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In the Power of the Spirit by Dennis A. Smith and B.F. Gutierrez (eds.)

Dennis Smith is a mission worker for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and works as general coordinator of the Latin American Evangelical Center for Pastoral Studies (CELEP). He has lived and worked in Latin America since 1978 and now lives in Guatemala City with his wife and two children. EM>THE POWER OF THE SPIRIT, was edited by Benjamin F. Gutierrez & Dennis A. Smith It was published in 1996 by the Presbyterian Church (USA) and AIPRAL/CELEP, and translated by Peter Kemmerle. This book was prepared for Religion Online by Ted & Winnie Brock.

The Pentecostal challenge to historic churches in Latin America, prepared by 17 historians, theologians and sociologists of religion from the region.

Introduction

Four arguments are presented for why the Pentecostal movement can be understood as a sign of the power of God's Spirit moving in the church.

Chapter 1: Pentecostalism, Theology and Social Ethics

Four arguments are presented for why the Pentecostal movement can be understood as a sign of the power of God's Spirit moving in the church.

Chapter 2: Theological Characteristics of an Indigenous Pentecostalism: The Case of Chile

Chilean Pentecostalism is different from worldwide Pentecostalism. This chapter describes Chile's unique contribution.

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What challenges do the Pentecostals they represent for Brazilian Protestants? What lessons may be learned from the success of this movement? Might these lessons help us to discover where main line Protestants "missed the boat" of history?

Chapter 4: Pentecostalism and Confrontation with Poverty in Brazil

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Chapter 5: Between Pentecostalism and the Crisis of Denominationalism: The Future of the Historic C

A review of the history of Pentecostalism in Latin America, it's use of mass media, it's involvement in politics, it's contrast with traditional Protestantism and the future of both

Chapter 6: Provocations

Mainline churches must abandon our historic triumphalism, assume our minority position with dignity and, without abandoning our principles, learn to establish relationships of mutual respect with both ancient and new spiritualities that proclaim values not wholly alien to the Reign of God.

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Introduction

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No one today doubts that the Pentecostal movement is one of the most significant religious experiences of the century. This fact has been recognized by Catholics, Protestants and innumerable social scientists. It is both a social-religious phenomenon and an alternative movement in the life and mission of the Christian church.

We begin with the premise that Pentecostalism is above all a religious *movement* and not a "denomination" or a "religious organization." Although there are religious communities within both Protestantism and Catholicism that call themselves "Pentecostal" or "charismatic," it is its character as *movement* that produces Pentecostalism's visible fruits.

The present political situation in Latin America has generated so much heated debate about the Church, the "sects," and religious freedom that it has become necessary to take a closer look at the existing religious scene, including Pentecostalism, if we are to build a coherent theological overview of the region capable of generating serious ecumenical dialogue.

I realize that the title of this article may raise a few eyebrows. Its diverse and complex origins, social make-up, religious practices and beliefs, not to mention ethical idiosyncrasies, will lead some to doubt whether Pentecostalism acts "in the power of the Spirit." Nevertheless, I will present four arguments for why the Pentecostal movement can be understood as a sign of the power of God's Spirit moving in the church.

I. A spiritual movement

Methodologically, any sociological consideration of religious movements or identities must begin by taking into account the considered views of its own practitioners, filtered, of course, through the lens provided by academic discipline and through the perspective of a particular investigator.

According to Pentecostal believers themselves, Pentecostalism is neither a simple socio-religious phenomenon, nor a mere product of the political-religious expansionism of North American capital.[1] For believers, Pentecostalism is the result of God's action through the Holy Spirit which erupted on Pentecost in the first century of Christian history (Acts 2-4; Luke 24:49; Joel 2:27-32) and extended from East to West.[2]

As a movement, Pentecostalism transcends denominational categories and presents itself as God acting in particular ways within Christianity. From a theological point of view, Pentecostalism is a personal experience of the divine. As a religious experience, it represents a *ritualized prolongation of the original Pentecostal event* (Acts 2, 10, 19) that expresses the essence of Christianity with an intense spirituality that recalls the life of the early Christians. It serves as a foundational myth.

As a spiritual movement, Pentecostalism is a builder of identities. To be "Pentecostal," just as to be "Catholic" or "Protestant," is a way of being in society.[3] Pentecostalism assumes different forms, according to the social, cultural and religious background or the class identity of the practitioners. As a spiritual movement, Pentecostalism has neither class, ideological, territorial, nor confessional boundaries. It can penetrate antagonistic social classes as well as conflicting historical processes. In Europe, for example, the Pentecostal movement has resisted secularization, the historical process by which societies liberated themselves from the control of the church and from closed metaphysical systems.[4] European Pentecostalism is known for its unbounded religious experiences and the creation of alternatives to traditional religious practices. In Latin America, where religious belief continues to be so deeply rooted and where secularization has been relegated to the realm of social protest,[5] the Pentecostal movement has had great social impact and now threatens the religious hegemony of Roman Catholicism. In Guatemala, El Salvador and Nicaragua, for example, some local Pentecostals have been used by U.S. neo-conservative and fundamentalist groups to escalate and/or control the political tensions of the region. Often ideological battles are carried out under the guise of religious conflict. What is really at stake is the defense of social identities, political power, and the attempted consolidation of old and new hegemonies.

All spiritualities are ways of living out one's faith in history. They depend on at least five different factors: 1) the believer's religious tradition; 2) one's utopia or model for the future; 3) one's level of sensitivity to or consciousness of social reality; 4) one's ability to discern between good and evil; and 5) the symbolic substratum which influences one's choices on the road to

building an identity.

Pentecostal spirituality is the everyday faith experience of real communities whose very identity is wrapped up in the Pentecost. In Latin America, these communities' daily experience is born of crisis, the product of a long process of economic, political and cultural domination; however, this same crisis is perceived as the starting point of a process of hopeful transformation.

The fundamental difference between this and other spiritualities engendered by the crisis is the way it uses Jesus' spiritual journey to the Father as the model for building a *synthesis* between Christian principles and everyday existence. This synthesis incorporates the ways in which a community lives out its faith, as well as the spiritual principles that regulate its conduct and impose a particular style on its religious identity. The core of Pentecostalism is Pentecost. The Pentecostal community gives itself legitimacy by identifying its religious practice as a prolongation of the experiences described in Acts 2 and other passages.

The failure to consider Pentecostal spirituality and its theological perspectives would deform any hermeneutic of Pentecostalism. For this reason, most sociological attempts to interpret Pentecostalism fail to comprehend Pentecostalism's ability to give meaning to life, bestow social identity on the hopeless, give power to the weak, and even provide ideological legitimation to the upper classes. Sociological interpretations usually fail to appreciate the meaning of a community's religious experience to the community itself For example, it is impossible to understand Pentecostal growth without exploring the doctrine of sanctification,[6] which is the motor of its aggressive evangelism.

II.

A protest movement

The Wesleyan inheritance

A number of studies deem that the "Wesleyan revival," which led to the founding of Methodist and other sanctificationist denominations in England in the 17th century, is the immediate forebear of modern Pentecostalism.[7] This thesis contends that Pentecostalism emerged in the "holiness circles" in the United States that derived from English pietism.

As soon as the Wesleyan emphasis on sanctification (the doctrine that explains the process of Christian perfection) was relaxed, a renewed Holiness Movement emerged that would take the name "Pentecostal." In the decade between 1895 and 1905 a number of new denominations consecrated themselves to the principles of Holiness.[8] What set these apart from the traditional holiness communities was their emphasis on the doctrine of the sanctified life resulting from a special "Baptism of the Spirit."

