PentecoStudies, vol. 5, no. 1, 2006, pp. 1-17
Simon Coleman, Studying "Global" Pentecostalism
ISSN 1871-7691

Studying "Global" Pentecostalism

Tensions, Representations and Opportunities

Simon Coleman
University of Sussex

DELIGHTS AND DILEMMAS

I want to start with a prayer. Not, you may be relieved to know, a prayer that I am intending to pronounce over today's assembly, but one that I heard a couple of months ago during the Sunday morning service of the Word of Life 'Faith' ministry in Uppsala, Sweden.[1] Early on in the service it is the custom for a very visible donation to take place. White plastic buckets are passed round so that everybody has the chance to fill it with coins, banknotes or specially designed promissory notes, all of which are dedicated to a 'good cause'. On this occasion the object of the dedication was the congregation itself, and the young preacher who urged us to give our money to the Word of Life also provided a remarkable perspective on our collective purpose. We were asked to pray for the world, Israel, Sweden, Uppsala, the congregation and its leaders, the local cell-groups that involve members of the Word of Life meeting regularly in small gatherings, and then for the economy of the ministry and finally for its task of encouraging mission, far away from the Word of Life itself.

Two dimensions of this prayer are significant for us. First, notice its trajectory: from 'the world' the focus becomes ever more intense and localised, ultimately reaching 'cells' made up of a handful of active believers. Crucially, however, the prayer does not stop there, at its point of maximum introversion. Our viewpoint immediately broadens out again, touching not only finances but also the wider projects that such resources can promote, looking towards unlimited potential arenas of action beyond Uppsala. The prayer can be seen as sketching a charismatic landscape constituted by movements of both material goods and the imagination, incorporating cartographic as well as face-to-face perspectives, juxtaposing a focus on the self with reference to a kind of charismatic sublime that reaches out beyond the

here and now. Second, notice that this landscape is not constituted as a verbal portrait alone, but also as a performance with performative intent. Words and gifts are meant to contribute very concretely to the monetary and moral economy of the group. And as audience we are expected to move from being listeners to collective actors, both speaking out words and donating resources in order actively to help create the landscape that has been described for us.

I start with this prayer because I think it encapsulates some of the delights and dilemmas in wait for an ethnographer studying these believers. On the one hand it is a perfect example of what for me, an anthropologist of no religious affiliation, is *aesthetically* satisfying about participation in such worship. In a few fluent phrases the preacher encapsulates a sense of 'reaching out' into the world - an orientation that is so much a part of what it means to be a member of an ambitious Faith ministry such as the Word of Life. We see how such an attempt to locate one's actions in terms of wider temporal and spatial frames turns charismatic 'globalization' away from its status as abstract sociological process and converts it into a quality of action that can be observed and experienced (Coleman 2000). What is more, the trajectory of the prayer can be understood in terms of other, very material frames conveying the same kind of message: the flags from many countries that line one side of the hall, the knowledge that the service is being broadcast simultaneously on the Internet and within minutes of finishing will be available to be bought on video and CD, the fact that this Sunday morning service also marks the end of one of the many big conferences that the Word of Life hosts each year.[2]

On the other hand the pastor's prayer also encapsulates what is so challenging for an anthropologist studying this form of Christianity, embodying the 'tensions' that I refer to in my title. The preacher's words can be seen as a ritual expression of the cultural and social distances that the fieldworker, customarily rooted to the ethnographic spot, somehow has to comprehend. Indeed, the prayer describes a ministry that is constructing itself as a moving centre among other centres, a location that - at least in rhetorical terms - is constantly deferring to others in its theological and missionary orientations but also being deferred to by them as Christians from Eastern Europe, the US, parts of Africa, Israel and so on flow to and from Uppsala.[3] Furthermore, given the traditional anthropological reflex of rooting supposedly holistic culture in fixed place, there is the problem that Pentecostalism and

