States in the years preceding 1906, this Azusa Street revival brought the practice to the attention of the world and catalyzed the formation of scores of Pentecostal denominations.”<sup>358</sup> It is true that directly or indirectly all of the Pentecostal denominations or groups existing in the world trace their lineage to the Azusa Street mission. The message of the Azusa Street revival spread from there to different parts of the world, and wherever it spread it took the name ‘Pentecostal.’<sup>359</sup> Hollenweger observes that the mainline churches criticized the emerging Pentecostal

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<sup>355</sup> Klaude Kendrick, *The Promise Fulfilled: A History of the Modern Pentecostal Movement* (Springfield: Gospel Publishing House, 1961); John T. Nicholas, *The Pentecostals* (Plainfield: Logos Books International, 1971); Donald W. Dayton, *Theological Roots of Pentecostalism* (Metuchen: The Scarecrow Press, 1987).

<sup>356</sup> Steven J. Land, ‘Pentecostal Spirituality: Living in the Spirit,’ in *Christian Spirituality: Post-Reformation and Modern*, ed. Louis Dupre and Don E. Salier (London: SCM Press, 1990), 480.

<sup>357</sup> Hollenweger, *The Pentecostals*, 23.

<sup>358</sup> Vinson Synan proposes some of the reasons why the Azusa Street revival was only known as the Pentecostal revival. According to him, after the Azusa Street revival, people reported that what took place in Azusa was the repetition of the day of Pentecost in Acts chapter 2. Reports from the *Apostolic Faith Magazine* published from the Azusa Street indicated that hundreds were speaking with tongues in addition to the numbers saved, sanctified and healed. The paper reported, “The waves of Pentecostal salvation are still rolling in Azusa Street Mission” moreover, “Los Angeles is being visited by a revival of Bible salvation and Pentecost as recorded in the book of Acts.” It is significant that the press referred to this revival movement as ‘Pentecostal.’ Vinson Synan, *The Holiness-Pentecostal Tradition: Charismatic Movements in the Twentieth Century* (Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1997), 105.

<sup>359</sup> The essential people behind this were Mrs. Rachel Sizelove in Missouri, Samuel Saell in Arizona, Glenn A. Cook in Indiana, D. W. Kerr in Ohio, R. E. McAlister in Ottawa, Ontario, C. H. Mason in Tennessee, G. B. Cashwell in North Carolina, and T. B. Barratt in Norway. Synan, 104; Nils Bloch-Hoell, *The Pentecostal Movement. Its Origin, Development and Distinctive Character* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1964), 39–51.

movement, despising the Pentecostals because of their lowly black origins. Social pressure soon prompted the emerging Pentecostal church leadership to segregate the Pentecostal churches into black and white organizations.<sup>360</sup> The Pentecostals after the Azusa revival considered themselves as a movement concerned primarily with the experience of the working of the Holy Spirit and the practice of the spiritual gifts. Therefore they were called Classical Pentecostals based on their doctrine of ‘initial evidence.’<sup>361</sup>

### 3.2.1.1. The ‘Bible Evidence’ or ‘Initial Evidence’ Doctrine of Classical Pentecostalism

After the Topeka revival of 1901 and the Azusa Street revival of 1906, the “Bible evidence” the doctrine, which was later popularly called the “initial evidence,” became the primary doctrinal teachings of the Pentecostals and became the chief distinctive teaching of Classical Pentecostalism.<sup>362</sup> Charles Parham who was influenced by the Wesleyan Holiness theology framed this chief doctrinal distinctive feature of Pentecostalism, and that was later taught after the Azusa Street revival by Pentecostal leaders. According to Parham, *glossolalia* provided the vital sign or “Bible evidence” of the baptism in the Holy Spirit by distributing among the saints every intelligible language to expedite world evangelization in the end times.<sup>363</sup> In the years of the spread of Azusa Pentecostalism, the *Apostolic Faith* and other periodicals published testimonies of people receiving known languages as part of their Baptism in the Holy Spirit. In the earliest document from the Azusa Street movement, which was an exposition of Pentecostal truths, published by George F. Taylor in 1907, strongly affirmed the doctrine of Bible Evidence.<sup>364</sup> It was not only the primary doctrine of Pentecostals, but it was the mission ethos or mission thrust of the Pentecostal

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<sup>360</sup> Walter J. Hollenweger, *Pentecostalism: Origins and Developments Worldwide* (Massachusetts: Hendrickson Publishers, 2005), 20.

<sup>361</sup> Anderson, *An Introduction to Pentecostalism: Global Charismatic Christianity*, 14.

<sup>362</sup> See Cecil M. Robeck, ‘William J. Seymour and the Bible Evidence,’ in *Initial Evidence: Historical and Biblical Perspectives on the Pentecostal Doctrine of Spirit Baptism*, ed. Gary B McGee (Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, 1991), 72–95.

<sup>363</sup> Sarah E. Parham, *The Life of Charles F. Parham* (Baxter: Apostolic Faith Bible College, 1930), 51–52.

<sup>364</sup> George F. Taylor, *The Spirit and the Bride* (Falcon: Falcon Printing, 1907), 37, 50–51.

movement. The missionaries who went from Azusa Street revival as Pentecostal missionaries began to teach this doctrine as a distinctive mark of Pentecostalism.

In turn A.B. Simpson expressed through his writing in 1915, that the Bible evidence doctrine was a missiological strategy of the early Pentecostals. He boldly said, the mainline Protestant missions in the world “had lost her faith...in the supernatural signs and workings of the Holy Ghost, she has lost the signs also, and the result is that she is compelled to produce conviction upon the minds of the heathen very largely by purely rational and moral considerations and influences.”<sup>365</sup> It was a common understanding and belief of the early Pentecostals and missionaries that Baptism in the Holy Spirit and *glossolalia* was the plan of the Lord to pour out His Spirit as an extraordinary gift for the operations of His power for the evangelization of the entire world. He further wrote: Through a select band of Spirit-filled missionaries, the miraculous work of the Spirit would then make up for the failure of the pedestrian practices of the Protestant missions movement to carry the gospel to all parts of the world before the Second Coming of Christ and the inauguration of his millennial reign on earth.<sup>366</sup>

### 3.2.2. The Arrival of Classical Pentecostalism in Kerala

George Berg, who served the Azusa Street revival and mission as a secretary with William J. Seymour was the first missionary from the Classical Pentecostalism to come to Kerala.<sup>367</sup> It was he who introduced Classical Pentecostalism to the Christians in Kerala. George and Mary Berg were already Brethren missionaries in India for five years since 1901, and during their visit to the United States, they attended the Azusa Street revival in September 1906.<sup>368</sup> Anderson writes, that the experience of the baptism in Holy Spirit Azusa Street revival in September 1906

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<sup>365</sup> Simpson A.B., *The Gospel of Healing* (Harrisburg: Christian Publications, 1915), 50–52.

<sup>366</sup> Simpson A.B., 54.

<sup>367</sup> George E. Berg, ‘Baptized with the Holy Ghost,’ *The Apostolic Faith* 1, no. 4 (December 1906): 2; Cecil M. Robeck, ‘Azusa Street Revival,’ in *The International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, ed. Stanley M. Burgess and Eduard M. Van Der Mass (Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 2003), 347. Robeck writes that the core of the Azusa mission leadership was 50 or 60 and the whites and blacks together served in the leadership position, and George E. Berg served as the Secretary with the Pastor William J. Seymour.

<sup>368</sup> Berg, ‘Baptized with the Holy Ghost.’

made him become the most successful early expatriate Pentecostal missionaries in India.<sup>369</sup> George Berg came back to India in 1908 as a Pentecostal missionary, settled in Bangalore and made extensive traveling to visit different places in Tamil Nadu and Kerala. As a former Brethren missionary, Berg was influenced by the Brethren principles of training and emphasizing the ministry of the laity; he used his Brethren contacts to teach and train to develop an indigenous leadership for Indian Classical Pentecostal mission.<sup>370</sup> In 1909, the Brethren invited George Berg as one of their guest speakers for the annual convention in Kottarakkara, Kerala.<sup>371</sup> In the next year, again Berg attended this Brethren convention, and in an open discussion Berg expressed the Classical Pentecostal view of “initial evidence.”<sup>372</sup> As a result, the Brethren discontinued their contact with Berg. When the Brethren did not allow him to preach or teach the members of Brethren community, Berg started an independent preaching and teaching ministry in Central Kerala.<sup>373</sup> A.C. George observes, his work, as an independent Pentecostal missionary and the Bible classes and prayer meetings that he conducted in different places in Central Kerala were instrumental.<sup>374</sup> His Bible classes helped certain disgruntled Syrian Christians, who were influenced by the earlier spiritual awakening, to acquaint with the Classical Pentecostal distinctive. The report George Berg published in *Latter Rain Evangel* says that his Bible classes about Jesus and the salvation through Him with emphasis on the doctrine of Baptism in Holy Spirit and speaking in tongues had an official role in the mission activities in Kerala.<sup>375</sup> Some blind received sight; lepers received healing, and demon-possessed received deliverance in many places in Kerala. In 1911, Robert Cummins, a Tamil-

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<sup>369</sup> Allan Anderson, *Spreading Fires: The Missionary Nature of Early Pentecostalism* (New York: Orbis Books, 2007), 95.

<sup>370</sup> George E. Berg, ‘The Signs Following in India,’ *The Latter Rain Evangel* 3, no. 5 (February 1911): 15–16.

<sup>371</sup> George E. Berg, ‘At Last the Light Is Shining in My Country: Miracles of Healing Wrought in South India,’ *The Latter Rain Evangel* 3, no. 12 (September 1911): 2.

<sup>372</sup> George E. Berg, ‘Thousands Eager For the Gospel,’ *The Latter Rain Evangel* 4, no. 8 (May 1912): 9.

<sup>373</sup> Berg, ‘Thousands Eager For the Gospel.’

<sup>374</sup> George, A.C., ‘Pentecostal Beginnings in Travancore, South India,’ 222.

<sup>375</sup> Berg, ‘The Signs Following in India,’ 16.

speaking Anglo-Indian from Kolar Gold Fields near Bangalore, who was converted to the Pentecostal faith by Berg accompanied him to Kerala.<sup>376</sup> There were also two Brethren expatriate missionaries Aldwinkle and Bouncil who received the baptism in the Holy Spirit in the meetings of Thomas Barrett in Nilgiri, Tamilnadu who worked with Berg in Kerala.<sup>377</sup> According to Bergunder, Berg's visit in 1911 had made more impacts and reached out to more people because the first Pentecostal missionary team worked in Kerala.<sup>378</sup> However, they could not establish a Classical Pentecostal church in Kerala until 1911.

### 3.2.2.1. The Confluence of Azusa Street Classical Pentecostalism with Indigenous Congregation

In 1911, the independent revival congregation at Thuvayoor in Central Kerala, which was developed as a result of the spiritual awakening or the revival movement among the Syrian Christians in Central Kerala who had the experiences of the working of the Holy Spirit, invited George Berg to visit their congregation. Under the leadership of Paruthuppara Thomas Ummachan, they had the practice of spiritual gifts. George Berg visited this independent prayer group at Thuvayoor and preached at their prayer meetings.<sup>379</sup> The members of this congregation who already had experienced the manifestation of the Holy Spirit, with the experience of *glossolalia* as part of revival once again renewed their experience in his meetings.<sup>380</sup> It is assumed that Berg's teaching of Classical Pentecostalism, the doctrine of Baptism of the Holy Spirit and the initial evidence of speaking in tongues attracted them. Consequently, this independent revival congregation accepted the Classical Pentecostal faith thus became the first classical Pentecostal congregation in south India.<sup>381</sup> Thus, this

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<sup>376</sup> Berg, 'At Last the Light Is Shining in My Country: Miracles of Healing Wrought in South India,' 7.

<sup>377</sup> Berg, 'Thousands Eager For the Gospel.'

<sup>378</sup> Michael Bergunder, 'Constructing Indian Pentecostalism: On Issues of Methodology and Representation,' in *Asian and Pentecostal: The Charismatic Face of Christianity in Asia*, ed. Allan Anderson and Edmond Tang (Oxford: Regnum Books International, 2005), 190.

<sup>379</sup> Varghese, *Ekanai...Kalnadayayi...(Mal.) [The Life Story of Pastor T. K. Varghese]*, 47.

<sup>380</sup> *Platinum Jubilee Smaranika (Mal.) [Platinum Jubilee Souvenir]: 1986-1987* (Thuvayoor: Church of God (Full Gospel) in India, 1987), 37.

<sup>381</sup> Mathew, *Kerala Penthecosthu Charithram (Mal.) [Kerala Pentecostal History]*, 30–31.

independent congregation with their leader Paruthuppara Ummachan completely identified with the Classical Pentecostal teachings of American Pentecostalism. Later with the help of this congregation at Thuvayoor, Berg conducted meetings in the surrounding places, which attracted many people to the Classical Pentecostalism.

The Spiritually awakened Christians in the central Kerala region, which had already accepted spiritual change, and started separate congregations, were happy with George Berg. Saju observes, they approved his teaching on the doctrine of ‘initial evidence,’ and the gifts of the Holy Spirit and they founded the Classical Pentecostal assemblies in many places in Central Kerala.<sup>382</sup> Berg also got acquainted with six young local preachers and leaders who followed him to Bangalore where he conducted regular Bible study to instruct them in the Classical Pentecostal faith. Berg along with Cummins appointed local workers as Pentecostal evangelists and sent them to different places in Kerala to teach and gather people in the congregations. Berg’s meetings in different places in Kerala attracted people due to the reports of several remarkable healings.<sup>383</sup> More than 3000 people attended his meetings, many were healed, and hundreds of young people accepted the Pentecostal faith.<sup>384</sup> According to Anderson, the mission principles of developing young local leaders and the small group teaching on Pentecostal faith contributed to the widespread of Classical Pentecostalism in Kerala.<sup>385</sup> After Berg left Thuvayoor, the members of the first Pentecostal Church continued to spread the message of Pentecostalism to the neighboring villages like Mannadi, Iverkala, Kunnathoor, Poruvezhy, Sooranadu, and Kadambanadu in Central Travancore.<sup>386</sup> Thus, the independent revival congregation of Thuvayoor became the center of classical Pentecostal faith in Kerala. Thuvayur acted as a replica of Azusa Street Mission in Kerala. Within a year, some of the indigenized prayer groups formed out of the revival movement, and their local leaders joined with Berg, and in 1912 there were 19 native evangelists who worked under

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<sup>382</sup> Mathew, 30–31.

<sup>383</sup> Berg, ‘The Signs Following in India,’ 17.

<sup>384</sup> *Word and Work* 42, no. 3 (March 1920): 32.

<sup>385</sup> Anderson, *Spreading Fires: The Missionary Nature of Early Pentecostalism*, 96–97.

<sup>386</sup> Mathew, *Kerala Penthecosthu Charithram (Mal.) [Kerala Pentecostal History]*, 34.

George Berg in Kerala.<sup>387</sup> Thus, the independent congregations that emerged after 1860 as part of the revival movement in Kerala merged with Classical Pentecostalism.

### 3.2.3 The Growth of Classical Pentecostalism in Kerala

During George Berg's visit to the first World Wide Pentecostal Camp in Azusa Street in 1913, Berg met Robert F. Cook and invited him to come to India.<sup>388</sup> Earlier in 1908, Cook and his wife Anna Cook regularly attended the Azusa Street Mission revival meetings in Los Angeles and heard the testimonies of people who had the experiences of speaking in tongues and healings.<sup>389</sup> Later, his wife Anna suffered severe sickness, cramps, and was paralyzed. When they realized the physicians and medical treatment could not help them, they contacted Elmer Fisher of Upper Room Mission, which was a split from Joseph Smale's New Testament Church and who had regular spiritual fellowship and prayer with Seymour and Azusa Street Mission.<sup>390</sup> Fisher came to Cook's house and prayed for Anna. She experienced a supernatural power that she jumped from her couch. After some months of prayer, Cook had the experience of speaking in tongues.<sup>391</sup> On the last day of the Worldwide Pentecostal Camp, when George Berg gave a talk on the opportunities of mission in India, Cook and his wife Anna decided to go to India.<sup>392</sup> The Cooks came to Bangalore, India in 1913, and they accompanied Berg on a preaching tour to Kerala. Anderson observes; initially, Cook concentrated on traveling and preaching, and crowds of people attended his meetings in which people experienced remarkable healings and exorcisms.<sup>393</sup> A few months later a conflict arose between Berg and Cook and as a

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<sup>387</sup> Berg, 'Thousands Eager For the Gospel,' 10.

<sup>388</sup> Robert F. Cook, *Half a Century of Divine Leading and Thirty-Seven Years of Apostolic Achievements in South India* (Cleveland: Church of God Foreign Missions Department, 1955), 16.

<sup>389</sup> Cook, *A Quarter Century of Divine Leading in India*, 2.

<sup>390</sup> Cecil M. Robeck, *Azusa Street Mission and Revival: The Birth of the Global Pentecostal Movement* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2006), 95.

<sup>391</sup> Cook, *Half a Century of Divine Leading and Thirty-Seven Years of Apostolic Achievements in South India*, 13.

<sup>392</sup> Cook, *A Quarter Century of Divine Leading in India*, 8–9.

<sup>393</sup> Anderson, *Spreading Fires: The Missionary Nature of Early Pentecostalism*, 97.

result in 1914, Berg decided to go back to the United States, and Cook continued the mission work.<sup>394</sup> Cook had eight local preachers to assist him in the evangelistic tour in different places in Kerala. In 1916-17, Cook visited and renewed the contacts made by Berg. Along with the local evangelists Cook conducted Pentecostal prayer meetings in several places like Punthala, Kidangannoor, Elanthoor, Punalur, Vettiyaar, and Venmony.<sup>395</sup> Cook bought a plot of land at Thuvayur for the establishment of the Pentecostal Church and encouraged the vigorous mission activities of the indigenous leaders Paruthuppara Ummachan, Umman Mammen, and Pandalam Mattai and the Thuvayur church.<sup>396</sup> Cook and these indigenous leaders converted many Pentecostal prayer meetings in several places in Kerala as Pentecostal congregations. They were established in Pandalam, Vettiyaar, Venmony, Elanthoor, Paraniyam, Palugal, Melpuram, Vallarakkavellai, Airanipuram, and Planthoppu.<sup>397</sup> All these congregations were independent, with no formal organization.

During this time Mary Chapman, a missionary of the Assemblies of God<sup>398</sup> from the United States of America came to Kerala. She was stationed in Chennai and made preaching tours in south Kerala.<sup>399</sup> It was not a compelling mission, and she could not establish congregations during this time. Cook decided to work with the

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<sup>394</sup> We can see a personal statement from Cook that he broke his relationship with Berg because of Berg's "unholy life." Cook, *Half a Century of Divine Leading and Thirty-Seven Years of Apostolic Achievements in South India*, 21; See Anderson, *Spreading Fires: The Missionary Nature of Early Pentecostalism*, 97. Anderson writes that Berg left India due to the most serious allegations made against his exaggerated reports and his own reprehensible personal life based on moral lapse.

<sup>395</sup> Cook, *A Quarter Century of Divine Leading in India*, 36-42.

<sup>396</sup> Mathew, *Kerala Penthecosthu Charithram (Mal.) [Kerala Pentecostal History]*, 42.

<sup>397</sup> K.E. Abraham, *I.P.C. Prarambha Varshangal (Mal.) {The Beginning Years of I.P.C.}* (Kumbanadu: K.E. Abraham Foundation, 1986), 7-9.

<sup>398</sup> The Assemblies of God as a Classical Pentecostal fellowship was inaugurated in 1914 in Hot Springs, Arkansas, United States of America and Mary Chapman was the first official Assemblies of God missionary to India. She arrived in Mumbai, India in October 1915 and visited Dhond, and Mukti Mission, and then settled in Doddaballapur near Bangalore. Later she moved to Madras in September 1916 and visited Tamilnadu and Kerala. 'Mary W. Chapman Arrives in India,' *Weekly Evangel*, 1 January 1916, 1; Mary W. Chapman, 'In Madras and Travancore India,' *The Weekly Evangel*, 21 April 1917, 13; 'Mary W. Chapman Returns to India,' *Weekly Evangel*, 1, 16 October 1915, 4. According to the report in *Weekly Evangel*, Mary Chapman was in India earlier as a Protestant missionary, but this time she returned to India as a Pentecostal and Assemblies of God missionary.

<sup>399</sup> Chapman, 'In Madras and Travancore India.'

Assemblies of God mission in 1919.<sup>400</sup> Cook was stationed in Doddaballapur, near Bangalore but gave leadership to the Pentecostal mission in Kerala. Cook's mission agency was known as *South India Full Gospel Mission*, which was an indigenous mission and its headquarters was in Bangalore. However, in 1919 Cook decided to merge his mission with the Assemblies of God mission in India.<sup>401</sup> As a South India Assemblies of God missionary, Cook had preaching tours in Kerala. Always his first meeting was at Thuvayur, and then he went to the surrounding places.<sup>402</sup> However, Cook always preferred to be independent in his preaching tours. He trained local leaders to supervise the mission stations in Kerala. He appointed five native leaders such as Oommen, Varghese, Enoch, Thomas, and Yohannan as the leaders and evangelists to develop the ministry in Central Kerala.<sup>403</sup> He was concerned about disunity, non-cooperation, heresy in the mission field and among the Assemblies missionaries in South India, which he requested the Assemblies of God leadership to set up a committee for resolving the issues.<sup>404</sup> It is evident from his letter that Cook was unhappy with the ministry of Assemblies of God women missionaries in Kerala. However, the Assemblies of God leadership in India did not show any interest in investigating the disunity in the mission field in South India and Kerala. They were in fact neglected.<sup>405</sup> It is important to note here that the early division and issues of

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<sup>400</sup> Cook wrote in his biography "I served the Lord in India for seven years before I was led to join up with the General Council of Assemblies of God." Cook, *A Quarter Century of Divine Leading in India*, 57.

<sup>401</sup> 'Robert F. Cook to James Harvey,' 22 February 1919, Robert F. Cook Collection, File 5, Church of God in India Archives, Mulakuzha.

<sup>402</sup> Robert F. Cook, 'My Evangelistic Tour in the Jungles of Travancore State,' *Echoes from South India* 8, no. 6 (August 1920): 5–8.

<sup>403</sup> Robert F. Cook, 'Condition and Need of the Work in General: In the Jungles of Travancore,' *Echoes from South India* 8, no. 6 (August 1920): 12.

<sup>404</sup> In an official letter, which Cook, wrote to V. K. Norton, the Chairman of the Indian Assemblies of God, Cook and His wife Bertha Cook represented the South India Assemblies of God and reported the Pentecostal revival in Central Kerala. However, he did not explicitly say what were the causes and issues of the disunity among the Pentecostal missionaries in South India. 'Robert F. Cook and Bertha N. Cook to W.K. Norton, Chairman of the Indian Assemblies of God,' 31 October 1920, Assemblies of God India Collection, File 1, Assemblies of God World Mission Archives, Springfield, Missouri.

<sup>405</sup> 'W.K. Norton, the Secretary for India Conference Assemblies of God to Robert F. Cook,' 20 November 1920, Assemblies of God India Collection, File 1, Assemblies of God World Mission Archives, Springfield, Missouri.

gender discrimination in Cook's attitude provided a divisive clue to Classical Pentecostalism in Kerala, which severely affected the growth of the movement.

At the same time, Mary Chapman concentrated on the Assemblies of God mission work in south Kerala, which resulted in the spread of Pentecostal revival and formation of Pentecostal churches in South Kerala. She wrote letters to encourage independent Pentecostal missionaries to work with her, Aldiwingle and Bouncil, who earlier worked with George Berg, joined with her, and they together worked for the development of Classical Pentecostal mission in Kerala.<sup>406</sup> They could consolidate many prayer groups as Pentecostal churches in south Kerala. In 1921, Cook settled permanently in Kottarakkara and exercised significant control of the Pentecostal congregations and indigenous evangelists, to whom he provided financial support. He renamed his mission and churches as *South India Full Gospel Assemblies of God* and made his title as superintendent.<sup>407</sup> Since he was a Pentecostal missionary affiliated to Assemblies of God in India, his denominational structure and title created confusion. Mary Chapman and other missionaries objected to the name of the organization and his title. However, he argued "the Pentecostal missionaries who do not belong to the Assemblies of God for racial reasons can work with us under this title."<sup>408</sup> It is about the differences of opinion among the Assemblies of God missionaries and often those were interpreted as racial bound. Among the Assemblies of God missionaries, some of them were from South African and some were from German backgrounds.<sup>409</sup> It is evident that Cook's attitude was more towards supporting division and having different denominations based non-theological issues such as caste or finance.

#### **3.2.4. The Growth of Classical Pentecostalism among the Dalits in Kerala**

After 1922, Cook's preaching impacted the Dalit community in Kerala, and in many places, the Dalits joined the Pentecostal movement in more significant

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<sup>406</sup> Mary W. Chapman, 'A Report on the Assemblies of God Mission in Travancore,' October 1925, Chapman Collection, File 12, Assemblies of God World Mission Archives, Springfield, Missouri.

<sup>407</sup> He attempted to resolve this issue by renaming the name of the church as *South India Full Gospel Assemblies*. 'Robert F. Cook to Thomsen,' 7 November 1922, Robert F. Cook Collection, File 5, Church of God in India Archives, Mulakuzha.

<sup>408</sup> 'Robert F. Cook to Thomsen.'

<sup>409</sup> 'W.K. Norton, the Secretary for India Conference Assemblies of God to Robert F. Cook.'

numbers.<sup>410</sup> He made Kottarakkara the center of mission, and from there he contacted the Dalit villages and made mission stations in Punalur, Sooranadu, and Chaliakkara. Cook himself confirmed that after 1922, he concentrated on the mission among the Dalits. Cook wrote, “When I first came to Travancore and saw the condition of the depressed classes, my sympathy and interest were drawn to them. Often the scripture came to my mind, ‘unto the poor the gospel is preached.’ They were attentive hearers and were looking for temporal help.”<sup>411</sup> Because of his burning desire to evangelize the Dalits in Kerala and his limited access to the people in Dalit background, Cook started a Bible training program at his residence in Kottarakkara in 1922; he trained the local men and sent them to the mission field, that was among the Dalits.<sup>412</sup> Through this training, Cook concentrated on the mission among the Dalits.

The impressive response of the Dalits in Kerala made Cook visit many Dalit villages to preach the gospel. During this time, Pentecostalism appeared to be the *Margam or a Way* for the Dalits in their spiritual and social renaissance.<sup>413</sup> The growth of Cook’s ministry among the Dalits was also because of the contribution of two indigenous Dalit leaders. One was Vellikara Chothi who was also known as Vellikara Mathai. Chothi was a leader among the Dalit community who worked for the emancipation of Dalits in Kerala and also a member of the Sri Mulam Assembly, the popular Legislative Assembly in Travancore. According to Cook, Chothi came to him to be prayed for his sickness and interacted with him and expressed Chothi’s negative attitude toward missionaries.<sup>414</sup> Cook does not say, what attracted Chothi to him; probably Pentecostalism’s openness to the oppressed classes of people in Kerala attracted Chothi. About one of his prayer meetings, Cook says, “many times I saw them ignored, and I was grieved. On one occasion it began to rain during a meeting, and the people ran for shelter; the Syrians made for the house, but the poor had to take shelter in a cowshed at a little distance. When I saw this, I took shelter in the

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<sup>410</sup> Thomas V.V., *Dalit Pentecostalism, Spirituality of the Empowered Poor*, 196.

<sup>411</sup> Cook, *Half a Century of Divine Leading and Thirty-Seven Years of Apostolic Achievements in South India*, 76–93, 98.

<sup>412</sup> Cook, 94.

<sup>413</sup> Mathew, *Kerala Penthecosthu Charithram (Mal.) [Kerala Pentecostal History]*, 48.

<sup>414</sup> Cook, *Half a Century of Divine Leading and Thirty-Seven Years of Apostolic Achievements in South India*, 96.

cowshed, mingling with them.”<sup>415</sup> Chothi invited Cook to preach to his community and followers at Vellikara near Thiruvalla. Cook joyfully accepted the invitation because he desired to concentrate on the mission to the Dalits in Central Kerala. It was the first time Classical Pentecostal faith reached Vellikara and Chothi made all the arrangements for the meetings and so, many people gathered at this meeting. During his meeting at Vellikara, people experienced the marvelous outpouring of the Holy Spirit, and many were healed. At the end of the meeting, sixteen Dalits were baptized.<sup>416</sup> V.V. Thomas observes “it might not have been possible for Cook to preach to so many Dalits in a gathering like the one in Kumbanadu at that time.”<sup>417</sup> However, the people who attended the meeting at Vellikara took initiative to take Cook to their places such as Kumbanadu, Ranni, Vennikulam, Ezhumattur, Kalluppara, and Mallappally. In all these places, many Dalits took water baptism under Cook and became Pentecostals.<sup>418</sup> It was the contribution of Chothi that the Pentecostal faith reached the Dalits, and they became the immediate Classical Pentecostal community in many parts of Central Kerala. It is important to note that the attitude of Cook towards the Dalits, considering them equal as brothers and sisters in Christ, the opportunity given to them to express themselves, in the context of social backwardness attracted them to join the Classical Pentecostalism.

Another significant Dalit leader who became the cause for the growth of Pentecostal faith among the Dalit community in Kerala was Poykayil Yohannan. He was an evangelist in the Marthoma and later Anglican Church, but he left both churches because of the caste disparity and discrimination by the Syrian Christians. As a Dalit leader as he was indifferent towards Christianity because of discrimination and caste distinction but had an earnest desire to work for his people. Thus he established *Prathyasha Raksha Daiva Sabha*, a movement exclusively for the Dalits and claimed himself as the Guru of 5000 people. Cook met him and considered him as a spiritual leader and social worker that God used for the depressed classes of people

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<sup>415</sup> Cook, *A Quarter Century of Divine Leading in India*, 36.

<sup>416</sup> Cook, *Half a Century of Divine Leading and Thirty-Seven Years of Apostolic Achievements in South India*, 100.

<sup>417</sup> Thomas V.V., *Dalit Pentecostalism, Spirituality of the Empowered Poor*, 173–74.

<sup>418</sup> Cook, *Half a Century of Divine Leading and Thirty-Seven Years of Apostolic Achievements in South India*, 106–12.

in Kerala.<sup>419</sup> Yohannan invited Cook to preach to his followers about the doctrine of salvation. Yohannan's understanding of salvation was more realistic and present rather than eschatological. He opined that the interpretation of the gospel should be related to the realities of the present life, and God's intervention in the daily lives of the Dalits in the midst of their experiences of slavery, oppression, and poverty. In this situation, the Dalits experienced that the gospel messages were revealing God's power to heal and to solve their sickness and their struggles in the society.<sup>420</sup> After the meeting, the Pentecostal faith received new openings to many neighboring villages where the Dalits invited and organized Cook's meetings.

Cook organized all his mission activities under the denomination of *South India Full Gospel Assemblies*, and he continued his affiliation with the Assemblies of God. At the same time, under this denomination, he concentrated on the mission to the Dalits.<sup>421</sup> The issues among the Assemblies of God missionaries about his leadership title within the church as superintendent and the name of the denomination made him also to concentrate on the mission work among the Dalits. Through Bible study and preaching, he intensified the mission among the Dalits in Kerala. Cook encouraged the Dalit converts, and Syrian converts to have inter-dining, to worship, and have Holy Communion together in the same congregation, which was a definite element that attracted the Dalits towards Classical Pentecostalism. Within the Pentecostal congregations, irrespective of one's caste background everyone addressed each other as 'brother' and 'sister' in the context of the established churches and referred the Dalit Christian as 'Thoma Pulayan' or 'Mathew Pulayan.'<sup>422</sup> This outward expression of oneness and unity that the Dalit received within Classical Pentecostalism, which they did not get from the society, attracted them all the more to Pentecostalism.

However, his intensified ministry contacts with Dalit leaders did not contribute to the conversion of Dalit leaders to Classical Pentecostalism. Saju points out the primary reason for this was the emerging dominance of the Syrian Christians

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<sup>419</sup> Cook, 121.

<sup>420</sup> Thomas V.V., *Dalit Pentecostalism, Spirituality of the Empowered Poor*, 181.

<sup>421</sup> 'Robert F. Cook to Thomsen.'

<sup>422</sup> Thomas V.V., *Dalit Pentecostalism, Spirituality of the Empowered Poor*, 209–10.

that prevented Dalit leaders such as Chothi and Poykayil Yohannan from joining the Pentecostal movement.<sup>423</sup> V.V. Thomas observes that the Syrians exhibited an outward expression of oneness and unity with the Dalits; but deep within them, they could not accept the Dalits to be leaders in the movement. He further says, the Syrians within the movement could not accept the Dalits as equals at all levels although this was not expressed in their words; however, it became clear in their deeds, which spoke louder than words.<sup>424</sup> Even though Cook concentrated on the mission among the Dalits and promoted equality within the Pentecostal churches, there were separate Pentecostal churches for Syrians and Dalits in Kerala. Bergunder also writes in the same vein “at that time it would have been hardly possible for Pentecostal Dalit pastors to reach leading church positions.”<sup>425</sup>

### **3.2.5. Re-reading the History of Spiritual Revival among the Syrian Christians as the Cause for the Beginning of Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity in Kerala**

Some of the Pentecostal writers, who have written about the origin of Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity in Kerala, have come out strongly in favour of the idea that the spiritual awakening among the Syrian in Kerala was a background for the advent of Pentecostalism in the twentieth century. Mathews P. Skaria writes, “...three great revivals were reported in Kerala...and these revivals made a lasting impact upon the Churches in Travancore and other parts of Kerala...The advent of Pentecostalism in India could be seen against this context.”<sup>426</sup> K.A. Ipe underscores in his work, “Prior to the coming of Pentecostal missionaries in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, there were revivals in Kerala. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, we found a great awakening in churches in Kerala, as part of a worldwide revival. These revival movements gave spiritual insights, the arrival of Pentecostal missionaries strengthened the revival, and ultimately it led to the establishment of Pentecostal Churches.”<sup>427</sup> In the same way,

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<sup>423</sup> Mathew, *Kerala Penthecosthu Charithram (Mal.) [Kerala Pentecostal History]*, 45–46, 49, 50–51.

<sup>424</sup> Thomas V.V., *Dalit Pentecostalism, Spirituality of the Empowered Poor*, 210.

<sup>425</sup> Bergunder, *The South Indian Pentecostal Movement in the Twentieth Century*, 30.

<sup>426</sup> Skaria, ‘An Evaluation of the History of the Assemblies of God Churches in Kerala and Proposals for the Unity among the Pentecostal Churches in Kerala,’ 45–46.

<sup>427</sup> Ipe Kochupallikunnel, *Pentecostal Churches in Kerala and Indigenous Leadership* (New Delhi: ISPCK, 2011), 23.

Samuel Kutty points out the rise of Pentecostalism in the aftermath of the revival movements. He argues, “The continuous revivals caused a theological development that made people accept Pentecostalism when it appeared on the scene. The people were urged to come back to the Scripture and test their lives in accordance with it.”<sup>428</sup> These are some representative arguments - arguments that have come from Pentecostal writers, and they tried to give more weight in these aspects as they represented views from inside.

However, K.J. Mathew appears to have argued slightly differently from the above Pentecostal writers. That is, about the revival movements and their relation to the origin of Pentecostal movement. He writes, “A close observation of these periods show that Pentecostalism gained momentum between 1906 and 1921 in the absence of revival in Malankara.”<sup>429</sup> It may be because of his consideration of the history of revival before 1906 as a background of the Pentecostal movement in Central Kerala. K.J. Mathew’s argument that revival movement was one thing and Pentecostalism was another might lead to a wrong notion about the history of Pentecostalism in Kerala. Most of those who led the Classical Pentecostal churches in the 20<sup>th</sup> century were products of the revival movements. A reference to K.E. Abraham’s experience is essential in as much as he was regarded as the leading Pentecostal figure in Kerala. As it has been mentioned about him earlier, K.E. Abraham, the Pentecostal leader from Central Kerala who experienced the revival movement in his lifetime, was of the opinion that the Pentecostal history of Central Kerala had its origin with the impacts of revivals on a section of Syrian Christians. He did not see the Pentecostal movement as something that had roots only in the Azusa Street, but rather as the continuation of the spiritual reformation and revival and their impacts on the Syrian Christians of Central Kerala.<sup>430</sup>

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<sup>428</sup> Kutty, *The Place and Contribution of Dalits in Select Pentecostal Churches in Central Kerala from 1922-1972*, 47.

<sup>429</sup> Mathew K.J., ‘Denominational Pluralism among Pentecostals in Kerala, Causes and Responses, 1920 to the Present,’ 57.

<sup>430</sup> He begins the history of Classical Pentecostal Movement and the history of Indian Pentecostal Church of God from the revivals among the Syrian Christians. See for details, Abraham K.E., *India Pentecostu Daivasabha: Prarambha Varshangal (Mal.) [India Pentecostal Church: The Beginning Years]* (Kumbanadu: K.E. Abraham, 1955), 5–10.

In support of K.E. Abraham's contention, one may refer to at least two Pentecostal writers, Samuel Mathew, and Paulson Pulikkottil. They argue that the origin of Pentecostalism in Central Kerala was connected with the revival movements, which occurred among the Syrian Christians between 1860 and 1909. In the words of Samuel Mathew, "the origin of this movement goes back to the widespread spiritual revival that had taken place in different parts of our country."<sup>431</sup> Besides, Paulson Pulikkottil, a Pentecostal theologian, states that, "the Phenomena of speaking in tongues and prophecy happened in many parts of India, especially South India, before Classical Pentecostalism made its advent."<sup>432</sup> Their conclusions are explicit statements that the revivals were not merely a background for the advent of the Pentecostal movement. The impact of revival on one section of Syrian Christians opened the avenue for Pentecostal movement. The people who had experienced the revivals, like K.E. Abraham, reflected that they experienced the spirit of revivalism during the same time of the advent of Azusa Street Pentecostalism in Kerala. Therefore, the spiritual reformation and revivals among the Syrian Christians of Central Kerala were not merely a background for the advent of Pentecostalism in Kerala. Also, the Azusa Street Pentecostalism emerged, not in the absence of revival, but as a continuation of the spirit of revivalism, which affected one section of Syrian Christians of Central Kerala. After observing the characteristics of the revivals in Kerala, A.C. George considered the revivals as antecedents of the Pentecostal movement in Kerala. According to him, "the recipients of these experiences did not know that they were speaking in unknown tongues as the result of the baptism in Spirit."<sup>433</sup> Gary B. McGee and Stanley M. Burgess also observed the revivals in Kerala as Pentecostal-like movement.<sup>434</sup> It is true that these revivals had the experiences and features of the 'Classical Pentecostal' movement that later after four decades, which began in the United States of America. According to McGee, "the

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<sup>431</sup> Samuel Mathew, 'Pentecostal Presence: A Historical Analysis,' *Faith Theological Review* 2, no. 1 (1998): 5.