Radical religious behavior

American Methodists differed from 17th Century English Methodists by substituting individualism for social ethics and philanthropy for millennarianism.[9] According to Richard Niebuhr, the Wesley brothers, founders of the Wesleyan movement, replaced the concept of the Reign of God with the symbol of heaven and saw sin as laxity and individual vice, not as oppression or social breakdown.[10]

With the building of North American society and the gradual transformation of certain "sects" into "denominations," the individualistic, philanthropic, and sentimental ethic common to Methodists came to dominate the middle-class Protestant churches of the United States. In contrast, Pentecostalism grew out of a deepening religious and spiritual experience that abandoned philanthropy and came to wholly identify this world with sin. However, Pentecostals did not abandon the individualism they had inherited from missionary societies.

Though the theories of contemporary sociologists of religion draw upon Max Weber's thesis about the Protestant ethic and the spirit of capitalism, they reject social and economic determinism. They usually describe Pentecostalism as a response to *social anomie*[11] and a religious response to the processes of immigration, industrialization, and urbanization in Latin America (see E. Willems, Christian Lalive d'Epinay, P.F. Camargo, M. Marzal, and Bryan Wilson, among others).

For others, Pentecostalism is the religious expression of a certain social and economic ethic. Sociologists of religion such as the Brazilian Francisco Cartaxo Rolim and the Swiss Jean-Pierre Bastian describe Pentecostalism as the religion of the disadvantaged resulting from the social relations and ideology imposed by capitalism.[12]

In most cases, Pentecostalism provides a way for people to give meaning to reality and to organize their daily conduct.

Pentecostalism is a "symbolic system," as are the various Catholicisms, historical Protestantisms, socialisms and populisms. For the oppressed, Pentecostalism provides a satisfying religious alternative to the trauma induced by conquest and colonization, historical processes that manipulated existing manifestations of the sacred to rend the social fabric.[13]

As a form of a "social protest" and utopia, the Pentecostal movement recalls movements such as the Taki Onqoy of 16th century Peru (Huamanga 1560-1570).[14] Both are apocalyptic movements, based on the idea of the world ending in great upheaval, although the followers of Taki Onqoy went beyond the religious sphere to promote a Messianic campaign of revenge against the European invaders. Pentecostals also hold that they are God's chosen people led by charismatic leaders with divine authority. To this they add a clear rejection of this world. This

apocalyptic vision, combined with an ideology of sanctification, mobilizes believers and has led Pentecostalism to adopt an *ethic of separation from the world*, often calling the faithful to spurn social change.

Nevertheless, the dire poverty in Latin America and the prevailing international system (globalization, neo-liberalism, etc.) have forced Pentecostal communities to face reality. In Peru and other countries on the continent, Pentecostals are beginning to participate actively in civil society, embracing forms of political participation and social action they had formerly rejected.

This rejection of the world, which takes the form of rigid personal ethics (no drinking, no smoking, no dancing, keeping oneself pure, etc.), and the creation of "substitute societies" are Pentecostal responses to having been marginalized by the dominant religious institutions and by the economic and political elites. Today's Pentecostals have achieved a new level of maturity. Increasingly, they desire to become the subjects of their own history and are casting their lot with the new forces that are emerging in our societies.

While Pentecostalism can be seen as a religious expression of the *popular unrest* produced by our current social crisis-- as Matos Mar has pointed out in the case of Peru[15] --this is not the whole story. The rapid expansion of informal economies and grassroot, sometimes radical, political and religious organizations, are common to all societies undergoing transition and crisis. Whenever social chaos reigns, there is room for religious explosions of the Pentecostal ilk.

III. *A popular movement*

There are few statistics that can capture the dizzying demographic growth of Pentecostals. According to David Stoll, "a third of the population in Latin America will be Protestant in the next century, as compared to 10% or 12% now."[16] Pentecostals make up 70% of all Brazilian Protestants; in Chile they are 17% of the population; in the Bahamas, 10%; in Peru, Pentecostals make up 70% of the Protestants who in turn make up 7% of the population of 22 million. Considering the historic dominance of Catholicism in Latin America, these are significant percentages[17] Academics calculate that 25% of the population of three Central American countries (El Salvador, Nicaragua, and Guatemala) will be Pentecostal by the year 2000. Pentecostalism has established such deep roots so quickly in Latin American society that many are beginning to ask whether official Protestantism and Catholicism will survive the region. [18]

Just as base ecclesial communities (known by the Spanish acronym, "CEBs") are authentic popular churches, so are Pentecostal churches authentic. Both find their support among the popular classes, and in both people become agents of social change through their religious activity.

Several characteristics of Pentecostalism could have a profound impact on the social transformation of South America. These are: 1) *an autonomous financial structure* that is independent of America, Europe, and Asia; 2) *a liturgy* in which expressions of Latin American popular religiosity take precedence over Christian traditions rooted in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin culture; 3) a *community experience* that incorporates the faithful into a community, affirms their individual worth, and permits them to play a role in society; and, 4) an *organic solidarity* with the less favored sectors of society.

Pentecostalism is the only branch of Protestantism rooted in Latin American "popular religiosity."[19] Witness, for example, the new movement that I call "iso-Pentecostalism" in that it takes its image from Pentecostalism but has a different form of organization. Antonio Gouvea Mendonça in Brazil calls it the "movement of the divine cure." "Iso-Pentecostalism" does away with ecclesiastical organization, teaching of the Bible, the participation of the faithful in worship, even hymnals, in order to focus exclusively on healing, and the sale of "healing objects," quite common in popular Afro-Brazilian religiosity, whence it comes. (See discussion of "third Pentecostal wave" and the Universal Church of the Kingdom of God in Silveira Campos, pp. 77-81.)***

Accordingly, the introduction, presence and expansion of Pentecostalism in Latin America should be understood in the context of popular culture and the history of the region's social and cultural movements.

IV. A movement of social change

The rapid multiplication of new religious groups with charismatic tendencies cannot be explained merely by a favorable social environment. These groups also generate social change, albeit indirectly, exerting their influence from within the social structure and the ideological superstructure.[20]

In the present religious configuration in Latin America, Pentecostalism has a two-sided relationship with civil society. On the one hand, it *opposes* "official" religions such as Roman Catholicism and historical Protestantism, while at the same time *interacting* with corporativist states, many of which are undergoing fundamental change, such as Nicaragua and Chile in the 1970s.[21]

Struggles continue on two fronts. Some groups strive to achieve new hegemonies, others strive to consolidate the old ones. On either front what is at stake are the existing and emerging political institutions that use religion to promote quite contradictory programs and aspirations. Ideological conflict is frequently expressed through religious battles, but the stakes are usually political.

At the symbolic level, Pentecostalism is clearly similar to both political and religious Messianic

movements. These are the symbolic sources of a *new society* which can *resist* the "collapse of hope" despite crushing defeats such as in Nicaragua, where Christians and Sandinistas tried to create a new society. Such groups can resist the aimlessness produced by the end of utopias suffered after the "collapse" of socialism.

For common folks, at stake are not just ideologies and political utopias--which they have little time for anyway--but their own subsistence in extreme situations where even their basic necessities are unmet.

The true roots of modern Pentecostalism go back to 15th- and 16th- century Europe. There, Pentecostal communities that were excluded from Luther's, Calvin's, and Zwingli's Reformation constituted a popular front known today as the "Radical Reformation." Differing from the Lutherans due to their religious practice and rural origins, they fought and died for a series of demands denied them by the nobles. The apocalyptic vision of history and the Messianic charisma of Thomas Müzer, a leader of this revolutionary movement, clearly marked the later Pentecostal movement.[22]

In Latin American Pentecostalism, one discovers the reflection of indigenous movements and waves of immigrants in search of new identities. It is surprising to note the case of Chile, for example, where the growth of Pentecostalism and socialism paralleled one another chronologically,[23] even employing similar tactics, though without forming any explicit alliance. On the contrary, Pentecostalism became a client of the State, legitimizing the State before civil society.