charismatic Christianity, at least in their self-consciously globalising forms, always seems to constitute 'part-cultures', presenting worldviews meant for export but often in tension with the values of any given host society. Until relatively recently it was not that unusual for ethnographers to resolve this problem by simply ignoring the presence of such Christians in a given field, especially if they came from the West, seeing them as so much background cultural noise to the real business of studying 'authentic' forms of local culture (cf. Coleman forthcoming). Finally, as an ethnographer I need to ask what I am to make of the sheer force of the ritual language I am describing, the eloquence of its self-description allied with a narrative power that often encapsulates and redefines cultural others, including academia itself. As a 'part-culture', Pentecostalism in its myriad forms is an old-hand at acknowledging and neutralizing alternative epistemologies; certainly as a fieldworker at the Word of Life I was sometimes assumed by believers to have arrived at the ministry for divine purposes that I did not myself understand.

In this paper, I want to explore these and other tensions for a social scientist working among Pentecostals and charismatics, but I also want to link them through the trope constituted in the prayer that I began with: that of distance. Anthropology, my discipline, is supposedly expert at comprehending cultural and geographical difference, but I am interested in asking whether particularly thorny issues of fieldwork and writing are raised in studying such Christians, relating not only to how the fieldworker is to negotiate *ideological* distance in relation to believers but also to how ethnographic fieldwork can orient itself in relation to the *imaginative* and *physical* distances covered by informants who are often mobile in deed as well as thought. In reflecting on these issues, and in considering how I think methodological tensions are currently turning into opportunities for fieldworkers, my argument is going to be a fairly straightforward if perhaps contentious one: it seems to me that Pentecostalism has been something of a taboo subject in anthropology but is now becoming, if not exactly popular, then at least increasingly visible. In fact, a highly distinguished professor of anthropology recently lamented to me that his entire department seemed to be studying Christianity, much of it Pentecostal and charismatic. But one of the interesting, and ironic, dimensions of these developments is that the reasons for the presence of past taboos and for the emergence of current visibilities may be basically the same. They may also resonate with some of the

reasons for setting up of the network of scholars of Pentecostalism that this journal celebrates.

My method for tracing this argument is going to be three-fold. Initially I will present what I am (somewhat infelicitously) calling the 'anthropologisation of Pentecostalism', in other words the ways in which ethnographers have defined Pentecostalism as a troubling field of study within the almost equally troubling sub-field of an anthropology of Christianity. Then I will try to isolate three key areas of juxtaposition, where Pentecostalism and anthropology display some key differences but also some intriguing parallels. Finally, I will talk of 'the Pentecostalisation of anthropology,' how - at least in some respects - these two ways of understanding the modern world have come to have some curious resonances.

Before I continue, however, I should make a brief comment on nomenclature. I am going to be referring for much of the time to my work on Faith Christianity, a movement that has variously been referred to as charismatic, neo-charismatic or neo-Pentecostal, while I am also going more briefly to be discussing my work on more 'classical' Pentecostals. I hope that you will forgive me if at times I use the term 'Pentecostalism' to refer to both of these manifestations of revivalist Christianity - my justification is that despite their differences they occupy significantly overlapping universes of anthropological discourse.

THE ANTHROPOLOGIZATION OF PENTECOSTALISM

A few weeks ago I attended an anthropology conference in the US, and at a party I found myself chatting to two fellow ethnographers of Pentecostalism. Knowing that I was going to be writing this paper once I got home, I decided to do a bit of proto-fieldwork and asked both of them what the main theme should be of a presentation dealing with the 'problems' ethnographers have had with studying Pentecostals. Both replied pretty much instantly, with the same word: 'distance'. I hope I am not over-interpreting my colleagues' response by saying that I think they were referring to an age-old insider-outsider problem that has faced all scholars of religion, not just anthropologists, but that they were also implying that it had special salience for ethnographers of Pentecostalism. Why might this be?