<sup>432</sup> Pulikkottil, 'As East and West Met in God's Own Country: Encounter of Western Pentecostalism with Native Pentecostalism in Kerala,' 12.

<sup>433</sup> George, A.C., 'Pentecostal Beginnings in Travancore, South India,' 221.

<sup>434</sup> Gary B McGee and Stanley M. Burgess, 'India,' in *The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, ed. Stanley M. Burgess and Eduard M. Van Der Mass (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2003), 118.

Pentecostal phenomena were pointedly associated with gospel witness in these revivals.”<sup>435</sup> He further pointed out; “Pentecostalism had already established itself in India long before the Word of Azusa reached the subcontinent.”<sup>436</sup>

### Summary

This chapter concludes that the Classical Pentecostalism reached Kerala in the context of the spiritual reformation and spiritual awakening among the Syrian Christians in Central Kerala. They had already experienced speaking in tongues, miracles, and prophecy as part of the revival movement, which occurred during and after the revival preaching of John Christian Arulappan in Kerala. Pentecostalism came to the state from Azusa Street, United States of America, as an offshoot of Classical Pentecostalism of North America. The growth of Classical Pentecostalism in Kerala is due to four primary reasons. First, the Pentecostal missionaries from the United States of America such as George Berg and Robert F. Cook recognized the outcome of the indigenous and independent revivals in Kerala and attempted a natural confluence of the independent congregations into Classical Pentecostal churches. In this sense, Classical Pentecostalism in Kerala can be viewed as a product of the North American Classical Pentecostal missions, which transformed indigenous independent congregations in Kerala to Classical Pentecostal churches. Second, the Classical Pentecostal mission that took place under Robert F. Cook in the existing Dalits and Dalit communities in Kerala impacted them for a social change. Classical Pentecostalism however appeared before them not as a spiritual movement from a foreign country; instead it appeared as a social organization for the upliftment of the people. From this outlook, Classical Pentecostalism in Kerala can be regarded as a movement interrelated to the social movement that took place among the Dalits in Kerala against the existing social and caste-based issues. Third, Classical Pentecostalism in Kerala had its growth due to its nature as an indigenous Pentecostal denomination. Cook was an Assemblies of God missionary, but he emphasized the indigenous nature through its name *South India Assemblies*, and it played a substantial

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<sup>435</sup> Gary B McGee, ‘Pentecostal Phenomena and Revivals in India: Implications for Indigenous Church Leadership,’ *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 20, no. 3 (July 1996): 112.

<sup>436</sup> Gary B McGee, ‘*Latter Rain* Falling in the East: Early-Twentieth-Century Pentecostalism in India and the Debate over Speaking in Tongues,’ *Church History* 68, no. 3 (1999): 648.

role in the making of the Pentecostal movement as an indigenous movement among the people in Kerala. Fourth, the active involvement and leadership of Robert F. Cook for training and appointing local leaders and evangelists as leaders and pastors of the movement helped to develop Indian Pentecostal leaders. The local pastors and evangelists thus caused the Classical Pentecostalism to spread to Kerala.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **INDIAN AND INDEPENDENT PENTECOSTALISM: THE EMERGENCE AND GROWTH OF INDIGENOUS DENOMINATIONS (FROM 1923 TO 1977)**

#### **Introduction**

This chapter focuses on the transitional period of Pentecostalism in Kerala; there was a tremendous growth amidst severe setbacks that led this movement to develop strong institutionalized tendencies. The transitional and transformational form of Classical Pentecostalism contributed to Indian and independent Pentecostalism, the evolution of indigenous leadership, indigenization of worship and ministry, development of Pentecostal theology, theological education, and local witness. Positively this period witnessed the emergence and growth of Indian and Independent Pentecostal denominations in Kerala but negatively experienced splits and leadership struggles in Classical Pentecostalism and Indian and independent Pentecostalism. This period of study can also be seen as the ‘dark era’ of Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity in Kerala due to the splits in the Classical Pentecostal denominations based on caste and other non-theological reasons. This chapter begins with the development of indigenous leadership in Classical Pentecostalism, division in the Classical Pentecostal denominations, the formation of independent and caste-based and community-based Pentecostal denominations in Kerala. Here is an attempt to dig out the history of the transition and transformation of Classical Pentecostalism towards the ‘Indian and Independent Pentecostalism.’

## 4.1. Transition and Transformation of Classical Pentecostalism in Kerala

### 4.1.1. The Growth of Keralite Classical Pentecostalism: The Formation of Indigenous Classical Pentecostal Denominations

In 1923, K.E. Abraham, one of the Syrian Brethren prayer group leaders from Central Kerala experienced baptism in the Holy Spirit with speaking in tongues under the ministry of indigenous Pentecostal evangelist Manesse in Thiruvananthapuram.<sup>437</sup> Immediately after his experience, Abraham went back to his Brethren prayer groups in Central Kerala. However, his congregations did not accept his new experience of baptism in the Holy Spirit with ‘speaking in tongues’ and the doctrine of ‘initial evidence.’ They expelled him from the church and declared that they cannot continue the fellowship with him.<sup>438</sup> In this context of abandonment from his community and congregations, Abraham wrote and published a book on ‘Baptism in Holy Spirit.’<sup>439</sup> He was very thorough with the doctrines of Classical Pentecostalism, and he promoted the doctrines through his writings. In December 1923, he had an opportunity to show the power of the Holy Spirit through miraculous healing which took place after his prayer in Mulakkuzha.<sup>440</sup> This miraculous healing paved the way for him to preach the Pentecostal doctrine in Central Kerala among the Syrians. Slowly, the Classical Pentecostal faith began to attract many people from the Syrian community in Central Kerala. Classical Pentecostalism reached many places in Central Kerala where the American missionaries such as Berg, Cook, or Chapman could not go. The impact of the ministry of K.E. Abraham was among the Syrians

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<sup>437</sup> Abraham K.E., *Yesukristhuvinte Eliya Dasan: Athmakadha, Pastor K.E. Abraham (Mal.) [Pastor K.E. Abraham: The Humble Servant of Jesus Christ, Autobiography]*, 69–70.

<sup>438</sup> Abraham K.E., 71–72.

<sup>439</sup> This book had seven chapters. 1. Holy Spirit and Baptism in Holy Spirit, 2. The Importance and Necessity of Baptism in Holy Spirit, 3. Is Baptism in Holy Spirit a Manifest Experience? 4. Speaking in Tongues, the Sign of Baptism in Holy Spirit, 5. Critiquing Arguments Against Speaking in Tongues, 6. The Conditions for Baptism in Holy Spirit, 7. Excellent Experience Ensuing Baptism in Holy Spirit. Abraham K.E., *Parishudhathma Snamam (Mal.) [Baptism in Holy Spirit]* (Thiruvalla: R.V. Press, 1923).

<sup>440</sup> He laid hands and prayed for a lady who had been lying unconscious - like dead – due to a Cobra bite. After the prayer, immediately she opened her eyes and after some time, she sat up on her bed by herself. Abraham K.E., *Yesukristhuvinte Eliya Dasan: Athmakadha, Pastor K.E. Abraham (Mal.) [Pastor K.E. Abraham: The Humble Servant of Jesus Christ, Autobiography]*, 74–75.

such that he was able to form a few Pentecostal churches in Central Kerala in Mulakuzha, Vettiyar, Pandalam, and Elanthoor under his care. During this time he continued his associations with Cook, Chapman, and the Assemblies of God. The churches that he raised under his care were formed as independent churches.<sup>441</sup> Abraham says, when Cook invited Abraham to join him in the ministry, he refused and told him, “The national churches should stay independent of foreign domination.”<sup>442</sup> It is evident that the social context in Kerala, which promoted nationalism and freedom movement at that time, influenced Abraham as he envisioned churches, which were free from foreign control.

In 1924, K.E. Abraham formed the first Classical Pentecostal denomination on the Indian soil. He named all his churches under his care as *South India Pentecostal Church of God*.<sup>443</sup> It was an indigenous Classical Pentecostal denomination or organization based in Mulakkuzha near Chengannur among the Syrian Christians in Kerala. K.E. Abraham writes that the need for the formation of a denomination or organization arose at the time of a wedding of a member from the church at Mulakuzha.<sup>444</sup> During this period, there were a series of Pentecostal awakenings in different places in Central Kerala under the ministry of indigenous leaders of *South India Pentecostal Church of God*, and many Syrians and Brethren prayer groups joined Classical Pentecostalism.

In 1924, when Cook was away, K.E. Abraham expressed his aspiration for the independence of church and mission among indigenous Pentecostal leaders. During this time a quarrel developed between Mary Chapman and K.E. Abraham and his followers on the question of financing a Church building.<sup>445</sup> She insisted on the registration of the property of the church in the name of Assemblies of God, U.S.A., whereas Abraham argued, the land must be registered in the name of the local congregation. Between 1923 to 1926 in Central Kerala and South Kerala, there were

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<sup>441</sup> Abraham K.E., 84.

<sup>442</sup> Abraham K.E., 91.

<sup>443</sup> Mathew, *Kerala Penthecosthu Charithram (Mal.) [Kerala Pentecostal History]*, 106.

<sup>444</sup> He made a formal marriage register in the name of the church. Abraham K.E., *Yesukristhuvinte Eliya Dasan: Athmakadha, Pastor K.E. Abraham (Mal.) [Pastor K.E. Abraham: The Humble Servant of Jesus Christ, Autobiography]*, 84.

<sup>445</sup> Mathew, *Kerala Penthecosthu Charithram (Mal.) [Kerala Pentecostal History]*, 74–75.

20 Churches and 25 indigenous leaders had an association with the South India Pentecostal Church of God.<sup>446</sup> In 1926, when Cook returned to Kerala, he supported Abraham and his followers in this issue and together they demanded the autonomy of the local congregations and indigenous leaders. Meanwhile, Cook and his churches named *South India Full Gospel Assemblies* merged with Abraham and his churches and founded the *Malankara Pentecostal Church* on October 6, 1926.<sup>447</sup> Bergunder observes that the new denomination was formally associated with the Assemblies of God but in reality acted independently.<sup>448</sup> This observation is valid because, after the formation of the *Malankara Pentecostal Church* also, Cook continued his association with the Assemblies of God.

The General Council of the Assemblies of God in the United States accepted Blossom, the daughter of Robert F. Cook and John H. Burgess as the Assemblies of God missionaries and the Foreign Missions Department sent them to Kerala in 1926.<sup>449</sup> Blossom began to work with her dad, Cook in Central Kerala and Burgess joined Mary Chapman. John Burgess along with Chapman settled in Mavelikkara with the aim of beginning an Assemblies of God Bible School in Kerala. John Burgess says, “one of the chief assignments given to me by the Foreign Missions Department was to open a Bible school in Travancore.”<sup>450</sup> At the same time, Cook initiated to raise funds to establish a Bible school in Kerala, and he published a request to financially support in this venture which was published in the *Pentecostal*

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<sup>446</sup> Mathew, 90–114; Abraham K.E., *Yesukristhuvinte Eliya Dasan: Athmakadha, Pastor K.E. Abraham (Mal.) [Pastor K.E. Abraham: The Humble Servant of Jesus Christ, Autobiography, 147–48.*

<sup>447</sup> In their meeting at the residence of Cook at Mulakuzha, the representatives of churches elected Cook as the President and Abraham as the Vice-president of the new denomination. Abraham K.E., ‘India Penthekosthu Daivasabha: Oru Thirinju Nottam (Mal.) [Indian Pentecostal Church of God: A Short History],’ in *The India Penthekosthu Daiva Sabha Jubilee Suvaneer (Mal.) [The Indian Pentecostal Church of God Jubilee Souvenir: 1924-1974* (Kumbanadu: I.P.C. Kerala State Presbytery, 1974), 5.

<sup>448</sup> Bergunder, *The South Indian Pentecostal Movement in the Twentieth Century*, 28.

<sup>449</sup> ‘Certificate of Fellowship of Blossom Cook with the Foreign Missions Department, General Council of the Assemblies of God,’ September 1926, Assemblies of God Missionaries in Kerala Collection, File 1, Assemblies of God Museum Archives, Punalur, Kerala; John H. Burgess, ‘History of the Assemblies of God in Travancore: A Paper,’ 1963, John H. Burgess Collections, File 1, Assemblies of God World Mission Archives, Springfield, Missouri.

<sup>450</sup> Burgess, ‘History of the Assemblies of God in Travancore: A Paper.’

*Evangel* in 1927.<sup>451</sup> Cook and K.E. Abraham did not cooperate with Chapman and Burgess to start a Bible school; instead, they decided to start a different Bible school. In 1927, Cook and Abraham started a Bible school at Mulakuzha called Mount Zion Bible School.<sup>452</sup> This Bible school was indigenously administered as an official Bible school of *Malankara Pentecostal Church*. The purpose of the Bible school was to theologically train indigenous pastors and leaders for the development of Pentecostal movement in Kerala. Very soon this Bible school became a center of Pentecostal awakening in Central Kerala.<sup>453</sup> In the same year, John Burgess with the help of two local pastors, P.V. John, and A.J. John established the Bethel Bible Institute at Mavelikkara.<sup>454</sup> The Bethel Bible Institute also impacted the growth of the Classical Pentecostal mission in Central Kerala since some of the graduates became teachers and preachers of the Word of God. The result of this scenario was the formation of two Bible schools with the affiliation of Assemblies of God in Kerala.

#### **4.1.2. Indigenous Leadership and Self-Supportive Churches under the Assemblies of God**

In 1923, Spencer May, a British Assemblies of God missionary came to Thiruvananthapuram in Kerala to work with Mary Chapman; this became a great support to the work of Assemblies of God in Kerala.<sup>455</sup> They organized conventions in the surrounding places and several people received baptism in the Holy Spirit with speaking in tongues. As Chapman reported, they could establish an Assemblies of God church in Thiruvananthapuram with thirty members.<sup>456</sup> During this initial period of Assemblies of God mission in South Kerala, Chapman and May emphasized the

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<sup>451</sup> Robert F. Cook, 'Progress in Malabar,' *Pentecostal Evangel*, 9 June 1927, 3–4.

<sup>452</sup> Bertha Cook, who completed her theological education and graduated from New York Practical Bible Training School was the Principal, and Cook and K.E. Abraham were the two teachers. Fifty students were already Pentecostal evangelists joined in the first batch of this school. Mathew, *Kerala Penthecosthu Charithram (Mal.) [Kerala Pentecostal History]*, 111.

<sup>453</sup> Abraham K.E., *Yesukristhuvinte Eliya Dasan: Athmakadha, Pastor K.E. Abraham (Mal.) [Pastor K.E. Abraham: The Humble Servant of Jesus Christ, Autobiography]*, 167.

<sup>454</sup> Burgess, 'History of the Assemblies of God in Travancore: A Paper,' 2.

<sup>455</sup> In 1923, Mary Chapman moved from Chennai to Thiruvananthapuram and established an Assemblies of God mission center in South Kerala. Mary W. Chapman, 'Pentecostal Revival in Travancore,' *Pentecostal Evangel*, 14 April 1923, 1.

<sup>456</sup> Chapman.

mission of raising local leadership for the Assemblies of God in Kerala. There were some local evangelists named Mathew, Manesse, Japaratham, Daniel, and Jacob who worked with Mary Chapman.<sup>457</sup> Chapman and May sent them to different places in South and Central Kerala to establish new congregations. A.C. George observes about the attitude of Chapman to develop indigenous leadership for Assemblies of God mission in Kerala, “God used her remarkably for the salvation and healing of people.”<sup>458</sup> Local evangelists and workers actively cooperated in the missionary activities supervised by Chapman and May. They enjoyed equality, friendship, and caring from the missionaries,<sup>459</sup> and the people experienced fellowship and social support during the time of poverty and crisis.<sup>460</sup>

The Pentecostal congregations during this period were self-sufficient regarding evangelistic work and ministry. Mary Chapman writes, “we have four new assemblies comprising about 160 members, which are setting in order that self-supporting assemblies. In some of these, some men can help in evangelistic work and to support conventions; they need a little help especially to buy a small piece of land for a cemetery...”<sup>461</sup> The Classical Pentecostal movement in Kerala during this period was moving towards a self-supportive and self-sufficient spiritual movement with indigenous leadership. The local evangelists were very active to conduct theological debates and write against different doctrines of Seventh Day Adventists and Brethren. In turn the native workers became self-sufficient to defend the doctrine of Classical Pentecostalism through testimonies and explaining the same from the Scripture.<sup>462</sup> In this context, the local evangelists encouraged the missionaries Chapman and Spencer

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<sup>457</sup> Mary W. Chapman, ‘Blessing in South India,’ *Pentecostal Evangel*, 23 June 1923, 1.

<sup>458</sup> George, A.C., *Trailblazers for God: A History of the Assemblies of God in India* (Bangalore: SABC Publications, 2004), 41.

<sup>459</sup> Mary W. Chapman, ‘The Lord Leading,’ *Pentecostal Evangel*, 16 August 1924, 1.

<sup>460</sup> During the time of the flood in Kerala in September 1924, Chapman sent Spencer May to Kumbanadu and Chengannur to help the people who were affected. He lived with the suffering people and got involved in the rescue work. Mary W. Chapman, ‘Floods in South India,’ *Pentecostal Evangel*, 18 October 1924, 1.

<sup>461</sup> Mary W. Chapman, ‘Encouraging News From South India,’ *Pentecostal Evangel*, 16 January 1926, 1.

<sup>462</sup> Mary W. Chapman, ‘How God Defended His Cause,’ *Pentecostal Evangel*, 7 November 1925, 2.

May to start a Malayalam Pentecostal Magazine. Chapman was confident that the Indian evangelists are capable of doing the editorial works in Malayalam; thus they started the *Pentekosthu Kahalam (Pentecostal Trumpet)*, the first Malayalam Pentecostal magazine.<sup>463</sup> It was the first magazine from Classical Pentecostalism in Kerala edited by V.J. John, a local evangelist and officially published in November 1924 by the Assemblies of God in South India.<sup>464</sup> The local pastors of Pentecostal congregations showed their passion for evangelism in the neighbouring places. The Pentecostal missionaries admitted that they could not walk miles to reach new places, but the local workers could walk many miles.<sup>465</sup> The local congregations had visions for their future development since they planned to establish mission schools for their children and other needy children in society.<sup>466</sup> The Pentecostal congregations also showed their willingness to accept the poor and Dalit people as brothers and sisters in the churches. As Mary Chapman observes about the condition of Dalit people, they had been “looked upon as fit to be used only in the most menial service and, when not required for that to be kicked aside as an unclean garment not fit to be touched. However, praise God they are included in whosoever... and many of whom had recently been adopted in the family of heaven.”<sup>467</sup> It was a significant characteristic of the native Pentecostal congregations that they accepted the people irrespective of their social status. In the social context of Kerala during this time, where the Dalit community suffered due to social and religious restrictions such as untouchability and ban on temple entry, the Classical Pentecostalism with its indigenous feature of ‘acceptance’ contributed to its growth. In the initial phase of Classical Pentecostalism in Kerala, it showed racial discrimination among the missionaries, but during this

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<sup>463</sup> Assemblies of God missionary Spencer May worked as the manager, but local evangelists A.J. John and Philip had done the editorial and translation works. Burgess, ‘History of the Assemblies of God in Travancore: A Paper’; Chapman, ‘Encouraging News From South India.’

<sup>464</sup> John V.J., ‘Kahalathinte Thritheeyavalsaram (Mal.) [Trumpeting in the Third Year],’ *Pentekosthu Kahalam* III, no. 1 (November 1927): 1–3.

<sup>465</sup> ‘Mary Chapman to Faux, the Secretary of Assemblies of God: A Revival In South India,’ 1 September 1926.

<sup>466</sup> Mary W. Chapman, ‘Pentecost In Travancore,’ *Pentecostal Evangel*, 20 March 1926, 2.

<sup>467</sup> Mary W. Chapman, ‘Ministering to the Untouchables,’ *Pentecostal Evangel*, 18 April 1925, 2.

second phase of its growth with more indigenous nature, it began to grow beyond these discriminations.

For the Christians in Kerala, the Classical Pentecostalism in its second phase of growth brought the Holy Spirit's gifts in terms of leadership and building of the church and mission in ways previously unimaginable. Classical Pentecostalism contributed to the indigenous shoulders to take responsibility for the leadership and mission of the church. According to Gary McGee, the strong indigenous dimensions in the early indigenous revivals in Kerala strengthened the vision of indigenous leaders to give leadership to the Pentecostal church and mission and immediately or gradually they became its key players.<sup>468</sup> This observation is accurate that after two hundred years of Protestant Missionary effort from the foreign lands in India, it is only during the time of the growth of Classical Pentecostalism in Kerala that the native evangelists and church workers got the opportunities to lead mission activities or a church. The socio-historical background of Kerala with its social movements with its indigenous leadership for the emancipation of oppressed classes and the social context of freedom movement influenced the native workers and congregations of Classical Pentecostalism in this phase to show more indigenous nature in its characteristics and functions. It is also important to note that during this period, many of the Pentecostal foreign missionaries migrated to Bangalore due to World War II and its impact.<sup>469</sup> Robert F. Cook went back to the United States of America as part of his furlough. The Classical Pentecostal congregations in Kerala during this context adopted its natural tendency of raising indigenous talent to fill the vacuum of leadership.

#### **4.1.3. The Formation of the Assemblies of God District Council of South India and Ceylon and Its Impact**

In 1929, a regional Council of the Assemblies of God for South India and Ceylon was formed in order to bring about a better organization of the work of the

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<sup>468</sup> Gary B McGee, 'Pentecostal Phenomena and Revivals in India: Implications for Indigenous Church Leadership,' *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 20, no. 3 (July 1996): 113.

<sup>469</sup> Abraham K.E., *Yesukristhuvinte Eliya Dasan: Athmakadha, Pastor K.E. Abraham (Mal.) [Pastor K.E. Abraham: The Humble Servant of Jesus Christ, Autobiography]*, 79.

missionaries.<sup>470</sup> According to Bergunder, this meant a decisive turning point in the history of Classical Pentecostal movement in Kerala.<sup>471</sup> In the first meeting of the Council of the Assemblies of God, the missionaries elected these officers: Thomas Stoddard was elected as the District superintendent; Walter Clifford<sup>472</sup> was elected as the Assistant superintendent, and Constance S. Eady became the Secretary-Treasurer of South India and Ceylon District Council. This regional Council had made regional allocations and restrictions for evangelists and missionaries to avoid competition and rivalry, and the Council decided to restrict the area of operation to agree on geographic regions mutually. Cook, his wife Bertha Cook, and their daughter Blossom attended this meeting along with other Assemblies of God missionaries, and they all agreed to the Council decisions.<sup>473</sup> After the formation of the Council, the Pentecostal mission work in Kerala was re-arranged under two regions: the Southern part of Kerala was assigned to John Burgess, and the Northern part of Kerala was called as ‘Assemblies of God in Malabar,’ and it was given to Robert Cook.<sup>474</sup> However, Abraham and other native evangelists were not ready to accept this regional restriction and administrative arrangements by the foreign mission agency. They were influenced by the spirit of nationalism and urged Cook to give up his association with the Council of the Assemblies of God for South India and Ceylon.<sup>475</sup> As Cook wanted to avoid the split and the distress within the *Malankara Pentecostal Church*, he was willing to leave his fellowship with the Assemblies of God.<sup>476</sup> Cook considered it was

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<sup>470</sup> ‘South India and Ceylon District Council,’ *Pentecostal Evangel*, 6 September 1929, 2.

<sup>471</sup> Bergunder, *The South Indian Pentecostal Movement in the Twentieth Century*, 28.

<sup>472</sup> Walter Clifford initially worked in North India as an Independent Protestant missionary, later he joined the British Assemblies of God in 1925 and American Assemblies of God in 1929, and he permanently worked in Sri Lanka as an Assemblies of God missionary. Somaratna G.P.V., *Origins of the Pentecostal Mission in Sri Lanka* (Nugegoda: Margaya Fellowship, 1996), 12.

<sup>473</sup> ‘South India and Ceylon District Council.’

<sup>474</sup> ‘Report on South India and Ceylon District Council,’ *Penthekosthu Kahalam*, June 1929, 3–4.

<sup>475</sup> In the editorial of ‘Gospel Preacher,’ the Malayalam Pentecostal weekly of the *Malankara Pentecostal Church*, K.E. Abraham describes the primary reason behind this decision is the regional restrictions of the Council of Assemblies of God in South India to the evangelists for the mission. Abraham K.E., ‘Editorial,’ *Gospel Preacher*, July 1929, 1–2.

<sup>476</sup> According to George Cook, the Indian brothers pressurized his dad for the separation. ‘George Cook, the Son of Robert F. Cook to Gary B. McGee,’ 19 September 1985, Gary McGee Collection, Box 3, File 2, Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center.

God's will for him to separate his affiliation with the Assemblies of God.<sup>477</sup> Abraham and his followers demanded a complete separation from the Assemblies of God fellowship not only because of the regional restrictions but also because the native evangelists emphasized the mission policy of "living by faith," that is, the mission without any foreign support. According to George Cook, son of Robert F. Cook his parents had to prove to the nationals that they were not living in India only because of the foreign mission support.<sup>478</sup> Cook left Assemblies of God and its Council in 1929 with Abraham and decided to strengthen *Malankara Pentecostal Church*. It is also true that there was a spirit of division among the missionaries of South India Assemblies of God Council and they did not recognize or accept the leadership of Robert F. Cook. He felt that "Thomas Stoddard did not want him to come to the leadership of the South India Assemblies of God Council, rather they elected Walter Clifford."<sup>479</sup> From the report of the first Council, it can be observed that, even though there were many local evangelists, pastors, and leaders, the Assemblies of God missionaries did not invite them to participate in the Council meeting.<sup>480</sup> Instead, they attempted to implement the Council decisions on the native churches and native workers. The social context of Kerala, which was more prevalent to support the 'home-rule policy,' impacted the native workers to turn against the new Council and its organization policies. The separation severely impacted the further growth of the indigenous Classical Pentecostal movement in Kerala. The separation resulted in having two Classical Pentecostal denominations in Kerala during this time. One was *Assemblies of God Churches* under the General Council of Assemblies of God, Springfield, Missouri, United States of America, and the other is *Malankara Pentecostal Church*, an indigenous denomination, had the headquarters in Chengannur, Kerala.

When Cook left the Assemblies of God fellowship, *Malankara Pentecostal Church* had 63 mission stations, and forty-three native pastors, a headquarter and Bible school at Mulakuzaha. Unfortunately, he severed his connections with the

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<sup>477</sup> Cook, *A Quarter Century of Divine Leading in India*, 57.

<sup>478</sup> 'George Cook, the Son of Robert F. Cook to Gary B. McGee.'

<sup>479</sup> 'George Cook, the Son of Robert F. Cook to Gary B. McGee.'

<sup>480</sup> 'Report on South India and Ceylon District Council.'

Assemblies of God without making arrangements for the transfer of any church properties that had been acquired with the Assemblies of God funds.<sup>481</sup> However, the South India District Council of Assemblies of God did not attempt to create any problem against the new denomination. *Malankara Pentecostal Church* began to grow as an indigenous Classical Pentecostal denomination with Cook as its President and Abraham as Vice-President, and also they had an elected executive committee for the administration of the church.<sup>482</sup> However, in the *Malankara Pentecostal Church* its President Cook, though he was an American missionary, being well aware of the spirit of the Biblical nature of the church, did not try to bring any restrictions on the local churches and he provided ‘freedom’ to all local churches and native evangelists.<sup>483</sup> During this time, Classical Pentecostalism through the indigenous Pentecostal denomination began to grow in large number both among the Dalits and Syrians in different places in Kerala. The impact of indigenous nature, the openness to Dalits, the democratic administration and freedom from foreign rule contributed thus to the growth of Classical Pentecostalism through the indigenous denomination in Kerala.

#### **4.1.4. A Great Schism in Malankara Pentecostal Church and its Impact**

However, in 1930, the Classical Pentecostalism in Kerala witnessed another schism that took place in *Malankara Pentecostal Church*, and the result was the formation of another indigenous Pentecostal denomination. In 1930, K.E. Abraham and his followers along with forty churches left *Malankara Pentecostal Church*, and they cut off entirely their relationship with Robert F. Cook.<sup>484</sup> The primary reason behind the division according to Abraham was that the pastors and congregations were not given enough freedom and according to the New Testament teachings, the

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<sup>481</sup> ‘George Cook, the Son of Robert F. Cook to Gary B. McGee.’

<sup>482</sup> Abraham K.E., *India Pentecostu Daivasabha: Prarambha Varshangal (Mal.) [India Pentecostal Church: The Beginning Years]*, 85–87.

<sup>483</sup> Robert F. Cook, ‘Editorial,’ *Suvishesha Prabhashakan (Mal.) [Full Gospel Preacher]*, 8, no. 4 (1929): 1–2.

<sup>484</sup> Oommen T.G., *IPC Yum Anpathu Varshathe Sevana Charichthravum (Mal.) [The IPC and Its 50 Years of History]* (Mallappally: Mallappally Printers, 1979), 9.

local churches should be independent and indigenous.<sup>485</sup> Another reason was that Abraham and some of the local pastors felt that Cook attempted to implement sovereign authority over churches and people, not considering the local pastors and their ministry with equal recognition.<sup>486</sup> Cook had some other reasons, and he considered that the Indian brothers cheated him in the ministry of the Lord. He wrote in his biography about the split of Abraham and followers from the Malankara Pentecostal church: "...one of the leaders of our fellowship, a young man, became vain and lifted with pride because of his ability. He thus became a prey to the national spirit, which was prevalent in India at that time. Four other workers and a number of our fellowship followed him."<sup>487</sup> It is true that as part of the dominant Western missionary stand, Cook's attitude towards the local pastors and evangelists was negative.

There was a significant issue between Cook, Abraham, and the native evangelists. When Cook distributed the monthly support to the native workers, he collected a monthly report from them, which Abraham and his followers opposed because of the policy of disparaging the Christian ministry as equal to a government job by the foreign Pentecostal missionary and the colonial agenda of considering Indian workers as slaves.<sup>488</sup> Abraham made his followers understand that the schism was required, because "although an 11-member executive committee was formed during the time of the merger of two organizations, it did not meet once, nor was the work carried out as decided. We became fully convinced that it would not be possible for the domestic churches to progress independently due to the merger."<sup>489</sup> Later the impact of the division was that Cook and Abraham's followers published their arguments regarding this division. In an official document published by the followers of Abraham in 1936, a severe disagreement between Cook and Abraham was

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<sup>485</sup> Abraham K.E., 'Oru Prathyaksha Lakhulekha [Mal. One Public Document]' (K.C. Oommen, 1936), 8, K.E. Abraham Collection, File 1, India Bible College Archives, Kumbanadu.

<sup>486</sup> Abraham K.E., 'Prathyaksha Pathram [Mal. Public Paper],' 1932, K.E. Abraham Collection, File 1, India Bible College Archives, Kumbanadu.

<sup>487</sup> Cook, *A Quarter Century of Divine Leading in India*, 57.

<sup>488</sup> Abraham K.E., *Yesukristhuvinte Eliya Dasan: Athmakadha, Pastor K.E. Abraham (Mal.) [Pastor K.E. Abraham: The Humble Servant of Jesus Christ, Autobiography]*, 186.

<sup>489</sup> Abraham K.E., 186.

narrated. Abraham and his followers were unhappy that Cook hesitated to give up the ownership of the properties of Mt. Zion headquarters and Bible School to Assemblies of God after he left the fellowship.<sup>490</sup> Saju writes that the sermons of Pastor Raman Paul, the founder of *Ceylon Pentecostal Mission*,<sup>491</sup> motivated Abraham and his followers to begin an indigenous Pentecostal mission with a policy of “faith living.”<sup>492</sup> Interestingly Bergunder observes, the American Cook functioned as President and the Indian Abraham was only Vice-president in the church, which caused the division.<sup>493</sup> V.V. Thomas argues that more than all these reasons, the ‘caste factor’ was the real reason behind separation and Abraham wanted to get away from the Dalits and to form a Syrian dominated Pentecostal Church.<sup>494</sup>

In consolidating all the causes of division in the *Malankara Pentecostal Church*, it may be said here that the influence of the spirit of nationalism that was prevalent in the Kerala society during this period and the opposition against colonialism was the most specific reason behind the split. Cook, though was a spirit-filled Pentecostal missionary, his white-man’s attitude against the brown-skinned men in India made him dominate the Pentecostal movement in Kerala, and his colonial attitude towards the native pastors made him overrule them. The explicit refusal of colonialism in Christian mission led Abraham to take this final stride of splitting the Pentecostal mission and the Classical Pentecostal denomination in Kerala. Cook’s colonial attitude was very evident, as Abraham and other native pastors did not have an opportunity to receive ordination from foreign missionaries or mission agencies.

#### **4.1.5. The Temperament of Biblio-centric Indigenous Classical Pentecostalism**

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<sup>490</sup> Abraham K.E., ‘Oru Parasya Lekhanam [Mal. One Public Essay],’ 1936, K.E. Abraham Collection, File 1, India Bible College Archives, Kumbanadu; ‘Noel Perkin, the Missionary Secretary of Assemblies of God to K.C. Oommen: Concerning the Separation of Robert F. Cook from Assemblies of God,’ 23 July 1936, Assemblies of God, Kerala Collection, File 1, Assemblies of God World Mission Archives, Springfield, Missouri.

<sup>491</sup> Earlier, at the end of 1920, two speakers and leaders of Ceylon Pentecostal Mission, an indigenous Pentecostal Mission from Sri Lanka, Ramankutty Paul and Alwin R. de Alwis visited Kerala and preached in the evangelistic meetings organized by Cook. See more details in the next section.

<sup>492</sup> Mathew, *Kerala Penthecosthu Charithram (Mal.) [Kerala Pentecostal History]*, 116.

<sup>493</sup> Bergunder, *The South Indian Pentecostal Movement in the Twentieth Century*, 29.

<sup>494</sup> Thomas V.V., *Dalit Pentecostalism, Spirituality of the Empowered Poor*, 206–7.

After the split, Abraham and his followers maintained their earlier denominational name, i.e., *South India Pentecostal Church of God*.<sup>495</sup> Abraham made Kumbanadu as the headquarters for the indigenous Pentecostal denomination and showed allegiance to *Ceylon Pentecostal Mission*. It was an indigenous Pentecostal Mission, and the Church in Sri Lanka indebted its origin to the ministry of Walter Clifford, who was an Assemblies of God missionary, who went from India and served after 1925 in Sri Lanka. The *Ceylon Pentecostal Mission* began as an indigenous Pentecostal denomination because of the efforts of Ramankutty Paul and Alwin R. de Alwis.<sup>496</sup> Ramankutty Paul was initially known as Ramankutty, born in 1881 to Hindu parents in the village of Engadiyur in Kerala. He had an encounter with the gospel of Jesus Christ in Colombo in 1901, later in 1902 he began to involve in evangelization in Sri Lanka. A college lecturer, Alwin R. de Alwis joined with Ramankutty Paul and their ministry spread beyond Colombo to Tamil Nadu and Kerala after 1926.<sup>497</sup> The *Ceylon Pentecostal Mission* embraced an ascetic approach to spirituality: it advocated the celibacy of the ministers, and they should wear a white dress; disparaged the use of medicine, gave central importance to the doctrine of the second coming of Christ, and instituted indigenous forms of worship.<sup>498</sup>

The indigenous nature of *Ceylon Pentecostal Mission* that originated and developed without any support from foreign mission agencies impressed the Keralite Pentecostal evangelists.<sup>499</sup> K.E. Abraham and his followers approached Ramankutty Paul, the founder of *Ceylon Pentecostal Mission* for the ordination. Thus Ramankutty Paul ordained K.E. Abraham and, *South India Pentecostal Church of God* became a full-fledged Pentecostal denomination in 1930. Allan Anderson observes that, “it is

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<sup>495</sup> Abraham K.E., *India Pentecostu Daivasabha: Prarambha Varshangal (Mal.) [India Pentecostal Church: The Beginning Years]*, 34.

<sup>496</sup> Ramankutty Paul and Alwin R. de Alwis after the formation of *Ceylon Pentecostal Mission* worked along with Walter Clifford in association with Assemblies of God but later in 1927, they separated *Ceylon Pentecostal Mission* from Assemblies of God. *Pastor Paul: Jeeva Charithra Samgraham (Mal.) [Biography of Pastor Paul]* (Thiruvananthapuram: Pentecost Press Trust - The Pentecostal Mission, 2010), 52–53.

<sup>497</sup> *The Biography of Pastor Paul* (Chennai: Adayar Pentecost Press Trust, 1998), 42.

<sup>498</sup> *Rules and Regulations of the Pentecostal Mission* (Chennai: Adayar Pentecost Press Trust, 1999).