Some interpreters of the Peruvian religious scene have hypothesized a probable *relation of mutual influence* between the emerging religious groups and a new kind of capitalism that recalls Weber's thesis on the Protestant ethic and the spirit of capitalism. Weber emphasized the general attitudes inherent in the character of each religion (in this case, the ethics of Calvinism) which influence economic activities and motivations. Though religious principles may not have a direct effect on economic behavior, they can lend religious and ideological legitimacy to new motivations, activities, and institutions.

Thus Weber postulated that the Puritan ethic of austerity and the denial of worldly pleasures had generated the beginnings of the capitalist spirit. He made it clear that ideas exercise an autonomous influence on the process of social evolution. For Weber, the key elements of the Calvinist ethic were "asceticism" and a "vocation" for work as a rational activity.

While Weber's thesis may apply to certain branches of European and North American Protestantism, it doesn't work for Latin American Protestantism. It works even less for Pentecostalism, given its mainly proletariat composition, its "eschatological urgency,"[24] and the volatile character of contemporary international capitalism.

Thus, Pentecostalism has not been a major player in the development of a new grassroots capitalism, except in the sense that Pentecostal believers are consumers and an available labor force. In my opinion, the reasons for this are: 1) mysticism rather than asceticism predominates among the Pentecostals; 2) splurging rather than saving is the cultural model, given that subsistence-level salaries make saving impossible and because the goods purchased with one's salary come to represent one's personal worth ("fetishization"); 3) work is not considered a divine vocation. Thus, Weber's thesis hardly applies. In these circumstances it would be more likely to posit a relationship between Pentecostal ethics and the spirit of socialism, or any system other than capitalism.

The transforming power of Pentecostalism resides not in the coherence of its doctrine, but in its flexibility and its capacity to give expression to new social practices in the defining moments of a society in transition. Christian Lalive d'Epinay has observed that in the time of Allende's Chile, Pentecostalism suffered the mutilation of its practices and doctrine.[25] The same was observed ten years later by Jean-Pierre Bastian in Nicaragua[26] and can be seen today in 1990s Peru.

Final words

Pentecostalism was born in the heat of a historical struggle, both real and symbolic, against Catholicism, official Protestantism, and political dogmatism. It has proven its capacity to generate symbols powerful enough to sustain hope for the working classes and a sense of national identity. Those who fight against Pentecostalism, whether they are politicians or clergy, do so because they fear competition for influence in civil society or because they realize that Pentecostalism represents an alternative to the present political order.

As for the question of whether Pentecostals will choose to become active players in *civil society* or *politics*, the obvious answer is both. Nevertheless, it is within civil society that Pentecostalism will make a key contribution to deciding the future of the region's social system. Past participation in the political sphere, minimal as it may have been, makes it clear that now is not the time to swell the ranks of the political class without first having participated in grassroots community organizations. Active participation in the newly emerging civil society is a historic opportunity that must not be wasted. This is possible today precisely because the Spirit continues to make all things new.

In sum, Pentecostalism is a spiritual movement resulting from the loss of holiness in our world; it is a movement of symbolic protest in a society that denies fulfillment and participation to the dispossessed; it is a grassroots movement born of traditional cultures struggling to cope with massive change; and it is a movement capable of being a channel for social change and of offering hope for a better world.

Pentecostalism is not only a historic embodiment of Christianity, it is an expression of universal

spirituality rooted in the resurrected Christ of Pentecost. Today's challenge is not to Pentecostalize the church so that it might grow, but rather to renew the church spiritually in the light of the universal experience of Pentecost, seeking the unity of the church and of all humanity, for whom Christ died and was resurrected.

END NOTES:

[1]The Pentecostals reject this conspiracy theory and consider it a crassly politicized interpretation of their theology.

[2]Pentecost is the founding event of the Pentecostal experience. The movement's name, organizational inspiration, and missionary vocation all derive from the word Pentecost.

[3]Carlos Rodríguez Brandão, "Ser Católico: Dimensões Brasileiras. Um Estudo sobre a atribução da identidade através da religião," *América Indígena* Vol. XLV, No. 4 (Oct.-Dec., 1985): pp. 691-722.

[4] Harvey Cox, The Secular City, New York, NY: MacMillan, 1965.

[5] José Miguel Bonino, "La Piedad Popular en América Latina," *Cristianismo y Sociedad*, XIV, No. 47, 1976: pp. 39-48.

[6] Bryan Wilson has correctly noted that the doctrine of sanctification provides the basis for sectarianism and for the enthusiastic propagation of this religious group that throws itself into spiritual conquest and tries to liberate sinful hearts from the clutch of Satan and guide the sinful to the path of holiness. Cf. Bryan Wilson, *Sociología de las sectas religiosas*, (Madrid: Guadarrama, 1970), 57ss.

[7] Walter Hollenweger, *El Pentecostalismo: Historia y Doctrinas*, (Buenos Aires: La Aurora, 1976) p. 7; Donald W. Dayton, *Theological Roots of Pentecostalism*. (Grand Rapids, MI: Francis Asbury, 1987), pp. 115-141.

[8] A history of the Holiness Movement and its relation to Pentecostalism can be found in Donald W. Dayton, op. cit.

[9] The belief in a period of one thousand years of peace on earth (literal or symbolic) in which Christ and his church will govern the world.

[10] Richard Niebuhr, The Social Sources of Denominationalism, (Magnolia, Mass: Peter Smith

Publisher, 1920), p. 65.

[11]The loss of traditional morals, leading to a crisis of values and norms in a determined social formation. Frequently associated with rapid social change.

[12] F. Cartaxo Rolim, *Pentecostais no Brasil*. Uma Interpretação do Protestantismo Brasileiro. (Rio de Janeiro: Vozes); Jean-Pierre Bastian, *Breve historia del Protestantismo en Améica Latina*, (México: CUPSA, 1986); Gamaliel Lugo, "Etica social pentecostal: santidad comprometida," C. Alvarez, ed., op. cit: pp. 101-122.

[13] Bernardo L. Campos, *Religión y Liberación del Pueblo*. (Lima: CEPS, 1989).

[14] See Steve Stern, "El Taki Onqoy y Ia Sociedad Andina" (Huamanga, Siglo XVI), *Allpanchis*, Vol VXI, No 19 (1982) pp. 49-77; Marco Curatola, "Mito y Milenarismo en los Andes: Del Taki Onqoy a Inkarri," *Allpanchis*, Vol X, (1977) pp. 65-92.

[15] José Matos Mar, *Desborde popular y crisis del Estado. El Nuevo rostro del Perú en la década de 1980*, (Lima: CONCYTEC, n.d).

[16] According to a cable from EFE (Washington, April 17, 1990) published in El Comercio on 4/17/90. Due to the organization and internal structure of Peruvian Pentecostalism, and the vitality of both traditional and popular Catholicism, the growth of Peruvian Pentecostalism has lagged behind that of Brazil and Chile.

[17] See Ivan Vallier, Catolicismo, Control Social y Modernsización en América Latina, (Buenos Aires: Amorrortu Editores, 1970), p. 17 and footnote.

[18] Remember the polemic that was set off by the treatment J.C. Mariátegui gave to religion in his *Ensayos de la realidad Peruana*. (Lima: Amauta, 1975) (fifth essay) and also the discipline imposed on Leonardo Boff in Brazil for his statements regarding ecclesiogenesis, the church which is born of the people, and the theology of liberation.

[19] Orlando Costas, "La Misión y el Crecimiento Numérico de la Iglesia: Hacia una misiología de las masas y minorías," CELEP, *Ensayos Ocasionales*, 1976, p. 13.

[20] Otto Maduro, *Religión y Conflicto Social*, (Mexico: Centro de Estudios Ecuménicos - Centro de Reflexión Teológica, 1980) pp. 165-206; 1. Vallier, loc. cit.