I will try to answer that question as briefly as possible. Quite recently the anthropologist Alfred Gell (1992), drawing on the work of Peter Berger (1967:107), commended social scientists of religion for what he thought of as their 'methodological atheism'. He concluded (p.42) 'nobody expects a sociologist of religion to adopt the premises of the religion he discusses; indeed, he [sic] is obliged not to do so.'

Of course there is much that one could immediately respond to in Gell's assertion - I could for instance launch at this point into an extended discussion of whether non-believers can understand 'belief' in general terms - but that is not my point. My real question is this: Given that a large degree of 'methodological atheism' permeates the social sciences, why should my two party interlocutors have been so quick to acknowledge a specific problem in the study of Pentecostalism? One salient factor, I think, is that Gell largely ignores a key, generic feature of much ethnographic work, the fact that post-Malinowski, as the anthropologist Kirsten Hastrup (1993:174) has noted, 'there has been an expectation that ethnographers learn to think, feel and often even behave like a native.' The basic principle behind such an assumption appears to be - at least ideally - 'the closer the better' - distance at least partially transcended by proximity. So methodological atheism combines curiously with a kind of phenomenological empathy, an assumption that practice leads if not to belief then to a form of understanding that has an 'as if', subjunctive quality to it that seems particularly potent when studying religion. Yet this principle leads us to a real problem of distance when we study religions that look very different to classic anthropological fields. How are we to deal with believers such as those at the Word of Life who are in the habit of redefining the terms of both distance and proximity in our encounters with them, who are used to living in part-worlds, and seem both to be aware of and explicitly opposed to many of the principles on which our work is based?

This kind of self-consciousness is not present among all Pentecostals, but it is present among many, and in reflecting on these issues I often think back to a student meeting I attended many years ago where the speaker, a university-trained member of the Word of Life, presented his own hierarchy of disciplines. Useful topics of study such as law and engineering came top of the pile; at the bottom were both theology and anthropology - the former because it offended the revivalist principle of retaining

spontaneity and the workings of the spirit in discussions of God, the latter because it put so many different notions of God on an equal epistemological and ontological footing. Even through my discomfort I could not help admiring the speaker's ability to encapsulate academia within a wider, self-confident and all embracing cosmology, and moreover one able to negotiate its own distance to my own discipline. And the charismatic and more broadly conservative Protestant response does not stop there, of course. The Word of Life has taught its own version of anthropology at its university, for instance, while Susan Harding in her studies of fundamentalism has vividly described an even more powerful strategy of appropriation. One of Harding's most famous papers (1987) is based on her encounter with a Baptist Revd. Cantrell in his office at a church in the US. What Harding hopes will be an ethnographic interview turns very quickly into an unsettling encounter, where performative language is shot at the unwashed listener - herself - in a linguistic encounter that takes no account of her understandings of the situation. Less dramatically, in her work on Pentecostal women preachers in Missouri, Elaine Lawless (1992) talks of the problems of becoming a close friend of a woman who is also a source of deep frustration to her, as social proximity combines with unsettling ideological distance. Whenever Sister Anna refers to 'God giving her strength' to withstand illness, Lawless finds herself guiltily wanting to ignore this conclusion, wanting to see strength as coming from Anna herself.[4] We see why Karla Poewe, herself both a believer and an anthropologist, notes (1994:1) that charismatic Christianity does not measure up to scholars' notions about intellectual progress, progressive refinement, religious ideas and political correctness, and Harding in another paper (1991) goes further in describing specifically fundamentalism as a 'repugnant other' for many in her field.