<sup>499</sup> Mathew, *Kerala Pentecostu Charithram (Mal.) [Kerala Pentecostal History]*, 174.

revealing that Cook never ordained the competent leader K.E. Abraham but Ramankutty Paul of the Ceylon Pentecostal Mission in 1930, but it could also be that Cook was disinterested in hierarchical leadership and did not practice ordination.”<sup>500</sup> It is worthy to note here that K.E. Abraham worked with Cook and the Assemblies of God missionaries since 1923, but they did not ordain K.E. Abraham. It could be due to the colonial spirit of the missionaries to dominate the administration, and the mission activities hindered them to keep away ordination from the Indian evangelists. Saju observes that Cook did not show personal interest to ordain native evangelists.<sup>501</sup> However, in the words of K.E. Abraham, though he worked with Cook for several years, he did not see the progress of apostolic ministry under the foreign missionaries which discouraged him to get ordination from Cook.<sup>502</sup> It is apparent that K.E. Abraham firmly believed that an indigenous Pentecostal mission was more effective than a foreign Pentecostal mission in Kerala. Abraham gives the reason for getting the ordination from *Ceylon Pentecostal Mission*, since “it was an indigenous Pentecostal denomination and free from foreign domination.”<sup>503</sup> The spirit of nationalism and the realization of the need for indigenous administration and mission policies for the Classical Pentecostal mission in Kerala prompted him to work with *Ceylon Pentecostal Mission* and Ramankutty Paul. Abraham sees separating from Cook and developing the identity of indigenous form and being free from ‘foreign rule’ contributed towards the growth of Classical Pentecostal mission in Kerala since some of the local pastors and believers joined *South India Pentecostal Church of God*.<sup>504</sup>

The liaison between Abraham and *Ceylon Pentecostal Mission* broke after three years. Bergunder observes the break was because of the vested interest of K.E. Abraham, as he writes, “the charismatic Abraham was very conscious of his power

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<sup>500</sup> Anderson, *To the Ends of the Earth: Pentecostalism and the Transformation of World Christianity*, 77.

<sup>501</sup> Mathew, *Kerala Penthecosthu Charithram (Mal.) [Kerala Pentecostal History]*, 119.

<sup>502</sup> Abraham K.E., *Yesukristhuvinte Eliya Dasan: Athmakadha, Pastor K.E. Abraham (Mal.) [Pastor K.E. Abraham: The Humble Servant of Jesus Christ, Autobiography]*, 179.

<sup>503</sup> Abraham K.E., *India Pentecostu Daivasabha: Prarambha Varshangal (Mal.) [India Pentecostal Church: The Beginning Years]*, 60.

<sup>504</sup> Abraham K.E., ‘India Penthekosthu Daivasabha: Oru Thirinju Nottam (Mal.) [Indian Pentecostal Church of God: A Short History],’ 6.

and influence, and he probably wanted to become the sole leader.”<sup>505</sup> However, according to K.E. Abraham, parting the relationship with *Ceylon Pentecostal Mission* was much needed because of “the unbiblical doctrines taught by Alwyn and the *Ceylon Pentecostal Mission*.”<sup>506</sup> They taught that the minister who conducts the water baptism should first be baptized in the Holy Spirit. According to this teaching, anyone who received water baptism from a person who has not received the baptism of the Holy Spirit must receive the baptism again.<sup>507</sup> Since K.E. Abraham was unhappy about the doctrine of ‘rebaptism’ for the Pentecostals, based on the scripture, he wrote to him with his arguments and invited him and his followers to have an open debate. However, they failed to respond to his invitation. K.E. Abraham and his followers then decided to discontinue their association with *the Ceylon Pentecostal Mission* in 1933.<sup>508</sup> It could be partially correct that more than the doctrinal differences the administrative structure of *Ceylon Pentecostal Mission* impelled Abraham and his followers to discontinue their affiliation with Paul and Alwin. Bergunder observes, *Ceylon Pentecostal Mission* was a centralized organization controlled by Paul and Alwin, which differed from the congregational vision and interests of the leaders of South India Pentecostal movement substantially.<sup>509</sup>

K.E. Abraham had the vision to train native evangelists for the Pentecostal mission in India. Abraham anticipated the freedom of India from the British rule and the departure of Western missionaries from India, and accordingly, the responsibility of the evangelization work would soon be laid on the local evangelists.<sup>510</sup> He had a firm conviction that young local ministers must be trained locally for the future of

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<sup>505</sup> Bergunder, *The South Indian Pentecostal Movement in the Twentieth Century*, 29.

<sup>506</sup> ‘A.K. Titus, Pastor of Ceylon Pentecostal Mission to K.E. Abraham: Concerning the Unbiblical Doctrines,’ 6 September 1932, K.E. Abraham Collection, File 3, India Bible College Archives, Kumbanadu; Abraham K.E., *Yesukristhuvinte Eliya Dasan: Athmakadha, Pastor K.E. Abraham (Mal.)* [*Pastor K.E. Abraham: The Humble Servant of Jesus Christ, Autobiography*, 244.

<sup>507</sup> ‘P. David to K.E. Abraham: Concerning the Unbiblical Teachings of Ceylon Pentecostal Church,’ 15 March 1934, K.E. Abraham Collection, File 1, India Bible College Archives, Kumbanadu; Mathew, *Kerala Penthecosthu Charithram (Mal.)* [*Kerala Pentecostal History*], 174–75.

<sup>508</sup> Abraham K.E., *Yesukristhuvinte Eliya Dasan: Athmakadha, Pastor K.E. Abraham (Mal.)* [*Pastor K.E. Abraham: The Humble Servant of Jesus Christ, Autobiography*, 190.

<sup>509</sup> Bergunder, *The South Indian Pentecostal Movement in the Twentieth Century*, 32.

<sup>510</sup> Abraham K.E., *Yesukristhuvinte Eliya Dasan: Athmakadha, Pastor K.E. Abraham (Mal.)* [*Pastor K.E. Abraham: The Humble Servant of Jesus Christ, Autobiography*, 198–99.

indigenous Classical Pentecostalism in India. Thus he opened the Hebron Bible School at Kumbanad in June 1930.<sup>511</sup> After the separation of the association of *South India Pentecostal Church of God* from *Ceylon Pentecostal Mission*, the mission with indigenous identity began to spread to many places in Kerala and South India. Kumbanad became the headquarters of the *South India Pentecostal Church of God* where they had an annual convention every year. From Kumbanadu, the native evangelists traveled across Kerala and South India, which resulted in the establishment of indigenous Pentecostal churches in many places in Kerala, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, and Andhra Pradesh. P.M. Samuel who worked alongside K.E. Abraham was the indigenous Pentecostal missionary leader who led a successful Pentecostal mission in South India.<sup>512</sup> Later in 1933, the general body of the *South India Pentecostal Church of God* conducted its annual meeting and elected fourteen members of ‘Council of ministers’ to govern the *South India Pentecostal Church of God*. The Council elected P.M. Samuel as the President and K.E. Abraham as the Secretary, and for the administrative functions, the Council decided to register the fundamental doctrines and the regulations of the church.<sup>513</sup> By this time, the missionary activities of *South India Pentecostal Church of God* extended intensively to Andhra Pradesh. The Minister’s Council meeting in 1934 decided to change the name of the Church from *South India Pentecostal Church of God* to *Indian Pentecostal Church of God*.<sup>514</sup> The Church was officially registered under the Society Act in 1935 in Eluru, Andhra Pradesh, which was under the British Presidency. Bergunder states about this with reservations as ‘K.E. Abraham founded his own, independent church.’<sup>515</sup> However, it can be observed, as the vision of K.E. Abraham of an indigenous Pentecostal Church with Indian identity for Indian people arose, it was accomplished in 1935.

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<sup>511</sup> Mathew, *Kerala Penthecosthu Charithram (Mal.) [Kerala Pentecostal History]*, 170.

<sup>512</sup> Abraham K.E., *India Pentecostu Daivasabha: Prarambha Varshangal (Mal.) [India Pentecostal Church: The Beginning Years]*, 18.

<sup>513</sup> Abraham K.E., ‘India Penthekosthu Daivasabha: Oru Thirinjju Nottam (Mal.) [Indian Pentecostal Church of God: A Short History],’ 8.

<sup>514</sup> Abraham K.E., *India Pentecostu Daivasabha: Prarambha Varshangal (Mal.) [India Pentecostal Church: The Beginning Years]*, 18–19.

<sup>515</sup> Bergunder, *The South Indian Pentecostal Movement in the Twentieth Century*, 32.

## 4.2. Transitional and Transformational Growth of Classical Pentecostalism in the Social Context of Kerala

After the 1930s, the social context of Kerala was in the transitional stage due to the formation of labourers and workers organizations in Kerala, the transformation of Communist ideologies as a dominating political and ruling party, and the impact of Indian Independence. In this social setting, the four Classical Pentecostal denominations such as Indian Pentecostal Church of God, Assemblies of God, Church of God, and Ceylon Pentecostal Mission had a transitional and transformational growth. Despite the departure of foreign Pentecostal missionaries, many internal quarrels and splits among the Pentecostals in Kerala, which severely affected the mission and ministry of the Pentecostal churches, Classical Pentecostalism showed a progressive consolidation and organizational development of its own identity in the Kerala society.

### 4.2.1. The Transitional Growth of Indian Pentecostal Church of God as an Indian Spiritual Movement

The leaders of Indian Pentecostal Church of God received an invitation from Lewi Pethrus of the Filadelfia Church of Sweden to minister in their Swedish National Convention in 1936.<sup>516</sup> According to Joel Halldorf, Lewi Pethrus was the patriarch of the Swedish Pentecostal movement who emphasized local congregationalism against denominationalism in that time.<sup>517</sup> K.E. Abraham and K.C. Cherian accepted this invitation and decided to go for a preaching tour in Europe during the next few months. Since Abraham and friends separated their churches from Assemblies of God fellowship and later from Cook's fellowship, they faced criticism due to their foreign travel. Abraham and Cherian attempted to explain to the people that, this invitation was from God, and it was not for fundraising but a global mission.<sup>518</sup> They had a very successful preaching tour with the support of Swedish-American missionaries. In the national missionary conference of Pentecostal churches

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<sup>516</sup> Abraham K.E., *Yesukristhuvinte Eliya Dasan: Athmakadha, Pastor K.E. Abraham (Mal.) [Pastor K.E. Abraham: The Humble Servant of Jesus Christ, Autobiography, 271–72.*

<sup>517</sup> Joel Halldorf, 'Lewi Pethrus and the Creation of a Christian Counterculture,' *PNEUMA: The Journal of the Society for Pentecostal Studies* 32, no. 3 (November 2010): 360.

<sup>518</sup> Abraham K.E., 'Sermons of K.E. Abraham Preached in the Farewell Meeting at Kumbanadu,' 1935, 2–3, K.E. Abraham Collection, File 1, India Bible College Archives, Kumbanadu.

in Sweden, Abraham and Cherian emphasized partnership in mission rather than ownership in the mission.<sup>519</sup> The leadership of the District Council of South India Assemblies of God was not happy about Abraham and Cherian's preaching tour in Sweden. They wrote letters to the Swedish churches about Indian ministers' attitude against the foreign mission, but it did not work well.<sup>520</sup> Abraham published this letter and defended the need for an indigenous mission in Kerala.<sup>521</sup> Later in 1947, K.E. Abraham, K. C. Cherian, and P.M. Samuel had another visit to Sweden and preached in the Swedish Pentecostal churches.<sup>522</sup> In the following year, based on an invitation to visit the USA received from a prominent Swedish-American pastor Joseph Mattsson-Boze from Chicago, these three leaders of Indian Pentecostal Church of God took a preaching tour in the USA.<sup>523</sup> They ministered to different churches in New York and then proceeded to Chicago, preached in Mattsson-Boze's church. Meanwhile, P.J. Thomas who was a co-worker of K.E. Abraham in Kerala (who had done his theological education in Canada) joined with Abraham in Chicago. Then four of them visited the headquarters of Assemblies of God in Springfield, Missouri and the Church of God in Cleveland, Tennessee and shared their vision of developing an indigenous interdenominational Classical Pentecostal fellowship in Kerala to the leaders of these denominations. They discussed the possibilities of developing 'an Indian ecumenical Classical Pentecostal mission and fellowship,' which is remarkably free from the foreign control for useful missionary work and spiritual fellowship during the post-Independence period. The discussion about the interdenominational Classical Pentecostal fellowship in Kerala was a failure because of the disagreement

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<sup>519</sup> Abraham K.E., 'Missionary Work: A Sermon Preached by Pastor K.E. Abraham in the Missionary Meeting of the Pentecostal Convention in Sweden, 1936' (Indian Pentecostal Church of God, 1936), K.E. Abraham Collection, File 1, India Bible College Archives, Kumbanadu.

<sup>520</sup> 'Constance Swinfen Eady, the Secretary of South India and Ceylon District Council of the General Council of the Assemblies of God to Carl F. Swahn, against Indigenous Pentecostal Mission,' 14 October 1935, K.E. Abraham Collection, File 3, India Bible College Archives, Kumbanadu.

<sup>521</sup> 'K.E. Abraham to K.C. Oommen,' 3 July 1936, K.E. Abraham Collection, File 3, India Bible College Archives, Kumbanadu.

<sup>522</sup> Mathew, *Kerala Penthecosthu Charithram (Mal.) [Kerala Pentecostal History]*, 177.

<sup>523</sup> Abraham K.E., *Yesukristhuvinte Eliya Dasan: Athmakadha, Pastor K.E. Abraham (Mal.) [Pastor K.E. Abraham: The Humble Servant of Jesus Christ, Autobiography]*, 274.

of missionaries and leaders of Assemblies of God and Church of God.<sup>524</sup> After some years, in an interview in 1971 at Kumbanadu, K.E. Abraham revitalized his vision of ‘ecumenism among the Pentecostals’ and criticized the attitude of missionaries against this view. He said:

I am all for the ecumenical movement of the born-again Christians. This has been my desire throughout; but, as a small group of believers, our influence was not very powerful to achieve this goal...It is in the best interest of every Pentecostal church in India to be united if possible; but the western missionaries, using their financial influence, attracted the believers to different groups.<sup>525</sup>

It is assumed that the Assemblies of God missionaries and the leadership in Springfield did not have the confidence in the Indian leaders since Abraham and others demanded free indigenous form with ‘no strings attached’<sup>526</sup> mission, but sought financial support from the foreign Pentecostal churches. They returned to India in 1949 with some sponsoring bodies and financial means to buy lands and to construct buildings for Indian Pentecostal churches in Kerala.

The next decade of the history of Indian Pentecostal Church of God witnessed bitter internal quarrels among the leaders and divisions of the church and mission in Kerala. The Indian Pentecostal Church of God leaders who travelled on the preaching tour with Abraham and other leaders who worked in the Council openly expressed their disagreement and separated from the Church. Saju observes, it happened not because of any doctrinal or theological differences but the issues related to the lack of adequate administration and distribution of resources.<sup>527</sup> Initially P.J. Thomas and K.C. Cherian decided to leave their association with the Indian Pentecostal Church of God concerning the ownership of property, which they had bought in their name. Abraham was against the individual ownership of any property and demanded the transfer of ownership of new properties to the IPC Council. Samkutty Chacko

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<sup>524</sup> Abraham K.E., 396–98.

<sup>525</sup> This interview is recorded and published. Habel G. Varghese, *K.E. Abraham: An Apostle from Modern India, A Brief Life Story of Rev. Dr. K.E. Abraham* (Kadampanadu: The Christian Literature Service in India, 1974), 117.

<sup>526</sup> K.E. Abraham mentioned about his view on foreign aid to Indian churches as “I am not against foreign aid, provided no string is attached...the recipient, and the giver must be equal. The giver should not assume superiority simply because he is giving financial assistance.” Varghese, 117.

<sup>527</sup> Mathew, *Kerala Penthecosthu Charithram (Mal.) [Kerala Pentecostal History]*, 253.

observes, at the same time, K.E. Abraham took autonomous decision to sell a portion of the cemetery property of Kumbanadu Church without discussing with the Church Council or leaders of the Church.<sup>528</sup> According to Saju, the attitude of Abraham was interpreted as the mismanagement of the church's property for personal use.<sup>529</sup> It was a difficult time for the India Pentecostal Church of God and Abraham since the Church at Kumbanadu was divided, and many churches and pastors within Kerala and India joined in this division.<sup>530</sup> This spilt impacted the complete division of Indian Pentecostal Church of God in Kerala as two parties and both the parties formed the church council and claimed the authenticity of their leadership. Concerning this division, Bergunder observes, "Abraham tried to ensure his control over these foreign funds, in order to secure his leading position within the church. As a consequence, serious quarrels on leadership and distribution arose that almost threatened to break the church."<sup>531</sup> Saju views about the issues from a different perspective as he writes, "the conflict worsened when influential pastors of the church settled in and around Kumbanadu, the center of the Pentecostal church where, until then, Abraham had resided alone, and they tried to take over leadership roles in the Indian Pentecostal church."<sup>532</sup> It is already observed that the impact of the social context of democratic leadership against the autonomy and domination of foreign rule, which was prevalent in the consciousness of the people of Kerala at that time. It could be because of the conflict in the ideology of K.E. Abraham, on one side, he propagated an indigenous mission and the Indian Church free from foreign rule, without any external domination, another side he channelized the resources from foreign countries for the expansion of the Church with autocratic leadership which resulted in the division of the Indian Pentecostal Church of God. The division continued until 1966. The impact of the long years of conflict within the leadership of Indian Pentecostal Church of God restricted the progress of its mission work considerably.

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<sup>528</sup> Samkutty Chacko Nilambur, *IPC Charithravum Pastor V.T. Thomasum (Mal.) [The History of IPC and the Life of Pastor V.T. Thomas]* (Thiruvalla: Hallelujah Books, 2018), 178.

<sup>529</sup> Mathew, *Kerala Penthecosthu Charithram (Mal.) [Kerala Pentecostal History]*, 225.

<sup>530</sup> Abraham K.E., *Yesukristhuvinte Eliya Dasan: Athmakadha, Pastor K.E. Abraham (Mal.) [Pastor K.E. Abraham: The Humble Servant of Jesus Christ, Autobiography]*, 425.

<sup>531</sup> Bergunder, *The South Indian Pentecostal Movement in the Twentieth Century*, 38.

<sup>532</sup> Mathew, *Kerala Penthecosthu Charithram (Mal.) [Kerala Pentecostal History]*, 254.

#### 4.2.1.1. The Transformational Growth of Indian Pentecostal Church of God

Indian Pentecostal Church of God had a transitional growth during the decades from 1937 to 1974 as K.E. Abraham remained as the indisputable leader of the movement until his death in December 1974 amidst the challenges of division and leadership quarrels. One major area of the transformational growth of Indian Pentecostal Church of God was the great autonomy attained by the local pastors or leaders to develop their local church or local areas through the exploration of new foreign or local resources by themselves and administration of the church. The prominent early leaders of the Indian Pentecostal Church of God such as K.E. Abraham, K.C. Cherian and T.G. Oommen emphasized the importance of the independent nature of local Pentecostal churches in their writings. According to them, each congregation is independent, and the New Testament pattern of the church is without the control of any external body or organization. K.C. Cherian expressed, “though all the ministers in the apostolic period had gone out from Jerusalem church and established many churches, neither the Jerusalem church nor the ministers argued for the control over those churches.”<sup>533</sup> K.E. Abraham argued, “the churches which we find in the scripture were independent, and we can follow only such examples.”<sup>534</sup> T.G. Oommen also had a similar view, “all local churches should be independent and ministered by the pastor and should be helped by the ministry of the Apostles.”<sup>535</sup> They negated the doubts of foreign Pentecostal missionaries who questioned the leadership abilities of Indian pastors to independently handle the administration of the local church based on the socio-political context of Kerala. As K.C. Cherian publicly expressed, “if Indian politics could contribute leaders from the country, why not the capable leaders of the local church to administer the church activities?”<sup>536</sup> During the foreign trips also K.E. Abraham encouraged his co-workers and local pastors of churches in Kerala that “the ministers are not getting any financial help from Sweden.

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<sup>533</sup> Cherian K.C., ‘Sthalam Sabhakahalude Swathanthriam (Mal.) [Independence of the Local Churches],’ *Zion Kahalam (Mal.) [Zion Trumpet]* 1, no. 11 (1937): 291.

<sup>534</sup> Abraham K.E., ‘Suvishesha Parisramam Indiyil Vijayapradhamakkunnathu Engane? (Mal.) [How Can We Have a Victorious Evangelization Work in India?],’ *Zion Kahalam (Mal.) [Zion Trumpet]* 2, no. 2 (March 1938): 68.

<sup>535</sup> Oommen T.G., *Atmakatha (Mal.) [Autobiography]* (Kumbanadu: Kuwait I.P.C., 1984), 73.

<sup>536</sup> Cherian K.C., ‘Sthalam Sabhakahalude Swathanthriam (Mal.) [Independence of the Local Churches],’ 315.

The local church has to meet the needs of their pastors. For the progress of the church, it is good to stand on our legs.”<sup>537</sup> The impact of the vision of these early leaders of Indian Pentecostal church of God resulted in the decentralization of the administration of the Indian Pentecostal Church of God, the local churches and the leaders of the local churches and also local centers acted entirely independent in the areas of worship, ministry, and mission. The Indian Pentecostal Church of God maintained a Council of Ministers, which consisted of 12 persons who were elected from the local churches for the administration of the churches in Andhra Pradesh, Kerala, Tamil Nadu and North India.<sup>538</sup>

Another area of transformational growth of Indian Pentecostal church was the *Swadeshi* nature. The leaders of the Indian Pentecostal Church of God always emphasized the ecclesiastical freedom of the local churches regarding administration and finances. The local native leadership had the complete responsibility of the local church, concerning administration and they had to find ways to meet their needs by themselves. The leaders encouraged the local pastors not to depend on the financial support by a missionary agent or a financial organization but to trust in God for every need.<sup>539</sup> This *Swadeshi* attitude of the leaders of Indian Pentecostal Church of God was against the ‘Ecclesiastical Colonialism’ posed by Classical Pentecostal missionaries in Kerala. According to Paulson Pulikkottil, “Pentecostalism made its appearance either in the last phase of European Colonialism or at the dawn of the new nation states. In other words, the Pentecostal missionaries entered the territories which had been colonial contact zone for centuries.”<sup>540</sup> It is true that the leaders of the Indian Pentecostal Church, K.E. Abraham, K.C. Cherian and T.G. Oommen constantly and purposefully used the phrases against colonialism in their writings and sermons. Paulson refers to some of those phrases as ‘being yoked under slavery, surrendering

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<sup>537</sup> Abraham K.E., ‘Sushrooshakanmarodu (Mal.) [A Letter to the Pastors],’ *Zion Kahalam (Mal.) [Zion Trumpet]* 1, no. 9 (n.d.): 244.

<sup>538</sup> Sara Abraham, ‘The Indigeneity of the India Pentecostal Church of God’, in *Christianity Is Indian: The Emergence of an Indigenous Community*, ed. Roger E. Hedlund (Mylapore & Delhi: MIIS & ISPCCK, 2004), 444.

<sup>539</sup> Abraham K.E., ‘Suvishesha Parisramam Indiyil Vijayapradhamakkunnathu Engane? (Mal.) [How Can We Have a Victorious Evangelization Work in India?],’ 68.

<sup>540</sup> Paulson Pulikottil, ‘As East and West Met in God’s Own Country: Encounter of Western Pentecostalism with Native Pentecostalism in Kerala,’ *Asian Journal of Pentecostal Studies* 5, no. 1 (2002): 7.

the freedom, building for money, and drinking the milk of the white cow.’<sup>541</sup> They attempted to make the adherents of indigenous Pentecostalism to experience the *Swadeshi* nature of Classical Pentecostalism against the colonial nature of Classical Pentecostalism.

The leaders of Indian Pentecostal Church of God always encouraged the congregations to collect their contribution to support their pastors and mission financially. The leaders channelized the gifts of individuals or churches outside India towards the purchase of properties or construction of church buildings. At the same time, they refused to take the support based on external domination or exploitation. They were against the exploitation of the ‘haves’ to the ‘have-nots.’<sup>542</sup> The Classical Pentecostal foreign missionaries who disagreed the *Swadeshi* attitude of the leaders of Indian Pentecostal Church of God attempted to oppose their preaching tour in Sweden and United States through adverse reports. However, Lewi Pethrus and the Swedish churches appreciated the attitude of Indian Pentecostal leaders, and they reported: “missionaries in India opposed the natives because the natives do not like to continue under the control of missionaries, who consider them as children or servants and demand obedience without questioning.”<sup>543</sup> The Swedish Pentecostal leaders supported the *Swadeshi* movement of the Indian Pentecostal Church of God. However, T.P. Varghese observed a strong influence of congregational ecclesiology of Scandinavian Pentecostalism on the autonomy nature of the Indian Pentecostal Church of God. According to him, “the Scandinavian Pentecostal movement emphasized the principle of ecclesiastical freedom, which maximizes the role of the laity, which means, ecclesiastical structures or hierarchy should not control a movement of the spirit,” influenced the leaders of Indian Pentecostal Church of God after their visit to Sweden.<sup>544</sup> It cannot be true, because the leaders of the Indian Pentecostal Church of God were more influenced by the socio-political context of

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<sup>541</sup> Pulikottil, 11.

<sup>542</sup> Varghese, *K.E. Abraham: An Apostle from Modern India, A Brief Life Story of Rev. Dr. K.E. Abraham*, 117.

<sup>543</sup> ‘Report,’ *Zion Kahalam (Mal.) [Zion Trumpet]* 1, no. 4 (April 1937): 23.

<sup>544</sup> Varghese T.P., ‘The Influence of Swedish Pentecostalism in India: A Paper Presented for the 9th EPCRA Conference, Missions Academy, University of Hamburg, July 13-17, 1999,’ July 1999, 3.

Kerala even before they established their relationship with the Swedish Pentecostal churches. As Roger E. Hedlund observes, “the IPC is an important expression of Christian nationalism in India before India’s Independence. K.E. Abraham believed that ministry could progress better without foreign missionary domination and self-sacrificing national ministers should lead self-supporting churches.”<sup>545</sup>

Another crucial area of the transformational growth of Indian Pentecostal Church of God was transforming ‘Kumbanadu, the center of the administration of the church as ‘Kumbanadu mission’ or ‘Kumbanadu as the center of the Classical Pentecostal mission in India.’ Similar to Azusa Street Mission of 1906, from Kumbanadu many native missionaries went out to work in the mission fields outside of Kerala and India. For several years in every prayer meeting at Kumbanadu, K.E. Abraham and his colleagues motivated the people to dedicate their lives to missionary work.<sup>546</sup> For many decades the Hebron Bible College at Kumbanadu functioned not only as a center of theological training but also as the center of sending missionaries. The leaders of Indian Pentecostal Church of God focused on training theological students as missionaries. Under the leadership of P.T. Chacko, the students received preaching training in English language, which helped them to go to other states.<sup>547</sup> The success of the missionary activities of the Indian Pentecostal Church in other states of India and other countries was because of its ‘Indian’ identity. When Classical Pentecostalism emerged in Kerala, it was developed as an offshoot of foreign missionary enterprise. In the initial stage, its identity in India was an imported religious sect from the United States of America. Ipe Kochupallikunnel observes, the Classical Pentecostal missionaries from the United States of America who worked in Kerala considered their work as an extension of their denomination and attempted to develop the Pentecostal churches in Kerala with the features of ‘Pentecostal movement of the USA.’<sup>548</sup> However, the social context of Kerala in that time

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<sup>545</sup> Roger E. Hedlund, ‘Critique of Pentecostal Mission by a Friendly Evangelical,’ *Asian Journal of Pentecostal Studies* 8, no. 1 (January 2005): 71.

<sup>546</sup> Abraham K.E., *India Pentecostu Daivasabha: Prarambha Varshangal (Mal.) [India Pentecostal Church: The Beginning Years]*, 56.

<sup>547</sup> ‘Hebron Bible College: A Report,’ *Zion Kahalam (Mal.) [Zion Trumpet]* 2, no. 8 (August 1938): 214.

<sup>548</sup> Kochupallikunnel, *Pentecostal Churches in Kerala and Indigenous Leadership*, 93.

influenced the Indian Pentecostal Church of God leaders to develop ‘Indian identity consciousness’ in the missionary activities, and wherever they went for the mission, they established Indian Pentecostalism. From 1936 to 1974, the native missionaries from Kumbanadu went and established Classical Pentecostal churches in all south Indian states and in many North Indian States.<sup>549</sup> It is also interesting to observe that the Indian Pentecostal Church of God with its ‘Indian identity’ had established Classical Pentecostal churches in different countries after 1956.<sup>550</sup> Classical Pentecostalism went back to the United States of America with Indian identity and flavor after 1968, in New York, the first Indian Pentecostal church was established later Indian Pentecostalism went to many states of America.<sup>551</sup> It is a remarkable fact to consider here that through the mission of Indian Pentecostal Church of God an Indian church had branches in foreign countries and those were guided and administered from India. Thus the ‘Kumbanadu mission’ of the Indian Pentecostal Church of God reversed the cross-cultural ‘Azusa mission’ of Classical Pentecostalism.

#### **4.2.2. The Transitional Growth of Assemblies of God under National Leadership**

After the setback of Robert F. Cook with mission stations, a few native pastors discontinued the association with Assemblies of God entirely in 1929. The Assemblies of God missionaries under the District Council of South India began to concentrate their work in Kerala. More Assemblies of God missionaries arrived during this period. Between 1930-34, the American missionaries such as Mildred C. Ginn and Martha M. Kucera gave leadership to Assemblies of God mission in Kerala. They emphasized two areas of mission, i.e., training the local ministers through

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<sup>549</sup> The Indian Pentecostal Churches were established in Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Punjab, Haryana, Madhya Pradesh, Delhi, Odisha, North-Eastern region, and Andaman and the Nicobar Islands. See the history of missionary activities of IPC in all the states of India. Abraham T.S., *A Brief History of the India Pentecostal Church of God: Pentecost from Jerusalem to Kodungallur to Kumbanadu to All of India* (Kumbanadu: K.E. Abraham Foundation, 2002), 82–104.

<sup>550</sup> The first Indian Pentecostal church outside India was established in 1956 in Bahrain, then later in other Arabian countries such as United Arab Emirates, Kuwait, Oman, and Yemen. See details of the history of Indian Pentecostal Churches in the Gulf region, Issac K.B., *Arabian Pentecosthu Charithram (Mal.) [Pentecostal History of Arabian Gulf]* (Thrissur: Yuvasnehithan Publications, 2002).

<sup>551</sup> Abraham T.S., *A Brief History of the India Pentecostal Church of God: Pentecost from Jerusalem to Kodungallur to Kumbanadu to All of India*, 112–14.

Bethel Bible Institute and raising native evangelists as leaders of Assemblies of God in Kerala.<sup>552</sup> Bergunder observes, from that time onward, John H. Burgess and the other missionaries staying in Kerala concentrated mainly on the Bible school, while the work in the congregation was left in the hands of the Indians.<sup>553</sup> For the first time, Assemblies of God appointed native evangelists as full-fledged pastors of local congregations within the Assemblies of God organization and supported their work among different people groups in south Kerala.<sup>554</sup> Several local people from the marginalized and suffering society found a new identity of leadership in Classical Pentecostalism in south Kerala. Kucera states that “Twelve families were received into the fellowship...it was precious to see them gather at the front of the assembly to receive new names. This is a custom, which is sometimes observed to do away with the Christian having to bear his old name...”<sup>555</sup> Until the beginning of the 1950s, the Assemblies of God had more congregations in South Kerala especially in the region of Trivandrum and in Kollam Districts. The growth of the church was primarily because of the openness of Classical Pentecostalism towards the suffering people groups who had the struggling experiences of untouchability, breast cloth controversy, and temple entry in the past.<sup>556</sup> Another reason for the growth of the Assemblies of God movement was in allowing measurable participation of indigenous pastors in leading positions. A.C. George writes that it is wrong to suppose that missionaries were alone responsible for the growth of Assemblies of God in Kerala, the truth is that the nationals who associated themselves with the missionaries helped them in a variety of ways: as translators, managers, editors of journals, supervisors of construction works, evangelists, pastors and co-workers.<sup>557</sup> The native ministers C. Manasseh, A.C. Samuel, R. Samuel, A.J. John, and P.V. John, who got opportunities

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<sup>552</sup> Carl F. Graves, ‘Encouraging News from South India,’ *Pentecostal Evangel*, February 1933, 9.

<sup>553</sup> Bergunder, *The South Indian Pentecostal Movement in the Twentieth Century*, 31.

<sup>554</sup> ‘Thomas Stoddart to Perkin,’ 7 March 1946, South India Collection, File 2, Assemblies of God World Mission Archives, Springfield, Missouri.

<sup>555</sup> Martha M. Kucera, ‘Report,’ *Pentecostal Evangel*, August 1933.

<sup>556</sup> Martha M. Kucera, ‘Report of Martha M. Kucera from Trivandrum,’ *Pentecostal Evangel*, 21 March 1931, 1.

<sup>557</sup> George, A.C., ‘Pentecostal Beginnings in Travancore, South India,’ 220.

to lead congregations in the Assemblies of God denomination during this time, considered them as successors, which contributed immensely for the expansion of the denomination. A.C. Samuel was the first Indian minister who received the ordination from Assemblies of God in 1935 in Ceylon.<sup>558</sup> During this period there were fifteen congregations of Assemblies of God, which include the people from the Syrian and Dalit background.<sup>559</sup>

The most significant impact of the social context of Kerala after the 1935s on the growth of Assemblies of God in Kerala was the fellowship meetings that were organized by the native pastors and members of the churches in different places in Kerala. There were more than thirty churches and thirty native pastors for Assemblies of God in Kerala, and they were under the direct administration of South India and Ceylon District council, which mandated the administrative works by the missionaries of Assemblies of God in Kerala.<sup>560</sup> John Burgess led this council and missionaries such as Mary Lynd Berg, Lydia Graner and Clarence Maloney worked in South and Central Kerala and focused on the expansion of Assemblies of God mission.<sup>561</sup> However, the native pastors organized regular fellowship meetings of pastors and members of the churches in different places in Kerala.<sup>562</sup> This initiative of the native pastors and members of the church who had the fellowship meeting played a vital role in the formation of the *Malayalam District Council of Assemblies of God* in 1947. The native pastors and members of the churches who had the fellowship with Assemblies of God in Kerala felt the need for recognition and participation in the organizational leadership to ensure solidarity and progress. In a conference of Assemblies of God native pastors, delegated members from thirty-five churches, and the missionaries with a total number of eighty members gathered at Mavelikkara in January 1947 and inaugurated the Malayalam District Council with the name the *South West District*

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<sup>558</sup> John H. Burgess, 'Sorrow and Blessing in South India,' *Pentecostal Evangel*, 14 December 1935, 2.

<sup>559</sup> John H. Burgess, 'Village Work in Travancore,' *Pentecostal Evangel*, 31 May 1930, 2.

<sup>560</sup> John H. Burgess, 'The Gospel in South India,' *Pentecostal Evangel*, June 1935, 4.

<sup>561</sup> Maloney C.T., 'Report on South India and Ceylon: Submitted to the Mission Conference in Springfield, Missouri,' 16 March 1943.

<sup>562</sup> Maloney C.T.

*Council of Assemblies of God.*<sup>563</sup> This conference decided to merge the Malayalam-speaking region with Tamil-speaking Kanyakumari District as an independent administrative unit, and this was a new administrative structure in their church.<sup>564</sup> The Assemblies of God missionary John Burgess was the first superintendent of the Malayalam District Council; however, the native pastors Jesudasan and K.M. Panicker were members of the executive committee as assistant superintendent and secretary-treasurer.<sup>565</sup> It was the first time that the local pastors received an opportunity to be part of the administration of the Assemblies of God denomination. It happened in the same year that India had her freedom from the British rule. It was a significant step towards the development of Assemblies of God as a national organization of Classical Pentecostalism.

From 1947 to 1948, the two local leaders of the newly formed Malayalam District of Assemblies of God churches in Kerala, A.C. Samuel, and C. Kunjummen undertook a preaching tour in the United States.<sup>566</sup> They focused on raising interest among the American partner churches in the mission work in Kerala. This journey contributed towards the next phase of the growth of the Assemblies of God mission in Kerala that was a permanent built-up land for Bethel Bible School. Until 1949, the Bethel Bible School had been run only provisionally for many years in different locations due to the lack of availability of funds and rented premises.<sup>567</sup> In 1949, the native leaders initiated the shift of Bethel Bible School from the rented facility to a newly purchased permanent campus at Punalur, which they considered as a ‘major shift.’<sup>568</sup> Bethel Bible School at Punalur began to provide a stable base for the evangelistic and church growth activities of Assemblies of God in Kerala. Maynard

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<sup>563</sup> Mildred Ginn, ‘Report,’ *Pentecostal Evangel*, 27 September 1947, 5–6.

<sup>564</sup> Mildred Ginn, ‘Annual Report of Assemblies of God Mission in Trivandrum,’ February 1949, Assemblies of God, Kerala Collection, File 1, Assemblies of God World Mission Archives, Springfield, Missouri.

<sup>565</sup> Burgess, ‘History of the Assemblies of God in Travancore: A Paper.’

<sup>566</sup> ‘South India Assemblies of God Leaders to Visit in States,’ *Pentecostal Evangel*, 6 October 1947, 3.

<sup>567</sup> Burgess, ‘History of the Assemblies of God in Travancore: A Paper.’

<sup>568</sup> Samuel A.C., *Assemblies of God* (Trivandrum: The Malayalam District of the South India Assemblies of God, 1954), 24.

Ketcham, an Assemblies of God missionary reported, “Bethel Bible School in Punalur...has been largely responsible for the remarkable development of the Assemblies of God in Travancore. Its graduates have established churches in every corner of Central and South India.”<sup>569</sup> The report could be slightly exaggerated, but it is true that Bethel Bible School as a base for the native leaders and pastors, which helped for the furtherance of the mission and developed indigenous leadership for Assemblies of God in Kerala. John Burgess unexpectedly returned to the USA in 1950 due to the ill health of his wife and no other missionary from the USA was immediately available as a substitute in Kerala for some time. It was a considerable period of the development of a robust indigenous leadership for Assemblies of God in Kerala. In 1950, A.C. Samuel became the first national superintendent of South West District or Malayalam District of Assemblies of God in South India.<sup>570</sup> During his tenure as the superintendent, he focused on the future development of the Assemblies of God as a Classical Pentecostal denomination in Kerala through the development of indigenous leadership. It can be observed from the reports sent to the Foreign Missions Department of Assemblies of God, Springfield, Missouri that during this period, more local pastors were elevated to the leadership as Section Presbyters, Ordained Pastors, and Licensed Exhorters, and Lay Pastors.<sup>571</sup> A.C. Samuel initiated a Malayalam Pentecostal Journal for Assemblies of God churches in 1954 called *Assemblies of God Dhoodan*, through this he encouraged pastors and lay leaders to publish theological articles and encouraged other pastors to write and publish articles.<sup>572</sup>

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<sup>569</sup> Maynard Ketchem, ‘Travancore: A Report,’ *The Missionary Challenge*, January 1954, 18.