[21] Some Pentecostal churches in Europe receive financial support from the State. Although this is not the case in Latin America, the support that General Pinochet gave to the Evangelical Church of Chile is well-documented.

[22] See Rosemary Radford Reuther, *El Reino de los extremistas. La experiencia occidental del la esperanza mesiánica*, (Buenos Aires: La Aurora, 1971); Norman Cohn, *The Pursuit of the Millennium*. (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1961); George H. Williams, *The Radical Reformation*. (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1962).

[23] An observation made by Christian Lalive d'Epinay, *El Refugio de las Masas. Estudio Sociológico de Protestantismo Chileno*, (Santiago: El Pacfíco, 1968), p. 276.

[24] Growing out of the belief in the imminent arrival of the Reign of God.

[25] Christian Lalive d'Epinay, "Regimes Politiques et Millénarismo dans une Societé dépendante. Reflection á propos du Pentecostisme au Chili," *Actes de la 15ème Conférence Internationale de Sociologie Religieuse*, Verise, 1979.

[26] Jean-Pierre Bastian, Cristianismo y Sociedad, 1986, pp. 52-53.

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As a spiritual movement, Pentecostalism is a builder of identities. To be "Pentecostal," just as to be "Catholic" or "Protestant," is a way of being in society.[3] Pentecostalism assumes different forms, according to the social, cultural and religious background or the class identity of the practitioners. As a spiritual movement, Pentecostalism has neither class, ideological, territorial, nor confessional boundaries. It can penetrate antagonistic social classes as well as conflicting historical processes. In Europe, for example, the Pentecostal movement has resisted secularization, the historical process by which societies liberated themselves from the control of the church and from closed metaphysical systems.[4] European Pentecostalism is known for its unbounded religious experiences and the creation of alternatives to traditional religious practices. In Latin America, where religious belief continues to be so deeply rooted and where secularization has been relegated to the realm of social protest,[5] the Pentecostal movement has had great social impact and now threatens the religious hegemony of Roman Catholicism. In Guatemala, El Salvador and Nicaragua, for example, some local Pentecostals have been used by U.S. neo-conservative and fundamentalist groups to escalate and/or control the political tensions of the region. Often ideological battles are carried out under the guise of religious conflict. What is really at stake is the defense of social identities, political power, and the attempted consolidation of old and new hegemonies.

All spiritualities are ways of living out one's faith in history. They depend on at least five different factors: 1) the believer's religious tradition; 2) one's utopia or model for the future; 3) one's level of sensitivity to or consciousness of social reality; 4) one's ability to discern between

good and evil; and 5) the symbolic substratum which influences one's choices on the road to building an identity.

Pentecostal spirituality is the everyday faith experience of real communities whose very identity is wrapped up in the Pentecost. In Latin America, these communities' daily experience is born of crisis, the product of a long process of economic, political and cultural domination; however, this same crisis is perceived as the starting point of a process of hopeful transformation.

The fundamental difference between this and other spiritualities engendered by the crisis is the way it uses Jesus' spiritual journey to the Father as the model for building a *synthesis* between Christian principles and everyday existence. This synthesis incorporates the ways in which a community lives out its faith, as well as the spiritual principles that regulate its conduct and impose a particular style on its religious identity. The core of Pentecostalism is Pentecost. The Pentecostal community gives itself legitimacy by identifying its religious practice as a prolongation of the experiences described in Acts 2 and other passages.

The failure to consider Pentecostal spirituality and its theological perspectives would deform any hermeneutic of Pentecostalism. For this reason, most sociological attempts to interpret Pentecostalism fail to comprehend Pentecostalism's ability to give meaning to life, bestow social identity on the hopeless, give power to the weak, and even provide ideological legitimation to the upper classes. Sociological interpretations usually fail to appreciate the meaning of a community's religious experience to the community itself For example, it is impossible to understand Pentecostal growth without exploring the doctrine of sanctification,[6] which is the motor of its aggressive evangelism.

II.

A protest movement

The Wesleyan inheritance

A number of studies deem that the "Wesleyan revival," which led to the founding of Methodist and other sanctificationist denominations in England in the 17th century, is the immediate forebear of modern Pentecostalism.[7] This thesis contends that Pentecostalism emerged in the "holiness circles" in the United States that derived from English pietism.

As soon as the Wesleyan emphasis on sanctification (the doctrine that explains the process of Christian perfection) was relaxed, a renewed Holiness Movement emerged that would take the name "Pentecostal." In the decade between 1895 and 1905 a number of new denominations consecrated themselves to the principles of Holiness.[8] What set these apart from the traditional holiness communities was their emphasis on the doctrine of the sanctified life

resulting from a special "Baptism of the Spirit."

Radical religious behavior

American Methodists differed from 17th Century English Methodists by substituting individualism for social ethics and philanthropy for millennarianism.[9] According to Richard Niebuhr, the Wesley brothers, founders of the Wesleyan movement, replaced the concept of the Reign of God with the symbol of heaven and saw sin as laxity and individual vice, not as oppression or social breakdown.[10]

With the building of North American society and the gradual transformation of certain "sects" into "denominations," the individualistic, philanthropic, and sentimental ethic common to Methodists came to dominate the middle-class Protestant churches of the United States. In contrast, Pentecostalism grew out of a deepening religious and spiritual experience that abandoned philanthropy and came to wholly identify this world with sin. However, Pentecostals did not abandon the individualism they had inherited from missionary societies.

Though the theories of contemporary sociologists of religion draw upon Max Weber's thesis about the Protestant ethic and the spirit of capitalism, they reject social and economic determinism. They usually describe Pentecostalism as a response to *social anomie*[11] and a religious response to the processes of immigration, industrialization, and urbanization in Latin America (see E. Willems, Christian Lalive d'Epinay, P.F. Camargo, M. Marzal, and Bryan Wilson, among others).

For others, Pentecostalism is the religious expression of a certain social and economic ethic. Sociologists of religion such as the Brazilian Francisco Cartaxo Rolim and the Swiss Jean-Pierre Bastian describe Pentecostalism as the religion of the disadvantaged resulting from the social relations and ideology imposed by capitalism.[12]

In most cases, Pentecostalism provides a way for people to give meaning to reality and to organize their daily conduct.

Pentecostalism is a "symbolic system," as are the various Catholicisms, historical Protestantisms, socialisms and populisms. For the oppressed, Pentecostalism provides a satisfying religious alternative to the trauma induced by conquest and colonization, historical processes that manipulated existing manifestations of the sacred to rend the social fabric.[13]

As a form of a "social protest" and utopia, the Pentecostal movement recalls movements such as the Taki Onqoy of 16th century Peru (Huamanga 1560-1570).[14] Both are apocalyptic movements, based on the idea of the world ending in great upheaval, although the followers of Taki Onqoy went beyond the religious sphere to promote a Messianic campaign of revenge

against the European invaders. Pentecostals also hold that they are God's chosen people led by charismatic leaders with divine authority. To this they add a clear rejection of this world. This apocalyptic vision, combined with an ideology of sanctification, mobilizes believers and has led Pentecostalism to adopt an *ethic of separation from the world*, often calling the faithful to spurn social change.

Nevertheless, the dire poverty in Latin America and the prevailing international system (globalization, neo-liberalism, etc.) have forced Pentecostal communities to face reality. In Peru and other countries on the continent, Pentecostals are beginning to participate actively in civil society, embracing forms of political participation and social action they had formerly rejected.

This rejection of the world, which takes the form of rigid personal ethics (no drinking, no smoking, no dancing, keeping oneself pure, etc.), and the creation of "substitute societies" are Pentecostal responses to having been marginalized by the dominant religious institutions and by the economic and political elites. Today's Pentecostals have achieved a new level of maturity. Increasingly, they desire to become the subjects of their own history and are casting their lot with the new forces that are emerging in our societies.