In applying these kinds of points to the Faith Movement we can point to the latter's frequently hyper-conservative politics, seeming obsession with material prosperity and - according to some - lack of liturgical taste. I remember one anthropologist, a specialist in the religion of South Asia, once asking me why I studied a form of religion that was obviously 'such crap'. But in exploring the construction of such taboos I am more interested in reading these two activities, the charismatic and the ethnographic, *through* each other. In doing so I want to argue for a more complex juxtaposition than mere opposition, so that not merely methodological atheism and phenomenology, but also repugnance and proximity, can

be seen to form powerful and ambivalent combinations. Historically, both conservative Protestantism in general, including its revivalist forms, and anthropology can be seen as products of a modernist sensibility, products in their respective fashions of attempts to comprehend the disjunctions and conjunctions between culture and place, past and present, commonality and difference - all on a global scale - leading to the forms of restlessness that have resulted in so many missionary fields also being ethnographic fields. But what do we learn by seeing the two as alternative cosmologies of the modern - both as products of but also forms of resistance to aspects of modernity? I will try to answer this question by making some very broad points about anthropological and Pentecostal constructions of the subject, of space and time, and notions of transformation.

JUXTAPOSITIONS

Constructing the subject

Pentecostalism is classically constituted by conversion - not only as a means of transforming the self but also as an ongoing, constitutive activity in relation to others (Coleman 2003). Such transformation rests on the initial division of the subject into separate realms - body, mind and spirit - that can achieve temporary reconciliation in experiential moments of transcendence. What is generally less talked about in the literature, though it is a hugely important aspect of much Faith discourse, is the way in which such divisions of the subject lead on to wider orientations to the worlds of knowledge, experience and ontology. It is not just that the person is made up of spirit and flesh, with the two separated but maintaining the possibility of one influencing the other, but that the world as a whole can be divided into 'discernible', exoteric reality detectable by both religious and secular observers alongside (or underneath) a more spiritually 'real' perspective on the world made available to believers alone. The distinction between the two is sometimes glossed as the gulf between 'the natural' and 'the supernatural'. The theological underpinnings of such a position are paralleled by Capps's (1990:183) discussion of the way for instance Pat Robertson affirms the primacy of a secret, invisible and transcendent kingdom in relation to which both

salvation religion and the affairs of the civil order are to be judged. Such grounding classically provides the opportunity for allowing the Christian believer to be 'in the world, but not of the world' (see Coleman 2005), but what is interesting about this orientation is that it provides a particular means of articulation with non-Christian others. Thinking of my own fieldwork I observed for instance how Ekman, head pastor of the Word of Life, might reply to his many political, theological and journalistic critics in the media by deploying what appeared to be a broadly civil discourse, and then provide far more spiritually radical comments on such discursive engagements in sermons given to his congregation. He was thus reflexively reappropriating the significance of his public language for internal purposes, engaging in a spiritualized deconstruction of his own apparently secular discourse. A striking if more trivial example of the conjoining of esoteric and exoteric dimensions of Prosperity language in the public sphere was provided by a singer called Carola, well-known in Sweden and supporter of the Word of Life. In 1991, Carola won the Eurovision Song Contest, famous for its meaningless Euro-lyrics. But as Carola sang, among other things, of how her 'desire awakes when you smile and stretch out your hand' an ostensibly conventional love song could be seen from a Prosperity perspective as a song of praise to God, a potential testimony to the development of a personal relationship with the divine.

These linguistic strategies are intriguing within a movement so often branded as one-dimensionally literalist in its approach to the relationship between reality and language. Such 'double talk', as I call it, provides a means of engagement with the world that does not appear to compromise with it at a deeper level of reality - providing a way to classify 'the natural' as a cultural superstructure overlying a more profound sacred realm. Secular modernity itself can therefore be seen as a form of reality with which one negotiates a complex form of linguistic 'distance' - back to that word - that is also a means of control and appropriation.