<sup>570</sup> Samuel A.C., *Assemblies of God*, 38.

<sup>571</sup> Mildred Ginn, ‘Annual Report of Assemblies of God Mission in Trivandrum,’ January 1950, Assemblies of God, Kerala Collection, File 1, Assemblies of God World Mission Archives, Springfield, Missouri; Lydia Graner, ‘Annual Report of Assemblies of God Mission in Punalur and Trivandrum,’ 1950, Assemblies of God Missionaries in Kerala Collection, File 1, Assemblies of God World Mission Archives, Springfield, Missouri; Mildred Ginn, ‘Annual Report of Assemblies of God Mission in Punalur,’ March 1950, Assemblies of God, Kerala Collection, File 1, Assemblies of God World Mission Archives, Springfield, Missouri; Mildred Ginn, ‘Annual Report of Assemblies of God Mission in Punalur and Trivandrum,’ April 1955, Assemblies of God, Kerala Collection, File 1, Assemblies of God World Mission Archives, Springfield, Missouri; Lydia Graner, ‘Annual Report of Assemblies of God Missionary in Punalur and Trivandrum,’ July 1956, Assemblies of God, Kerala Collection, File 1, Assemblies of God World Mission Archives, Springfield, Missouri.

<sup>572</sup> Samuel A.C., *Assemblies of God*, 54.

Even though Ernest A. Sorbo, an Assemblies of God missionary, arrived in Kerala in 1951 as a successor of Burgess to lead the Malayalam District Council, the missionaries such as Ms. Mildred C. Ginn and Ms. Lydia H. Graner remained at the Bethel Bible School, as the Assemblies of God pastors and churches in Kerala continued to have confidence in the national leadership.<sup>573</sup> Thus, the national leaders did not transfer the administrative works to the missionaries.<sup>574</sup> At the same time, national leadership closely worked in harmony with the missionaries in the areas of developing the Bethel Bible School, missionary activities in South India, and on the mobilization of necessary finances.<sup>575</sup> After the retirement of Samuel as superintendent of South West District or Malayalam District of Assemblies of God in 1967, C. Kunjummen occupied the office of superintendent until his death in 1979. During this period, under the national leadership during the 1960s and 1970s, the Assemblies of God attained a steady but modest growth.

#### **4.2.2.1. Indigenous Reasons for the Transformational Growth of Assemblies of God in Kerala**

There were some indigenous reasons for this transitional growth of Assemblies of God under national leadership during this period. The first and most important reason was the ‘mission of Assemblies of God for developing local pastors and leaders’ under indigenous teachers. The Assemblies of God focused on developing local pastors and leaders through the Home Missionary Council, the evangelism department of Bethel Bible School by local teachers and pastors. After Burgess left Kerala, C. Kunjummen became the Principal of Bethel Bible School. Along with him, local pastors trained the students in Bethel Bible School.<sup>576</sup> The

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<sup>573</sup> Flower J.R., ‘The Survey of Assemblies of God Missions Stations in India: A Report,’ 1958, Assemblies of God, Kerala Collection, File 1, Assemblies of God World Mission Archives, Springfield, Missouri; Samuel A.C., ‘Annual Report of Assemblies of God Superintendent of Malayalam District,’ May 1969.

<sup>574</sup> ‘The Constitution and By-Laws of the South India Assemblies of God’ (South India Assemblies of God, 1957), Assemblies of God History Collection, File 2, Assemblies of God Museum Archives, Punalur, Kerala.

<sup>575</sup> Kunjummen C., ‘Report – Kerala Pentecostal Fellowship Convention, Kottarakkara,’ *Assemblies of God Messenger* VIII, no. 4 (January 1962): 4–7.

<sup>576</sup> Kunjummen C., ‘Principal’s Annual Report of Bethel Bible School, Punalur,’ March 1968, Bethel Bible School Collection, File 1, Assemblies of God Museum Archives, Punalur, Kerala.

purpose of founding the Home Missionary Council was “to provide practical training in ministry and leadership to the students of Bethel Bible School and to evangelize the unreached areas of Kerala and India.”<sup>577</sup> It was entirely an indigenous organization and no missionaries involved directly or indirectly in any activities of the Home Missionary Council.<sup>578</sup> It helped to develop a passionate and powerful leadership of pastors for Assemblies of God churches in Kerala. As A.C. George observes “given the fact that the nation could relate to the culture, linguistic environment, and socio-political situations better than the missionaries, they were able to establish rapport with the people more quickly and make gains as they tried to reach people with the gospel truths.”<sup>579</sup> Under national leadership, the Assemblies of God mission widely spread across Kerala.

Another reason for the transformational growth of Assemblies of God in Kerala was that; the national leadership emphasized the theological and ministerial training by nationals. In 1950, Malayalam District Council of Assemblies of God appointed C. Kunjummen as the Second Principal of Bethel Bible School and later after the departure of John Burgess in the same year as C. Kunjummen became the Principal.<sup>580</sup> K.J. Mathew observes, Kunjummen as a former student of Bethel Bible School, was a great administrator and theological trainer who was well aware of the spiritual and social context of Kerala.<sup>581</sup> The beginning of women’s training in 1951, the founding of the Home Missionary Council in 1954, and the establishment of Evangelism Department at Bethel Bible School in 1954 were the significant achievements of Kunjummen as a national leader.<sup>582</sup> The indigenous emphasis was

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<sup>577</sup> Mathai M.S., ‘Home Missionary Council,’ in *Bethel Bible School Golden Jubilee Souvenir* (Punalur: Bethel Bible School, 1977), 16.

<sup>578</sup> Kunjummen C., ‘Diary of Kunjummen C., the Principal of Bethel Bible School and the Superintendent of Assemblies of God in Kerala,’ September 1976, Assemblies of God, Kerala Collection, File 1, Assemblies of God Museum Archives, Punalur, Kerala.

<sup>579</sup> George, A.C., *Trailblazers for God: A History of the Assemblies of God in India*, 55.

<sup>580</sup> Samuel A.C., *Assemblies of God*; Kunjummen C., ‘Diary of Kunjummen C., the Principal of Bethel Bible School and the Superintendent of Assemblies of God in Kerala.’

<sup>581</sup> Mathew K.J., ‘Malayalam Districtinte Vedashastra Sthapanangal (Mal) [Theological Institutions of Malayalam District of Assemblies of God],’ in *Athma Niravinte Nooru Varshangal (Mal.) [A History of Assemblies of God in Kerala: A Centennial Publication]*, ed. Finny George (Punalur: Assemblies of God Malayalam District Council, 2015), 128.

<sup>582</sup> Kunjummen C., ‘Principal’s Annual Report of Bethel Bible School, Punalur.’

very evident in the training of workers through Bethel Bible School by theologically trained native faculty. About the earlier theological and ministry training by the Pentecostal missionaries in Kerala, Shaibu observes “Even though early Pentecostals had their mission in the power of the Spirit and achieved considerable results, they failed to develop indigenous means and methods to articulate their theology according to the contextual needs.”<sup>583</sup> However, during this period of transitional growth of Assemblies of God, the major transformation that took place in the theological training was indigenous theological training by native ministers. The native leaders such as A.C. Samuel and C. Kunjummen had a strong vision of ‘Indians reaching Indians’ and they trained and sent workers to major towns and cities in Kerala to establish new churches.<sup>584</sup> This indigenous training contributed to the Assemblies of God Malayalam District to experience a remarkable growth during the post-independence period.

The national leadership of Assemblies of God in Kerala emphasized the transformation of the churches to self-supportive churches.<sup>585</sup> The national leadership was unable to give systematic aid to the ministers due to lack of financial support from the missionaries and the increasing number of ministers.<sup>586</sup> However, the national leadership was successful in developing a strong sense of responsibility among the pastors and churches to convert the churches as self-supportive churches.<sup>587</sup> The national leadership insisted on the local churches to own land and church buildings through their efforts and national funds. Though it was difficult, the

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<sup>583</sup> Shaibu Abraham, *The History of the Pentecostal Movement in North India: Unfolding Its Social and Theological Contexts* (New Delhi: Christian World Imprints, 2017), 71.

<sup>584</sup> Kunjummen C., ‘Principal’s Annual Report of Bethel Bible School, Punalur’; Samuel A.C., ‘Annual Report of Assemblies of God Superintendent of Malayalam District.’

<sup>585</sup> ‘The Executive Presbytery of the General Council of the Assemblies of God, U.S.A. to A.C. Samuel, the Retired Superintendent of Assemblies of God Kerala,’ August 1968, South India Collection, File 2, Assemblies of God World Mission Archives, Springfield, Missouri.

<sup>586</sup> Samuel A.C., ‘Annual Report of Assemblies of God Superintendent of Malayalam District’; ‘Superintendent of South India Assemblies of God to the National Pastors,’ 9 February 1960, Assemblies of God, Kerala Collection, File 1, Assemblies of God Museum Archives, Punalur, Kerala.

<sup>587</sup> Kunjummen C., ‘Report of Assemblies of God Superintendent of Assemblies of God Mission in Kerala,’ March 1972, Assemblies of God, Kerala Collection, File 1, Assemblies of God Museum Archives, Punalur, Kerala.

local pastors and believers achieved to own properties and buildings.<sup>588</sup> Shaibu Abraham observes, “in the south, especially in Kerala, most of the native missionary leaders were from Syrian Christian background and began ‘faith ministry’ and harnessed their resources.”<sup>589</sup> It is true that the native leaders of the Assemblies of God churches in Kerala showed the courage to move away from the missionary paternalism and asserted self-supportive churches.

#### **4.2.3. Transitional Growth of Malankara Full Gospel Church as an American Classical Pentecostal Denomination**

After the division of K.E. Abraham and his followers from the *Malankara Pentecostal Church* in 1930, Robert F. Cook continued the Pentecostal Mission in Kerala as an independent denomination under the name *Malankara Full Gospel Church*. However, his financial condition deteriorated considerably because of the worldwide economic crisis and some people from the United States who had supported his work until then discontinued their help.<sup>590</sup> It appears that he worried about the future of his church because of the financial condition.<sup>591</sup> Another reason that he was afraid of about the future of the church was that Abraham and Cherian from *Indian Pentecostal Church of God* traveled to Sweden, he feared that this would result in the migration of his coworkers to the *Indian Pentecostal Church of God*.<sup>592</sup> Cook says, he and his church members were searching and praying for a Pentecostal mission who can give equal status to native evangelists and financially support the

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<sup>588</sup> ‘Report of Properties of South Section of the Malayalam District of Assemblies of God, Kerala,’ March 1957, Assemblies of God, Kerala Collection, File 1, Assemblies of God Museum Archives, Punalur, Kerala; ‘Report of Properties of Trivandrum Section of the Malayalam District of Assemblies of God, Kerala,’ March 1957, Assemblies of God, Kerala Collection, File 1, Assemblies of God Museum Archives, Punalur, Kerala; ‘Report of Properties of Central Travancore Section of the Malayalam District of Assemblies of God, Kerala,’ March 1957, Assemblies of God, Kerala Collection, File 1, Assemblies of God Museum Archives, Punalur, Kerala; ‘Report of Properties of Malabar Section of the Malayalam District of Assemblies of God, Kerala,’ March 1957, Assemblies of God, Kerala Collection, File 1, Assemblies of God Museum Archives, Punalur, Kerala.

<sup>589</sup> Abraham, *The History of the Pentecostal Movement in North India: Unfolding Its Social and Theological Contexts*, 69.

<sup>590</sup> Robert F. Cook, *Half a Century of Divine Leading and Thirty-Seven Years of Apostolic Achievements in South India* (Cleveland: Church of God Foreign Missions Department, 1955), 203.

<sup>591</sup> Cook, *A Quarter Century of Divine Leading in India*, 61.

<sup>592</sup> Cook, *Half a Century of Divine Leading and Thirty-Seven Years of Apostolic Achievements in South India*, 212.

mission in Kerala.<sup>593</sup> In the words of Cook, the local pastors in fellowship advised him to join a foreign denomination.<sup>594</sup> It cannot be taken as a valid reason, because of the social context in Kerala that was against the foreign domination as it always influenced the local pastors. It is evident that more than the local pastors Cook wanted to have an affiliation to get financial support for the future of his mission work in Kerala. In this context, Cook met a representative of another American Classical Pentecostal denomination, J.H. Ingram, a missionary of the foreign Missions department of Church of God with the headquarters at Cleveland, Tennessee in Ooty, Tamil Nadu.<sup>595</sup> As a result, Cook, and his 43 local workers with 63 churches of *Malankara Full Gospel Church* merged with the Church of God on May 15, 1936.<sup>596</sup> In this way Cook fortified to provide financial stability and administrative structure to the future of the Pentecostal mission, which he started in Kerala. However, the ultimate result of this action was the emergence of another foreign Pentecostal denomination in Kerala. It was a great transition in the history of the ministry of Cook in Kerala. The Classical Pentecostalism, which he promoted in Kerala and which began with indigenous characteristics finally merged in a foreign denomination.

#### **4.2.3.1. Transformational Growth of Church of God in Kerala under Foreign Administration**

The history of the transformational growth of the Church of God after 1940s impacted the growth of Classical Pentecostalism with foreign characteristics in Kerala. While the Assemblies of God as a foreign Classical Pentecostal denomination in Kerala emphasized the development of indigenous administration and leadership in Kerala in the post-Independence period, the Church of God entirely depended on the foreign mission office of Church of God, Cleveland in the United States of America.

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<sup>593</sup> Robert F. Cook, 'Editorial,' *Suvishesha Prabhashakan (Mal.) [The Gospel Preacher]* 4, no. 6 (February 1930): 1.

<sup>594</sup> Cook, *Half a Century of Divine Leading and Thirty-Seven Years of Apostolic Achievements in South India*, 211.

<sup>595</sup> Church of God was already an established denomination in the United States, and Ingram visited India in 1936 as part of his Golden Jubilee World Tour on the occasion of the Golden Jubilee celebration of the Church of God. Cook, 211–12; Mathew, *Kerala Penthecosthu Charithram (Mal.) [Kerala Pentecostal History]*.

<sup>596</sup> Dora P. Myers, *Daiva Sabha Charithram [Mal. Church of God History]* (Mulakuzha: Church of God in India Press, 1960), 52.

During the period from the 1940s to 1970s, in the social context of nationalism and Communism, which influenced Kerala, the world mission department of the Church of God continued to retain considerable control over the branch churches in Kerala. The administration policy of Church of God in India published in 1976 clearly stated, “the Church of God (Full Gospel) in India is, and shall be governed by the current acts, teachings, discipline, and the government of the General Assembly of the Church of God international with offices located at Cleveland, USA.”<sup>597</sup> During this period, the Foreign Mission Board of Church of God in Cleveland, USA, appointed the overseer, i.e., superior leader of Church of God in Kerala and they paid and controlled the duties and responsibilities entrusted to the leadership.<sup>598</sup> Moreover, the leadership was obligated to submit a monthly report to the office of the Mission Board of the Church of God, USA. According to the policy, all the administration, mission-related and financial matters must be submitted to get approval from the Foreign Mission Board in the form of proposed projects.<sup>599</sup>

In 1947, when India received her freedom from foreign rule, the Foreign Mission Board of Church of God, Cleveland, USA appointed C.E. French as the Secretary and Treasurer of Church of God Mission in India and sent him to Kerala to oversee the Church and mission in Kerala.<sup>600</sup> The central leadership of the Church of God had a hidden agenda to relieve Robert F. Cook, who was the superior authority of Church of God in Kerala after he joined with the Church of God to bring the churches and mission in Kerala under the direct control and supervision of Church of God, Cleveland. Initially, Cook was delighted to work with C.E. French and his wife as Cook wrote about them, “they served five years, and during this time they were a great asset to the work in an organizational way as directed by the Foreign Missions Department.”<sup>601</sup> Later Cook realized the super control of Foreign Missions Department in the financial and administrative affairs in Kerala, and Cook reacted

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<sup>597</sup> *Supplement to the General Assembly of the Church of God (Full Gospel) in India* (Mulakuzha: Church of God in India Press, 1976).

<sup>598</sup> Myers, *Daiva Sabha Charithram [Mal. Church of God History]*, 57.

<sup>599</sup> *Supplement to the General Assembly of Church of God (Full Gospel) in India*.

<sup>600</sup> Myers, *Daiva Sabha Charithram [Mal. Church of God History]*, 55.

<sup>601</sup> Cook, *Half a Century of Divine Leading and Thirty-Seven Years of Apostolic Achievements in South India*, 254.

against this external control as he attempted to persuade his Indian co-worker T.M. Varghese to separate the churches from Church of God and to form a new Independent Church.<sup>602</sup> However, due to the refusal to follow the advice of Cook and the mediating works of Paul Cook, the son of Robert F. Cook, the crisis of split was avoided.<sup>603</sup> Meanwhile, T.M. Varghese and other pastors decided to support the works of C.E. French and to strengthen the mission of the Church of God in Kerala.<sup>604</sup> In order to solve the internal divisions, the General Overseer of the Church of God came to Kerala forced Robert F. Cook to leave India for the good future of the Church of God in Kerala.<sup>605</sup> Even though it was a heartbreaking decision for Robert F. Cook to leave the mission field of Kerala and go for a retirement life in the USA, he accepted the decision of the leaders of the organization. There were a group of native pastors under the leadership of C.G. Varghese who were influenced by the socio-political context of Kerala and who had strongly expressed their view against foreign paternalism of mission in Kerala. In a conference of native pastors, he stated: “we face troubles because of seeking springs and riverside for the benefit of a few people. Therefore turn your eyes from the west and trust in God.”<sup>606</sup> Through his words, he attempted to influence the native pastors for an indigenous Church of God mission in Kerala but the more influential T.M. Varghese favored to continue the direct control of Church of God, Cleveland in Kerala and he claimed more followers to support the view.

In this context of internal struggles, in 1950 the Mission Board sent Dora P. Myers as a missionary of the Church of God with an aim to reorganize the administration and mission of the Church of God in Kerala.<sup>607</sup> Dora with the help of another missionary, William Pospisil reopened the Zion Bible College in Mulakuzha and initiated some steps towards the regionalization of the Church of God in India.

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<sup>602</sup> Myers, *Daiva Sabha Charithram [Mal. Church of God History]*, 56.

<sup>603</sup> Varghese T.M. and George E.V., *Daivasabha Pinnitta Anpathu Varshangal (Mal.) [The Last Fifty Years of the Church of God]* (Mulakuzha: Church of God in India Press, 1955), 236.

<sup>604</sup> John Mathew, ‘Pastor T.M. Varghese,’ *Gospel Echo* 12, no. 101 (January 1972): 21.

<sup>605</sup> Myers, *Daiva Sabha Charithram [Mal. Church of God History]*, 56.

<sup>606</sup> John Mathew, ‘Pastor C.G. Varghese,’ *Gospel Echo* 12, no. 111 (15-17): 15.

<sup>607</sup> Myers, *Daiva Sabha Charithram [Mal. Church of God History]*, 1.

The Church of God in India was divided into three districts as Kerala, Tamil Nadu, and Andhra Pradesh and each district got a separate regional overseer.<sup>608</sup> After the reorganization of the Church of God in India, Kerala became a separate district with an indigenous leader. However, the church administration remained substantially controlled by American missionaries until 1972. In 1964, the Church of God, head office in Cleveland appointed U. Thomas, as the first Keralite overseer for the Church of God in Kerala. Later P.C. Chacko and A.P. Abraham became the overseers. The Church of God headquarters in Cleveland, USA, always elected and appointed the state overseers of Kerala, without discussing with the pastors in Kerala. It always had a negative impact on the growth of Church of God in Kerala. In 1972, when William Pospisil left India, he divided the Church of God in Kerala into separate two districts as caste-based administrative units. It also had far-reaching effects on the church growth in Kerala.

#### **4.3.4. Transformational Growth of Ceylon Pentecostal Mission with Sectarian Tendencies**

During the period after 1940s, the Ceylon Pentecostal Church experienced a transition and a transformational growth in Sri Lanka and made an unhelpful impact in Kerala. After the death of Paul Ramankutty in 1945, Alwin R.de Alwis became the sole leader of Ceylon Pentecostal Church and established his unquestionable authority through his extraordinary charismatic power until 1960. However, later the autocratic leadership style and self-glorifying and unpredictable decisions of Alwin produced internal tensions within the church and then broke out openly.<sup>609</sup> In 1962, the Church dismissed Alwin due to an accusation of his immoral behavior, but he reacted indifferently. He suspended or transferred pastors whom he considered disagreed with him. Alwin extended false accusations, using humiliating words, excommunicated Freddy Paul, who was the next level leader of the church after Alwin and the son of Ramankutty Paul, the co-founder of Ceylon Pentecostal Church. During this time A.C. Thomas from Kerala, who was the leader of the church in Europe, returned to Madras and attempted to remove Alwin from the position based on the immoral

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<sup>608</sup> Myers, 5.

<sup>609</sup> Paul C. Martin, 'A Brief History of the Ceylon Pentecostal Mission: Unpublished Paper,' 1998.

accusations and to win the support of pastors to become the chief pastor of the Ceylon Pentecostal Church.<sup>610</sup> Bergunder observes that however, because of the opposition of pastors from Tamil Nadu and some pastors from Kerala who suspected the intentions of Thomas supported Freddy Paul and he became the successor of Alwin.<sup>611</sup>

In 1963, this church was registered as 'Ceylon Pentecostal Mission' in Chennai under Indian Society Registration Act. However, in 1970, the Sri Lankan government recognized it as one among the episcopal<sup>612</sup> Christian churches in Sri Lanka.<sup>613</sup> Freddy Paul was a man of prayer and character. In the midst of the leadership setback that severely affected the church in 1962, Freddy Paul through his gentle nature and highest wisdom attracted more people to become his followers.<sup>614</sup> The integrity of Freddy Paul as the leader of the Ceylon Pentecostal movement, the missionary dynamics of the Church in Kerala, and the support of the Syrian Christians contributed towards a consolidated and considerable growth of Ceylon Pentecostal Church in Kerala during the 1970s.<sup>615</sup> The major transformation that took place in this church was that the sectarian tendencies based on the traditional teaching of Alwin made the church to grow more like a sect than a Church movement.<sup>616</sup> As we had noted earlier, when the Ceylon Pentecostal Church began to grow in Kerala, the church had close missional and ministerial association and fellowship with other Classical Pentecostal Churches. In 1930, K.E. Abraham the founder of Indian Pentecostal Church had the ordination from Ramankutty Paul, the Co-founder of Ceylon Pentecostal Mission. However, after this period, the church was transformed as a sect, not having any theological, missional, or ministerial fellowship with any other Classical Pentecostal denominations. Because of some of their doctrines and

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<sup>610</sup> Oommen T.G., *Ceylon Penthekosthu Mission, Thiruvachana Velichathil [Mal. Ceylon Pentecostal Mission, A Biblical Understanding]* (Kumbanadu: The Bharatha Printing House, 1960), 12.

<sup>611</sup> Bergunder, *The South Indian Pentecostal Movement in the Twentieth Century*, 41.

<sup>612</sup> Which means Christians who are coming from churches that have bishops.

<sup>613</sup> *Rules and Regulations of the Pentecostal Mission.*

<sup>614</sup> *Pastor Paul: Jeeva Charithra Samgraham (Mal.) [Biography of Pastor Paul]*, 170.

<sup>615</sup> Samkutty Chacko, ed., *Hallelujah Pentecostal Year Book 2015 (Mal.)* (Thiruvalla: Hallelujah, 2015), 314.

<sup>616</sup> Oommen T.G., *Ceylon Penthekosthu Mission, Thiruvachana Velichathil [Mal. Ceylon Pentecostal Mission, A Biblical Understanding]*, 24.

traditions that differed from other classical Pentecostal denominations, they maintained their church as a sect without having a relationship with any other Christian Churches in Kerala.<sup>617</sup> The principal doctrinal differences that developed with Classical Pentecostal denominations were: their strong teaching on the hard practice of “faith healing,” that they introduced disciplinary actions against members who were using medicines. The second was their strict teaching of celibacy for their pastors and sisters and allowed them to stay in the ‘faith homes’ of the churches. Moreover, the third one is about the doctrine of rapture, as only the Holy Spirit baptized members of the church will be experiencing the rapture.<sup>618</sup> This church insisted their ministers to sell their possessions and to devote themselves extensively to the Christian ministry. The administration policy of the church until 1975 was not purchasing properties or was not constructing church Buildings. They considered having a property and buildings equal to embracing worldliness. Ceylon Pentecostal Mission in Kerala emphasized their churches to maintain self-supporting, self-governing and self-propagating churches. Local Churches did not have an administrative team or committee instead ‘pastors, and the sisters’ administered all financial and legal matters. The senior pastor of a local church was the final authority regarding all administrative and spiritual affairs, and the supportive pastors, sisters, and believers were expected to obey their senior pastor.<sup>619</sup> They did not emphasize formal theological education; instead, those committed to ministry had to stay two years in headquarters and one year in ‘faith home’ for the training. Then, after ten years of ministry they were appointed as elders, and after twenty years of ministry they were ordained as pastors.<sup>620</sup> However, the simplicity, exemplary dedication, and sincerity of the ministers of this church were the critical factors for the transformational growth of this church in Kerala. They’re consecrated charismatic ministry emphasizing healing and miracles and the ministry of ‘sisters’ among women

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<sup>617</sup> *Rules and Regulations of the Pentecostal Mission.*

<sup>618</sup> Oommen T.G., *Ceylon Penthekosthu Mission, Thiruvachana Velichathil [Mal. Ceylon Pentecostal Mission, A Biblical Understanding, 23–25.*

<sup>619</sup> *Pastor Paul: Jeeva Charithra Samgraham (Mal.) [Biography of Pastor Paul], 110.*

<sup>620</sup> Samkutty Chacko Nilambur, ed., *Hallelujah Pentecostal Year Book 2015, 311.*

made this sect as one of the fast growing indigenous Classical Pentecostal Church in Kerala.

#### **4.4. A Major Transition of Classical Pentecostalism in Kerala: Emergence and Growth of Independent and Caste-based Pentecostalism**

During the period of post-Independence, the Pentecostal-Charismatic movement in Kerala witnessed the emergence and the growth of new and fully independent Pentecostal denominations. The spirit of nationalism, the ideologies of Communism, and the longing for an Indian identity for Pentecostalism in Kerala influenced some members and native evangelists from Classical Pentecostal denominations to begin new independent churches. Doctrinally these churches followed the Classical Pentecostalism, but they developed the administration of their churches as more ‘Indian’ and ‘independent’ in feature, based on their social experiences against the caste-based, community-based, or foreign-based oppressions. About the transitional growth of Pentecostalism in Kerala during this period, Samuelkutty comments, “it was a period that Pentecostalism in the hands of influential Syrian Christians.”<sup>621</sup> It is true that some of these new churches emerged due to the efforts of native Pentecostal leaders from Syrian Christian background who had theological education and had strong connections with Pentecostals in foreign nations. However, Bergunder observes, “it was not only young Pentecostal leaders with Thomas Christian background who founded important new churches in Kerala since the 1940s, Dalits, and Nadars also initiated new Pentecostal churches.”<sup>622</sup>

##### **4.4.1. Independent Church of God in India: The Beginning of Dalit Pentecostalism in Kerala**

The first exclusive Dalit Pentecostal denomination in Kerala was the Independent Church of God, which was founded in 1947 by C.S. Mathew. He was brought up in a Brethren family since his mother took baptism and accepted ‘Brethren faith’ from Hindu background when he was four years of age.<sup>623</sup> Samkutty Chacko

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<sup>621</sup> Kutty, *The Place and Contribution of Dalits in Select Pentecostal Churches in Central Kerala from 1922-1972*, 97.

<sup>622</sup> Bergunder, *The South Indian Pentecostal Movement in the Twentieth Century*, 54.

<sup>623</sup> The Brethren missionary, Edward Hunter Noel changed their names. His mother’s name was changed from Saralamma to Saramma, and he received a new name, Mathew. Rajukutty O.M.,

observes, his original name was Veluthamby belonging to the *Sambavar* caste in Kerala, and in 1936 he became a member of the Brethren church and received the new name of C.S. Mathew.<sup>624</sup> The Brethren Church accepted him as an evangelist in their Church, and he began his ministry within the Brethren Church. While attending a revival meeting conducted by a native revival preacher who was an associate of K.E. Abraham, Sakhayi Upadesi at Perunad, Ranni in 1946, C.S. Mathew experienced the Classical Pentecostal experience of ‘baptism in Holy Spirit with speaking in tongues.’<sup>625</sup> C.S. Mathew records, "as I fell in the presence of God, Holy Spirit revealed my sinful life, then I got up with the gifts of speaking in tongues, prophecy, revelation."<sup>626</sup> He began to spread the Pentecostal faith within his Brethren Church and other places. The first Pentecostal church that Mathew established was in Kurisumattom among the Dalits.<sup>627</sup> Mathew was an outstanding preacher and an excellent composer of Malayalam songs. He conducted revival meetings in different places in central Kerala. In November 1946, he conducted a revival meeting near Ranni. This revival meeting caused the birth of the first Pentecostal church under his care.<sup>628</sup> In December 1946, after a revival meeting, in the night he had a revelation, which inspired him to write the first song, later he wrote more than 200 songs.<sup>629</sup> His songs, sermons, and revival meetings influenced many people to accept Pentecostalism from the Dalit communities. On July 12, 1947, he organized a public meeting at Kunnam, near Ranni. In this meeting, C.S. Mathew officially inaugurated the new Pentecostal denomination of *Independent Church of God in India*.<sup>630</sup> Its

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‘Unpublished Official Biography of Pastor C.S. Mathew - Written by His Son-in-Law (Mal.),’ September 2018, 1.

<sup>624</sup> Chacko, *Hallelujah Pentecostal Year Book 2015 (Mal.)*, 314.

<sup>625</sup> ‘Diary of C.S. Mathew,’ 1946, File 1, C.S. Mathew Archives, W.M.E. Headquarters, Kariyanplavu.

<sup>626</sup> ‘Diary of C.S. Mathew.’

<sup>627</sup> Rajukutty O.M., ‘Unpublished Official Biography of Pastor C.S. Mathew - Written by His Son-in-Law (Mal.),’ 2.

<sup>628</sup> Rajukutty O.M., 2.

<sup>629</sup> Paulose K.M., ‘Ara Shadhabtham Pinnidunna W.M.E. Prasthanam (Mal.) [History of the Fifty Years of W.M.E.],’ in *Poima 99: Golden Jubilee Year of Kariamplave Convention* (Kariamplave: World Missionary Evangelism of India, 1999), 23.

<sup>630</sup> ‘Diary of C.S. Mathew.’

pastors and members of the churches were from the Dalit background namely *Sambavar* or *Cheramar*. This church was an independent Classical Pentecostal denomination with a Dalit identity. The headquarters of the Church was established at Kariyanplavu, Ranni in 1952. In the same year, the Church established its Bible College named Ebenezer Bible College in Kariyamplave for the furtherance of the Pentecostal mission in India.

During the development of the Church, he maintained a constant relationship with the leaders of indigenous Classical Pentecostalism in Kerala, especially with K.E. Abraham and Indian Pentecostal Church of God. Bergunder observes, “The elite leaders of the Indian Pentecostal Church, who had a Thomas Christian background, were not at all ready to share church leadership with a Dalit.”<sup>631</sup> It is observed that C.S. Mathew wanted to associate with the Indian Pentecostal Church of God along with the churches and pastors, but K.E. Abraham discouraged him from doing so.<sup>632</sup> According to Thomas, Mathew had the view that their association with the Indian Pentecostal Church of God, which was mostly composed of the Syrians, would help him and his church to come up in the society.<sup>633</sup> As K.E. Abraham writes about this, he rejected Mathew’s suggestion under the apprehension of a split in the future within the Indian Pentecostal Church of God based on their Syrian and Dalit background.<sup>634</sup> Thomas observes that Abraham wisely rejected Mathew’s suggestion since he was a caste-minded Syrian Pentecostal who was not willing to have fellowship with Dalit churches.<sup>635</sup> C.S. Mathew considered it as an opportunity to grow, and he took more efforts for the training and missionary activities. He conducted revival meetings in many places, appointed workers in all districts of Kerala, which resulted in the growth of the church among the Dalits with an Indian identity.<sup>636</sup> Classical Pentecostalism

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<sup>631</sup> Michael Bergunder, *The South Indian Pentecostal Movement in the Twentieth Century*, 55.

<sup>632</sup> Abraham K.E., *Yesukristhuvinte Eliya Dasan: Athmakadha, Pastor K.E. Abraham (Mal.) [Pastor K.E. Abraham: The Humble Servant of Jesus Christ, Autobiography]*, 421.

<sup>633</sup> Thomas V.V., *Dalit Pentecostalism, Spirituality of the Empowered Poor*, 328.

<sup>634</sup> Abraham K.E., *Yesukristhuvinte Eliya Dasan: Athmakadha, Pastor K.E. Abraham (Mal.) [Pastor K.E. Abraham: The Humble Servant of Jesus Christ, Autobiography]*, 421.

<sup>635</sup> Thomas V.V., *Dalit Pentecostalism, Spirituality of the Empowered Poor*, 328.

<sup>636</sup> Rajukutty O.M., ‘Unpublished Official Biography of Pastor C.S. Mathew - Written by His Son-in-Law (Mal.)’, 15.

with its independent characteristics attracted Dalits to Pentecostal movement. Classical Pentecostalism appeared for the Dalit community as a place for recognition, freedom of expression and fellowship. In 1953, when the church required ordination for their pastors, C.S. Mathew approached K.E. Abraham and Indian Pentecostal Church of God, and they came forward to ordain the ministers.<sup>637</sup> K.E. Abraham ordained C.S. Mathew and other five pastors, namely C.J. Mathai, V.M. Mathai, K.J. Chacko, and C.J. Mathai at Kariyanplave, the headquarters of the Church.<sup>638</sup> Thus, it was the first Pentecostal denomination in Kerala, which received ordination from Indian leaders. An important factor to note as the primary feature of Dalit Pentecostalism was that until 1962 the *Independent Church of God in India* as the Pentecostal church had grown independently without any foreign financial or administrative support. From the period 1947 to 1962, *Independent Church of God in India* was able to build 57 church buildings with local financial support.<sup>639</sup>

However, in 1962 C.S. Mathew accepted the offer to join World Missionary Evangelism and John E. Douglas, and Independent Church of God in India merged into this fellowship.<sup>640</sup> Bergunder observes that Douglas accepted this offer to receive financial support to the pastors and the churches from this foreign organization and its leader.<sup>641</sup> The collaboration of mission and the association of the church with this organization provided financial stability and led to the further growth of the church. Finally, Mathew transferred the whole property of the church to this organization and changed the name of the church as World Missionary Evangelism Church.<sup>642</sup> At the same time, this Church continued to keep its identity as of Indian and Independent Pentecostal denomination.

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<sup>637</sup> Abraham K.E., *Yesukristhuvinte Eliya Dasan: Athmakadha, Pastor K.E. Abraham (Mal.) [Pastor K.E. Abraham: The Humble Servant of Jesus Christ, Autobiography]*, 421; Rajukutty O.M., 'Unpublished Official Biography of Pastor C.S. Mathew - Written by His Son-in-Law (Mal.)', 12.

<sup>638</sup> Rajukutty O.M., 'Unpublished Official Biography of Pastor C.S. Mathew - Written by His Son-in-Law (Mal.)', 14.

<sup>639</sup> Rajukutty O.M., 16–18.

<sup>640</sup> Rajukutty O.M., 18.

<sup>641</sup> Bergunder, *The South Indian Pentecostal Movement in the Twentieth Century*, 55.

<sup>642</sup> Chediath G., *Christian Churches in Kerala* (Kottayam: Oriental Institute of Religious Studies, 1989), 339.

#### 4.4.2. Sharon Fellowship Church: An Association of Pentecostal Churches among the Syrian Pentecostals in Kerala

In the 1940s, P.J. Thomas a member of the Indian Pentecostal Church of God was involved in the mission fields of the Church in Andhra Pradesh with P.T. Chacko, an associate of K.E. Abraham. Later he completed his theological education in Serampore, Kolkotta, and also in Bangalore. He graduated with a Bachelor of Divinity and came back to Kerala with a passion for Pentecostal mission.<sup>643</sup> After his theological education in 1944, he began to work as the headmaster of the Free School at Kumbanadu.<sup>644</sup> After a few years, he went to Australia and later Canada for his higher theological education. During the year 1948, when K.E. Abraham visited Canada and the USA, the highly theologically educated P.J. Thomas accompanied him in the revival meetings. In 1952, he returned to Kerala and began to work as a theological teacher at Hebron Bible School of Indian Pentecostal Church of God. Moreover, also as a minister of Indian Pentecostal Church of God, he got involved in the mission as a traveling revival preacher.<sup>645</sup> As noted earlier it was the time of an internal leadership struggle that broke out in the Indian Pentecostal Church of God. In this situation, in 1953 P.J. Thomas decided to buy land in Thiruvalla to open an Independent Bible School.<sup>646</sup> Meanwhile, a missionary couple from the United States of America, J.C. and M.A. Daoud, who were strong proponents of 'faith healing,' arrived in Thiruvalla and P.J. Thomas organized a long twenty-three days of revival meetings.<sup>647</sup> Bergunder observes this revival meeting impacted the formation of a new

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<sup>643</sup> Mannamaruthy Varghese T.P., *Pastor P.J. Thomas: Ardradhayude Apostholan (Mal.) [Pastor P.J. Thomas: An Apostle of Mercy]* (Alwaye: Doulos Publications, 2006), 22–23.