While Pentecostalism can be seen as a religious expression of the *popular unrest* produced by our current social crisis-- as Matos Mar has pointed out in the case of Peru[15] --this is not the whole story. The rapid expansion of informal economies and grassroot, sometimes radical, political and religious organizations, are common to all societies undergoing transition and crisis. Whenever social chaos reigns, there is room for religious explosions of the Pentecostal ilk.

III. *A popular movement*

There are few statistics that can capture the dizzying demographic growth of Pentecostals. According to David Stoll, "a third of the population in Latin America will be Protestant in the next century, as compared to 10% or 12% now."[16] Pentecostals make up 70% of all Brazilian Protestants; in Chile they are 17% of the population; in the Bahamas, 10%; in Peru, Pentecostals make up 70% of the Protestants who in turn make up 7% of the population of 22 million. Considering the historic dominance of Catholicism in Latin America, these are significant percentages[17] Academics calculate that 25% of the population of three Central American countries (El Salvador, Nicaragua, and Guatemala) will be Pentecostal by the year 2000. Pentecostalism has established such deep roots so quickly in Latin American society that many are beginning to ask whether official Protestantism and Catholicism will survive the region. [18]

Just as base ecclesial communities (known by the Spanish acronym, "CEBs") are authentic popular churches, so are Pentecostal churches authentic. Both find their support among the popular classes, and in both people become agents of social change through their religious

activity.

Several characteristics of Pentecostalism could have a profound impact on the social transformation of South America. These are: 1) *an autonomous financial structure* that is independent of America, Europe, and Asia; 2) *a liturgy* in which expressions of Latin American popular religiosity take precedence over Christian traditions rooted in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin culture; 3) a *community experience* that incorporates the faithful into a community, affirms their individual worth, and permits them to play a role in society; and, 4) an *organic solidarity* with the less favored sectors of society.

Pentecostalism is the only branch of Protestantism rooted in Latin American "popular religiosity."[19] Witness, for example, the new movement that I call "iso-Pentecostalism" in that it takes its image from Pentecostalism but has a different form of organization. Antonio Gouvea Mendonça in Brazil calls it the "movement of the divine cure." "Iso-Pentecostalism" does away with ecclesiastical organization, teaching of the Bible, the participation of the faithful in worship, even hymnals, in order to focus exclusively on healing, and the sale of "healing objects," quite common in popular Afro-Brazilian religiosity, whence it comes. (See discussion of "third Pentecostal wave" and the Universal Church of the Kingdom of God in Silveira Campos, pp. 77-81.)***

Accordingly, the introduction, presence and expansion of Pentecostalism in Latin America should be understood in the context of popular culture and the history of the region's social and cultural movements.

IV. A movement of social change

The rapid multiplication of new religious groups with charismatic tendencies cannot be explained merely by a favorable social environment. These groups also generate social change, albeit indirectly, exerting their influence from within the social structure and the ideological superstructure.[20]

In the present religious configuration in Latin America, Pentecostalism has a two-sided relationship with civil society. On the one hand, it *opposes* "official" religions such as Roman Catholicism and historical Protestantism, while at the same time *interacting* with corporativist states, many of which are undergoing fundamental change, such as Nicaragua and Chile in the 1970s.[21]

Struggles continue on two fronts. Some groups strive to achieve new hegemonies, others strive to consolidate the old ones. On either front what is at stake are the existing and emerging political institutions that use religion to promote quite contradictory programs and aspirations. Ideological conflict is frequently expressed through religious battles, but the stakes are usually political.

At the symbolic level, Pentecostalism is clearly similar to both political and religious Messianic movements. These are the symbolic sources of a *new society* which can *resist* the "collapse of hope" despite crushing defeats such as in Nicaragua, where Christians and Sandinistas tried to create a new society. Such groups can resist the aimlessness produced by the end of utopias suffered after the "collapse" of socialism.

For common folks, at stake are not just ideologies and political utopias--which they have little time for anyway--but their own subsistence in extreme situations where even their basic necessities are unmet.

The true roots of modern Pentecostalism go back to 15th- and 16th- century Europe. There, Pentecostal communities that were excluded from Luther's, Calvin's, and Zwingli's Reformation constituted a popular front known today as the "Radical Reformation." Differing from the Lutherans due to their religious practice and rural origins, they fought and died for a series of demands denied them by the nobles. The apocalyptic vision of history and the Messianic charisma of Thomas Müzer, a leader of this revolutionary movement, clearly marked the later Pentecostal movement.[22]

In Latin American Pentecostalism, one discovers the reflection of indigenous movements and waves of immigrants in search of new identities. It is surprising to note the case of Chile, for example, where the growth of Pentecostalism and socialism paralleled one another chronologically,[23] even employing similar tactics, though without forming any explicit alliance. On the contrary, Pentecostalism became a client of the State, legitimizing the State before civil society.

Some interpreters of the Peruvian religious scene have hypothesized a probable *relation of mutual influence* between the emerging religious groups and a new kind of capitalism that recalls Weber's thesis on the Protestant ethic and the spirit of capitalism. Weber emphasized the general attitudes inherent in the character of each religion (in this case, the ethics of Calvinism) which influence economic activities and motivations. Though religious principles may not have a direct effect on economic behavior, they can lend religious and ideological legitimacy to new motivations, activities, and institutions.

Thus Weber postulated that the Puritan ethic of austerity and the denial of worldly pleasures had generated the beginnings of the capitalist spirit. He made it clear that ideas exercise an autonomous influence on the process of social evolution. For Weber, the key elements of the Calvinist ethic were "asceticism" and a "vocation" for work as a rational activity.

While Weber's thesis may apply to certain branches of European and North American Protestantism, it doesn't work for Latin American Protestantism. It works even less for Pentecostalism, given its mainly proletariat composition, its "eschatological urgency,"[24] and

the volatile character of contemporary international capitalism.

Thus, Pentecostalism has not been a major player in the development of a new grassroots capitalism, except in the sense that Pentecostal believers are consumers and an available labor force. In my opinion, the reasons for this are: 1) mysticism rather than asceticism predominates among the Pentecostals; 2) splurging rather than saving is the cultural model, given that subsistence-level salaries make saving impossible and because the goods purchased with one's salary come to represent one's personal worth ("fetishization"); 3) work is not considered a divine vocation. Thus, Weber's thesis hardly applies. In these circumstances it would be more likely to posit a relationship between Pentecostal ethics and the spirit of socialism, or any system other than capitalism.

The transforming power of Pentecostalism resides not in the coherence of its doctrine, but in its flexibility and its capacity to give expression to new social practices in the defining moments of a society in transition. Christian Lalive d'Epinay has observed that in the time of Allende's Chile, Pentecostalism suffered the mutilation of its practices and doctrine.[25] The same was observed ten years later by Jean-Pierre Bastian in Nicaragua[26] and can be seen today in 1990s Peru.

Final words

Pentecostalism was born in the heat of a historical struggle, both real and symbolic, against Catholicism, official Protestantism, and political dogmatism. It has proven its capacity to generate symbols powerful enough to sustain hope for the working classes and a sense of national identity. Those who fight against Pentecostalism, whether they are politicians or clergy, do so because they fear competition for influence in civil society or because they realize that Pentecostalism represents an alternative to the present political order.

As for the question of whether Pentecostals will choose to become active players in *civil society* or *politics*, the obvious answer is both. Nevertheless, it is within civil society that Pentecostalism will make a key contribution to deciding the future of the region's social system. Past participation in the political sphere, minimal as it may have been, makes it clear that now is not the time to swell the ranks of the political class without first having participated in grassroots community organizations. Active participation in the newly emerging civil society is a historic opportunity that must not be wasted. This is possible today precisely because the Spirit continues to make all things new.