As the anthropologist Webb Keane has noted (1997), a discourse of sincerity and transparency in use of language is central to the Protestant subject. Yet I think this co-exists, certainly among the charismatics I have studied, with a more complex understanding of the self in the world: in the instances I have cited, the charismatic speaker is not lacking sincerity so much as assuming that language can bear dual

significances and functions, just as the person negotiates two levels of reality often simultaneously - in a sense participates in two cultures simultaneously.[5]

What on earth, you may well be asking, does this have to do with anthropology as a mode of practice? Here I am interested in thinking about the very notion of fieldwork, of participant observation, as an engagement with the world that also depends on the creation of a Homo Duplex: in engaging with the other the anthropological agent is constituted not as spirit and flesh so much as observer and participant, divided between the objective and subjective, the transcendent and the grounded, and 'immersion' in the field - of course the religious metaphor is widely deployed - is meant to transform the fieldworker from an old state of ignorance into a new one of gnosis. In the process, fieldwork also raises issues of sincerity and transparency in language that become particularly salient in the kind of work that Pentecostalism and indeed fundamentalism tends to require.[6] Harding's problem of working with the 'repugnant other', or even that of Lawless doing fieldwork with women preachers in Missouri, make the split - the distance - between participant and observer all the more notable and unbridgeable, as if the spirit of observing and the flesh of participation can never come together unless, as in Harding's case, there is a virtual capitulation to the sacred language of the other. Anthropology may often be a form of self-conversion, a giving of the self to the other as a mode of understanding, but the contradictions in this position become all the more apparent in studying Pentecostals: the idea of such self-conversion is exposed even more than usual as a convenient but usually self-deluding piety.

Rupture and continuity

Joel Robbins (2004:118) has noted that the full gospel pattern of Pentecostal theology - stressing that Jesus offers salvation, heals, baptizes with the Holy Spirit and is coming again - provides elements that are immensely portable, 'seemingly able to enter any number of cultural contexts without losing their basic shape' (p.121). Furthermore (p.129), Pentecostalism's preservation of indigenous spiritual ontologies and continued ritual engagement with spirits that populate them distinguishes it from other forms of Christianity (see also Casanova 2001:437-8, Meyer 1999), so that it

avails self of locally meaningful idioms for talking about the past and about current social problems. In a sense Robbins' point here reminds me of my image of double talk - a mode of interaction with the unsaved other that contrasts with Harding's notion of simply shooting language at the unwashed listener, and which is about a more subtle engagement with 'the world' of the other. But of course the point is that such apparent accommodation to the other usually has a deeply transformative intent - as David Martin (e.g. 1990) and others have pointed out. The dualism of Pentecostalism tends to provide an idiom for retaining the spiritual reality of other worlds but also reclassifying them as of demonic origin, and it has often been argued that such an effect is key to believers' ability in effect to convert to modernity through participation in the faith.

This thematisation of change and rupture again brings Pentecostalism into juxtaposition with anthropology, but initially appears to lead to a parallelism of opposites. Anthropology might be said to be a discipline of continuities (thus Robbins), seeking for the retention of the local and the indigenous through idioms of syncretism and hybridity. In doing so it provides a paradigm for a form of deconversion from, or partial resistance to, what are perceived as the polluting aspects of modernity. The seeming continuities of Pentecostalism - of ritual and linguistic forms *across* cultures - seems deeply threatening to a discipline that has preferred to emphasize distinctions between cultures but continuity *within* them. Hastrup (1993) points out that ethnographic emphasis on proximity and co-presence also feeds into a discourse of the unique, since intensity of observation lends the ethnographic gaze an eye for detail, and Pentecostalism, if viewed from a certain angle, seems to challenge the unique through a rhetoric of homogeneity and practices such as tongues-speaking that strip away the indexicality implied in semantic meaning. So if the Pentecostal narrative is about the move from Babel to Pentecost, from cacophony to unity, the ethnographic move has traditionally been to combine assertion of the underlying commonality of humanity with the desire to see the positive aspects in a Babel of languages and cultures. Given such disciplinary assumptions, forms of mobility and globalization have appeared to create 'matter out of ethnographic place', confounding contexts by colonizing spaces between 'wholes', and indeed fragmenting such 'wholes' irrevocably (Coleman and Collins in press) - and we are back to the ambiguities of Pentecostalism as part-culture. It is interesting here that, traditionally,

Malinowskian anthropology has not only been about constituting the bounded local as context of study, but has also specialized in studying how communities police the local through such discourses as witchcraft accusations and assertions of limited good; the mistrust of some members of the discipline of anthropology towards translocal cultures has seemed itself to be a form of accusation, emerging from a particular kind of methodological surveillance.