<sup>644</sup> Free School was an initiative of K.E. Abraham and his friends with the aim of giving free English education to the children of native ministers. It began in 1939 at Kumbanadu. In 1944 P.J. Thomas was appointed as the Head Master of the school.

<sup>645</sup> Abraham K.E., *India Pentecostu Daivasabha: Prarambha Varshangal (Mal.) [India Pentecostal Church: The Beginning Years]*, 45.

<sup>646</sup> Varghese T.P., *Pastor P.J. Thomas: Ardradhayude Apostholan (Mal.) [Pastor P.J. Thomas: An Apostle of Mercy]*, 36.

<sup>647</sup> Varghese M.A., Abraham Mandhamaruthi, and Prasad Abraham Valanjavattom, *Sharon Fellowship Church: Preshitha Vayalil Anchu Pathittandukal (Mal.) [History of the Five Decades of Mission of Sharon Fellowship Church]* (Thiruvalla: Sharon Fellowship Church, 2000), 23.

denomination.<sup>648</sup> In these revival meetings, many people experienced healing from their sicknesses and many others experienced deliverance from the oppression of demon possession. Instant and miraculous healings such as the blind people received sight, the deaf heard, paralyzed began to jump and praise God. Local newspapers reported these healing events widely, and they reported about these revival meetings with much importance.<sup>649</sup> The significant impacts of these meetings were that Thomas became a well-known figure in the Pentecostal movement in Kerala, he could establish contacts with several sponsors and supporters in the USA for the furtherance of Pentecostal mission in Kerala. After the revival meetings, some independent congregations formed in Central Kerala. In 1955, some of these congregations and pastors showed their willingness to associate with P.J. Thomas for spiritual fellowship. Then he established a fellowship of new independent Pentecostal Churches named *Full Gospel Free Churches* with twenty local congregations and pastors in 1955.<sup>650</sup> According to T.P. Varghese, P.J. Thomas had two reasons for the founding of a new fellowship of churches. One was, a Pentecostal holistic aspect of a mission to help the poor and the needy, and for the freedom of local churches for mission and ministry.<sup>651</sup> The social context of Kerala in his time influenced P.J. Thomas to begin a fellowship of Pentecostal churches that was free from all centralized administration, and emphasized autonomy of local churches. In order to further strengthen the new fellowship, P.J. Thomas organized another revival meeting in 1957. An American faith healer A.A. Allen and his two co-workers Robert W. Schambach and John Douglas preached in the revival meetings, and after the meetings, John Douglas showed great interest to support and to do further evangelization work in Kerala.<sup>652</sup> The primary result of this revival meeting was many pastors and congregations who were dissatisfied with the administrative leadership of

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<sup>648</sup> Bergunder, *The South Indian Pentecostal Movement in the Twentieth Century*, 50.

<sup>649</sup> 'Revival in Thiruvalla,' *Malayala Manorama*, 16 December 1953, 5.

<sup>650</sup> Varghese T.P., Interview by Author, Alwaye, Kerala, 12 September 2018. T.P. Varghese, the former Vice-president of Sharon Fellowship Church, was a close associate and a companion of P.J. Thomas, the founder of Full Gospel of Free Churches.

<sup>651</sup> Varghese T.P.

<sup>652</sup> Varghese M.A., Mandhamaruthi, and Valanjavattom, *Sharon Fellowship Church: Preshitha Vayalil Anchu Pathittandukal (Mal.) [History of the Five Decades of Mission of Sharon Fellowship Church]*, 33.

the Indian Pentecostal Church of God joined the new fellowship of Full Gospel Free Churches.<sup>653</sup>

Later in 1960, this fellowship was renamed as *Sharon Fellowship Church*. From 1960 to 1975, the Sharon Fellowship had a period of considerable Church growth. During this period, *Sharon Fellowship Church* received financial assistance from John Douglas and the World Missionary Evangelism. With the association of this funding body, Thomas established an orphanage, extended considerable financial support to pastors, and built a few church buildings.<sup>654</sup> In 1975, *Sharon Fellowship Church* was registered as an association of different Pentecostal churches.<sup>655</sup> The preamble of the memorandum of *Sharon Fellowship church* clearly states that it is an association of Pentecostal churches.<sup>656</sup> Some of the native Pentecostal pastors and congregations, who did not want to associate with the Assemblies of God, Indian Pentecostal Church of God, or Church of God in India, sought to associate with this new fellowship of Pentecostal Churches in Kerala. Sharon Fellowship Church maintained its credibility as an association of Pentecostal churches more than a new Pentecostal denomination in Kerala that contributed to its growth. According to T.P. Varghese, the local churches within the Sharon Fellowship Church had the freedom to function and administer its affairs.<sup>657</sup> It was one of the primary reasons for the progress of Sharon Fellowship Church during this period. Another critical factor that contributed towards the church growth was the autonomy and freedom of ministry and mission given to the pastors.<sup>658</sup> The pastors could establish their institutions, they

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<sup>653</sup> John V.G., 'Message,' in *Christian Evangelical Movement Silver Jubilee Souvenir 1957-82* (Thiruvalla: CEM Publications, 1982), 3.

<sup>654</sup> Varghese T.P., *Pastor P.J. Thomas: Ardradhayude Apostholan (Mal.) [Pastor P.J. Thomas: An Apostle of Mercy]*, 54.

<sup>655</sup> Varghese M.A., Mandhamaruthi, and Valanjavattom, *Sharon Fellowship Church: Preshitha Vayalil Anchu Pathittandukal (Mal.) [History of the Five Decades of Mission of Sharon Fellowship Church]*, 56.

<sup>656</sup> 'Memorandum of Sharon Fellowship Church - 1975' (Sharon Fellowship Church, 1975), Sharon Fellowship Church, Head Office, Thiruvalla.

<sup>657</sup> The author was the Vice-president of Sharon Fellowship Church in Kerala. Varghese T.P., 'Keralathile Pentecosthu Sabhakkalude Valarcha (Mal.) [The Growth of Pentecostal Churches in Kerala],' in *Unrvinte Jwalakal (Mal.) [Flames of Revival]*, ed. Achankunju Elanthoor (Thiruvalla: Deepthi Publications, 2011), 74.

<sup>658</sup> Varghese T.P., 74–75.

had the freedom to choose a mission field, and they could appoint and send missionaries or evangelists for ministry. The first theological institution for Pentecostal women in Kerala was Sharon Bible School in Thiruvalla, established and supervised by Aleyamma Thomas, the wife of P.J. Thomas in 1971, contributing to the progress of the church growth.<sup>659</sup> According to Bergunder, one crucial factor of the growth of Sharon Fellowship Church was, “unlike the Indian Pentecostal Church, Sharon Fellowship remained free from bigger internal conflicts...that is the extremely the congregational structure of the church, without a hierarchical central administration.”<sup>660</sup> It is important to note here that the growing social context of communism impacted the Classical Pentecostalism in Kerala to witness a transition of Pentecostal denominationalism to Pentecostal congregationalism where the local church and the local pastors had the freedom to grow and involve in the growth.

#### **4.4.3. New India Church of God: A Pentecostal Denomination of Knanaya Syrian Christians**

After the 1970s, another Indian and independent Classical Pentecostal denomination emerged in Kerala due to the efforts of V.A. Thampy from the Knanaya community.<sup>661</sup> In 1962, at the age of nineteen, he became a member of the Classical Pentecostal movement in Kerala and from that time he worked as a full-time evangelist. From the time of his conversion until the beginning of the 1970s, he worked independently as a Pentecostal evangelist and conducted revival meetings among his relatives, in his community members, and in places of the Knanaya community, which attracted severe persecutions from them.<sup>662</sup> At the same time, he was able to organize many independent Pentecostal house congregations among the

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<sup>659</sup> Kochupallikunnel, *Pentecostal Churches in Kerala and Indigenous Leadership*, 80.

<sup>660</sup> Bergunder, *The South Indian Pentecostal Movement in the Twentieth Century*, 50–51.

<sup>661</sup> The members of Knanaya community are the descendants of the Syrian migrators who landed in Cranganore in AD 345 under the leadership of Thomas of Cana and Bishop Joseph of Edessa from South West Asia. The group of the 400 Syrians had received high privileges from the ruler, the Cheraman Perumal, which are inscribed on a Copperplate. This migrated community had been maintaining its identity and separation since migration. This community has existed as a separate group in the midst of the Syrian Christians in Kerala. James Thodathil, *Antiquity and Identity of the Knanaya Community* (Chingavanam: Knanaya Clergy Association, 2001), 1; Mundadan, *History of Christianity in India: From the Beginning up to the Middle of Sixteenth Century*, 1:95–98.

<sup>662</sup> Thampy V.A., ‘Humble Beginning and Great Vision,’ in *Silver Jubilee Souvenir of New India Church of God* (Chingavanam: New India Church of God, 2001), 2.

Knanaya community, and he became the pastor of those congregations.<sup>663</sup> Meanwhile a revival broke out in 1967-68 among the Knanaya community, and subsequently, some Pentecostal churches were formed at Chengannur, Ranni, and Othara.<sup>664</sup> Monayi observes, the next few years were the period of church growth especially in the regions of Kerala where other Pentecostal denominations could not succeed.<sup>665</sup> During this period, Thamby was able to establish twelve congregations and appoint pastors among the Knanaya community through evangelistic activities, house prayers, and conventions. The distinctive feature of his ministry was the healing and miracles the people experienced which stimulated the growth of the church in Kerala.<sup>666</sup> According to Bergunder, apart from the churches among the Knanaya Community, Thamby could not show any notable missionary success until the beginning of the 1970s.<sup>667</sup> It was due to the financial struggle that he and his churches faced in Kerala. This situation changed in 1973 when Thamby was associated with an Australian pastor Cliff Beard, and he undertook a long preaching tour in the Canada, United States, and Australia.<sup>668</sup> He gained sponsors for the mission work in North India and Kerala. Since the end of the 1970s, the New India Church of God developed some missionary activities that led to a steady growth of the church.<sup>669</sup> In 1974, after he came back from foreign countries, he opened a training center in a rented house in Nagercoil, Tamil Nadu.<sup>670</sup> In this situation of the expansion of the missionary work of

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<sup>663</sup> Mariyamma Thampy, 'New India Church of God and God's Commission,' in *Silver Jubilee Souvenir of New India Church of God* (Chingavanam: New India Church of God, 2001), 8.

<sup>664</sup> Thomas T.A., 'New India Church of God: Origin and Growth,' in *Silver Jubilee Souvenir of New India Church of God* (Chingavanam: New India Church of God, 2001), 34.

<sup>665</sup> Monayi C.P., *New India Daivasabha Charithram (Mal.) [The History of New India Church of God]* (Chingavanam: New India Church of God, 1994), 34.

<sup>666</sup> C.P. Monayi, *New India Daivasabha Charithram (Mal.) [The History of New India Church of God]*, 22-24.

<sup>667</sup> Bergunder, *The South Indian Pentecostal Movement in the Twentieth Century*, 50-51.

<sup>668</sup> Thampy, 'New India Church of God and God's Commission,' 13.

<sup>669</sup> 'New India Church of God, Executive Committee Report, 1977-1988' (Chingavanam: New India Church of God, 1988); 'New India Church of God, Executive Committee Report, 1989-2004' (Chingavanam: New India Church of God, 2004).

<sup>670</sup> James Kuriokose, *Kuttanattil Kurutha Suvishesha Viplavam (Mal.) [Biography of Pastor V.A. Thamby]* (Chingavanam: Bethesda Publications, 2011), 120.

the church, he registered the church as New India Church of God in 1974.<sup>671</sup> Later this church established its headquarters and a theological institution in Chingavanam, near the traditional episcopal headquarters of the Knanaya Syrian Church. They concentrated on their ministry of missionary training, church planting, and missionary work in North India.<sup>672</sup>

#### **4.4.4. Church of God (Kerala Division): A Foreign-Funded Dalit Pentecostal Denomination**

As part of the reorganization of the administration of Church of God in the 1960s, Kerala became a separate District of the Church of God in India, and there was an indigenous head to supervise the ministry and mission of the Church in Kerala. However, the American missionaries controlled the church leadership. Since its emergence, the Church of God had a significant proportion of Dalits among the members, but after 1960 when the Church of God, Head office appointed overseers in Kerala, all of them, U. Thomas, P.C. Chacko and A.P. Abraham were Syrian Christians. Thus leadership of the Church of God in Kerala was in the hands of Syrian Christians. A significant development that has taken place within the church of God on November 29, 1969 was that some of the Dalit pastors and members of the church who expressed their struggles and discrimination within the church gathered in Peruva, near Kottayam in secret and discussed their struggles and discrimination within the Church of God. The Dalits realized the oppression and discrimination that were common against them within the church, and they felt the need to assert their rights and privileges within the Pentecostal community. In order to discuss the struggles and aspirations of Dalit pastors in the Church of God, the pastors organized another meeting in Ranni. Under the leadership of three center pastors from the Dalit community, K.J. Joseph Vellor, M.P. Mathai Kooroppada, and K.J. Markose Kunnamchira, other pastors P.J. Joseph Chempuruthu, N.J. Andrews, K.V.Chacko, P.P. Mathai Kalloorpara, M.M. David, Ranni, N.C. Joseph Thiruvanchoor, K.C. Joseph Kanichakulam, K.C. Joseph Mukkalil, P.D. Moses, P.P. Philipose, P.M. Mathai, and K.P. Markose Thalappady discussed and decided to draft a memorandum

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<sup>671</sup> 'New India Church of God, Executive Committee Report, 1977-1988.'

<sup>672</sup> Abraham R., 'New India Church of God: North India Ministry at a Glance,' in *Silver Jubilee Souvenir of New India Church of God* (Chingavanam: New India Church of God, 2001), 45.

to be given to the governing body of the Church of God in Kerala.<sup>673</sup> They drafted a memorandum with seven points about their problems and aspirations in the church. The primary issue they shared in the memorandum was their demand for equality in leadership and ministry in the Church of God in Kerala.<sup>674</sup> Through the memorandum, they demanded that the Dalits students should have the opportunity for theological education in the Church of God Bible School in Kerala and outside India. There should be one representative from the Dalit community within the leadership of the church.<sup>675</sup> However, the Syrian Christian leaders of the Church of God at that time interpreted it as Dalits' assertion for power and the Syrians were not ready to accept any change.

The governing body of the Church of God in Kerala, which consisted Pastors only from the Syrian background, invited the Dalit pastors for a friendly discussion on June 25, 1970, but forced them to withdraw the memorandum to get away from disciplinary actions. Meanwhile, the Dalit pastors and believers gathered at Amaravathy in Idukki District, formed an action council for the future work.<sup>676</sup> The period from 1971 to 1973, the Dalit pastors and members of the church through the Action Council well organized their works in the form of a trade union organizational structure. The Action Council had an executive committee, which had authority to supervise the works, and they elected committees for each district in Kerala and appointed the district committees to visit the churches and promote the works of the Action Council.<sup>677</sup> They submitted three significant memorandums to the Syrian leadership of the church. They submitted their demand for equality in ministerial training, representation of leadership from Dalit community in the administrative council, ordination of Dalit pastors, and the participation in the leadership role of the

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<sup>673</sup> The author of this manuscript was a member of the Action Council formed to demand the rights and privileges of the pastors and believers of the Dalit Pentecostals in the Church of God. Abraham T.K., 'India Daivasabha: Samshiktha Charithram (Mal.) [Church of God in India: A Short History]' (1995), 30–31.

<sup>674</sup> Abraham T.K., 32.

<sup>675</sup> Abraham T.K., 33–35.

<sup>676</sup> Thampy Manarcadu, Interview by author, 10 September 2018. He is the son of T.K. Abraham, who actively participated in the work of the action council.

<sup>677</sup> Abraham T.K., 'India Daivasabha: Samshiktha Charithram (Mal.) [Church of God in India: A Short History]', 35.

church.<sup>678</sup> Meanwhile, the Syrian leadership of the church contacted the headquarters of the Church of God in Cleveland and suggested a meeting for discussing the memorandums. After the discussions with the Syrian leaders and the Dalit leaders, the Mission Board of the Church of God decided to appoint two representatives from the Dalit community in the council meeting. The Dalits accepted this proposal in order to resolve the splits, but the Syrians reacted differently. The Syrian leadership excommunicated the Dalit leaders and attempted to suppress the opposition group.<sup>679</sup> In 1971, in the General Body meeting of the Church of God in India, the Syrian leadership proposed for a division of the Church and to make the Dalit churches come under the Dalit leadership. Finally, in a meeting on November 17, 1971, the missionary Pospisil and the representatives of the mission board and the headquarters of Church of God, Cleveland, USA, decided to divide the church of God in Kerala as two Pentecostal churches.<sup>680</sup> The Dalit Pentecostals who were members of the Church of God in Kerala had the provision to form their administrative council, which was known, as the Church of God in India (Kerala Division). Bergunder observes, during the initial years of their existence; they concentrated on developing an educated, able, and strong leadership for the future development of the Church.<sup>681</sup> The Church of God (Division) attained progress under the Dalit leadership. The church had promoted indigenous methods of evangelism and church growth, which helped, for the considerable progress of the Church.

#### **4.4.5. New India Bible Church: An Independent Pentecostal Denomination without Caste Discrimination**

Thomas Philip and Abraham Philip who were brothers and members of the Marthoma Syrian Church accepted the Pentecostal teachings in 1969.<sup>682</sup> When they came to the Pentecostal faith, Thomas Philip was a schoolteacher, and Abraham

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<sup>678</sup> Abraham T.K., 36–38.

<sup>679</sup> Manarcadu, Interview by author.

<sup>680</sup> Abraham T.K., 'India Daivasabha: Samshiktha Charithram (Mal.) [Church of God in India: A Short History],’ 65.

<sup>681</sup> Bergunder, *The South Indian Pentecostal Movement in the Twentieth Century*, 53.

<sup>682</sup> Marthoma Syrian Church was formed in 1888 as a result of the reformation activities of Abraham Malpan within the Syrian Church, who was influenced by missionaries of Church Missionary Society. See details in Chapter 3.

Philip was a student in the United States of America. Immediately after the Pentecostal experience, Thomas Philip began to involve in evangelistic activities among the Syrian Christians in Thiruvalla. He conducted Bible courses for the youth and children during the holidays, which found approval from the community.<sup>683</sup> The successful ministry among the youth urged him to start a theological institution for training for evangelism, and he started a Bible School, namely Kerala Institute of Evangelism in 1972.<sup>684</sup> In 1974, Abraham Philip returned to India and got involved in the development of this Bible school, and it became the New India Bible College. Since this institution was an independent Pentecostal institute, they accepted students who were free from the spirit of denominationalism. However, when they found that the graduates who were independent had difficulty to work as an independent minister, they established an organization as New India Evangelistic Association and established an independent Pentecostal denomination namely New India Bible Church. According to Thomas Philip, the students and graduates from their institution did not get the opportunity to minister in some Classical Pentecostal denominations and churches; the need arose to begin a new Pentecostal denomination.<sup>685</sup> Thomas Philip began to concentrate on the church growth, and Abraham Philip gave leadership to the development of the College.<sup>686</sup> The first church of this denomination was organized in Kombady in 1976 and very soon they established fifteen churches in different places in Kerala. According to Thomas Philip, this new Pentecostal denomination was different because from the beginning there was no caste discrimination in the Church. Pastors and members of the churches were from the Syrian and Dalit background.<sup>687</sup> Bergunder observes that even though the founders were from the Syrian Christian background; the members of the newly founded congregations were exclusively Dalits.<sup>688</sup> It was an independent Pentecostal

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<sup>683</sup> Thomas Philip, Interview by author, 8 September 2018.

<sup>684</sup> Raju John, *Rev. Thomas Philip, Padakkalathile Soumyanaya Porali, Jeevacharithram (Mal.) [Rev. Thomas Philip: A Biography]* (Thiruvalla: New India Bible Church, 2018), 29.

<sup>685</sup> Philip, Interview by author.

<sup>686</sup> John, *Rev. Thomas Philip, Padakkalathile Soumyanaya Porali, Jeevacharithram (Mal.) [Rev. Thomas Philip: A Biography]*, 33.

<sup>687</sup> Philip, Interview by author.

<sup>688</sup> Bergunder, *The South Indian Pentecostal Movement in the Twentieth Century*, 53.

denomination in Kerala, which emphasized the Indian identity, cross-cultural ministry, and inter-caste fellowship within the Pentecostal community in Kerala that could not be seen in many other Pentecostal denominations during this period.

#### 4.4.6. The Emergence of More Independent Pentecostal Denominations

In addition to the above-mentioned independent denominations, the period from 1923 to 1977, witnessed the emergence of several more Pentecostal denominations. Those denominations could be considered, as minor denominations<sup>689</sup> mainly because of the growth and the impact of these denominations were very meager in the social and spiritual context of Kerala. These independent churches had emerged locally and developed without any organizational or financial affiliation to any other Pentecostal denominations. However, they all were identified as Pentecostals, and they were the followers of Classical Pentecostalism.

P.J. Daniel, the elder brother of P.J. Thomas who worked with K.E. Abraham and other leaders of Indian Pentecostal Church of God left the church in 1953. In the same year, he established an independent denomination called *the Pentecostal Church of God* based in Mavelikkara. Later this church opened a Bible school and established many churches in Kollam district.

In 1960, a group of brothers who had the experience of baptism in the Holy Spirit under the leadership of K.V. Joseph decided to involve in the evangelistic activities. Divine healing was very common in their prayer meetings, which resulted in the formation of some congregations in Thrissur District. In the same year, K.V. Joseph and his brothers formed a new Pentecostal denomination called *the Apostolic Church of God, Pazhanji*.

Raman Kutty Paul and the teachings of Ceylon Pentecostal Church influenced Itty Mathayichan from Kalayapuram in Kollam District when he went to Ceylon for trade in 1927. Later he accepted Pentecostal teachings but did not become a member

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<sup>689</sup> It is a precise term used by historians and writers who attempted to write the history of these denominations. Some of these churches did not have enough materials to support their history. The references of all these denominations are from the books; Ipe K.A., *Bharathathile Daivasabhakal: Oru Samshiptha Charithram (Mal.) [A Brief History of Churches of God in India]* (Kottayam: FIC Publishers, 2001); Mathew K.J., 'Denominational Pluralism among Pentecostals in Kerala, Causes and Responses, 1920 to the Present'; Daniel Ayiroor, *Keralathile Pentecosthu Sabhakal (Mal.) [Pentecostal Churches in Kerala]* (Mavelikkara: Bersheba Bible College, 1986).

of a Pentecostal denomination. In 1961, he registered a church based in Kalayapuram, which was known as *the Church of God, Kalayapuram*.

Some members of the Jacobite Syrian Community in Manarcadu, who were influenced by the Pentecostal teachings, but hesitated to join a Pentecostal denomination gathered under the leadership of M.V. Abraham for revival prayer meetings. Later in 1965, this prayer group became a Pentecostal denomination named *Manarcadu Church of God*.

C.M. Varghese who was a former priest of the Marthoma Syrian Church in Kerala established *Sayanna Deepam (Evening Light) Church of God, Karikkam* in 1965. Since he came out of the episcopal Church, he was against episcopacy and priesthood. He emphasized the apostolic teachings or New Testament teachings.

M.I. Thomas, who was an elder of a Brethren Church in Elappara and a group of believers, had the experience of baptism in the Holy Spirit in 1965. They did not join any existing Pentecostal denominations; instead, they established a new denomination known as *Independent Assemblies of God International, Elappara* in 1965. They focused on their mission and ministry among the hill regions of Kerala.

During the period of the missionary work of Robert F. Cook, he baptized and separated V.C. Yohannan for ministry. Initially, he was a traveling evangelist and preacher, and his focus of ministry was to organize public meetings. However, in 1966, he established a Church at his home in Trivandrum, which became a Pentecostal denomination with the name *Israel Pentecostal Church of God*.

Sundar Levi, who was a former army officer in Trivandrum, established the *South India Apostolic Church of God* in 1966. This Pentecostal denomination focused their mission among the poor and suffering people in the district of Trivandrum.

In 1950, K.P. Markose graduated from Zion Bible School Mulakuzha, where he studied under Robert F. Cook. After the graduation, Cook prayed and separated him for mission among his natives in Kottayam District. In 1967, he established a Pentecostal congregation at his residence in Thalappady, Kottayam with the name *India Church of God, Thalappady*. Later it became a denomination with some branches.

M.D. Daniel, who was a disciple of P.M. Philip, was an outstanding leader of the Indian Pentecostal Church of God. He initiated some days of revival prayer meetings in his home in 1970. People began to experience miracles and healings

which resulted in the formation of a Pentecostal denomination known as *Indian Pentecostal Assembly, Kuzhikkala*.

*Pentecostal Maranatha Gospel Church* was established in Trivandrum from a regular prayer meeting under the leadership of K.M. George at his residence. In 1972, after few days of revival meetings, they formed this denomination and appointed G. Chacko as the pastor and leader of this movement. They focused on their mission and ministry in Trivandrum and in Kollam districts of Kerala.

M.E. Jacob was an electrical engineer, and a member of the Ceylon Pentecostal Church of God; he resigned his job in 1969 and became an evangelist. He was not happy with the leadership of Ceylon Pentecostal Church due to some internal struggles and conducted a prayer meeting at his residence at Kallumala, near Mavelikkara. He emphasized the gift of healing, and people had miraculous experiences, which resulted in the formation of *the Church of God, Kallumala* in 1973. It was of an independent Pentecostal denomination following rigid and traditional doctrines of Ceylon Pentecostalism. They emphasized the doctrine of 'faith healing and discouraged the members from using medicines. Members who took medicines were excluded from the participation of the Holy Communion.

Daniel Ayiroor, the son of a pioneer of Pentecostal faith in Thrissur, began a youth ministry and a prayer group in 1975. This prayer group emphasized the importance of missionary work among the native people and this became a Pentecostal denomination named as *Full Gospel Church, Thrissur*.

The *All India Church of God (Chingavanam)* emerged in 1976 at Chingavanam, near Kottayam founded by Joy V. John. Within a short time, they established twelve churches in around Kottayam. S.P. Johnson was a navy officer in the Indian Navy, who had a personal encounter with Jesus Christ in 1976. As he received a call from God for evangelism and mission, he began a church at his residence at Ranni in 1977 namely *Assemblies of the Good Shepherd in India*. Within a few years, they established branches in Kottayam, Idukki, Wayanadu, and Thrissur districts.

#### **4.5. Transformational Growth of Classical Pentecostalism in Kerala: Major Observations**

During the period between 1923 and 1977, when the Classical Pentecostal denominations namely Indian Pentecostal Church of God, Assemblies of God, Church

of God (Full Gospel) in India, and Ceylon Pentecostal Church had experienced transitional growth, they continued to emphasize the doctrines of Classical Pentecostalism. The indigenous leadership of Classical Pentecostal denominations strongly emphasized the doctrine of the Baptism in the Holy Spirit, especially the teaching on Classical Pentecostal distinctive features of the ministry of the Holy Spirit and ‘speaking in tongues as the initial evidence of the Baptism in Holy Spirit’ within the members of the church.<sup>690</sup> They also continued to emphasize the biblical doctrines of salvation as a born-again experience, adult baptism or believers’ baptism by immersion, faith healing, miracles, gifts of Holy Spirit, the ministry of apostles, pastors, and believers, and deliverance from demon possession.<sup>691</sup> The leaders of Classical Pentecostalism emphasized eschatology in their sermons and writings.<sup>692</sup> The Classical Pentecostals during this period convinced people through their preaching and writing about the imminent return of Christ, and motivated people for evangelistic outreach. As Reuben Louis Gabriel observes, it was a period when the Pentecostals proclaimed “a clarion call to turn to Christ because the end was at hand was always a subject of Pentecostal evangelistic campaigns.”<sup>693</sup> It is observed that the indigenous leaders of Pentecostalism during this period in Kerala wrote and taught the worldwide teachings of Pentecostal distinctiveness without any change. K.J. Mathew observes, “It is true that fundamental doctrines or the tenets were never challenged in Kerala...and any attempt in this regard dealt with immediately.”<sup>694</sup> During this period

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<sup>690</sup> The Assemblies of God Malayalam District Council published an exclusive Malayalam theological book on the distinctive Pentecostal teaching on Holy Spirit including biblical teaching on the Holy Spirit, Gifts of the Holy Spirit, and Baptism in the Holy Spirit, Speaking in Tongues, and the ministry of the Holy Spirit in the church in 1959. This book was a translation of the English book, which attempted to defend the practices and doctrines of Pentecostals. Myer Pearlman and Frank M. Boyd, *Pentecosthu Sathyam (Mal.) [Pentecostal Truth]* (Trivandrum: The South-West District of the South India Assemblies of God, 1959); Varghese T.M. and George E.V., *Daivasbha Pinnitta Anpathu Varshangal (Mal.) [The Last Fifty Years of the Church of God]*.

<sup>691</sup> Chacko E.J., *Keralathile Chila Swathanthra Sabhakal (Mal.) [Some of the Independent Churches in Kerala]* (Thiruvalla: The Theological Literature Council, 1986), 33–34.

<sup>692</sup> The book of K.E. Abraham on Eschatology was well accepted among the Classical and Independent Pentecostal Churches Kerala. Abraham K.E., *Ezhu Parudeesa (Mal.) [Heavenly Realms]*, Fourth (Kumbanadu: K.E. Abraham Foundation, 1990).

<sup>693</sup> Reuben Louis Gabriel, ‘Reflections on Indian Pentecostalism: Trends and Issues,’ *Dharma Deepika: A South Asian Journal of Missiological Research* 6, no. 2 (December 2002): 71.

<sup>694</sup> Mathew K.J., ‘A Century of Potential Witness: An Introspective Retrospection,’ *Conviction, A Journal of Bethel Bible College* 2, no. 1 (June 2014): 12.

of transition, Classical and independent Pentecostalism witnessed the practical aspect of Pentecostal theology, i.e., “free God-expression and celebration of life experience.”<sup>695</sup>

Pentecostal theology, which was developed during the period, challenged the tradition of Christian spirituality in Kerala regarding providing equal identity and dignity to all human beings irrespective of their caste or class. Between the Classical and Independent Pentecostals, Pentecostal theology functioned as experiential and transformative. It can be noted that the Pentecostal theology that developed during this period through their experiences was a transformative theology that intended to transform the people against their social and oppressive background. It could also be noted that the Pentecostal theology that developed during this period of transition was ‘missional theology.’<sup>696</sup> Classical and independent Pentecostals believed that they had a mission to the world outside their church, which they witnessed in their personal experiences with others.

Along with these Pentecostal doctrines, the indigenous leaders of Classical Pentecostalism emphasized the ‘doctrine of Separation.’<sup>697</sup> Classical and independent Pentecostals promoted its identity through purity and healthy separation from worldly affairs. In their writings and sermons, the leaders emphasized separation as equal to the biblical doctrine of sanctification. The doctrine of separation according to them, meant “separation from sin and sinners, heresies, and wrong way of worship, drinking of intoxicating drinks, idolatry, entertainments such as movies and plays, and smoking and any use of tobacco.”<sup>698</sup> As K.E. Abraham wrote about the doctrine of separation along with all other teachings of separation, he emphasized the need for removal of ornaments by the members of the church.<sup>699</sup> During the period of indigenous

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<sup>695</sup> Nitson K. Varghese, ‘Pentecostal Theology Through Decades,’ *Conviction, A Journal of Bethel Bible College* 2, no. 1 (June 2014): 33.

<sup>696</sup> Jacob Mathew, ‘Pentecostu Faith Movement and Indigenous, Contextual Realities and Relevance: A Theological Analysis,’ *Sathri Journal: A Journal of Contextual Theology* 9, no. 2 (October 2015): 48.

<sup>697</sup> Ayiroor, *Keralathile Pentecosthu Sabhakal (Mal.) [Pentecostal Churches in Kerala]*, 125.

<sup>698</sup> Oommen T.G., *IPC Yum Anpathu Varshathe Sevana Charichthravum (Mal.) [The IPC and Its 50 Years of History]*, 125.

<sup>699</sup> Abraham K.E., *Mahathiyam Babylon (Mal.) [Babylon the Great]*, Reprint (Kumbanadu: K.E. Abraham Foundation, 1986), 266.

leadership, the Classical Pentecostals in Kerala strictly practiced the doctrine of separation and did not give ‘water baptism’ and ‘Holy Communion’ to members of the church who used ornaments. The leaders of Classical Pentecostalism promoted the doctrine of separation in the strict sense that one must be prevented from partaking of the Holy Communion and membership by ornaments.<sup>700</sup> During this period of emergence and growth of Indian and Independent Pentecostalism in Kerala, all the new Pentecostal churches followed and practiced the Pentecostal distinctiveness taught by the Classical Pentecostal denominations. It was so because of the association of its founders with Classical Pentecostalism. All the founders of the independent Pentecostal denominations had their Pentecostal experience in one of the Classical Pentecostal denominations, and they continued to teach and practice those doctrines within their denominations. All of them agreed upon the doctrine of separation along with the fundamental teachings of Pentecostalism.<sup>701</sup> Thus, the Indian and independent denominations also practiced the removal of ornaments in their Pentecostal denominations. As Pentecostals have shown less interest in relating themselves to the broader community and the social context of Kerala during this period of transitional growth, this detachment has often resulted in branding Pentecostals as ‘social-life deniers.’ According to Jacob Mathew, “Perhaps the reason for their reluctance to relate to the world outside is that an inner transformation of an individual was the main focus of their mission.”<sup>702</sup> Thus the involvement of Classical and Independent Pentecostals in the socio-political and economic struggles for liberation and justice of the people in Kerala was very little. However, the Classical Pentecostals in Kerala during the period of transitional growth of Indian and independent Pentecostalism attempted to integrate Dalits as members of the church. The integration of Dalits, especially in the Assemblies of God and some Independent groups was significant.

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<sup>700</sup> Oommen T.G., *IPC Yum Anpathu Varshathe Sevana Charichthravum (Mal.) [The IPC and Its 50 Years of History]*, 155.

<sup>701</sup> Ayiroor, *Keralathile Pentecosthu Sabhakal (Mal.) [Pentecostal Churches in Kerala]*, 127.

<sup>702</sup> Jacob Mathew, ‘Separated but Not Sectarians: Challenges in Developing a Paradigm for Partnering Pentecostalism with Asian Christian Theology,’ *Doon Theological Journal* 10, no. 1 (March 2013): 98.

This period also witnessed the growth of theological education in the Classical Pentecostal denominations and the Independent denominations. The leaders of the churches realized the importance of systematic theological education during the period of indigenous leadership and the growth of independent churches, and they promoted theological education among the Pentecostals in Kerala. The missionaries had the only intention of training native evangelists for the Pentecostal mission in Kerala; thus their involvement in the Bible schools was limited. After the missionaries left from India, the indigenous leadership of Pentecostalism in Kerala made severe attempts to increase the standard of the schools to improve academic excellence.<sup>703</sup> The Pentecostal theological institutions administered by either Classical Pentecostals or Independent Pentecostals offered theological degrees in English and Malayalam medium, which produced Pentecostal ministers with theological intellectualism. Most of the independent denominations established their theological institutions, or they sent their candidates for theological education in the institutions of Classical Pentecostals. During this period, in 1970, in association with the Sharon Fellowship Church, the Faith Theological Seminary was established. It was the first Pentecostal Bible College, which was affiliated to the Senate of Serampore College.<sup>704</sup> The emphasis on theological education provided highly qualified theological educators, theologians, writers, and qualified pastors. The Pentecostal denominations in Kerala emphasized the appointment and ordination of a pastor based on his theological education.

It was also a period of the growth of Pentecostalism in Kerala as an indigenous movement. The Classical Pentecostal denominations and the independent churches thoughtfully incorporated indigenous elements in worship and ministry during this period. The native evangelists and leaders of the church even used a dress code that was suitable for the local context. The indigenous language and the indigenous communication skills that they used to communicate with the people and the local ministers' identity as one among them fostered the growth of Independent Pentecostalism in Kerala. Indigenization of worship, equality, and simplicity in internal as well as external life influenced the mass, and thus Pentecostalism

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<sup>703</sup> Kochupallikunnel, *Pentecostal Churches in Kerala and Indigenous Leadership*, 95.

<sup>704</sup> Kochupallikunnel, 95.

functioned as an inclusive movement.<sup>705</sup> The use of locally made musical instruments such as *drum* and *thamber* along with clapping of hands was the dominant feature of Pentecostal worship during this period. The independent Pentecostal churches grew regionally during this period due to their openness to adopt the local cultures.<sup>706</sup>

During this period of transition, Pentecostalism appealed to many Dalits as a movement towards social mobility. Many Dalits during this period responded to the independent Pentecostal denominations because they witnessed the capacity of Pentecostalism to transform lives and the community. For many of them, Pentecostalism offered hope and solutions to their practical life challenges, and through spiritual exercises, they were able to gain their identity as human beings.<sup>707</sup>

The leadership struggle was a significant factor that could be seen during this period of the development and growth of Indian and independent Pentecostalism in Kerala. Many Pentecostal denominations were formed as a result of the struggle for leadership.<sup>708</sup> It is evident from the historical facts that the primary cause of the emergence of many independent denominations was due to the splits and internal struggles, which occurred among the leaders and not among the members. It is observed that the social context of Kerala during this period, which promoted freedom of expression and autonomy, impacted several pastors to establish a denomination under their own exclusive leadership.

Another factor that produced some of the independent denomination was caste discrimination. From the history of Classical Pentecostalism in Kerala, it was noted earlier that initially Classical Pentecostalism had rooted itself among the Syrian Christian Community of Kerala then it struggled to come out its traditional barriers. Classical Pentecostalism as a social movement elsewhere did not present itself in Kerala as a movement for the depressed classes. When the message of equality and

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<sup>705</sup> Prasad Abraham, 'Pentecostalism in Kerala as an Inclusive Movement with Subaltern Solidarity: A Re-Reading of Its Mission and Socio-Ecclesiastic Impact in Kerala in Missiological Perspective,' in *Pentecostalism Today*, ed. Stephen M. and Jose T.M. (Manakala: Faith Theological Seminary, 2015), 184–85.

<sup>706</sup> Varghese, 'Pentecostal Theology Through Decades,' 35.

