In any research project interesting questions and issues will arise that simply cannot be treated within necessary limitations of scope. This was certainly the case here. There are certain issues pertaining to the study of Pentecostalism which I was not able to deal with, or at least not at any depth. The whole issue on whether Latin American Pentecostalism is actually Protestant is one of them. Bastian¹ and Lalive² seem to suggest that it is not because of the high level of acculturation with local cultures, but Samuel Escobar disagrees, except when referring to “… neo-charismatic or post-denominational churches that have come on the scene in the last decade or so…”³ “By appealing to some deep-seated aspects of Catholic popular religiosity they are denying key tenets of the Protestant reformation”.⁴ This would apply to the church under study here as it is closer to the neo-Pentecostals than to the classical Pentecostals. However, I decided not to enter into this debate as drawing boundaries of inclusion and exclusion was not my motive. I have assumed the Protestantism of the neo-Pentecostal churches because the believers in them have made a break from the Roman Catholic Church and aligned themselves with the Protestant family, even though many of their beliefs and practices are still reminiscent of popular Catholicism. Discussion on this issue would also lead into a debate on syncretism and as this term carries overtones of censure amongst Evangelicals it would inevitably lead to a judgement. Such books are already in existence.⁵ In this area we must be

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⁴ Personal communication 25th April 2006.
aware of our own presuppositions and predispositions; particularly as an over emphasis on divine power, with its similarities to traditional religions and post modern paganism, makes us uncomfortable. The great need for a wider debate on the whole subject of accessing spiritual power.

The issue of who globalises whom is an interesting question and worthy of further study. There has been much talk of the globalising power of North America, and there has certainly been on-going contact between Argentine and North American Pentecostals for a very long time, but the influence is not all one way. Although I have pointed this out in various places this was not a major aim of this study. Argentine Pentecostalism today is the result of both reaching down into the substrata and reaching up into the airwaves, but I was only able to concentrate on one aspect. A study on ‘reaching up’ could also be very useful.

I am very aware that this research has been based upon the stories of those who have become more or less established members of a local Pentecostal church, or who at least appeared so at the time of study. However, they may well be a minority of all who pass through the doors of a Pentecostal church, the majority either not returning, or only staying for a short while. Without a doubt their stories would provide much needed information on why people chose not to convert, or why they fail to become attached to a particular church. Such a study would contribute greatly to our knowledge of the processes of conversion and may shed light on the whole Pentecostal movement in Latin America.

Despite these acknowledged limitations it is my hope that this book has been able to make a considerable contribution to the study of Pentecostalism at the local level in Argentina, even though we must always be aware of drawing general conclusions and principles from specific case studies.

In terms of both theory and field research it was very important to me to get as close as I could to an Argentine perspective. I also wanted to let the voices of real people be heard in the end product of this work. To this end I have reviewed and used Latin American literature, and narrowed this to Argentine works where possible. This is not intended

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7 This connection was already pointed out by David Martin in Tongues of Fire: The Explosion of Pentecostalism in Latin America. (Cambridge, MA: Blackwell, 1990) p. 204.