Parts for Wholes

In a resonant article that examines, among other things, the connections and disjunctions between social scientists and believers, André Droogers (1994:34) talks of how: 'The process of signification, of viewing happenings as metonyms, as part of and caused by an active God…is responsible for the paradoxical coexistence of narrowness and openness in Pentecostalism.' Pentecostal praxis is thus always searching for the authentic religious experience that is expressed in concrete terms and that illustrates how the partial experience of the single subject can stand for the immeasurable totality of God's omnipresence. Crucially in such metonymy part and whole partake of the same substance - united in the same spirit - but it is also important to point out that the uniting of part and whole must be repeated again and again - the relationship confirmed through constantly being tested and found to be present, just as conversion itself is in a sense a continuous process of self-persuasion. At the Pentecostal church where I worked in Uppsala, the collective conjoining of spirit and matter was often expressed by what I came to think of as the '*just nu*' ('right now') moments, taken from the head pastor's habit of uttering such words when calling for the congregation to come under spiritual guidance in the here and now of ritual ecstasy.

In the context of this paper, the valorisation of such metonymy through experience is intriguing because it has a curious echo in ethnographic praxis. Anthropologists, like Pentecostals, tend to construct their arguments through people, through grounded events and persons rather than abstractions, and within such grounding the part is frequently presented as somehow embodying the ethnographic whole. On the one hand we see here an argument about scale - the larger encompassing the smaller - but

also about substance, the smaller partaking of the larger. In ethnographic circles there is sometimes self-conscious discussion of the vignette, the 'unique' and yet somehow 'typical' incident or event - Geertz's cock-fight is perhaps the apogee of this genre - and of course I deployed this narrative strategy myself when starting my paper with a prayer drawn from the field.

But there are also significant contrasts between ethnographic and Pentecostal metonymy, and let me draw these deliberately starkly - perhaps too crudely. It seems to me that for much of the time Pentecostal metonymy - at least at a congregation such as the Word of Life - is about moving from the smaller to the larger. The problem is how to 'reach out', how to assert the significance of the local in relation to the global and the transcendent - even, as my informants sometimes put it, to show how even little, secular Sweden has significance in the divine landscape of the world as a whole. After all, the prayer I mentioned did not stop with the cell-group - it expanded back out into the world. In addition, such metonymy is necessarily of the moment - 'right now' - so that even repetition must be thought of as continuous creation.

Much of the time, at least in the past, ethnographic metonymy has moved in the opposite direction: the problem has been how to screen out the homogeneities of the modern and the larger scale in favour of the deeply embedded experience and experience - reaching 'in' rather than out. Furthermore, for much of its history the temporal trope of Malinowskian anthropology has been the ethnographic present - the moment that, as Johannes Fabian (1983) so powerfully points out, has frozen the native far away, not only in prisons of bounded territory but also in iconic moments divorced from the passage of real time. 'Right now' replaced by '*always* now', perhaps. If we have sometimes accused Pentecostals of Manichean thinking, dividing the world into the good and the bad, then anthropology has also had its secular version of binary thought: local good, global bad.

THE PENTECOSTALISATION OF ANTHROPOLOGY?

So what I have done so far is to explain some of the reasons for my claim that Pentecostalism has been taboo for the cult of anthropology - constituting a liminal

'part-culture' that has not easily found a place within the ethnographic field. But my final argument is that the grounds of argument and assumption - even of liminality - are shifting. Pentecostalism and other forms of conservative Protestantism are still regarded with mistrust by many ethnographers to the degree that they are seen as harbingers of particularly Western forms of modernity, but, viewed quantitatively, the number of anthropologists studying such Christians has increased greatly over the last ten years or so. Pentecostalism is more widely seen as an opportunity for work rather than a threat to 'real' participant observation.