<sup>707</sup> Thomas V.V., 'Challenges to Mission of the Church in India Today: A Pentecostal Perspective,' *Bethany Journal of Theology* 6, no. 2 (September 2014): 23.

<sup>708</sup> Mathew K.J., 'Denominational Pluralism among Pentecostals in Kerala, Causes and Responses, 1920 to the Present,' 90.

brotherhood of Pentecostalism reached the depressed classes, the dominant Syrian Community within the Classical Pentecostalism disagreed to accept the depressed classes. In this situation, the social context of Kerala during the period of post-independence nurtured the Pentecostal believers to develop independent and exclusive caste-based Pentecostal denominations. Thus the Indian identity of Pentecostalism in Kerala prompted some Pentecostals to promote caste-based Pentecostalism.

### **Summary**

The above discussion on the transition and transformational growth of Classical Pentecostalism into indigenous, Indian, and Independent Pentecostalism reveals that the social factors such as nationalism, spirit of autonomy, Communism, the impact of Communism on Dalits, and the formation of trade union movement from the social context of Kerala during the period of Indian Independence and Post-Independence affected Kerala Pentecostalism. The impact of the social context spurred the leaders of Pentecostalism to respond to issues related to the administration and development of Pentecostal denominations. Even though Classical Pentecostalism had already stabilized its institutional form with its denominational structure and administration before this period, it had to experience the transition and transformation. The nexus between social context and Pentecostalism and as well as their passion for growing seems to be the biggest reason for the emergence of several Indian and Independent Pentecostal denominations in Kerala. Moreover, independent Pentecostalism was a vital factor that provided Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity in Kerala a 'local faith' against the view of 'imported foreign faith.'

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **CHARISMATIC PENTECOSTALISM: THE EMERGENCE AND GROWTH OF CHARISMATIC AND THIRD WAVE OR NEOCHARISMATIC CHURCHES (FROM 1978 TO PRESENT)**

#### **Introduction**

This chapter provides a historical study of transitional and transformational growth of Classical Pentecostalism and the Indian and Independent Pentecostal churches as Charismatic Movement and Third wave or Neo-charismatic Churches in Kerala. It begins by describing the historical transformational development of Classical Pentecostalism after 1978 and outlining some of the contextual and theological issues that the Classical Pentecostal churches faced in Kerala. It also deals with the causes of the stagnation and slow growth of classical Pentecostal denominations in Kerala. It is necessary to understand the emergence and growth of Charismatic renewal movement in general and charismatic Christianity in Kerala particular as it has a bearing on Classical Pentecostalism in the transition and growth of Charismatic Churches. Again it is challenging to understand the emergence and growth of neo-charismatics globally and to see the phenomenal growth of neo-charismatic churches in Kerala. It has been noticed in the previous chapters that Classical Pentecostalism had the transition in Kerala, from Classical Pentecostalism to Indian and independent Pentecostalism with the distinctive doctrines of Classical Pentecostalism from the United States of America. This chapter reveals how the Classical and independent Pentecostalism had its transition to Charismatic and neo-charismatic churches with the doctrines and teachings of global 'Third wave' movement, which is the fastest growing sector of Christianity in Kerala.

## **5.1. The Stagnation and Slow Growth of Classical Pentecostalism in Kerala**

In the context of migration, social transformation, and economic growth of Kerala society, the Classical Pentecostals attained a steady administrative structure and stagnation in growth. Theologically and socially the external appearance was stable and more organized. However internally there was high conflict among the leadership that erupted openly at the end of the 1970s and has been continuing to the present time, which impacted Classical Pentecostalism in Kerala.

### **5.1.1. Conflict and Organizational Division within the Assemblies of God Churches**

At the end of the 1970, the native leadership of Assemblies of God, especially C. Kunjummen who was the Principal of the Bethel Bible College and the superintendent of Malayalam District Council with other local leaders developed conflicts with the Assemblies of God missionaries who were in India. The Assemblies of God leadership did not want to co-operate with the missionaries regarding the development of administrative structure, theological education, and the expansion of mission of the Church; instead, they attempted to gain the support of pastors in Kerala against missionary paternalism.<sup>709</sup> In 1975, when Earl Stubbs, an American missionary came to Kerala with some plans and proposals for the development of theological education through Bethel Bible School and the mission expansion through local churches, however, the native leadership did not co-operate with him.<sup>710</sup> Stubbs' original focus was to develop more educated national leaders for the future leadership of the church. In his proposal, he mentioned, "There is a continued emphasis on the training of Indian Christians to take over the responsibility of evangelizing their people. The vast and over-exploding population alone is evidence that India cannot be reached for God by missionaries. It will take Indians reaching Indians."<sup>711</sup> However, the national leadership of Assemblies of God in Kerala doubted the intention of the

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<sup>709</sup> Kunjummen C., 'Diary of Kunjummen C., the Principal of Bethel Bible School and the Superintendent of Assemblies of God in Kerala,' September 1976, Assemblies of God, Kerala Collection, File 1, Assemblies of God Museum Archives, Punalur, Kerala.

<sup>710</sup> Earl Stubbs and Arlene Stubbs, 'The Assemblies of God in South India: A Paper,' July 1974, 9–10, South India Collection, File 3, Assemblies of God World Mission Archives, Springfield, Missouri.

<sup>711</sup> Stubbs and Stubbs, 'The Assemblies of God in South India: A Paper.'

new missionary. Stubbs worked at the Bethel Bible College as a faculty member and Dean and expressed his interests in working as the advisor of the Malayalam District.<sup>712</sup> According to Bergunder, Stubbs attempted to raise the academic standard of the Bible School, and the missionary strength of the Malayalam District Council brought a direct conflict with Kunjummen who felt attacked in his leading position.<sup>713</sup> In this scenario, in 1977, an unhealthy tension developed among the leaders of Assemblies of God in Kerala and some pastors and members of the Churches divided into groups under their leaders and demanded leadership positions. Meanwhile, this division had grown into a level of Malayalam-speaking churches and the Tamil-speaking churches in the Malayalam District. Finally, based on this division the Assistant Superintendent who was from South Kerala resigned from his position.<sup>714</sup> The tension continued in the next couple of years, and the pastors of the South Kerala and Kanyakumari district of Tamil Nadu did not co-operate with the Malayalam District leadership and sought the support of the American missionaries to resolve the issues.

After 1977, the situation deteriorated to the most challenging position where the pastors and members of the church demanded a caste-based division of the South-West Council of Assemblies of God. The students of Bethel Bible School from south Kerala and the Tamil speaking students from Kanyakumari District of Tamil Nadu protested against the leadership of Assemblies of God in Kerala, especially against C. Kunjummen. Bergunder observes, these students belonged predominately to the *Nadar* caste, started this massive protest and the Malayalam-speaking Dalits also supported.<sup>715</sup> In order to resolve the splits, the Director Board of the Bethel Bible School, which included the Missionaries from the United States, removed Kunjummen from the leadership of the School and appointed Stubbs as the new

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<sup>712</sup> 'C. Earl Stubbs Family from Kerala to the Secretary of Assemblies of God,' 1 August 1975, Assemblies of God Missionaries in Kerala Collection, File 1, Assemblies of God World Mission Archives, Springfield, Missouri.

<sup>713</sup> Bergunder, *The South Indian Pentecostal Movement in the Twentieth Century*, 45.

<sup>714</sup> 'Conference Minutes, South West District or Malayalam District,' February 1977.

<sup>715</sup> Bergunder, *The South Indian Pentecostal Movement in the Twentieth Century*, 45.

Principal.<sup>716</sup> Some of the members of the church who were from the Syrian Christian background supported Kunjummen and revolted against the decision of the Director, Board of the College. They took legal action against Stubbs and other members of the Advisory Committee. Thus in this situation, Stubbs decided to leave Kerala and go to Andhra Pradesh.<sup>717</sup> As Reginald observes, some of the pastors who were from Central Kerala were not happy about the continual involvement of foreign missionaries in the affairs of the Church in Kerala, who raised extremely hostile voices against the foreign missionaries and demanded them to leave Kerala, which badly affected the relationship with the missionaries.<sup>718</sup> The beginning of the economic transformation due to the migration of Syrian Christians from Central Kerala slowly began to impact the Assemblies of God churches in Central Kerala. Due to the changes of the economic status of Syrian Christians, because of the migration to Arabian countries encouraged the churches to close their eyes against the financial support of foreign mission board of Assemblies of God. However, the Syrian Christian pastors from the Northern Kerala and Tamil-speaking region favoured the foreign missionaries and attempted to retain the support of missionaries towards their mission work. The Mission Board and the missionary community of the Assemblies of God, USA displeased with the native leadership of Assemblies of God, Kerala and hesitated to continue their co-operation in mission with the Malayalam District of Assemblies of God.<sup>719</sup> Since then the Assemblies of God missionaries from the United States did not come to Kerala with a long-term commitment. Another after effect of this conflict was that the Tamil-speaking pastors demanded to separate the churches of Kanyakumari District of Tamil Nadu as an independent District of South India Assemblies of God. Finally, in 1982, thirty recognized churches, some outstation works, and pastors of

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<sup>716</sup> Earl C. Stubbs, 'The First Assemblies of God Bible School to Reach Its Golden Jubilee,' *Pentecostal Witness*, March 1977.

<sup>717</sup> 'Earl C. Stubbs to Greenaway,' 18 October 1979, Assemblies of God Museum Archives, Punalur, Kerala.

<sup>718</sup> Reginald N., 'A Study of the Growth the Churches in the Southern District of the Assemblies of God, from 1981-1994' (M.Th. Thesis, South Asia Institute of Advanced Christian Studies, 1995), 56.

<sup>719</sup> Biju Varghese, 'Keralathile Assemblies of God Oru Shathabthathile Valarcha (Mal.) [The Growth of Assemblies of God Malayalam District within the Hundred Years],' in *Athma Niravinte Nooru Varshangal (Mal.) [A History of Assemblies of God in Kerala: A Centennial Publication]*, ed. Finny George (Punalur: Assemblies of God Malayalam District Council, 2015), 95.

Tamil-speaking region became independent and formed the Southern District of South India Assemblies of God.<sup>720</sup>

During the 1980s, the Assemblies of God churches in the Malayalam District had shown a considerable change regarding spirituality and approach to the mission under the charismatic leadership of P.D. Johnson as the superintendent of Malayalam District. Ipe observes about this period as “P.D. Johnson as the superintendent played a remarkable role in the development of the church.”<sup>721</sup> P.D. Johnson who was a gifted revival preacher emphasized ‘faith healing’ and organized ‘healing meetings’ in many cities and towns in Kerala. Every year he focused on starting 25 new churches under Malayalam District Council.<sup>722</sup> The regular revival meetings in different places in Central Kerala and South Kerala contributed towards the establishment of Assemblies of God Churches.<sup>723</sup> During his tenure as the Superintendent of Malayalam District, P.D. Johnson initiated regular annual convention, which became a time of spiritual renewal for the pastors and members of the church. However, this development was only in the areas of spiritual renewal and financial stability, and there was no intensive work for the missional growth of the church.

During the period after the 1980s, Assemblies of God members from Kerala migrated to the Arabian countries and the United States of America. The Keralite Pentecostal nurses went to the United States on exchange visas, later based on the new immigration laws, the nurses settled in the United States.<sup>724</sup> This migration impacted two-fold benefits to the Assemblies of God Churches in Kerala. The Assemblies of God church members, who worked in the Arabian countries and the

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<sup>720</sup> ‘Superintendent’s Report - 1982,’ March 1982, Assemblies of God Museum Archives, Punalur, Kerala.

<sup>721</sup> Kochupallikunnel, *Pentecostal Churches in Kerala and Indigenous Leadership*, 71.

<sup>722</sup> ‘P.D. Johnson to Assemblies of God World Mission Office, Springfield,’ 12 December 1984, File 2, Assemblies of God Museum Archives, Punalur, Kerala.

<sup>723</sup> Koshy Vaidyan, ‘Assemblies of God: Viswasathinteyum Preshitha Pravathanathinteyum Valarchayudeyum 98 Varsham (Mal.) [The 98 Years of Faith, Mission, and Growth of Assemblies of God],’ in *Assemblies of God India Fellowship of North America Souvenir*, ed. Stanley George (New York: AGIFNA Fifteenth Conference Committee, 2011), 40.

<sup>724</sup> Philip P.S. and Stanley George, ‘Amerikkayile Malayalikal Arambicha Assemblies of God Sabhakal (Mal.) [The History of Assemblies of God Malayalam Churches in America],’ in *Assemblies of God India Fellowship of North America Souvenir* (New York: AGIFNA Fifteenth Conference Committee, 2011), 57.

USA, began to financially support the mission and other activities of the churches in Kerala. The migrants established churches in the countries of their work and stayed and took affiliation with Malayalam District of Assemblies of God provided financial boom to the administrative growth of the organization in Kerala. In 1990, after the death of P.D. Johnson, T.J. Samuel succeeded the leadership of Assemblies of God in Kerala. Since he was familiar with the Assemblies of God members who were living overseas, he gathered their financial support for the infrastructural development. During his tenure as the Superintendent, a ground was purchased in Punalur city for the headquarter and the annual convention of Malayalam District with the money collected from the Assemblies of God Keralite members from overseas and from the natives.<sup>725</sup> It is important to note that self-sufficiency regarding financial matters was attained with the help of Keralite overseas members of Malayalam District Council of Assemblies of God.

In the 1990s, the Assemblies of God churches in northern Kerala expressed their unwillingness to continue in the Malayalam District due to the practical difficulty to come to Central Kerala for administrative and other needs. Eventually, they proposed the advancement of Assemblies of God mission in North India as an Independent District. Though this did not make sense to many pastors and leaders of Central Kerala, the leadership of Malayalam District and South India Assemblies of God accepted the demand and separated the churches in the northern revenue districts of Kerala state. That is churches in Palakkad, Wayanad, Malappuram, Kannur, Kozhikkodu, and Kasargodu as a separate and independent district of South India Assemblies of God called Malabar District in 1997.<sup>726</sup> However, these conflicts and divisions affected and deteriorated not only the administrative strength of the Assemblies of God churches in Kerala but also the spiritual and physical growth of the church. The mission strategy of Assemblies of God churches after 1980s had been more limited to the Syrian Christians and churches had more generational growth than missional growth.

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<sup>725</sup> Samuel T.J., 'The Origin and Development of Assemblies of God in Kerala: A Report by T.J. Samuel, the Superintendent,' 1994, Assemblies of God History Collection, File 2, Assemblies of God Museum Archives, Punalur, Kerala.

<sup>726</sup> Varghese, 'Keralathile Assemblies of God Oru Shathabthathile Valarcha (Mal.) [The Growth of Assemblies of God Malayalam District within the Hundred Years], ' 95.

### 5.1.2. Organizational Pluralism within the Indian Pentecostal Church of God

In 1974, after the death of K.E. Abraham, his son T.S. Abraham took the leadership of Indian Pentecostal Church of God for the next three and half decades. There were some senior leaders in the church who had tirelessly worked with K.E. Abraham for the development of the church but it was neglected.<sup>727</sup> He was in a powerful position of the Indian Pentecostal Church as State Secretary, General Secretary, General President, and the head of the Hebron Bible School for several years. In 1970, T.S. Abraham became the Principal of Hebron Bible College and after the death of his father, K.E. Abraham, became the President and Principal of the college.<sup>728</sup> In 1975, T.S. Abraham established K.E. Abraham Foundation, which contributed some administrative struggles within the Indian Pentecostal Church of God. According to T.S. Abraham, in 1982, The Indian Pentecostal Church Council hesitated to take over the administration and the financial support of the Hebron Bible College; he handed over the administration to K.E. Abraham foundation.<sup>729</sup> However, after 1985, these administration changes created tensions within the administrative council of the Indian Pentecostal Church of God and the Council showed their willingness to take over the administration of the College. T.S. Abraham then transferred the administration of the Malayalam section of the College to the Council and continued to head the English section of the college.<sup>730</sup> Meanwhile, some of the members of the church filed court cases against T.S. Abraham and Abraham Foundation demanding the transfer of administration of the Hebron Bible College from Abraham foundation to the Executive Council of Indian Pentecostal Church of God. Then the K.E. Abraham Foundation changed the name of the Bible College as India Bible College and continued to function under the Foundation.

During this period, the central leadership of the church did not show interest in purchasing land or in constructing a building for the Indian Pentecostal Church of

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<sup>727</sup> Chacko, *Hallelujah Pentecostal Year Book 2015 (Mal.)*, 314.

<sup>728</sup> Abraham T.S., 'Hebron Bible College & Hebron Puram: Yatharthyangal (Mal.) [Hebron Bible College and Hebronpuram: The Truth],' 2 September 1994, 3.

<sup>729</sup> 'Diary of T.S. Abraham,' 1982, The History of I.P.C. Collection, File 2, India Bible College Archives, Kumbanadu.

<sup>730</sup> Abraham T.S., 'Hebron Bible College & Hebron Puram: Yatharthyangal (Mal.) [Hebron Bible College and Hebronpuram: The Truth],' 4.

God. Samkutty observes it as a period without any projects for the development of the church in Kerala.<sup>731</sup> Meanwhile, during the 1980s, this administrative structure encouraged other leading pastors of Indian Pentecostal Church of God in Kerala to do their work and the expansion of mission through organizations and trusts that were registered in their names or families. It was possible to do so with the help of non-resident Keralite Pentecostals who were working in foreign countries. It was the period of the expansion of Keralite Pentecostal Diaspora in the United States.<sup>732</sup> The Keralite nurses who began to settle in the United States took their husbands and children to the United States of America. Moreover, in the same period, a significant number of Keralite Pentecostals were finding skilled and unskilled labour opportunities in the Middle Eastern nations, notably the United Arab Emirates.<sup>733</sup> Most of the Keralite Pentecostals maintained membership affiliation with the Indian Pentecostal Church of God. Thomson observes,

As petrodollars flowed to India, Pentecostal pastors flowed to the Middle East, pastoring congregations and doing itinerant ministries...Keralite pastors visiting in the Middle Eastern countries extended their visits to America. They visited churches and families across the United States, raising funds for projects in India and establishing jurisdiction over the young American congregations, many of whom were originally established as independent groups.<sup>734</sup>

Through the contributions of non-residential Keralites, who were working in the Arabian countries and the United States of America, these organizations or trusts established a series of Bible schools and sent native evangelists and missionaries to many places. All the new Bible schools were under the auspices of Indian Pentecostal Church and the organizations claimed the affiliation with IPC.<sup>735</sup> During this period, several new churches, new mission stations, and the growth of the church took place

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<sup>731</sup> Samkutty Chacko, ed., 'Keralathil Pravarthikkunna Sabha Prasthanangal (Mal.) [Pentecostal Churches in Kerala],' in *Pentecostal Year Book 2017* (Thiruvalla: Hallelujah Books, 2017), 358.

<sup>732</sup> Thomson K. Mathew, 'The Keralite Diaspora,' in *Children of the Calling: Essays in Honour of Stanley M. Burgess and Ruth V. Burgess*, ed. Eric Nelson New Berg and Lois E. Olena (Eugene: Pickwick Publications, 2014), 268.

<sup>733</sup> Mathew, *Kerala Penthecosthu Charithram (Mal.) [Kerala Pentecostal History]*, 416.

<sup>734</sup> Mathew, 'The Keralite Diaspora,' 269–70.

<sup>735</sup> Kochupallikunnel, *Pentecostal Churches in Kerala and Indigenous Leadership*, 58.

regarding membership. However, Bergunder observes, “The problem with this development was that it led to the disintegration of the Indian Pentecostal Church into different small organizations, the overall name of the church being used only to collect funds abroad for their organizations.”<sup>736</sup> Thus, the decentralization of the administration of Indian Pentecostal Church of God contributed to many small organizations and local centers, which acted entirely independently about the areas of mission, spiritual authority, finance, and property.

### 5.1.3. The Ceylon Pentecostal Mission to ‘The Pentecostal Mission’

During the 1980s, the Ceylon Pentecostal Mission in Kerala had grown with sectarian tendencies based on their doctrines slightly different from other Pentecostal denominations. Since many families from the Syrian Christian background accepted the teachings of the Ceylon Pentecostal Mission, they had consolidated growth in Central Kerala. However, the church had faced severe conflict and finally a spilt due to its name change for the Indian section of the Ceylon Pentecostal Church.<sup>737</sup> The name change occurred against the background of escalating struggle between separatist Tamils and the government in Sri Lanka through which, especially in Tamil Nadu, an extremely hostile feeling developed against Sri Lanka.<sup>738</sup> In order to avoid the hostility of Tamil people and the persecutions against the members of the Church, the churches in the Indian Territory changed their name to ‘The Pentecostal Mission.’ Bergunder observes, however, some churches in Kerala disagreed with the name change since they wanted to retain the old name to which they attributed a significant part of their identity.<sup>739</sup> During this time a massive opposition arose in Kerala against the name change. Some pastors and congregations who opposed the change claimed a declension and deviation of the spirituality and missionary dynamics of their church from the vision of their founder Ramankutty Paul. The opposition was turned out as a violent quarrel and hand-to-hand fight between two parties. In 1984, two parties gathered at Kottarakkara under the leadership of Philip Chandrapillai. He was a leader

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<sup>736</sup> Bergunder, *The South Indian Pentecostal Movement in the Twentieth Century*, 40.

<sup>737</sup> Paul C. Martin, ‘A Brief History of the Ceylon Pentecostal Mission: Unpublished Paper,’ 1998.

<sup>738</sup> Martin.

<sup>739</sup> Bergunder, *The South Indian Pentecostal Movement in the Twentieth Century*, 43.

of the church, and he came to negotiate peace between the two contending parties. However, he could not settle the fight between two opposing parties; he had a bad fall and died due to this accident.<sup>740</sup> After this incident, the majority of the people accepted the name change, and a group of them under the leadership of A. Chandy separated from the church and retained the name Ceylon Pentecostal Mission.<sup>741</sup>

These internal differences and splits badly affected the growth of the Pentecostal Mission churches in Kerala in the 1990s. The Pentecostal Mission continued their sectarian tendencies and their doctrines that restricted them to have fellowship with other Pentecostal Churches in Kerala. Their rejection of theological education badly affected to have able leadership for the growth of the church. Their distinctive doctrines of celibacy of the pastors and the sisters, exclusion of ministers from wealth or properties, perfect salvation after water baptism, and prohibition of medical treatment were also reasons for them to be excluding themselves from other Pentecostals in Kerala.

#### **5.1.4. Church of God (State and Division) in Kerala with Different Leadership Dynamics**

After the division of the Church of God in 1972 as the Church of God in India (State) of Syrian Christians and the Church of God in India (Division) of Dalits, a complete transfer of leadership from foreign hands to indigenous hands took place. During the 1980s, M.V. Chacko, a capable theologian and a prominent speaker who was leading the Church of God (State) in Kerala which provided much hope to the ordinary pastors and members of the church about the future growth of the church.<sup>742</sup> Bergunder observes; however, the vested interests and the inadequate assessment of the situation in Kerala by the American headquarters of the Church of God removed M.V. Chacko from the position of overseer in 1988.<sup>743</sup> This move was to create a way for P.A.V. Sam who gave up a good post in the industry and took up a full-time

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<sup>740</sup> Martin, 'A Brief History of the Ceylon Pentecostal Mission: Unpublished Paper.'

<sup>741</sup> Mathew K.J., 'Denominational Pluralism among Pentecostals in Kerala, Causes and Responses, 1920 to the Present' (M.Th. Thesis, Senate of Serampore, 1993), 70.

<sup>742</sup> Sunny P. Samuel, 'Daivasabha Charithram (Mal.) [The History of Church of God],' in *Church of God in India (Kerala State) General Convention Souvenir - 1996* (Mulakuzha: Church of God in India State Council, 1996), 24.

<sup>743</sup> Bergunder, *The South Indian Pentecostal Movement in the Twentieth Century*, 49.

ministry in the church of God. Some pastors and church members supported M.V. Chacko and opposed the authoritarian leadership style of P.A.V. Sam, and they questioned the leadership of Sam through legal actions, setting up a parallel church leadership in Kumbanadu.<sup>744</sup> In many places, the church members protested against Sam, but he was unwilling to reconcile with the opposition group. It caused a division within the church, which affected the church growth. Some pastors and members of the church, including M.V. Chacko, left the church and joined the Indian Pentecostal Church of God, which damaged the reputation and growth of the church. Later in the year 2000, the divided group came back to the Church of God. The primary issue that the Church of God faced was the challenges against leadership.<sup>745</sup>

Meanwhile, the Church of God (Division), which was an exclusive Dalit church, showed considerable growth in the 1980s. In 1984, the church opened a Bible School and the headquarters at Pakkil near Kottayam. The visionary leaders of the Church attempted to develop a second generation of Church leaders by sending many of them for higher theological education. Thus, the Church pastors who were young and had great missionary dynamics used different mission strategies to reach out to many people. Thus the Church of God (Division) had more church growth than the Church of God (State).<sup>746</sup>

The major challenge that the Church of God (State and Division) faced after the 1990s was about the selection and appointment of the leaders of the church by the foreign missions office of Church of God in Cleveland, Tennessee as they paid remuneration to the leaders of the church in Kerala and controlled the administrative works of the leaders. Ipe observes, “Since the General Overseer, who takes important decisions concerning the church in Kerala, are not aware of the culture, practices, and notions of the people in Kerala, and were often influenced by the one who can please him.”<sup>747</sup> The Overseers therefore, of both the churches did not have any authority to start new projects without prior permission from the American headquarters of the

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<sup>744</sup> Chacko, ‘Keralathil Pravarthikkunna Sabha Prasthanangal (Mal.) [Pentecostal Churches in Kerala],’ 351.

<sup>745</sup> Chacko, 352.

<sup>746</sup> Chacko, 351.

<sup>747</sup> Kochupallikunnel, *Pentecostal Churches in Kerala and Indigenous Leadership*, 58.

Church of God. According to Bergunder, “The decisions taken were often bad or at least not sufficiently coordinated with the Indian partners, a circumstance that bore considerable potential for conflicts.”<sup>748</sup> It could have been a reason for the inactive status of Church of God in Kerala after the 1980s in the context of migration and economic growth in Kerala where the other classical denominations attempted to develop the church and mission with the help of Non-resident Pentecostal Keralites.

### 5.1.5. The Plurality of Indian and Independent Denominations

Among the Indian and Independent churches, Sharon Fellowship Church, New India Church of God, and New India Bible church had shown modest growth after the 1980s. These three churches depended on the financial support of the non-resident Keralites for the development of church growth and mission. They secured a firm place within the Classical Pentecostal tradition in Kerala through the theologically qualified leadership, higher theological education given to the ministers, and missionary movement outside Kerala. The young pastors and missionaries who were the second-generation leaders of the churches provided greater missionary dynamics for the denominations, and the churches extended their territories in North India, Arabian Countries, Australia-Pacific regions and the United States of America.<sup>749</sup> All other minor denominations and the particular Dalit churches sought financial support through different organizations and attempted to survive through donations of native members. Most of them maintained their denominations despite financial and leadership crisis.

At the same time, after the 1980s, some more independent Pentecostal churches were registered in Kerala.<sup>750</sup> The founders of all these denominations were

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<sup>748</sup> Bergunder, *The South Indian Pentecostal Movement in the Twentieth Century*, 49.

<sup>749</sup> Chacko E.J., *Keralathile Chila Swathanthra Sabhakal (Mal.) [Some of the Independent Churches in Kerala]*, 31–54.

<sup>750</sup> Some of them were: *Mathai Outreach New Hope Churches, Pandalam*, established by Ipe Mathai in 1980; *New Testament Pentecostal Church, Trivandrum*, established by A.P. Daniel in 1980; *Pentecostal Assemblies of the World, Thelliyur*, established by K.S. John in 1981; *Jesus for India Church of God, Vakathanam*, established by James Jacob in 1982; *Calvary Fellowship, Tiruvalla*, established by James Abraham in 1984; *Ebenezer Mission Church, Chengannur*, established by Thoams Abraham in 1984; *Revival Christian Prayer Fellowship, Mallappally*, established by Kuruvila Chacko in 1984; *Global Missions India, Elappara*, established by P.M. Baby in 1984; *Living Word Ministries, Eranakulam*, established by K.G. Jose in 1987; *Bethel Gospel Assembly, Pathanapuram*, established by Joy P. Oommen in 1990; *Malankara Christian Church, Muvattupuzha*, established by Paulose Kunnummel in 1990; *Full Gospel Church of God in India, Manarcadu*, established by M.P. Chacko in 1991; *Grace Church of God, Vaduthala*, established by George Punnooran in 1993, *Praise*

from the Classical Pentecostalism and hailed from the Classical Pentecostal families. The founders established a mother church and later some branch churches in the surrounding places and began to function as denominations. Most of the founders were either non-resident Keralites or closely associated with non-resident Keralites.<sup>751</sup> The denominations' family members and friends of the founders who had been living and working in Arabian countries or the United States of America have been financially supporting these denominations.

## **5.2. Emergence and Growth of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal Movement in Kerala**

### **5.2.1. Catholic Charismatic Beginnings**

The Catholic Charismatic Renewal Movement began in 1967 in the United States of America as one of the ecclesial movements within the Roman Catholic Church, which focused on the spiritual renewal and reformation of the spiritual life of the members of the Church. The Catholic Charismatic Renewal Movement began in the background of the Second Vatican Council (1962-65)<sup>752</sup> in which the documents of the Council placed considerable stress on the role of the laity in the life of the church and also recognized the importance of charismatic gifts.<sup>753</sup> Another background was the origin of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal Movement that influenced the emergence and growth of Classical Pentecostalism in the United States

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*Gospel Mission, Trivandrum*, established by J.S. Benjamin in 1994; *Maranatha Full Gospel Church, Tiruvalla*, established by Jeksy Mathew in 1995; *International Gospel Church, Kottayam*, established by Thomas Mammen in 1998; *Abundant Life Fellowship, Thrippunithara*, established by C.K. Johnkikutty in 1998; and *Gilejad Christian Fellowship, Neyyattinkara*, established by Babu Thomas in 1998. Chacko, 'Keralathil Pravarthikkunna Sabha Prasthanangal (Mal.) [Pentecostal Churches in Kerala],' 378–418.

<sup>751</sup> Chacko, 358--418.

<sup>752</sup> Pope John XXIII changed the course of Catholic history by announcing on 29 January 1959 a General Council of the Roman Catholic Church and expressed the desire to update the church through a time of purification and renewal. The results of Vatican II made significant changes in the life and practice of Catholicism. Some these included the relaxing of specific disciplines, use of the vernacular in the Mass, an open ecumenical concern, a new mood of openness to change, a more significant role of the laity, and a renewed emphasis upon the pneumatic nature of the church – including the gifts and graces of the Holy Spirit. See Jerry L Sandidge, 'The Origin and Development of the Catholic Charismatic Movement in Belgium' (Master in Moral and Religious Sciences, Thesis, Catholic University of Leuven, 1976), 28.

<sup>753</sup> Thigpen T.P., 'Catholic Charismatic Renewal,' in *Dictionary of Pentecostals and Charismatic Movements*, ed. Stanley M. Burgess and Eduard M. Van Der Mass (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2003), 460.

of America.<sup>754</sup> In 1967, some lay professors of Duquesne University in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania were looking for a spiritual experience, which would activate in them the full power of faith and invoke a total generosity in the mission, envisaged by Pope John XXIII through the second Vatican Council.<sup>755</sup> One of them Ralph Keifer attended a revival meeting conducted by an independent Classical Pentecostal group for the members of an episcopal church, where he experienced the gift of speaking in tongues. Then Ralph Keifer and Patrick Bourgeois, two lay faculty members at Duquesne University in February 1967 gathered a group of thirty students and professors to spend a weekend in prayer and fellowship.<sup>756</sup> With a desire to experience the ‘baptism in the Holy Spirit,’ they studied the New Testament again, particularly the sections dealing with the life of the primitive Church, when the early Christians experienced the coming of the Holy Spirit. They prayed with genuine confidence and expectation that Christ’s Spirit would come.<sup>757</sup> During the second meeting, they experienced the ‘baptism in the Holy Spirit’ including the speaking in tongues. Later the faculty members and thirty students organized a religious retreat at Duquesne and meditated on the first few chapters of the book of Acts and sought the experience of the Holy Spirit. All of them at the retreat experienced the ‘baptism in the Holy Spirit’ at various times and in this way the first Catholic Charismatic prayer group came into existence.<sup>758</sup> Very soon a charismatic network developed through connections between the Catholic university campuses and the charismatic movement began to spread on the campuses of some of America’s finest universities such as Notre Dame, Michigan and Fordham University.<sup>759</sup>

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<sup>754</sup> Mary Barbara Agnew, ‘Charismatic Renewal,’ in *The New Dictionary of Catholic Spirituality*, ed. Michael Downey (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1993), 143.

<sup>755</sup> Desmond De Sousa, ‘Popular Religion: Pentecostal Charismatic Perspective,’ *Faith Theological Review* II, no. 1 (March 1998): 10.

<sup>756</sup> Thigpen T.P., ‘Catholic Charismatic Renewal,’ 460.

<sup>757</sup> Kevin Ranaghan and Dorothy Ranaghan, *Catholic Pentecostals* (Paramus: Paulist Press Deus Books, 1969), 8.

<sup>758</sup> Thigpen T.P., ‘Catholic Charismatic Renewal,’ 460.

<sup>759</sup> Sandidge, ‘The Origin and Development of the Catholic Charismatic Movement in Belgium,’ 31.

This movement soon expanded to other cities and towns in the United States of America through small local prayer groups and conferences. Through annual conferences, the Catholic Charismatic movement received its own identity and rapid growth. Later the Catholic Charismatic Renewal Movement developed its theological interpretation of the phenomenon called ‘baptism in the Holy Spirit’ which was different from the Classical Pentecostals as there are two major schools of theological interpretation on the ‘baptism in the Holy Spirit.’ The first school relates it to the sacrament of baptism, which means the baptism in the Holy Spirit as a phenomenon of actualization or realization of the power received during the reception of the sacrament of baptism.<sup>760</sup> The second school of interpretation about the baptism in Holy Spirit considers it as a new sending or falling afresh of the Holy Spirit, which empowers the receiver to radically renew a conscious experience of his or her spiritual life.<sup>761</sup> This movement indeed contributed to the spiritual renewal of people who associated with it. It helped in the over-all renewal and reformation process within the church. It raised further the standards of the authentic Christian life.

### **5.2.2. Catholic Charismatic Beginnings in India**

The Catholic Charismatic Renewal Movement began in India in the 1970s through the efforts of one young man and two Roman Catholic priests who were research students in the United States. Minoo Engineer, who was a Parsi civil engineer who had been studying at Fordham University and had been exposed to Charismatic movement, brought the Catholic Charismatic renewal to India in 1972.<sup>762</sup> In the same year, along with Minoo Engineer, two Jesuit priests, Fuster and Bertie Phillips, who had returned to India after their higher studies from the United States as Charismatics.<sup>763</sup> Minno formed a Charismatic prayer group of four members, Fio

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<sup>760</sup> Kilian McDonnell and George T. Montague, *Christian Initiation and Baptism in the Holy Spirit: Evidence from the First Eight Centuries* (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1991), 84.

<sup>761</sup> *Theological and Pastoral Orientations on the Catholic Charismatic Renewal* (Belgium: International Catholic Charismatic Renewal Office, 2001), 19.

<sup>762</sup> Gary B McGee and Stanley M. Burgess, ‘India,’ in *The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, ed. Stanley M. Burgess and Eduard M. Van Der Mass (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2003), 124.

<sup>763</sup> Annie Berly, ‘The Role of the Charismatic Movement in the Faith Formation of Youth,’ *Kristu Jyoti: A Youth Pastoral Theological Catechetical Journal* 28, no. 2 (June 2012): 114.

Mascarenhas, a Roman Catholic priest, Olga, a Roman Catholic nun, Minno, and his wife, for the spiritual renewal and gathered on Monday evenings in Mumbai. Fuster and Philips started 'Life in the Spirit' seminars and regular prayer groups at St. Xavier's college in Mumbai.<sup>764</sup> The movement of spiritual renewal began to spread among the Catholic sisters and priests in other cities such as Pune, and spread throughout the state of Maharashtra and then to other cities of India such as Goa, Guwahati, and Delhi. Very soon small charismatic prayer groups spread throughout all of India. Later, in 1974 a group of thirty Charismatic Catholic leaders in India gathered in Bombay and discussed the future of the movement in India. They decided to have the first National Charismatic convention, to begin a journal for Charismatic movement in India, *Charisindia*, to print the first edition of *Praise the Lord* hymnbook, and to nominate a Service Team, which formed the apex body of the national leaders with the threefold task of discernment, prophetic ministry, and service to the movement.<sup>765</sup> It was in 1977 that the influence of Charismatic renewal movement reached Kerala.<sup>766</sup> Later, many Charismatic retreat centers and numerous prayer groups sprung up in Kerala which proved that the Charismatic influence in Kerala was far more significant than in other states in India.

### 5.2.3. Catholic Charismatic Beginnings and Growth in Kerala

Mathew Naickomparambil who was a seminarian of the Vincentian Congregation in Kerala emphasized personal prayer and meditation to have the experience of receiving the power of Holy Spirit in 1970. While he was kneeling and praying, he felt a divine illumination in front of him, and he saw a shining sphere of light of the size of a full moon, two or three meters above his head, which slowly descended upon him and entered into him.<sup>767</sup> After this experience, he received inner healing in his personal life, healing of his wounded memories, and debilitating

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<sup>764</sup> Lesser R.H., *The Holy Spirit and the Charismatic Renewal* (Bangalore: Theological Publications in India, 1978), 128.

<sup>765</sup> McGee and Burgess, 'India,' 125.

<sup>766</sup> Berly, 'The Role of the Charismatic Movement in the Faith Formation of Youth,' 114.