In sum, Pentecostalism is a spiritual movement resulting from the loss of holiness in our world; it is a movement of symbolic protest in a society that denies fulfillment and participation to the dispossessed; it is a grassroots movement born of traditional cultures struggling to cope with massive change; and it is a movement capable of being a channel for social change and of offering hope for a better world.

Pentecostalism is not only a historic embodiment of Christianity, it is an expression of universal spirituality rooted in the resurrected Christ of Pentecost. Today's challenge is not to Pentecostalize the church so that it might grow, but rather to renew the church spiritually in the light of the universal experience of Pentecost, seeking the unity of the church and of all humanity, for whom Christ died and was resurrected.

END NOTES:

[1]The Pentecostals reject this conspiracy theory and consider it a crassly politicized interpretation of their theology.

[2]Pentecost is the founding event of the Pentecostal experience. The movement's name, organizational inspiration, and missionary vocation all derive from the word Pentecost.

[3]Carlos Rodríguez Brandão, "Ser Católico: Dimensões Brasileiras. Um Estudo sobre a atribução da identidade através da religião," *América Indígena* Vol. XLV, No. 4 (Oct.-Dec., 1985): pp. 691-722.

[4] Harvey Cox, The Secular City, New York, NY: MacMillan, 1965.

[5] José Miguel Bonino, "La Piedad Popular en América Latina," *Cristianismo y Sociedad*, XIV, No. 47, 1976: pp. 39-48.

[6] Bryan Wilson has correctly noted that the doctrine of sanctification provides the basis for sectarianism and for the enthusiastic propagation of this religious group that throws itself into spiritual conquest and tries to liberate sinful hearts from the clutch of Satan and guide the sinful to the path of holiness. Cf. Bryan Wilson, *Sociología de las sectas religiosas*, (Madrid: Guadarrama, 1970), 57ss.

[7] Walter Hollenweger, *El Pentecostalismo: Historia y Doctrinas*, (Buenos Aires: La Aurora, 1976) p. 7; Donald W. Dayton, *Theological Roots of Pentecostalism*. (Grand Rapids, MI: Francis Asbury, 1987), pp. 115-141.

[8] A history of the Holiness Movement and its relation to Pentecostalism can be found in Donald W. Dayton, op. cit.

[9] The belief in a period of one thousand years of peace on earth (literal or symbolic) in which Christ and his church will govern the world.

[10] Richard Niebuhr, The Social Sources of Denominationalism, (Magnolia, Mass: Peter Smith Publisher, 1920), p. 65.

[11]The loss of traditional morals, leading to a crisis of values and norms in a determined social formation. Frequently associated with rapid social change.

[12] F. Cartaxo Rolim, *Pentecostais no Brasil*. Uma Interpretação do Protestantismo Brasileiro. (Rio de Janeiro: Vozes); Jean-Pierre Bastian, *Breve historia del Protestantismo en Améica Latina*, (México: CUPSA, 1986); Gamaliel Lugo, "Etica social pentecostal: santidad comprometida," C. Alvarez, ed., op. cit: pp. 101-122.

[13] Bernardo L. Campos, *Religión y Liberación del Pueblo*. (Lima: CEPS, 1989).

[14] See Steve Stern, "El Taki Onqoy y Ia Sociedad Andina" (Huamanga, Siglo XVI), *Allpanchis*, Vol VXI, No 19 (1982) pp. 49-77; Marco Curatola, "Mito y Milenarismo en los Andes: Del Taki Onqoy a Inkarri," *Allpanchis*, Vol X, (1977) pp. 65-92.

[15] José Matos Mar, *Desborde popular y crisis del Estado. El Nuevo rostro del Perú en la década de 1980*, (Lima: CONCYTEC, n.d).

[16] According to a cable from EFE (Washington, April 17, 1990) published in El Comercio on 4/17/90. Due to the organization and internal structure of Peruvian Pentecostalism, and the vitality of both traditional and popular Catholicism, the growth of Peruvian Pentecostalism has lagged behind that of Brazil and Chile.

[17] See Ivan Vallier, Catolicismo, Control Social y Modernsización en América Latina, (Buenos Aires: Amorrortu Editores, 1970), p. 17 and footnote.

[18] Remember the polemic that was set off by the treatment J.C. Mariátegui gave to religion in his *Ensayos de la realidad Peruana*. (Lima: Amauta, 1975) (fifth essay) and also the discipline imposed on Leonardo Boff in Brazil for his statements regarding ecclesiogenesis, the church which is born of the people, and the theology of liberation.

[19] Orlando Costas, "La Misión y el Crecimiento Numérico de la Iglesia: Hacia una misiología de las masas y minorías," CELEP, *Ensayos Ocasionales*, 1976, p. 13.

[20] Otto Maduro, *Religión y Conflicto Social*, (Mexico: Centro de Estudios Ecuménicos - Centro de Reflexión Teológica, 1980) pp. 165-206; 1. Vallier, loc. cit.

[21] Some Pentecostal churches in Europe receive financial support from the State. Although

this is not the case in Latin America, the support that General Pinochet gave to the Evangelical Church of Chile is well-documented.

[22] See Rosemary Radford Reuther, *El Reino de los extremistas. La experiencia occidental del la esperanza mesiánica*, (Buenos Aires: La Aurora, 1971); Norman Cohn, *The Pursuit of the Millennium*. (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1961); George H. Williams, *The Radical Reformation*. (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1962).

[23] An observation made by Christian Lalive d'Epinay, *El Refugio de las Masas. Estudio Sociológico de Protestantismo Chileno*, (Santiago: El Pacfíco, 1968), p. 276.

[24] Growing out of the belief in the imminent arrival of the Reign of God.

[25] Christian Lalive d'Epinay, "Regimes Politiques et Millénarismo dans une Societé dépendante. Reflection á propos du Pentecostisme au Chili," *Actes de la 15ème Conférence Internationale de Sociologie Religieuse*, Verise, 1979.

[26] Jean-Pierre Bastian, Cristianismo y Sociedad, 1986, pp. 52-53.

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In the Power of the Spirit by Dennis A. Smith and B.F. Gutierrez (eds.)

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Chapter 2: Theological Characteristics of an Indigenous Pentecostalism: The Case of Chile

Introduction

The purpose of this article is to reflect briefly upon the theological characteristics of Chilean Pentecostalism. Und erstanding the diversity within Pentecostalism as a world movement provides a firmer base for dialogue between Pentecostal believers as well as between Pentecostals and other churches.

Although Pentecostal experiences can be found throughout the history of Christianity, the modern Pentecostal movement was born with the present century. It was the last stage of a process of spiritual renewal begun by John Wesley in 18th-century England and developed in the United States throughout the 19th century by the Holiness Movement.

Although it began in the United States and expanded from there to Europe and the Third World, the United States was only one of several early centers of the Pentecostal movement. Another was in Chile. When the Azusa Street Mission (generally considered the cradle of modern Pentecostalism) [1] was born in Los Angeles, a Methodist congregation in Valparaiso had already taken its first steps toward Pentecostalism by holding prayer groups and studying the book of Acts. Under the leadership of the Rev. Willis Hoover, Valparaiso Methodists experienced a Pentecostal revival in 1909 and a schism in 1910.[2] Hoover had visited revival meetings in the United States and was aware of a pamphlet from India calling for a "clear and definitive baptism of the Holy Spirit and fire" [3] as a necessary supplement to justification and sanctification.