Why is this sea change occurring? One obvious reason relates to the sheer visibility of forms of the faith, to the statistics that talk of Pentecostalism as one of the fastest growing religious manifestations in the world (see e.g. Anderson 2004). Interestingly, anthropologists have not been particularly concerned to use such expansion as a substantive weapon in opposition to monolithic theories of secularization - indeed, secularization as a topic has been of less interest to members of my discipline than it has been to sociologists. Rather, the key point relates to the reconstitution - the transformation - of aspects of distance in ethnography. If the 1980s for anthropology was the decade of the crisis of representation - *writing* about the other - the 1990s initiated a new crisis of location - working out exactly where the other was to be found. Of course anthropology has played a key role in grounding globalization, resisting its abstractions with assertions of the power of peripheries, but at the same time the local itself has become a deeply problematised concept as connections between culture and territory, identity and fixed community, have been challenged (Coleman and Collins in press). Metaphors of place, of ground, are now challenged by those of movement and flow - witness Bauman's (2000) 'liquid' modernity, Clifford's (1997) depiction of the ethnographer studying 'dwelling in movement' and 'travelling cultures', Appadurai's (1996) multiple 'scapes' and George Marcus's concept of 'multi-sited' ethnography (1995). Marcus's phrase interestingly fragments the sense of a single field but retains the spatial imagery of 'site'. The agency and organizing power of the ethnographer is made explicit through strategic decisions to 'follow' people, things, metaphors and so on. Thus Marcus's influential work mediates between images of fixity and flow, openness and closure, accepting the contingency of the ethnographic object but retaining emphasis on the need to explore the everyday consciousness of informants, including indeed their 'system awareness' and knowledge of other sites and agents.

The theoretical and discursive landscape of anthropology has been shifting, in other words, and my point is that in some respects it has started to look more Pentecostal in its contours and waves. Indeed, it seems intriguing that the very period during which anthropology has started to fragment, to question its ability to locate parts firmly within well-bounded wholes, has also been the period when Pentecostalism has again found its voice in so many cultural stages. Pentecostalism, as a religion constitutionally oriented towards both mobility and the other, and as a practice self-consciously constructing persons who interact with ideological others, starts to look like a paradigm for understanding many of the current predicaments of culture - resulting, to adapt a phrase from Droogers (1994), in the normalization of the study not so much of religion per se but of what I have been calling 'part-cultures'. At the same time, anthropology's continuity thinking, if it survives, is often located precisely in the tracing of cultures, metaphors, institutions, *across* physical sites - following the ethnographic spirit where it listeth, as it were. The anthropological agent is often required to reach out as well as in, as ethnography seeks its metonymic links within increasingly unstable cultural formations - and moreover increasingly studies people who are able to provide their own meta-commentaries not only on 'culture' but also on anthropology.

There are of course some powerful reasons why many variants of Pentecostalism will retain taboo in relation to an anthropological sensibility. Furthermore, the very real problems of adapting ethnographic methodology to cultures that are so much oriented towards 'elsewheres' are still with us and have hardly been discussed in this paper. Rather, my point has been that studying 'global' Pentecostalism has become less of an anomaly in a discipline that has been subject to many of the same forces that have permeated Pentecostal worlds in recent years. After all, over time many taboos, many ways of identifying the 'threatening' and the new, have the habit of being converted into opportunities for the future.

ENDNOTES

1. 06/11/05. As a 'Faith' Ministry the Word of Life (*Livets Ord*) is part of the worldwide Health and Wealth/Prosperity Movement of Charismatic Christians (Coleman 2000).

2. In this case the annual 'youth' conference.

3. So the form of 'charismatic globality' encapsulated in Uppsala is more than just a quality of action or an imaginary, it also contributes to a wider political economy of 'Faith', consisting of multiple sites and ministries, including the offices and Bible Schools started around Europe and beyond by the Word of Life itself.