<sup>767</sup> *The Wind Blows Where It Wills: Fr. Mathew Naickomparambil VC, An Interview* (Chalakkudy: Potta Ashram Publications, 2016), 59.

inferiority complex.<sup>768</sup> The personal experience of receiving the power of Holy Spirit by Mathew Naickomparambil was the first experience of the Charismatic Renewal in Kerala. It took place in the same year that Charismatic Renewal movement began to spread in India from Mumbai and well before the Catholic Charismatic Renewal was known in Kerala. His first experience of healing ministry was in 1977. After his ordination as a priest of the Syro-Malabar Roman Catholic Church in Kerala and as a member of the Vincentian Congregation, while he prayed for the sick people who had tuberculosis and asthma, they received instant healing.<sup>769</sup> Meanwhile, he attended the Charismatic retreat that was spreading in different cities in India and learned about the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Mathew Naickomparambil began his ministry as a preacher in the Popular Mission Retreat, which conducted spiritual enhancement programme for the members and families of the Roman Catholic Church in Kerala by the Vincentian priests. After the sermons, he began to pray for healing, deliverance from addictions, and demon possessions. The news regarding the healing and deliverance received wide publicity.<sup>770</sup> However, his ministry and influence were limited within a section of families and members of the Roman Catholic Church in Kerala. Moreover, this retreat was not a favorite retreat among the people. The other reason was the lack of support that Mathew Naickomparambil received from the leadership of Vincentian Congregation since they did not like his new type of ministry in the Popular Mission Retreat.

A transitional growth of the Charismatic movement in Kerala took place after 1984. Mathew Naickomparambil attended a worldwide retreat for priests in Rome, and after this conference of priests, he had the vision to organize retreats for priests in Kerala. He rented a college hostel and organized regular retreats for the priests and nuns at Thrikkakkara near Ernakulam.<sup>771</sup> In these retreats for the priests and nuns, he invited D.G.S. Dinakaran, who was an independent revival preacher and the user of

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<sup>768</sup> *The Wind Blows Where It Wills: Fr. Mathew Naickomparambil VC, An Interview*, 59–60.

<sup>769</sup> *The Wind Blows Where It Wills: Fr. Mathew Naickomparambil VC, An Interview*, 61; Susan Alexander, *The Unseen Hand of God: Divine Retreat Centre* (Chalakkudy: Divine Retreat Centre, 2010), 19.

<sup>770</sup> *The Wind Blows Where It Wills: Fr. Mathew Naickomparambil VC, An Interview*, 70.

<sup>771</sup> Devaprasad T., *Attu Theerathe Poomaram (Mal.) [History of Divine Retreat Centre]* (Chalakkudy: Divine Retreat Centre, 2016), 13.

the gifts of Holy Spirit in India. Dinakaran taught them with practical guidance on the use of gifts of Holy Spirit in ministry.<sup>772</sup> In 1987, Mathew Naickomparambil stayed in Potta Ashram, which was the meditation center of the Vincentian Congregation and conducted regular counseling and meditation as one to one program. In the same year, Naickomparambil felt that he was led by the Holy Spirit to preach and teach the Word instead of counseling and to minister individually. Stanley M. Burgess observes, his daily proclamation of the Word of God at the Potta Retreat Centre influenced many and people began to come for hearing the Word of God and prayer for healing.<sup>773</sup> In 1990, the Vincentian Congregation bought a nearby hospital at Muringoor, near Chalakudy and developed the Divine Retreat Center, which was an independent Charismatic Renewal Center for prayer, healing, and deliverance. The Vincentian Congregation officially accepted this Charismatic Retreat Center as the center for the evangelization of the world in 1991.<sup>774</sup> After that, the Charismatic Retreat Center organized mega conventions and healing meetings regularly, which contributed to the development of Charismatic movement in Kerala. Charismatic renewal retreats were conducted in six languages, simultaneously conducted in six different auditoriums. Retreats were conducted every week of the year with an average of 15,000 people per week and up to 150,000 at the five-day conventions, especially during the summer holidays. The weekly plan of the retreat was like this: Sunday was the day of registration; Monday the day of surrender; Tuesday the day of confession; Wednesday the day of counseling; Thursday a time for inner healing, prayer, and fasting; Friday devoted to the gift of the Holy Spirit; and Saturday was the final mass, with the blessing of rosary and the Bible. Everyone in attendance was given accommodation and food at the center during the retreats.<sup>775</sup> The people who attended these weeklong retreats received healing from their sicknesses, deliverance from their addictions, and large numbers accepted Jesus Christ as their Savior and Lord.<sup>776</sup>

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<sup>772</sup> *The Wind Blows Where It Wills: Fr. Mathew Naickomparambil VC, An Interview*, 75.

<sup>773</sup> Stanley M. Burgess, 'Pentecostalism in India: An Overview,' *Asian Journal of Pentecostal Studies* 4, no. 1 (2001): 95.

<sup>774</sup> Devaprasad T., *Attu Theerathe Poomaram (Mal.) [History of Divine Retreat Centre]*, 58.

<sup>775</sup> *The Wind Blows Where It Wills: Fr. Mathew Naickomparambil VC, An Interview*, 77.

<sup>776</sup> Devaprasad T., *Attu Theerathe Poomaram (Mal.) [History of Divine Retreat Centre]*, 60.

#### 5.2.4. The Growth of Charismatic Movement in Kerala: Some Observations

The primary reasons for the growth of the Charismatic movement in Kerala are connected with the social and spiritual context of Kerala. The primary reason for the Growth of Charismatic movement in Kerala was because the Charismatic Movement helped the Catholics in Kerala to experience ‘baptism in the Holy Spirit.’<sup>777</sup> The Classical Pentecostals in Kerala till this time taught about the ‘baptism in the Holy Spirit’ as a distinctive teaching of Pentecostal experience. The Roman Catholics longed to experience ‘baptism in the Holy Spirit’ but hesitated to approach the Classical Pentecostals due to their sectarian doctrines and principles such as the removal of ornaments. In this spiritual context, the Charismatic Movement received great acceptance among the Catholics in Kerala. A study probed that majority of Roman Catholic Christians who attends the Charismatic meetings seek the prayer for healing and only a minority seeks deeper religious experience.<sup>778</sup> Another spiritual reason was the Charismatic Movement helped the Catholics to understand the use of the charismatic gifts, which were the source of strength for Christians in the expansion of the mission.<sup>779</sup> The Charismatic Movement in Kerala provided an opportunity to all to experience the gift of healing and deliverance from demon possession. Until this period it was labeled as an exclusive characteristic of Classical Pentecostals, which was not freely accessible to ordinary people. The Charismatic movement in Kerala promoted evangelization in the power of the Holy Spirit. It was more a re-evangelization of the members of the church, the evangelization of the non-Christians, and the evangelization of the culture and social structures.<sup>780</sup> It happened through the importance given to the sharing of the Word of God in the Charismatic Movement. The Roman Catholic Churches did not give much opportunity to the members to listen to the Word of God. The daily sharing from the Bible provided enthusiasm to the members to listen to the voice from the Bible. The Charismatic Movement in Kerala provided people an opportunity to taste the word of God. Thus, the Charismatic Movement attempted to re-structure the understanding of Classical

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<sup>777</sup> Berly, ‘The Role of the Charismatic Movement in the Faith Formation of Youth,’ 114.

<sup>778</sup> D’Souza Leela, ‘The Pentecostal-Charismatic Movement: A Socio-Historical Analysis’, *Indian Church History Review* XLII, no. 1 (June 2008): 48–49.

<sup>779</sup> *The Wind Blows Where It Wills: Fr. Mathew Naickomparambil VC, An Interview*, 79.

<sup>780</sup> Berly, ‘The Role of the Charismatic Movement in the Faith Formation of Youth,’ 115.

Pentecostals and their authoritarian principle of sharing the Word of God.

A social reason for the growth of Charismatic Movement was the growing effect of alcoholism where more men were addicted to intoxicating drinks due to their growing financial status due to their affluence of finance.<sup>781</sup> The Charismatic Movement in Kerala emphasized prayer for deliverance from addictions, which invited many families to Charismatic Movement in Kerala. Through prayer for deliverance from addictions, people received transformation in life. Their attitudes and value systems changed, which contributed to the overall development of their families. Another social reason for the growth of the Charismatic Movement in Kerala was the practice of gathering together in small groups for informal, spontaneous prayer, which was not a common practice among the Catholics in Kerala.<sup>782</sup> As the Classical Pentecostalism took root among the people in Kerala through small prayer meetings, which provided a sense of social togetherness, now the Charismatics adopted the same method, which unquestionably became the natural vehicle for the growth of the Charismatic Movement in Kerala. The Charismatic prayer meetings, which were conducted in homes, became the mode of worship that combined freedom to express and participate and provided the demands of sharing and respect for every individual to contribute to the growth of this movement in Kerala.

#### **5.2.5. The Absence of Charismatic Revival within the Syrian Christian Community and Protestant Churches in Kerala**

The Syrian Orthodox Christian church in Kerala during the period from 1912 to 1995 went through unparalleled controversies and divisions. In 1934 Syrian Orthodox church in Kerala was divided as Malankara Syrian Orthodox Church and Malankara Jacobite Syrian Church based on their connection with the Catholicate to the East. From 1934, the Syrian Orthodox group began to function as an Independent church under the leadership of a Malankara Metropolitan called “Catholicos” and the other group functioned under the leadership of a Catholicos-designate who was designed by the Catholicos of the East.<sup>783</sup> During the period of Charismatic revival

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<sup>781</sup> *The Wind Blows Where It Wills: Fr. Mathew Naickomparambil VC, An Interview*, 79.

<sup>782</sup> Berly, ‘The Role of the Charismatic Movement in the Faith Formation of Youth,’ 119.

<sup>783</sup> Cherian C.V., *Orthodox Christianity in India: A History of Malankara Orthodox Church AD52-2002* (Kottayam: Academic Publishers, 2003), 339.

among the Catholics, the Syrian Orthodox community in Kerala experienced bitter sufferings caused by prolonged litigations and controversies. This context of divisions and disunity eluded the peace, mission, and spiritual revival in the Syrian churches.<sup>784</sup> This became a reason for the absence of Charismatic renewal among the Syrian Christian churches during this period. The churches of the Syrian tradition such as Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church, Malankara Jacobite Syrian Church, and the Mar Thoma Church continued to follow Saint James Liturgy in their worship services and it did not give any room for spontaneity and the free expression of the Spirit.<sup>785</sup> At the same time, the Charismatic aspirations of the members of Syrian community motivated some of them to seek the new experiences outside of their church. One of the outstanding leaders of the Protestant Churches during the middle of twentieth century in South India, Bishop Lesslie Newbigin, invited the Protestant churches to have openness to the work of the Holy Spirit. He urged the churches to have participation by the stream of Christians who experienced the ‘power and presence of the Holy Spirit.’<sup>786</sup> However, the Protestant churches in Kerala such as Church of South India and Anglican Church did not positively respond to this call to participate the Charismatic renewal within the Protestant churches. This context of the absence of Charismatic revival among the Syrian Christian churches and Protestant churches paved the way for the growth of Neo-Charismatic churches in Kerala.

### **5.3. The Emergence and Phenomenal Growth of Third Wave or Neo-charismatic Churches in Kerala**

#### **5.3.1. Third Wave or Neo-charismatic Beginnings**

C. Peter Wagner, who was a missiologist and Professor at Fuller Theological Seminary, surfaced there and coined the label ‘Third Wave,’ for this new movement while *Pastoral Renewal* interviewed him and published an article in 1983 on the

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<sup>784</sup> Cherian C.V., *Orthodox Christianity in India: A History of Malankara Orthodox Church AD52-2002* (Kottayam: Academic Publishers, 2003), 340.

<sup>785</sup> George Oommen, ‘Growth of Pentecostalism in Central Kerala from 1921-1947: A Paradigm for Pentecostal Churches in North India’, *Indian Church History Review* XXXV, no. 2 (December 2001): 139.

<sup>786</sup> Lesslie Newbigin, *The Household of God: Lectures on the Nature of the Church* (London: SCM Press, 1953), 87.

subject of the actions of the Holy Spirit in the last period of the twentieth century.<sup>787</sup> In the next five subsequent years, the term found its way into several books and publications, and it was used to designate the movement that was similar to Pentecostal and Charismatic movement but with specific but reasonably essential differences.<sup>788</sup> The ‘Third Wave’ implied two previous waves, about the work of the Holy Spirit in the Twentieth Century. Wagner observes, the first wave was the Classical Pentecostal movement, which was a powerful ministry of the Holy Spirit in the realm of the miraculous that most other Christians at the time found highly unusual. The second wave of the Holy Spirit was the Charismatic movement, and it was the beginning of the dream of early Pentecostal leaders that the miraculous power of the Holy Spirit would be introduced into the mainline denominations. The third wave was new in the moving of the Holy Spirit among the evangelicals, who for one reason or another, chose not to identify with either the Pentecostals or the Charismatics.<sup>789</sup> Wagner originally applied the label ‘Third Wave’ to himself and the events and the movement that occurred around him in 1980 and especially in 1982. At Fuller Theological Seminary, both Wagner and his friend John Wimber, the founder of Vineyard Churches developed and co-taught a course entitled ‘The Miraculous and Church Growth’ in 1982.<sup>790</sup> At Fuller, the course was the most popular, and the success of the course gained international attention. Similar to the laboratory sessions, at the close of each lecture, Wagner portrayed the manifestation of God’s power and presence which attracted crowds of non-students who came to witness signs and wonders. In the same year, Wagner invited Robert Walker the Editor of *Christian Life* to observe the course and experience the practical application of the course. Then he published the entire October 1982 issue with signs and wonders that happened within the context of the classroom. David Barrett implemented the term third-wave to

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<sup>787</sup> Peter C. Wagner, ‘A Third Wave?’, *Pastoral Renewal*, August 1983, 1.

<sup>788</sup> Peter C. Wagner, ‘Third Wave,’ in *The New International Dictionary of Pentecostals and Charismatic Movements*, ed. Stanley M. Burgess and Eduard M. Van Der Mass (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2003), 1141.

<sup>789</sup> Peter C. Wagner, *The Third Wave of the Holy Spirit: Encountering the Power of Signs and Wonders Today* (Ann Arbor: Vine Books and Servant Publications, 1988), 16–18.

<sup>790</sup> Donald Kammer, ‘Perplexing Power Of John Wimber’s Power Encounters,’ *Churchman*, Spring 1998, 47.

observable categories and trends in global Pentecostalism that did not fit into Classical Pentecostalism or the Charismatic Movement.<sup>791</sup> The Third Wavers were mainly composed of evangelical Christians from all over the world, who applauded and supported the work and experienced the power of the Holy Spirit in healing the sick, casting out demons, receiving prophecies, and participating in other charismatic-type manifestations without disturbing the current viewpoint, fellowship, and membership of the ministry in their own congregations. According to Barrett, these new charismatics outnumbered all Pentecostals and Charismatics combined.<sup>792</sup>

Some distinctive teachings and features of the Third Wave movement are the following:<sup>793</sup> One was the belief that the baptism in the Holy Spirit occurs at conversion,<sup>794</sup> rather than as a second work of grace after the new birth. The second one was the expectation of multiple fillings of the Holy Spirit after the new birth, some of which may closely resemble what others call “baptism in the Holy Spirit.” The third one was acceptance of tongues as one of many New Testament spiritual gifts that God gives to some and not to others. The ‘speaking in tongues’ was not considered the initial physical evidence of the spiritual experience of baptism in the Holy Spirit. However, it was a gift used by some for ministry or prayer language. The fourth one is about ministry, and the ministry under the power and anointing of the Holy Spirit is the doorway into the third wave experience rather than a spiritual experience as is typical of the first two waves. The context of ministry was most commonly a body of believers rather than individual activities of a faith healer or a specially gifted individual. The fifth one was avoidance of disunity at almost any cost. Compromise in areas such as raising of hands in worship, public tongues, methods of prayer for the sick, and others were cordially accepted in order to maintain harmony with those not in the Third Wave.

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<sup>791</sup> David B. Barrett, ‘The Twentieth-Century Pentecostal/Charismatic Renewal in the Holy Spirit with Its Goal of World Evangelization,’ *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 12, no. 3 (March 1988): 119; David B. Barrett, ‘Three Waves of Renewal,’ in *World Christian Encyclopedia: A Comparative Survey of Churches and Religions in the Modern World*, ed. David B. Barrett, George T. Kurian, and Todd M. Johnson, vol. I (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 19.

<sup>792</sup> David B. Barrett and Todd M. Johnson, ‘Third Wave Revival,’ *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 23, no. 1 (January 1999): 281.

<sup>793</sup> Wagner, ‘Third Wave,’ 1141.

<sup>794</sup> Based on 1 Corinthians 12: 13.

In a broader sense, this movement was also called the New Apostolic Reformation, and Peter Wagner coined it in his book *The New Apostolic Churches*. Wagner described specific distinctive characteristics of these neo-charismatic churches. One was about the new name, and the new name would not have the connection with any previous Pentecostal denominational labels. The second was the new authority structure based on the New Testament pattern of the apostolic church, which the office of the apostle assumes leadership.<sup>795</sup> According to Wagner, “the special ability that God gives to certain members of the body of Christ to assume and exercise general leadership over some churches with an extraordinary authority in spiritual matters that is spontaneously recognized and appreciated by those churches.”<sup>796</sup> The third was about the leadership training that was given in the local churches with an emphasis on gift and character rather than intellectual ability, and the ministry focus was ideally based on the vision of the founder or founders and focuses on the future. Next was about the worship that was a new worship style based on contemporary music and using worship bands, which encouraged every person in the congregation to become an active participant. Another specialty was about the new prayer forms in which members pray aloud and engage in prayer walks and also new power orientation with current emphasis on healing, exorcism, and prophecy. New financing in which generous giving was encouraged and teaching about ‘more than tithing.’ Finally, the mission or outreach ministry aspect was planting new churches and reaching out to the poor and the marginalized in the neighborhood.<sup>797</sup>

In recent years the ‘third wave’ is broadened and re-labeled as ‘neo-charismatic’ and it includes vast numbers of independent and indigenous churches and groups that cannot be classified as either Pentecostal or Charismatic, but they are with the Pentecostal-like experiences that have no traditional Pentecostal or Charismatic denominational connections.<sup>798</sup> Thus the ‘Neo-charismatics’ is a broader

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<sup>795</sup> Peter C. Wagner, *The New Apostolic Churches* (Ventura: Regal Books, 1998), 13–15.

<sup>796</sup> Peter C. Wagner, *Churchquake!: How the New Apostolic Reformation Is Shaking Up the Church as We Know It* (Ventura: Regal Books, 1999), 105.

<sup>797</sup> Wagner, *The New Apostolic Churches*, 18–25.

<sup>798</sup> Stanley M. Burgess and Eduard M. Van Der Mass, eds., ‘Introduction,’ in *The New International Dictionary of Pentecostals and Charismatic Movements* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2013), xviii.

category that includes the vast numbers of independent and indigenous churches and groups worldwide, and they are not under the category of Pentecostal or charismatic. According to *The New International Dictionary of Pentecostals and Charismatic Movements*, ‘neo-charismatic’ is a catch-all category that comprises 18,810 independent, indigenous, post-denominational denominations and groups that cannot be classified as either Pentecostal or Charismatic but share a common emphasis on the Holy Spirit, spiritual gifts, Pentecostal-like experiences, signs and wonders, and power encounters.<sup>799</sup>

The language of Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity is extremely complex one and different new groups and movements have attached different meanings to their name, identity, and expressions. The terms ‘Neo-Pentecostal,’ ‘Neo-Charismatics,’ and ‘Third Wave’ have used to designate different groups within Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity in different parts of the world. Walter Hollenweger defines the Neo-Pentecostals or Neo-Charismatics as “Pentecostal-like independent churches, the growth which became particularly discernible in the 1970’s.”<sup>800</sup> Chad M. Bauman who has done a study on ‘Pentecostals in India’ defines “Neo-Pentecostal” or “Neo-Charismatics” as denominations and churches emerged from or beside the older, and churches manifesting theologies and ritual practices similar to that of earlier Pentecostals and Charismatics, but outside of the traditional denominational space those earlier groups inhabited.<sup>801</sup> Bergunder’s observation regarding the doctrines of Neo-Pentecostals or Neo-Charismatics is that “initial evidence” as a doctrine of South Indian Neo-Pentecostalism.<sup>802</sup> However, Bauman argues against this based on his study and clarifies that the Neo-Pentecostals in South India consider tongues as a sign of commitment, piety, and belief, but not necessarily

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<sup>799</sup> Burgess and Van Der Mass, xx.

<sup>800</sup> Walter J. Hollenweger, *Pentecostalism: Origins and Developments Worldwide* (Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, 1997), 1.

<sup>801</sup> Bergunder reports among the South Indian Neo-Pentecostals he analyzed, belief in tongues as “initial evidence” was nearly universal. Chad M. Bauman, *Pentecostals, Proselytization, and Anti-Christian Violence in Contemporary India* (Oxford University Press, 2015), 27.

<sup>802</sup> Michael Bergunder, *The South Indian Pentecostal Movement in the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2008), 141–43.

the sole indicator of Holy Spirit baptism.<sup>803</sup> It is a clear observation in the context of Kerala too that the Neo-Pentecostals or neo-Charismatics in Kerala do not hold on the doctrinal position of ‘initial evidence.’ Paulson Pulikottil names the Pentecostal-like churches or movement as ‘Post-Denominationism.’ He defines it as “they don’t make any explicit claim of historical continuity and identity; they don’t insist on creedal conformity; they have practically no structure of governance. It is a very different way of imagining and being church.”<sup>804</sup> It is true that the neo-Pentecostals or neo-Charismatics in Kerala worship the same way the Classical Pentecostals worship or preach or involve in mission but they don’t emphasize the Classical Pentecostal distinctive such as “baptism in Holy Spirit” and “initial evidence.” Some of the common emphasizes of teachings of Neo-Pentecostals such as healing ministry, spiritual warfare, worship as evangelism and worship as healing, and denominational recomposition<sup>805</sup> can be seen in Kerala too.

### **5.3.2. Emergence and Phenomenal Growth of Third Wave or Neo-charismatic Churches in Kerala**

Christian churches with Pentecostal-like experiences with the current emphasis on the Holy Spirit, which have some connections with Classical Pentecostal denominations or Charismatic Movement, emerged in Kerala in the 1990s. However, the founders of these neo-charismatic churches or groups in Kerala had an association with Classical Pentecostal churches either as members or they were baptized under a Classical Pentecostal pastor. Yet these churches were independent, indigenous, post-denominational congregations, which come under the category of ‘neo-charismatics. The primary distinctive feature of the members of these congregations in Kerala was unlike Classical Pentecostalism, what signified was their willingness to stay in their historical faith traditions, and yet seek charismatic experiences, rather than leave their

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<sup>803</sup> Chad M. Bauman, *Pentecostals, Proselytization, and Anti-Christian Violence in Contemporary India* (Oxford University Press, 2015), 30–31.

<sup>804</sup> Paulson Pulikottil, ‘The Fittest Shall Survive: Post-Denominationalism and Classical Pentecostalism’ (Unpublished Paper Presented at A.C. George Centre for Pentecostal-Charismatic Studies, Bangalore, 12 February 2019).

<sup>805</sup> Michael J. McClymond, ‘Charismatic Renewal and Neo-Pentecostalism: From North American Origins to Global Permutations’, in *The Cambridge Companion to Pentecostalism*, ed. Cecil M. Robeck and Amos Yong (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 133–43.

churches and traditions and form new ones, as many Pentecostals had done in previous generations.

The first neo-charismatic church in Kerala was *Heavenly Feast or Swargheeya Virunnu*, which originated in December 1998 in Kottayam in Central Kerala. Mathew Kuruvilla, nicknamed, as Thangu was a businessman from Syrian Christian background who became a Pentecostal in December 1995 due to a miraculous healing experience in his personal life.<sup>806</sup> Since then he had his association with Classical Pentecostalism as a member of the *Indian Pentecostal Church of God* in Kottayam. In the same year, he began a small prayer fellowship in his business place at Kanjikuzhy, Kottayam with a friend Jake Thomas. Five to six people attended his meetings in the initial days, which slowly began to grow as a congregation. Then he hired a small auditorium at Kottayam and began to share the Word of God and pray for people. Later Thomas Abraham, who was a pastor of the Church of God in India joined this church and became the second leader.<sup>807</sup> Benny Kurian, the senior pastor of the Heavenly Feast Church, says, they started ministering to the people from the word of God, the power of Jesus manifested in each meeting through wonders, signs, and miracles.<sup>808</sup> People who began to come and attend the meetings had physical, economic, and emotional challenges. Some people who were addicted to alcoholic drinks and drugs, and people who went through economic crises, and some others who had severe health challenges attended the meetings and received deliverance and healing.<sup>809</sup> More people soon joined the church from different religious, economic, and social backgrounds and it became a megachurch in the city of Kottayam. The church was registered as a Public Charitable Trust with a board, a council, and a

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<sup>806</sup> Thangu had an accident in 1995, and he was paralyzed, and after the treatment also he could not walk without the help of somebody. In 1997 he attended a revival meeting of Amos Singh, a revival preacher from North India in Kottayam. Amos Singh prayed for Thangu and asked him to walk without help. Thangu experienced a divine touch of God, and he was healed. Benny Kurian, 'Swargheeya Virunnu: Kadha Ithuvare (Mal.) [Heavenly Feast: A Short History],' in *Reach World Wide: A Souvenir of Heavenly Feast* (Kottayam: Heavenly Feast Publications, 2013), 70.

<sup>807</sup> Kurian, 71.

<sup>808</sup> Benny Kurian, 'The Heaven's Sumptuous Feast,' accessed 5 August 2018, <http://www.theheavenlyfeast.org/the-heavens-sumptuous-feast/>.

<sup>809</sup> Kurian, 'Swargheeya Virunnu: Kadha Ithuvare (Mal.) [Heavenly Feast: A Short History],' 71.

presbytery for the administrative works.<sup>810</sup> Initially, it had only one congregation or a megachurch in Kottayam, but later it became a denomination with 75 branch churches in Kerala. At present Heavenly Feast has total 300 branches in other states in India, Gulf region, Europe, Canada, and in the United States of America and all churches are among the Keralite community only.<sup>811</sup> After 2008, Heavenly Feast faced severe opposition from some religious organizations and Christian churches. Religious conversion was the major accusation that came against them. According to the Church Council of Heavenly Feast, they do not encourage religious conversion instead they promote the transformation of individuals.<sup>812</sup> As Benny Kurian, the Senior Pastor of the Church observes, “it is true that thousands of people who are gathering in their services are either from a troubled social or health background or from a financially deteriorated background. After they joined the church, they received a transformation of life, which made them live a life in its full potential.”<sup>813</sup> The Church has Care cells, Prayer Cells, Home Fellowship Meetings, and Conventions, which promoted the growth of the Church. One major cause for church growth, according to Benny is that the leaders of the Church promoted the ministry of the laity. They encouraged the members of the Church to pray for others and expect a miracle. The Church has thousands of lay leaders and ministers.<sup>814</sup> In the last two decades, the Heavenly Feast impacted thousands of Keralites and led them to a transformation of life.

Damien Antony was born and brought up in a Christian family in Cochin. He had an earnest desire for understanding the Word of God in his youth. While he was in college in 1984, he attended a revival meeting of D.G.S Dinakaran and Paul Dinakaran; he had the experience of Baptism in the Holy Spirit.<sup>815</sup> In his college days,

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<sup>810</sup> ‘Swargeeya Virunnu Enthanu? (Mal.) [What Is Heavenly Feast?] - Church Council,’ in *Swargeeya Virunnu (Mal.) [Heavenly Feast]* (Kottayam: Heavenly Feast Publications, 2012), 10.

<sup>811</sup> Chacko, ‘Keralathil Pravarthikkunna Sabha Prasthanangal (Mal.) [Pentecostal Churches in Kerala],’ 402.

<sup>812</sup> ‘Swargeeya Virunnu Enthanu? (Mal.) [What Is Heavenly Feast?] - Church Council,’ 11.

<sup>813</sup> Benny Kurian, Interview by author, 10 September 2018.

<sup>814</sup> Kurian, ‘Swargheeya Virunnu: Kadha Ithuvare (Mal.) [Heavenly Feast: A Short History],’ 75.

<sup>815</sup> Damien Antony, ‘Charithra Thalukaliloode: Brother Damiente Viswasa Jeevithathinteyum Pravarthanathinteyum Lakhu Charithram (Mal.) [The History of the Faith Life and Ministry of Brother Damien],’ in *Milestones: Blessing Today 1000th Episode Celebration Edition, Souvenir 2014* (Ernakulam: Blessing Today, 2014), 21.

he was closely associated with a Classical Pentecostal church, and for ten years he was a faithful member of that church. In 1994, while he was pursuing his career as a teacher and publisher, he conducted regular prayer fellowship for youth and college students. In the same year, he named his fellowship as ‘The Master Ministries.’<sup>816</sup> In 1997, he left his job and concentrated more on the ministry among youth. In the year 1998, he conducted the first worship service for youth in a rented room in Cochin in Central Kerala. After 1998, he organized several revival meetings among the Pentecostals. His meetings named ‘Faith Revival Camp, Faith Workshop, Latter Rain, Jesus Meet, Cochin Crusade’ were interdenominational, and he invited Classical Pentecostal believers and pastors from all denominations.<sup>817</sup> In 1999, Damien began his regular Sunday services in a rented hall in Cochin. He named the worship place as ‘Prayer Chamber.’ Then within a few years, the congregation began to grow, and people experienced miracles and healings in every Sunday service. In 2002, the church was renamed as *Blessing Centre*, and in 2004, Damien and his wife Kshama began to host a tele-evangelism program named ‘Blessing Today.’ This television program impacted many people who were undergoing different kinds of sickness, family problems, financial struggles, and addictions. They promoted the testimonies of people who received deliverances through their prayer.<sup>818</sup> These testimonies encouraged many others to this program and the church. Syamala G. Nair a member from the early days of the church says, the people who are coming from different backgrounds expect deliverance from their sickness, financial troubles, family problems, and emotional challenges. The ministry of the Church will bless them all.<sup>819</sup> Blessing center in Cochin in Central Kerala has 4000 members and Blessing Center has 23 branches in India and one branch in the United Arab Emirates. They invite people from all religious and social background to attend the services.

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<sup>816</sup> Damien Antony, ‘When You Take One Step Forward, the Lord Comes Thousand Steps Closer to You,’ *Blessing Today* (blog), accessed 6 August 2018, <https://www.blessingtoday.tv/bro-damien/>.

<sup>817</sup> Antony, ‘Charithra Thalukaliloode: Brother Damiente Viswasa Jeevithathinteyum Pravarthanathinteyum Lakhu Charithram (Mal.) [The History of the Faith Life and Ministry of Brother Damien],’ 22.

<sup>818</sup> ‘Unarvinte Thiramalakal (Mal.) [Waves of Revival],’ in *Blessing Today Milestones, Souvenir 2014* (Ernakulam: Blessing Today, 2014), 54–55.

<sup>819</sup> Syamala Nair, Interview by author, 17 September 2018.

According to Damien, they do not believe in religious conversion. However, their vision is transformed communities and a prepared church for Jesus Christ.<sup>820</sup> It is true that this church is impacting communities and transforming them to experience Christian life.

*Exodus* was another neocharismatic church that began in January 2002 in Cochin, Central Kerala by Abe Tharakan and Sam John, who were musicians and youth leaders in the city of Cochin.<sup>821</sup> After their spiritual experience at a Classical Pentecostal prayer meeting, in September 1997 they began a rock band called 'Exodus' to impact young people. Later they formed a youth group to influence young people and through this youth group they committed their lives to serve the youth in the city of Cochin.<sup>822</sup> Slowly many youth began to dedicate their lives to become instruments of transformation in society. They emphasized the work of the Holy Spirit in the life of the people, and they devoted more time to meditate and teach from the Word of God and serve people. Finally, they established a church, with Malayalam service in 2002, in Cochin.<sup>823</sup> The church began with people from different religious and social backgrounds. Niran Nair a member from the early beginning of church observes that people who were going through different life situations, especially people with problems came to the church for deliverance and they received help and healing.<sup>824</sup> In 2006, they started an English service for the people from cross-cultural backgrounds. The administration of the church is under the Managing Board, in which Abe and Sam work as Trustee and Secretary. They have nine branches in Kerala and more than 90 branches in other states of India.<sup>825</sup>

Tinu George, who hailed from a Marthoma Syrian Church had a spiritual experience at the age of seventeen in a Classical Pentecostal prayer meeting in

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<sup>820</sup> Antony, 'When You Take One Step Forward, the Lord Comes Thousand Steps Closer to You.'

<sup>821</sup> Chacko, 'Keralathil Pravarthikkunna Sabha Prasthanangal (Mal.) [Pentecostal Churches in Kerala],' 408.

<sup>822</sup> 'Exodus: Global Harvest-Glorious Church,' accessed 19 August 2018, <http://exoduschurch.in/#ministry>.

<sup>823</sup> 'Honouring God, Building People,' accessed 19 August 2018, <http://exoduschurch.in>.

<sup>824</sup> Niran Nair, Interview by author, 18 September 2018.

<sup>825</sup> Samkutty Chacko Nilambur, ed., *Hallelujah Pentecostal Year Book 2015*, 356.

Kottarakkara. Then he committed his life to serve the Lord as an evangelist. In one of the evangelistic meetings he received the gift of healing, then he began to travel and preach the Word of God in many places.<sup>826</sup> In 2006, the world-famous tele-evangelist Roger Hosma ordained him as a pastor and soon he established *Jesus is Alive Global Worship Centre* in Kottarakkara, in central Kerala.<sup>827</sup> It has grown to become a mega church at Kottarakkara with 4000 people. People are gathering at this church every Sunday for worship, healing and deliverance and people are experiencing miracles and healings in this church. The testimonies of people reveal the fact that most of the members of this church received either healing of their sickness or deliverance from their alcoholic addiction or financial problems.<sup>828</sup> Under this church three satellite churches are functioning in Kerala in Cochin, Kottayam, and Trivandrum. This church has 18 branch churches in countries such as the United Arab Emirates, Kuwait, Oman, Australia, Israel, and the United Kingdom.<sup>829</sup> The vision of the church is not religious conversion, but the transformation of people from their troubled life experience to the fullness of life in Christ. Their focus is to reach the unreached with the gospel of Jesus Christ and train them to fulfill the Great Commission of Jesus Christ.<sup>830</sup> According to Sanju Mathew, a lay minister of the church, this church is emphasizing lay leaders. The church leadership believes that members of the church can pray for others and allow them to pray for the deliverance of people, which resulted in developing more lay leaders within the church.<sup>831</sup> This church also involves itself in charity work. Regularly they distribute free food to poor people who are in need, study materials for poor children, construct houses for poor people, and

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<sup>826</sup> 'Pastor Tinu George,' *El-Shaddai Ministry, Jesus Is Alive Global Worship Centre* (blog), 20 August 2018, <http://www.pastortinugeorge.org/about-pastor-tinu-george.php>.

<sup>827</sup> Tinu George, 'Editorial,' ed. Tinu George, *Yesu Jeevikkunnu (Mal.) [Jesus Is Alive]: Christian Family Magazine* 6, no. 1–2 (February 2016): 4.

<sup>828</sup> Tinu George, 'Sakshyangal (Mal.) [Testimonies],' *Yesu Jeevikkunnu (Mal.) [Jesus Is Alive]: Christian Family Magazine* 6, no. 1–2 (February 2016): 32–35.

<sup>829</sup> Chacko, 'Keralathil Pravarthikkunna Sabha Prasthanangal (Mal.) [Pentecostal Churches in Kerala],' 409.

<sup>830</sup> 'Vision,' *El-Shaddai Ministry, Jesus Is Alive Global Worship Centre* (blog), 20 August 2018, <http://www.pastortinugeorge.org/mission-vision.php>.

<sup>831</sup> Sanju Mathew, Interview by author, n.d.

financial support for marriage.<sup>832</sup> It is true that these charity works also attract people to this church.

### **5.3.3. Salient Features and the Causes of Phenomenal Growth of Neo-charismatic Churches in Kerala**

The neo-charismatic churches emerged in Kerala since 1998, and they had a phenomenal growth in the past two decades. These churches were developed indigenously and independently in Central Kerala, mainly in the districts of Kollam, Pathanamthitta, Kottayam, and Ernakulam under a few self-styled preachers or divine healers. These churches originated and grew into mega churches in three major cities in Kerala such as Ernakulam or Cochin, Kottayam, and Kottarakkara. The founder Pastors of all these neo-charismatic megachurches had an association with Classical Pentecostalism in the initial phase of their experience of the Baptism in the Holy Spirit. However, as part of the development of their churches, the founder Pastors separated themselves from Classical Pentecostalism in Kerala. According to M. Stephen, the neo-charismatic churches manifested a protest against traditional or Classical Pentecostalism in Kerala.<sup>833</sup> They protested against the worship pattern and organizational structures of Classical Pentecostal denominations in Kerala. The protest was against the sectarian tendencies based on non-doctrinal issues and leadership struggles. While the Classical Pentecostal churches in Kerala emphasized traditional organizational structure and hierarchy of ministry and leadership, these neo-charismatic churches and their leaders developed lay-leaders who had the anointing of the Holy Spirit and gifts of the Holy Spirit. More than theological education, the credibility of the preachers and evangelists in the neo-charismatic churches in Kerala was their claim of anointing to heal the sick people and deliver people from demon possession.<sup>834</sup> The lay leaders of neo-charismatic churches in

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<sup>832</sup> Tinu George, 'God's Love Charity Pravarthanangal (Mal.) [God's Love Charity Works: A Report],' *Yesu Jeevikkunnu (Mal.) [Jesus Is Alive]: Christian Family Magazine* 6, no. 1–2 (February 2016): 50–56.

<sup>833</sup> Stephen M., 'Removing the Blinders: Influence of the New Pentecostal Movement,' *Theology of Our Times*, no. 14 (July 2011): 78.