Since the break with the Methodist church meant the loss of external funding, the nascent Chilean Pentecostal movement had to design a strategy for financial self sufficiency; and having lost access to theological education, it was forced to create its own of pastoral ministry. Thus, Chilean Pentecostalism became the first example of an autonomous Protestantism. It had strong roots in popular culture and took on a number of characteristics that distinguish it from the global Pentecostal movement

One illustration of this difference is the fact that, in current Chilean evangelical parlance, "Pentecostalism" refers exclusively to the "indigenous" Pentecostal churches, while the Pentecostal churches of missionary origin (implanted after 1937) are always identified by their denominational name (Assemblies of God, Autonomous Assemblies of God, Church of God, etc.).

Distinguishing features of Pentecostal theology

To understand the specificity of Chilean Pentecostalism, one must first identify the theological features of Pentecostalism the world over. This is not an easy task since Pentecostalism has roots in various confessional traditions.

It seems that the single aspect that is absolutely unique to Pentecostalism is the "baptism of the Holy Spirit." A Norwegian pastor, cited by Beatriz Muñiz de Souza, wrote:

With respect to salvation through justification by the faith we are Lutherans. In our form of baptism by water we are Baptists. With respect to sanctification, we are Methodists. In our aggressive evangelism we're like the Salvation Army. But in relation to the Baptism of the Holy Spirit, we are Pentecostals.[4]

The well-known specialist in Pentecostal origins, Donald Dayton, thinks that the common and distinctive traits of Pentecostalism can be summed up in the four theological affirmations of the Foursquare Gospel Church: salvation, the baptism of the Holy Spirit, healing, and the second coming of Christ. In the first two elements, Dayton differentiates between two groups:

Those who teach a doctrine of sanctification in the Wesleyan, Holiness tradition, the "three works of grace." These Pentecostals assert that the Christian experience normally finds expression in a pattern of 1) conversion, followed by 2) "entire sanctification," followed by 3) "baptism in the Holy Spirit," which enables the believer to testify and serve, and is evidenced by speaking in tongues.

Those who reduce this model to "two works of grace," by uniting the first two in one "finished work" which then is complemented by a gradual process of sanctification (meaning a strong

focus on conversion followed by a subsequent "baptism in the Holy Spirit").[5]

The first of these two groups adds a fifth affirmation, conversion, to the foursquare model described above.

Pastor Gabriel Vaccaro proposed the following elements as constitutive of the Pentecostal theological identity: 1) evangelization oriented to conversion (understood as a change in life); 2) baptism of the Holy Spirit (speaking in tongues); 3) the church as a charismatic and healing community; 4) and belief in a spiritual world.[6] Vaccaro's view complements rather than contradicts Dayton's. Both describe speaking in tongues, or glossolalia, as the key manifestation of the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

Distinguishing features of Chilean Pentecostalism

Three aspects of the origin of Chilean Pentecostalism help us understand its later theological and organizational development:

1. Chilean Pentecostalism came directly out of Methodism without the mediation of the Holiness Movement, as occurred in North America. The importance of this distinction is clearer if we take into account that the Holiness Movement was not a brief transition between Methodism and Pentecostalism, but a movement that developed throughout the entire 19th century, mainly in the Methodist and Presbyterian churches. Since it came directly from the Episcopal Methodist Church, Chilean Pentecostalism was deeply influenced by its mother church. This is evidenced by the fact that the initial Pentecostal movement wholly assumed the articles of faith of the Methodist Church and perceived itself, at least in Hoover's view, as being a return to the sources of Wesleyan thought.

2 The Chilean Pentecostal revival was almost exclusively experiential in nature, and did not produce a meaningful theological renewal which would have distinguished it radically from the mother church. In spite of the fact that the Methodist Conference of 1910 found the teachings of pastor Hoover to be "anti-Methodist, contrary to the Scriptures, and irrational,"[7] the emerging Pentecostal movement could be considered orthodox from a doctrinal point of view. As indicated by the last word of the condemnatory resolution, the crux of the conflict was more cultural than doctrinal. What was condemned were the lived experiences and practices of revival, which to the rationalist, modernist, and liberal mentality of the Methodist church of that time, seemed primitive, excessively subjective, and beyond the control of reason. Thus, the condemnation of Pentecostalism differs little from the condemnation of the practices of popular Catholicism. In sum, in Chilean Pentecostalism, the centrality of experience over doctrine will be more marked than in North American Pentecostalism.

3. It is precisely the centrality of religious experience over doctrine that will prepare the terrain for the introduction of the Pentecostal experience into Chilean popular culture. Insofar as it

offers an intense encounter with God, communicated more by body language and feelings than by the language of reason, Pentecostalism opens a new space where common people could express their own faith experience. This produces a fecund relationship of reciprocal influence between Pentecostalism and popular culture. It is one of the principal factors which will contribute to the wide acceptance of Pentecostalism in the popular sectors[8] and to the uniqueness of Chilean Pentecostalism.

Is there a "theology" of Chilean Pentecostalism?

Considering all the above, it is not surprising that academic theologians and observers from the historic churches would deny that Chilean Pentecostalism has a "theology." Christian Lalive d'Epinay, author of *The Refuge of the Masses*, says (p. 229; p. 191 in the English edition.):

If one takes "theology" to mean that the beliefs of a religious group and the ways in which its faith is expressed are classified as concepts and considered as a system, then the study of Chilean Pentecostal theology proves to be very disappointing.

As this statement demonstrates, the starting point of d'Epinay's objection is an understanding of theology as the conceptual formulation and systemization of a doctrine. This supposes a high degree of institutionalization, adequately prepared theologians, and academic centers that encourage the development of theology.

From this perspective, the supposed theological poverty of Chilean Pentecostalism is explained by its youth (less than 100 years of existence), its scant institutionalization, and the way it thrives in social sectors with no access to higher education. But d'Epinay seems to point to something deeper: Pentecostalism is founded more on the subjective experience of God than on God's objective revelation. Pentecostalism presents itself as a movement originating in the experience of God, not a church structure concerned with the objective revelation of Christian dogma. For a Protestantism influenced by dialectical theology (Barth), with its emphasis on the radical discontinuity between divine revelation and human experience, it is difficult to see an acceptable theology issuing from Chilean Pentecostalism.

This point of view has been challenged by, among others, Jürgen Moltmann, in his recent book, *The Spirit of Life: A Universal Affirmation*, Moltmann claims that "personal and shared experience of the Spirit" is a legitimate point of departure for theology. "To begin with experience," says Moltmann, "may sound subjective, arbitrary and fortuitous, but I hope to show that it is none of these things."[9] If Barthian theology starts from the supposition that human beings cannot aspire to God through experience because God cannot be the object of experience, Moltmann reminds us that "God's revelation is always the revelation of God to others, and is therefore a making-itself-experienceable through others." (Moltmann, p. 6)

Naturally, a theology which begins with experience will have a language and methodology

distinct from those of classical, conceptual theology. "The theology of revelation," Moltmann continues, "is church theology, a theology for pastors and priests. The theology of experience is preeminently lay theology." (Moltmann, p.17) Since experience cannot be reduced to concepts, a theology that takes experience as its starting point must be a narrative theology, as is biblical theology, to a large degree.

From this point of view, the theology of Chilean Pentecostalism is founded upon testimonies. It is in the narration of the experience in the Spirit, not in books or systematic elaborations, where we find the theology of Chilean Pentecostalism. What follows is a provisional attempt to "read" some of the aspects of Chilean Pentecostal testimony.

Change of life as fundamental experience

The Pentecostal movement is built upon the possibility of a direct, intense encounter with God, which profoundly changes a person's life. Such a change in life, called conversion or personal salvation, clearly marks a before and after in the life of the convert.

Through the Holy Spirit, God becomes directly accessible to the seeker, making any priestly mediation unnecessary. The encounter with the Holy Spirit is intense: God practically invades the believer, occupies him, filling his life with new meaning. The intensity and force of the encounter make a change in life possible, that is, a change in his subjectivity, the way he sees himself and the way he sees life.