4. Interestingly both Harding and Lawless come up with the same solution to managing this problem, in both cases attempting to surrender their scholarly voice to a more intersubjective and intertextual representation of the religious worlds they are describing - an apparent surrender of distance.

5. Although I do not have time to develop the point here, an ethnographic parallel might be with gypsies - a 'group' that often in fact engages with forms of Pentecostalism and charismatic worship.

6. Fieldnotes and ethnographies themselves take on one of the qualities of 'double-talk', retranslating the language of the encounter with the other into one's own argot and form of understanding.

REFERENCES

Anderson, A., *An Introduction to Pentecostalism: Global Charismatic Christianity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004.

Appadurai, A., *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization*.London: Minneapolis, 1996.

Bauman, Z., *Liquid Modernity*. Cambridge: Polity, 2000.

Berger, P., *The Social Reality of Religion*. Penguin: Harmondsworth, 1967.

Casanova, J., 'Religion, The New Millennium and Globalization', *Sociology of Religion* 62:415-41, 2001

Clifford, J., *Routes: Travel and Translation in the Late Twentieth Century*.Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1997.

Coleman, S., *The Globalisation of Charismatic Christianity: Spreading the Gospel of Prosperity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000.

Coleman, S., 'The Rhetoric, Practice, and Rhetorical Practice of Charismatic Protestant Conversion'. In: A. Buckser and S. Glazier (eds), *The Anthropology of Conversion*. New York: Rowman and Littlefield, pp.15-27, 2003.

Coleman, S., 'An Empire on a Hill? The Christian Right and the Right to be Christian in America'. *Anthropological Quarterly* 78(3):653-71, 2005.

Coleman, S., 'The Abominations of Anthropology: Christianity, Ethnographic Taboos and the Meanings of "Science"'. In: F. Pine (ed.), *On the Margins of Religion*. Oxford: Berghahn, forthcoming.

Coleman, S. and Collins, P. (eds) *Locating the Field?: Changing Contexts of Fieldwork and Ethnography* ASA Series Oxford: Berg, in press.

Droogers, A., 'The Normalization of Religious Experience: Healing, Prophecy, Dreams, and Visions'. In: K. Poewe (ed.), *Charismatic Christianity as a Global Culture*. Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, pp.33-49, 1994.

Fabian, J., *Time and the Other: How Anthropology Makes its Object*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1983.

Gell, A., 'The Technology of Enchantment and the Enchantment of Technology'. In: J. Coote and A. Shelton (eds), *Anthropology, Arts and Aesthetics*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, pp. 40-63, 1992.

Harding, S., 'Convicted by the Holy Spirit: The Rhetoric of Fundamental Baptist Conversion'. *American Ethnologist* 14:167-81, 1987.

Harding, S., 'Representing Fundamentalism: The Problem of the Repugnant Cultural Other'. *Social Research* 58(2):373-93, 1991.

Hastrup, K., 'The Native Voice - and the Anthropological Vision'. *SocialAnthropology* 1(2):173-86, 1993.

Keane, W. 1997 *Signs of Recognition: Powers and Hazards of Representation in an Indonesian Society* Berkeley: University of California Press.

Lawless, E. J., '"I Was Afraid Someone Like You...an Outsider...Would Misunderstand": Negotiating Interpretive Differences between Ethnographers and Subjects'. *The Journal of American Folklore* 105(417):302-314, 1992.

Marcus, G., 'Ethnography In/Of the World System: The Emergence of Multi-Sited Ethnography'. *Annual Review of Anthropology* 24: 95-117, 1995.

Martin, D., *Pentecostalism: The World Their Parish*. Oxford: Blackwell, 2002.

Meyer, B., *Translating the Devil: Religion and Modernity among the Ewe in Ghana.* Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, 1999.

Robbins, J.,'The Globalization of Pentecostal and Charismatic Christianity'. *Annual Review of Anthropology* 33:117-43, 2004.

CORRESPONDENCE WITH THE AUTHOR

s.m.coleman@sussex.ac.uk