<sup>834</sup> Kurian, 'The Heaven's Sumptuous Feast'; Antony, 'Charithra Thalukaliloode: Brother Damiente Viswasa Jeevithathinteyum Pravarthanathinteyum Lakhu Charithram (Mal.) [The History of

Kerala received spiritual authority and freedom from their founder pastors. Thus the lay leaders ministered to people freely which influenced these churches. The institutionalization, organizational structure and the leadership crisis of the Classical Pentecostal denominations and the independent Pentecostal denominations created a 'needy context' for the growth of neo-charismatic churches in Kerala. According to R.C. Thomas, the spiritual and moral declension among the leaders and members of Classical Pentecostalism in Kerala became a significant cause for the growth of neo-charismatics in Kerala.<sup>835</sup>

These neo-charismatic churches attracted episcopal Christians in Kerala from Syrian Christian background, Roman Catholics, and Church of South India. M. Stephen observes some of these Christians were wholly detached from the membership of these episcopal churches, and some of them maintained their membership with their episcopal churches. Some of them wanted to keep their dual membership.<sup>836</sup> It is true that the thousands of people who are attending the services of megachurches are not full-fledged members; instead, they attend all the services of neo-charismatic churches and maintain their membership with their mainline churches. George Oommen observes, in Kerala, there are three models of affiliations regarding the nature of membership that are common among the participants of neo-charismatic churches.<sup>837</sup> One category of people who regularly keep their membership in the mainline churches; but fully adhere to the teachings and practices of neo-charismatic churches in Kerala. Another group keeps their identity and membership within the mainline churches but show their affinity towards neo-charismatic meetings. The third group of people separated from the mainline churches and took membership in the neo-charismatic churches in Kerala.<sup>838</sup> It is important to note what made some of the mainline Christians to attend and take membership in the neo-

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the Faith Life and Ministry of Brother Damien']; 'Exodus: Global Harvest-Glorious Church'; George, 'Editorial.'

<sup>835</sup> R.C. Thomas, *Nava Pentacostu Prasthanangal: Human Tragediyilninnu Divine Comediyilekku (Mal.) [Neo-charismatic Pentecostal Movements: A Sociological, Psychological, and Theological Search]* (Tiruvalla: Christava Sahithya Samithi, 2003), 76.

<sup>836</sup> Stephen M., 'Removing the Blinders: Influence of the New Pentecostal Movement,' 78.

<sup>837</sup> George Oommen, 'Pentecostal-Charismatic Movements in Post-Independent India: An Appraisal,' *Doon Theological Journal* 2, no. 2 (July 2005): 155.

<sup>838</sup> Oommen, 155.

charismatic megachurches. Some of the nominal Christians in Kerala thought that they have lost their 'true apostolic Christianity' due to historical traditions and practices. Hence they believed that they lost the chance to experience salvation. T.P. Kurien a member from the beginning of the church *Blessing Centre* says, "I was a Christian by birth, I attended the Sunday services, but in my innermost being I felt empty. I began searching the meaning of the oft-repeated word salvation, and I found Jesus in *the Blessing Centre*."<sup>839</sup> A national survey was conducted by a Roman Catholic All-India Consultation on the challenge of Neo-Pentecostalism and made a final statement.<sup>840</sup> According to the survey, the most frequently mentioned reasons or push factors are (a) lack of God-experience; (b) neglect of Scripture; (c) lack of fellowship.<sup>841</sup> It is true that the neo-charismatic mega churches in Kerala have a majority from Roman Catholic background and these push factors made them be part of the neo-charismatic movement.<sup>842</sup>

The signs and wonders, deliverance from demon possessions, praise, and worship with musical instruments or musical bands attracted people in Kerala to the neo-charismatic megachurches. All these neo-charismatic churches have musical bands with all musical instruments, and they give enough time in every service for praise and worship. The interpretation of the Bible and preaching emphasizing 'prosperity gospel,' healing, and deliverance also attracted people to these churches. While Classical Pentecostalism in Kerala restricted people to join the movement and church based on wearing ornaments for many decades, but neo charismatics welcomed everyone to their churches without any restrictions. Prosperity and blessing oriented teachings of the leaders of neo-charismatic churches in Kerala have found favour among many people because the preachers of these churches directly responded to the anxiety-related issues. V.V. Thomas observes, many of these

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<sup>839</sup> Kurien T.P., 'My Tryst With the Master Ministries: Testimony of T.P. Kurien and Mini Kurien,' in *Milestones: Blessing Today 1000th Episode Celebration Edition, Souvenir 2014* (Ernakulam: Blessing Today, 2014), 98.

<sup>840</sup> This consultation consisted of 86 members from all over India – 9 Bishops, 57 Priests, Brothers, 3 Sisters, 15, and Women. See 'The Challenge of Neo-Pentecostalism: Final Statement of the All-India Consultation, NBCLC Bangalore, 5-7 December 1996,' *Word and Worship* 30, no. 2 (April 1997): 120.

<sup>841</sup> 'The Challenge of Neo-Pentecostalism: Final Statement of the All-India Consultation, NBCLC Bangalore, 5-7 December 1996,' 121.

<sup>842</sup> George, 'Sakshyangal (Mal.) [Testimonies].'

preachers advocate piety and prayer to be secured against dangers and harms in life and as criteria for material blessing. It is a kind of ‘insurance’ theology.<sup>843</sup> It is worth noticing that the neo-charismatic churches in Kerala teach about prosperity theology through their sermons on deliverance or healing.<sup>844</sup> As Oommen says, the physical well-being and healing of ailments are integrally linked to this blessing-oriented understanding, or preaching of the neo-charismatic leaders of the neo-charismatic congregations in Kerala attracted many people to this movement.<sup>845</sup> The leaders and preachers of Neo-charismatic churches in Kerala bestowed great mental power on individuals, that is through their word of faith theology which helped people to overcome their sicknesses and life-challenging issues.

The social aspect of the phenomenal growth of neo-charismatic churches in Kerala is due to the location of these churches. The central Kerala, which includes the four districts of Kerala, Kollam, Pathanamthitta, Kottayam, and Ernakulam is the prime location for all these churches. The migration of Christians and their diasporas in Arabian countries and the United States of America and their connections with the people in Central Kerala was another cause for the growth of neo-charismatic churches. George Oommen observes, in the context of the demographic shift, migrants became susceptible to neo-charismatic movement.<sup>846</sup> As part of the act of migration and to get away from the effects of migration, some of the Christians in Kerala were looking for logical socio-religious substitutes and ties that could sustain them emotionally. So some of them and their relatives became part of the neo-charismatic movement due to the impact of migration. Uninterrupted financial flow through the Gulf returnees and the relatives of migrants in central Kerala and the profound influence of social remittances have significantly reoriented the growth of

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<sup>843</sup> Thomas V.V., ‘Contemporary Pentecostal Missiology: A Critical Analysis from An Insider,’ *Sathri Journal: A Journal of Contextual Theology* IX, no. 2 (October 2015): 95.

<sup>844</sup> ‘Swargeeya Virunnu Enthanu? (Mal.) [What Is Heavenly Feast?] - Church Council.’

<sup>845</sup> Oommen, ‘Pentecostal-Charismatic Movements in Post-Independent India: An Appraisal,’ 156–57.

<sup>846</sup> George Oommen, “Pentecostal-Charismatic Movements in Post-Independent India: An Appraisal,” 156.

neo-charismatic churches in Kerala.<sup>847</sup> In the beginning decades of the twentieth century, Classical Pentecostalism was a movement of the socially and economically deprived classes of people in Kerala that they struggled to live and follow the teachings of Pentecostalism. However, after the 1980s due to the massive social changes that occurred in Kerala society through urbanization with close association with modernization, economic transition, globalization, and migration to Arabian and other countries in the world, a transition of the sense of uprooting of people took place among the people in Kerala. As George Oommen observes, “this created a conducive environment for conversion and affiliation to Pentecostal-charismatic groups that are more close-knit in their socio-ethnic organization.”<sup>848</sup>

A social aspect of the growth of neo-charismatic churches in Kerala is that neo-charismatic churches provided a meaningful close-knit fellowship for the people in crisis. Through the care cells, prayer groups, fellowship gatherings, and leadership training the members of the church received social support from others which helped them to be part of the church.<sup>849</sup> George Oommen observes the neo-charismatic fellowships provide a meaningful alternate worldview to the people in crisis.<sup>850</sup> It is noticeable that the neo-charismatic churches in Kerala provided a sense of community to people who helped them knit-together with some people who had gone through the same kind of situation. Another social aspect of the growth of neo-charismatic churches in Kerala is the impact of globalization. Since globalization projected an ideal culture of emphasizing consumerism and profit and made the product appealing to the market, the leaders of neo-charismatic churches used the principles of globalization for the church growth. As V.V. Thomas observes, “the gospel is seen as

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<sup>847</sup> Ginu Zacharia Oommen, ‘Gulf Migration, Social Remittances and Religion: The Changing Dynamics of Kerala Christians - Research Paper, Senior Fellowship Programme, 2015’ (India Centre for Migration, Ministry of External Affairs, 2016), 11.

<sup>848</sup> Oommen, ‘Pentecostal-Charismatic Movements in Post-Independent India: An Appraisal,’ 156.

<sup>849</sup> George, ‘Sakshyangal (Mal.) [Testimonies]’; Antony, ‘Charithra Thalukaliloode: Brother Damiente Viswasa Jeevithathinteyum Pravarthanathinteyum Lakhu Charithram (Mal.) [The History of the Faith Life and Ministry of Brother Damien].’

<sup>850</sup> Oommen, ‘Pentecostal-Charismatic Movements in Post-Independent India: An Appraisal,’ 156.

a product, which the preacher must ‘sell’ the product.”<sup>851</sup> It is observed that the neo-charismatic leaders are tele-evangelists and they market their churches and activities through television programmes as a ‘brand’ and attract the people to their churches.<sup>852</sup> It is a transition of the missiology of Pentecostalism from the beginning decades of the twentieth century to the beginning decades of the twenty-first century. According to V.V. Thomas, it is the tendency among the neo-charismatic churches to promote their ‘church’ than promoting the founder of the church and His gospel.<sup>853</sup> It is a great transition that took place in the Pentecostal missiology. Once the Classical Pentecostal missiology in Kerala was based on Christ-centred gospel which brought people to the experiences of salvation and baptism in Holy Spirit. However it was transformed to the marketing or promoting of ‘Independent’ and ‘Third Wave’ churches that have ventured into ‘tele-evangelism’ and ‘neo-charismatic features.’

### Summary

This chapter concludes that the ‘Classical Pentecostalism’ that arrived in Kerala through the Classical Pentecostal missionaries from the United States had grown to the institutional structure with indigenous leadership and to a period of transition. It became a faith with much breakaway movement based on individualism, power-positions, wealth, and casteism. Classical Pentecostalism in Kerala, which produced several Indian and independent Pentecostal denominations in Kerala and all of them followed the doctrines, traditions, and practices of the existing Classical Pentecostal faith. Thus, Classical Pentecostalism faced a stagnation or slow growth in Kerala. The origin and growth of the Charismatic movement in Kerala was a significant shift of Pentecostal Christianity in Kerala. One of the distinctive features of Classical Pentecostalism that is ‘signs and wonders’ influenced the mainline churches in Kerala and the result of this influence was the progressive shift to neo-

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<sup>851</sup> Thomas V.V., ‘Contemporary Pentecostal Missiology: A Critical Analysis from An Insider,’ 96.

<sup>852</sup> Antony, ‘When You Take One Step Forward, the Lord Comes Thousand Steps Closer to You’; Antony, ‘Charithra Thalukalilode: Brother Damiente Viswasa Jeevithathinteyum Pravarthanathinteyum Lakhu Charithram (Mal.) [The History of the Faith Life and Ministry of Brother Damien]’; Kurian, ‘Swargheeya Virunnu: Kadha Ithuvare (Mal.) [Heavenly Feast: A Short History]’; George, ‘Editorial.’

<sup>853</sup> Thomas V.V., ‘Post Colonialism – Post Modernism and Post Pentecostalism: Perspectives and Challenges,’ in *Pentecostalism Today*, ed. Stephen M. and Jose T.M. (Manakala: Faith Theological Seminary, 2015), 113.

charismatic movement. It is true that the Pentecostal teachings and practices of Classical Pentecostalism had a significant role in the growth and development of neo-charismatic churches in Kerala. The changing situation, which includes the phenomenal growth of neo-charismatic churches in Kerala, has been a significant shift in worship, administration, leadership training, teaching, and membership of Classical Pentecostalism. It is a reformulation of the Classical Pentecostal mission, teaching, and practices to a newer level, which are more compatible with the future generations.

## CONCLUSION

This chapter is a summary of the research on 'Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity in Kerala: A Socio-Historical Analysis of Its Transition and Transformation.' The chapter also provides the findings of this research work.

The Introductory chapter of this thesis dealt with primarily the research questions and the methodology. The research questions centered predominantly on the history of the social and spiritual background of Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity in Kerala, the introduction of Classical Pentecostalism, development of indigenous, Indian and Independent Pentecostalism based on division, caste, and community, and the formation of charismatic and neo-charismatic churches. It also discussed the questions on different transitional and transformational phases of Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity in Kerala from its formation until today and the socio-cultural factors that influenced the transition and transformation of Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity in Kerala through history. This chapter also discussed the 'social history' methodology used in this study. This method on writing history considered the social transition, movements of the society, classes and divisions, contexts of work and ways of life, families, households, local communities, and urbanization, which impacted the Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity in Kerala. Augustus Cerillo's functional approach of writing the history of Pentecostalism as it demonstrates to interpret the history of Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity by evaluating the relationship of the structures of society with the members of this movement in Kerala is also discussed in this chapter. The remaining chapters attempted to answer these research questions with the help of social-history methodology and the functional approach of Augustus Cerillo to sketch the history of the transitional and transformational phases of Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity in Kerala.

Previous studies done on the history of Pentecostal Movement and its denominations in Kerala highlight the origin, growth, and development of denominations from the perspective of the Providential or Subaltern methodology and neglected or overlooked the socio-historical factors and their influence on the transition and transformation of the Pentecostal movement in Kerala. Even though this chapter portrays the characteristics of the history of Pentecostalism in Kerala from previous studies, it displays the lapses and missing links in the research works.

The necessity to re-examine the history of the Pentecostal movement in Kerala and to analyze the socio-historical factors of influence on the movement towards the transition and transformation of Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity is also emphasized in this chapter.

This research has portrayed that the caste-based social structure in all its inflexibility was a predominant element of Kerala society, as anyplace else in India in the nineteenth century. The expedition for social identity of the people in Tirunelveli and Kerala in their socio-religious context was the dominant background of the emergence of Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity in Kerala. The upper-cloth struggle among the *Shanars* in Tirunelveli and South Kerala, the Nair reform movement by Chattampi Swamikal in Kerala, the social reform movement among the *Izhavas* by Sree Narayana Guru, and Ayyankali and the renaissance among the Pulayas made an impact on Kerala society towards social transformation. The most significant impact of the social transformation was the upliftment of backward communities, which created in them a transition in their whole lifestyle and prompted them to highlight their own identity. The social context of Kerala in the first half of the twentieth century outlined the historical development of communal and social organizations, Dalit movements, Nationalism, and temple entry movements, which contributed to a transformed Kerala society. The freedom to enter a temple and freedom of worship made the Dalit communities to redefine their religious experiences not to be confined to the religion of the higher castes and to be open for a change. The spirit of nationalism that prevailed among the people at that time provided them with a spirit of self-determination. The Communist ideologies that emerged in Kerala society in the middle of the twentieth century enhanced further the deprived working classes of people to demand their rights and privileges associated with their work and to form organizations. The ordinary people's acceptance of Communism as a social reform movement provided hope for future emancipation of the suffering people in the Kerala society. The popularity of Communism among the Dalits and Dalit Christians resulted in their active involvement in trade union organizations and the identification of self-dignity within the Syrian and Anglican Christianity in Kerala. The social context of Kerala after 1970 was another period of social change in the Kerala society primarily due to migration, economic development in the society, impact of media on people, addiction to alcoholism, and the emotional challenges contributed to the suicidal tendency among the people. As a result,

personal life in Kerala society was though marked by traditionalism and religiosity; it became a pretentious pattern of utilization and insensitivity to social obligations.

This research provided the history of the spiritual background of the initial phase of Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity in Kerala in terms of apostolic Christianity, which was transformed, to Persian, then to Roman Catholic, and then to Anglican, which contributed to a spiritual change in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. It identified that the spiritual reformation among the Syrian Christians in Central Kerala was the immediate cause for spiritual renewal and acceptance of Pentecostal-like experiences among them. In this context of transformed spiritual context, John Christian Arulappan, who had an encounter with a revival experience of Christianity in Tirunelveli, arrived in Kerala. The Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity, which emerged in Tirunelveli indigenously and independently, arrived in Kerala in the context of spiritual transformation among the Syrian Christians in Central Kerala and impacted their Christian spirituality. John Christian Arulappan's visit to Kerala and the revival meetings among the Syrian Christians in Central Kerala from 1860 to 1909 resulted in the rise of indigenous lay ministry and the independent congregations in Kerala. The Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity in turn emerged in Kerala as a revival movement among the Syrian Christians and it got well established in the society through the formation of independent congregations. It further challenged the view that Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity in Kerala is an imported religious movement from the United States of America by the American Pentecostal missionaries in the beginning decades of the twentieth century. This study also presented an indispensable analysis of the comprehensive history of Classical Pentecostalism that emerged in the United States as a spiritual movement, and later as it grew as an organization with the distinctive doctrine of 'initial evidence.' It further traced the history of the establishment of Classical Pentecostalism in Kerala through missionary efforts. Though Classical Pentecostalism had an imported stem, it was well associated with Kerala society and transformed the indigenous congregations into Classical Pentecostalism. This study also indicated that Classical Pentecostalism had good acceptance among the Dalits in Kerala due to the outward expression of 'oneness' among the members as brothers and sisters in Christ.

The study brought out the historical fact that for the Keralite Christians, Classical Pentecostalism brought the gifts of Holy Spirit in promoting leadership and building the church and its mission in ways previously unimaginable. After two

hundred years of Protestant Missionary efforts from foreign lands in India, it was only during the time of the indigenous Classical Pentecostalism in Kerala that the native evangelists and church workers got the opportunities to lead a denomination or a church in Kerala. Thus it was only due to indigenous Classical Pentecostalism, which contributed to the indigenous shoulders to take responsibility of the leadership and mission of the church. The research highlights that the significant transitional and transformational growth of Classical Pentecostal denominations which took place in the social context of Kerala contributed towards the emergence of indigenous leadership, indigenization of worship and ministry, development of Pentecostal theology, theological education, and local witness. At the same time, positively this period witnessed the emergence and growth of Indian and Independent Pentecostal denominations in Kerala but negatively experienced splits and leadership struggles. For some, it was the 'dark era of Pentecostalism in Kerala' due to the splits in the Classical Pentecostal denominations based on caste and the emergence of caste-based Pentecostal denominations. However, for others, it was a period of strengthening Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity in Kerala that had grown to the extent of developing an Indian and Independent identity.

Moreover, this study indicated that 'independent Pentecostalism' is a vital factor that provided Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity in Kerala the face of a 'local faith' against the view of 'imported foreign faith.' This research presented that Indian and independent movement of indigenous Classical Pentecostalism in Kerala was a breakaway movement from that which was based on individualism, power-positions, wealth, and caste. Though indigenous Classical Pentecostalism and its products of Indian and independent Pentecostal denominations in Kerala followed the doctrines, traditions, and practices of the global Classical Pentecostal denominations, it had considerable growth in Kerala.

The research helped to know the causes of the stagnation and slow growth of Classical Pentecostalism in Kerala during the period after the 1980s. It identified that in the context of the stagnation of Classical Pentecostal denominations in Kerala, it caused the emergence and growth of Charismatic Renewal movement and the neo-charismatic churches. It offered a challenging history of the emergence and growth of neo-charismatics globally to see its impact on the phenomenal growth of neo-charismatic churches in Kerala. Although the Charismatic and neo-charismatic churches in Kerala is a new phenomenon in Kerala, it has become the fastest growing

sector of Christianity in Kerala. Even though the neo-Charismatic churches influenced the traditional or mainline Christians in Kerala, this chapter shows the progressive impact of neo-charismatic movement on Classical Pentecostalism. It also suggested that the Pentecostal teachings and practices of Classical Pentecostalism had a significant role in the growth and development of neo-charismatic churches in Kerala. The changing situation, which included the phenomenal growth of neo-charismatic churches in Kerala, has been partly responsible for the reformulation of the Pentecostal mission, its teaching, and practices in Kerala today.

### **Findings of the Study**

#### **1. The Uniqueness of the Origin of Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity in Kerala**

It is imperative to notice that the indigenous spiritual revival of Tirunelveli under the leadership of native Christian leader John Christian Arulappan occurred in a social context of struggles of Shanars due to the caste discrimination and upper-cloth revolt. The social movements against the religious and caste-oriented social structures in Kerala in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century influenced a section of Syrian Christians to enhance a spiritual reformation against their spiritual oppression of foreign ecclesiastical tradition. The revolt against social oppression and the rise of Dalit leadership were the two social factors that influenced for the revival movement among a section of Syrian Christians in Central Kerala. The indigenous revivalism with Pentecostal-like characteristics that arrived and spread among this section of Syrian Christians in Central Kerala contributed to the formation of indigenous and independent congregations. When Classical Pentecostalism arrived in Kerala at the beginning of the twentieth century from Azusa Street with its distinctive doctrine of ‘initial evidence,’ it had a natural confluence with the indigenous congregations in Kerala. This study ascertained that these revivals among the Syrian Christians in Central Kerala were not just the background of the origin of Classical Pentecostalism, but it can be re-interpreted as “it was an indigenous, pre-Pentecostal or Pentecostal-like manifestation that paved the way for the arrival and growth of the Classical Pentecostal message in Kerala.”

## **2. Dalits' Embrace of Classical Pentecostalism was against their Struggle of Caste Discrimination and Search for Freedom, Identity, and Dignity**

The social movements of the Dalits in Kerala against the social oppression in the second half of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century were their attempt to experience freedom and identity in the society. The Dalits were bound to some of the religious practices, which restricted them to enter into the worship places, and also questioned their identity and dignity in the society. In this context of their struggles, the Classical Pentecostalism with its features of freedom in Spirit worship, openness to the struggles of people, and the spirit of oneness among its adherents provided an opportunity for the acceptance of Classical Pentecostalism among the Dalits. Classical Pentecostalism appeared to them as a partial answer for their century's long search for freedom, identity, and dignity in the society.

## **3. The Transition of Classical Pentecostalism to Indian Pentecostalism**

In the second phase of Classical Pentecostalism in Kerala (1923-1977), it had a significant transition in its appearance, features, leadership, and functions. In this remarkable facet of transition of Classical Pentecostalism in Kerala, it developed with an identity of 'Indian Pentecostal movement.' In the process of transition, Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity as a movement empowered the local people to exhibit their leadership abilities. As identified by historians and scholars, this period in the history of Kerala society was a significant period of transition and transformation. The rising nationalism, the demand for home rule in India, the temple entry movements, Communism and its ideologies, and trade union movements impacted the native pastors and members of Classical Pentecostalism. Along with the Kerala society, which went through the social transition, the Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity went through a transition from the 'foreign-oriented Classical Pentecostalism' to an 'Indian Classical Pentecostalism.'

## **4. Indigenous Leadership of Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity in Kerala: A Product of Indian and Independent Classical Pentecostalism**

Indian and Independent Pentecostalism had brought not just transformation of the movement, but separate denominations or churches that originated locally. It also contributed to the emergence of indigenous leadership. Responsibility for the

leadership of the denominations and evangelism activities came to the indigenous Pentecostal leaders with strong indigenous dimensions. The Classical Pentecostal experience and the impact of the social context helped them to lead new spiritual movements in Kerala. They became the pioneers of the establishment of new Pentecostal denominations in Kerala. Not surprisingly, however, this indigenous movement coincided with the leadership spectrum of American Pentecostal missionaries who worked in Kerala during this period.

In the period, that is the second decade of the twentieth century, when the American missionaries Robert F. Cook and Mary W. Chapman represented the institutionalized Classical Pentecostalism of the Western soil attempted to develop the Classical Pentecostal denominations in Kerala, they controlled the missions and churches. They considered the native evangelists who worked side by side with the missionaries only as assistants and subordinates. However, in this period of the transition of Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity in Kerala, the indigenous leadership challenged the monopoly of the American Pentecostal leadership. The spirit of nationalism and home rule movement, which were prevalent in Kerala during this period, was the primary social factors, which influenced indigenous leadership.

##### **5. *Swadeshi* Church: A Transformational Growth of Classical Pentecostalism under Indigenous Leadership**

The Indian Pentecostal Church of God, Assemblies of God, and Ceylon Pentecostal Church had indigenous leadership in the transitional period of Indian and Independent Pentecostalism. During this period of transition, all these churches showed a transformational growth. The primary feature of transformational growth was its *Swadeshi* nature. The indigenous leadership of these denominations emphasized ‘ecclesiastical freedom of the local church’ in terms administration and finances. The leadership strengthened the local leaders of the churches not to depend on the financial support of the foreign mission agent instead find ways locally to meet their needs. The leadership also promoted an Indian identity consciousness in the missionary activities among the evangelists and local pastors. The indigenous leadership strengthened the local fellowship gatherings of the native pastors and evangelists, which promoted local mission.

## **6. The Transition of Classical Pentecostalism to Independent Pentecostalism**

In the second phase of the transition of Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity in Kerala, the Classical Pentecostalism transformed itself to become an ‘Independent institution.’ Thus the two Classical Pentecostal denominations imported from the United States of America, Assemblies of God and the Church of God, the one imported from Sri Lanka had transformational growth in Kerala under indigenous leadership. Indian Pentecostal Church of God as an indigenous denomination had its broad spectrum of growth because of its Indian identity. The influence of the social context of Kerala such as the Communist ideologies and its demand for autonomy, the demand of labour class people for their rights and privileges, and the trade union movements impacted the formation of many independent Pentecostal denominations in Kerala. All of them followed the doctrines of Classical Pentecostalism but had the differences in the style of leadership and administration. The leaders and founders who initiated the formation of these new denominations had splits or conflicts of interests with their mother church of Classical Pentecostalism. The spirit of autonomy and the demand for their rights and privileges made them give leadership for new denominations.

## **7. Dalit Pentecostalism: A Product of Independent Classical Pentecostalism**

In the second transitional period of Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity in Kerala, the Classical Pentecostalism had a transformational phase of divisions in Classical Pentecostalism and formation of new denominations based on the castes of the adherents. The exclusive Dalit Pentecostal churches emerged in Kerala during this period. The first Dalit Pentecostal denomination was Independent Church of God in India, which emerged in 1947, and The Church of God was divided based on caste, and an exclusive Dalit Church of God was established in 1972. The research indicated that the social context of Kerala during this time, especially the growth of Communism and the trade union movements among the working class people influenced the formation of exclusive Dalit Pentecostal churches. Even though they followed and practiced the doctrines of Classical Pentecostalism, they developed exclusive Dalit leadership, self-governance, and self-supportive churches. It is observed that the emergence of Dalit Pentecostalism considered by the Dalit Pentecostal churches and adherents, was a God-given opportunity for fulfilling the visions and dreams of God through them.

## **8. Transformation of Classical Pentecostalism into Sectarianism**

The research indicated that the indigenous leaders of Indian and independent Pentecostalism during the transitional period of Classical Pentecostalism (from 1923 to 1977), developed a 'doctrine of separation.' The Classical Pentecostals emphasized the maintenance of the purity of a believer through good separation from the worldly affairs, which is equal to the biblical doctrine of sanctification. The indigenous leaders of Classical Pentecostalism promoted their teachings of separation and the removal of ornaments as a distinguished mark of Classical Pentecostalism through their writings and sermons. The Indian and independent Pentecostal leaders promoted the doctrine of separation as equal to the biblical doctrine of Classical Pentecostalism. The transformation of Classical Pentecostalism to a 'sect' within Christianity negatively affected its growth and expansion in Kerala.

## **9. Organizational Pluralism in Classical Pentecostalism**

The research identified that the Classical Pentecostalism after 1978 went through a period of transition and transformation in Kerala. The Classical Pentecostal denominations such as Assemblies of God, Indian Pentecostal Church of God, Ceylon Pentecostal Church of God, Church of God (State and Division), and the independent churches experienced a phase of transition in terms of splits, conflicts, leadership crisis, and internal flights. The primary cause behind all these issues, which badly affected the growth of the church, was 'finance or wealth.' The social context of Kerala, which had a transformation of society due to the migration of Keralites to the Arabian countries, and the United States of America, and its after-effects of economic transformation caused for splits and conflicts in the movement. This social context also influenced the pastors of the denominations to develop organizations, mission agencies, Bible colleges within their Classical Pentecostal denominations. The leaders of these organizations brought their finances from the migrant Keralites and the Keralite Pentecostal churches in the Arabian and European countries, and the United States of America. All those organizations and institutions were affiliated to the Classical Pentecostal denominations.

## **10. Charismatic Christianity in Kerala: Spiritual Empowerment Outside of Classical Pentecostalism**

The research pointed out that the period after 1978 witnessed the spiritual experiences of Holy Spirit such as prophecy, healing, and miracles, which the Classical Pentecostal movement in Kerala kept with them for decades as a distinctive mark of Classical Pentecostalism. This became a shared experience of the adherents of Catholic Charismatic movement in Kerala. The spiritual reason for this transition was the enthusiasm of the members of the Roman Catholic Church to listen to the voice of God through His Word. The social reason for this transition was the growing addiction of alcoholism among men and its psychosocial effects on families, which attracted people to prayer for the deliverance and inner healing in the Charismatic movement. The Charismatic prayer and worship, and the experiences of the gifts of Holy Spirit provided a social togetherness among the believers, which gained popularity among the Catholics and Christians in Kerala.

## **11. Personal Wholeness and Numerical Growth of Neo-Charismatic Churches in Kerala**

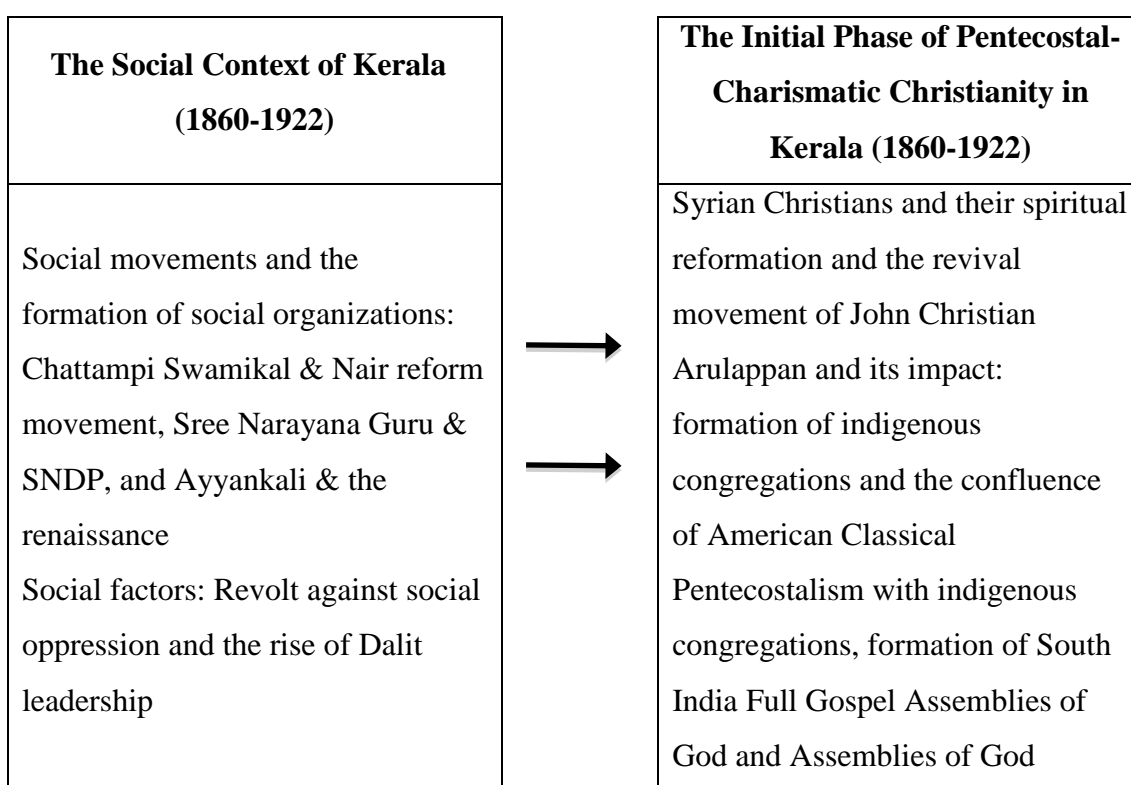
The adherents of neo-charismatic churches in Kerala claim that many were attracted to the neo-charismatic churches because these churches emphasized the message of personal wholeness through physical healings and deliverance from demon-possession. The sick and demon-possessed people often got healed and were delivered when the leaders of the neo-charismatic churches prayed for them in their prayer meetings or worship services. Unlike Classical Pentecostalism, what signified was the freedom of its adherents to stay in their historical faith traditions, and yet seek charismatic experiences. Rather than leave their churches and traditions, they contributed to the numerical growth of neo-charismatic congregations. One of the social reasons for the numerical growth was due to the social context and its challenges of alcoholism, impact of media, financial instability, emotional challenges that dragged the people to the neo-charismatic congregations. Another social reason was due to the close-knit fellowship that they provided for the people in crisis and the social status that they received in such fellowships. These attracted more people to neo-charismatic churches.

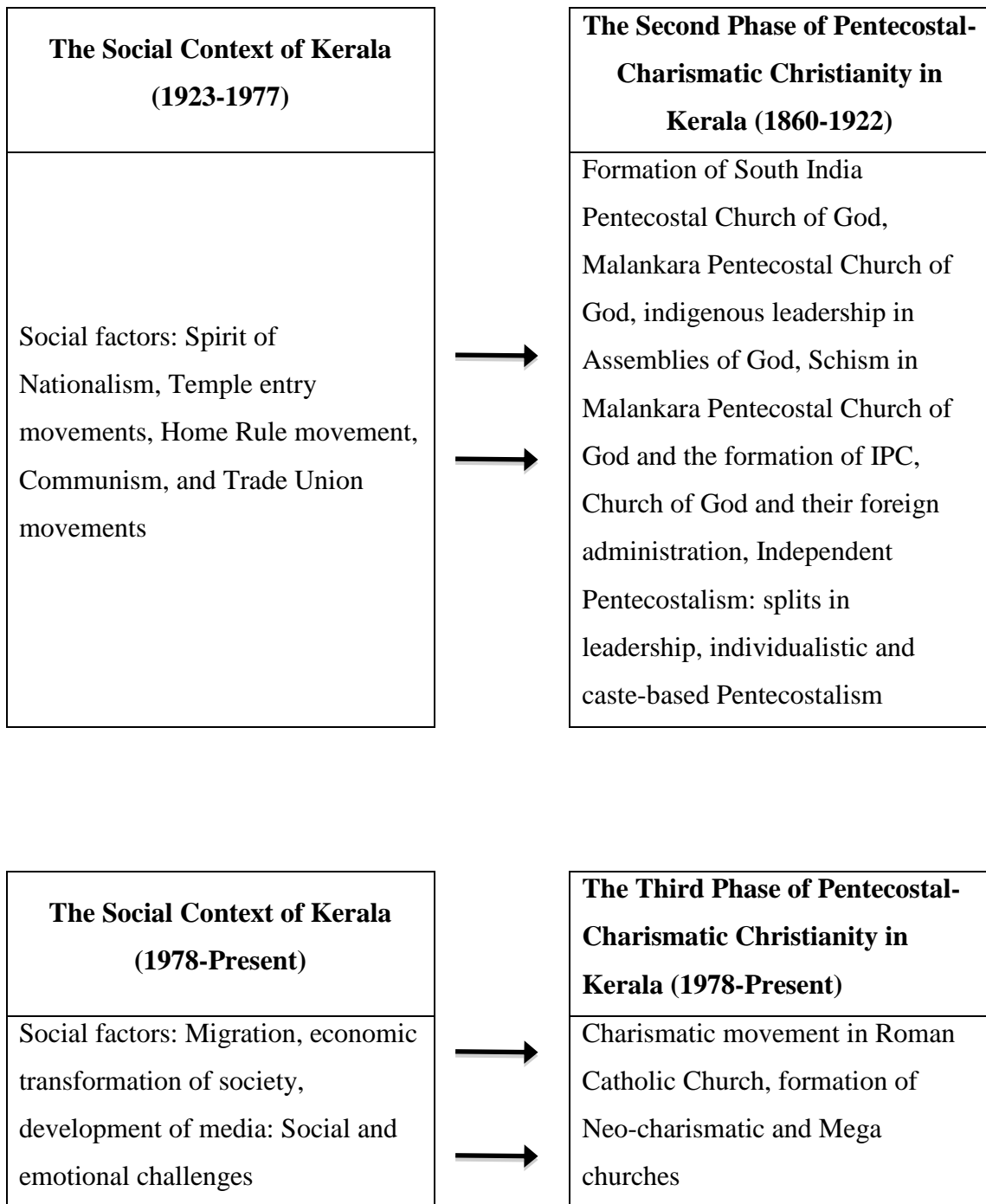
## **12. Emphasis on Anointing over Theological Education**

Since the development of Classical Pentecostalism in Kerala, the leaders and denominations emphasized the value of theological education. They established theological institutions as Bible Schools, Colleges, and Seminaries. Initially, the purpose of theological education was to train native evangelists and ministers to become pastors and evangelists to continue the mission of the Church. Later after the 1970s, the Classical Pentecostals emphasized academic theological training, which focused on producing theological educators, writers, and theologians. Since 1980, many theological institutions as the product of organizational pluralism promoted higher theological learning. However, the emergence of Charismatic movement and the neo-charismatic churches and its phenomenal growth emphasized anointing of the Holy Spirit as a requirement for mission and ministry. The founder pastors and leaders of neo-charismatic megachurches had not gone for theological education, and they trained their lay leaders without a theological education. They emphasized the anointing of the Holy Spirit and exercising the spiritual gifts of physical healing and exorcisms in their churches, and they trained their lay leaders to experience and exercise the anointing of the Holy Spirit.

**APPENDIX A:**

**A Chart of the History of Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity in Kerala**





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