

Divine Healers and Divine Healings

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This paper is based on the Nagas of Nagaland, India. The practice of healing has always been an important agency in facilitating conversion, and strengthening affiliation. Healing was an important agency through which American Baptist missionaries sought to educate and convert the Nagas when they started arriving in the 1870's. However, the concept of healing ordained by the divine power which gets manifested through a chosen person came as a result of revival movements in the 1950's and 1960's. The result of these revival movements was the propagation of God and the Holy Spirit as the ultimate healer. It was during these revival movements that divine gifts such as healing, speaking in tongues, visions and prophecies were claimed to be spiritual gifts granted by God. These movements gave rise to divine healers who practices healing within and outside the church. As such, this paper seeks to explore the practice of healing as propagated by 'divine healers' who claims to have received the 'gift' of healing through divine providence. However, not all divine healings manifests in the same way, and those who claim to heal in the name of the divine do not follow a set ritual or practice. Therefore, this paper also seeks to delve into aspects of the divine healer such as their 'gifts', the dimensions of these 'gifts' and how such kind of healing practice interacts with existing practices of healing and understanding of what healing constitutes.