The "works of grace" in Chilean Pentecostalism

How is this fundamental experience, this change of life, lived out in relation to the "works of grace"? Pentecostal testimony shows that justification, sanctification, and the baptism of the Holy Spirit are grounded in this unique experience. In the teaching and preaching of the Chilean Pentecostal churches--except for those more influenced by missionary Pentecostalism --the three (or two) works of grace are not usually described as separate and distinguishable stages. The "Pentecostal experience" is at the same time an unconditional acceptance by the forgiving God (justification), the beginning of a new and transformed life (sanctification), the receiving of the strength to sustain new life in an adverse social and cultural medium, and the sharing of testimony with others (baptism of the Holy Spirit).

Unlike Pentecostalism the world over, Chilean Pentecostalism makes no temporal distinction about the works of grace, perhaps because the Holiness Movement tried to define the experience conceptually. Pentecostalism moved from the distinction of concepts (justification, sanctification, baptism of the Holy Spirit) to the distinction of experiences or stages. In this context, two further quotations from Moltmann are illuminating:

If we call this event *justification*, we are describing it as the operation of Christ. If we call it *regeneration*, we are describing the operation of the Spirit. We need both viewpoints if we are to understand the event completely. (Moltmann, p. 153)

Of course these are not stages in the experience of the Spirit. They are different aspects of the one single gift of the Holy Spirit, although in terms of time we can certainly discover these aspects successively. (Moltmann, p. 82)

To the degree that the baptism of the Holy Spirit frequently merges with the experience of conversion, Chilean Pentecostalism sees the change of life itself--not temporary and extraordinary manifestations--as evidence of authenticity of the experience of God. (When the believer has participated in church prior to receiving the baptism of the Spirit, it is understood as a phase of seeking.) As in Pentecostalism the world over, the experience of God is usually accompanied by extraordinary feelings and perceptions, such as speaking in tongues, sobbing, dancing, visions, auditory hallucinations, laughter, or exuberant joy. These manifestations are ways of sharing an experience otherwise impossible to communicate, and this is another criterion for the authenticity of the experience. Here Chilean Pentecostalism most clearly separates itself from mainstream Pentecostalism: speaking in tongues, although it can happen, is not seen as the only guarantee that one has been baptized in the Spirit. It is one among several possible manifestations of this intense experience of one's encounter with God. It is a specific gift which certain people receive to benefit the building of community.

In Chilean Pentecostalism the emphasis on the "gifts of the Spirit" (1 Cor. 12) is superseded by an emphasis on the "fruits of the Spirit" (Gal. 5). In this, Chilean Pentecostalism is heir to the Wesleyan understanding of sanctification: the "new life" is seen in the fruits. Extraordinary or charismatic experiences that are not translated into new fruits may well be the work of other spirits or even pure posturing. The "new life" must show itself not only in faithful participation in the work of the church, but also in daily life, that is, in fulfilling the roles one assumes in the family, at work, and in society in general.[10]

This means, furthermore, that Chilean Pentecostals generally do not retreat from the world. When a Pentecostal convert testifies that he "left the world," he isn't saying that he left society. Rather, he is saying that he has abandoned the world that made up his previous life. But this "new life" must be lived in this world, because this is where he must now bear testimony to having been made new.[11]

In sum, the work of the Holy Spirit is understood fundamentally as the eruption of the power of the living God. This power is manifest in personal life as the possibility to overcome powerlessness when facing evil (dependence on vices, incapacity to plan one's life, family failures, etc.) and to become a new person. In the community, this power is manifest in the church's capacity to evangelize and its ability to offer the newly converted a "living church."

The fact that they have not reduced the manifestations of the Spirit to a single expression (such as glossolalia, in mainstream Pentecostalism) has allowed Chilean Pentecostalism to develop a clear vision of the freedom of the Spirit. Not having a fixed definition makes it easier to conserve spontaneity in the liturgy and more difficult to reduce the liturgy into a mechanism for attaining a glossolalic trance. Unfortunately, this idea of the freedom of the Spirit is frequently used to justify the divisions in the Chilean Pentecostal fold.

Healing and salvation

As in mainstream Pentecostalism, faith in God's healing power plays an important role in the life of the Chilean Pentecostal communities. Considering how little access poor Chileans had to the benefits of modern medicine during the first decades of this century, experiences of divine healing occupy a privileged place in the conversion testimonies of the first generations of Chilean Pentecostals.

Donald Dayton observes that, in the development of North American Pentecostalism, the doctrine of "healing as part of expiation" (Dayton, p. 6) played an important role. This doctrine holds that healing functions as evidence of expiation; therefore, whoever has not been cured also has not been pardoned for his sins. Although this doctrine was later reconsidered by Pentecostal theologians--as it was by some important figures in the Holiness Movement--it continues to exert an influence, especially among the branches of Pentecostalism that stress healing as the first article of faith. The mass campaigns that focus on healing over evangelization usually express this point of view.

In Chilean Pentecostalism, many testimonies blend healing and conversion into a single experience; yet we must not confuse the two. Conversion ("giving oneself up to God" or accepting Jesus Christ as personal savior) is understood as a joyful response to God's love, which can be expressed in healing.[12] However, people can be healed and not converted, and people who have been converted have not necessarily experienced physical healing.

While the mass healing campaigns (including the more recent televised versions) emphasize the marvel of individual healing, Chilean Pentecostalism emphasizes the everyday life of the faith communities. The healing power of God is manifested in the warm welcome given to newcomers, in caring for the sick, in community prayer, and in perseverance in care and visitation. It is the community that heals. If, for reasons known only to God, there is no physical cure, there is always God's power manifest in the community, which gives the afflicted strength to confront adversity with hope, and even with joy.

Present and future salvation

Chilean Pentecostalism, like Pentecostalism around the world, believes in and awaits the second coming of Jesus Christ; still, it may not be clear at first glance what place this hope has in

Pentecostal preaching and testimony. Many outside observers share the prejudice that Pentecostals are more concerned with the afterlife than with their present responsibilities. The inevitability of suffering is accepted, while all hope for happiness centers on the next world. Certain expressions in Pentecostal discourse tend to confirm this impression: "we suffer here, we will reign there"; "this world offers nothing but perdition." It is therefore surprising to find that in Chilean Pentecostal testimony, and particularly in street corner preaching, the emphasis is on the possibility of salvation here and now, a possibility that appears to be supported by the preacher's personal experience.

The street corner preacher doesn't claim that by accepting Christ "I will be saved and happy in the beyond," but rather "I am saved and happy here and now, because Christ made me into a new creation." Pentecostal testimony doesn't compare the present with the future, but the present with the past, a present of salvation versus a past of perdition. The preacher announces that this same experience is within reach of anyone listening if she sincerely wants it because, not long ago, the preacher himself was in the place of the listener. Although Chilean Pentecostalism is certainly not disinterested in the hereafter, the novelty of the Pentecostal gospel is that the hereafter can actually be lived in the here and now.

For the Chilean Pentecostal, waiting for the second coming of Christ is not a passive activity; it is by definition active. While waiting expectantly, one carries out the work of the Lord, bearing testimony to God's work in all dimensions of everyday life. God's promises (fulfilled eschatology) are usually understood to apply only to the lives of the converted, not to society in general. Still, there are signs that Chilean Pentecostalism is gaining awareness of itself as a major actor in popular strategies to confront social problems, such as alcoholism and family violence.

Pentecostalism's impact on society results from the conversion of individuals. For this reason, the Pentecostal version of utopia can be expressed in the ideal of "Chile for Christ," that is, when all Chileans are won to Christ, Chile will be better off. After eighty years of uninterrupted growth, however, it is beginning to dawn on the Chilean Pentecostal movement that such growth has not resolved the country's many social problems. For this reason it cannot continue to hope that "Chile for Christ" is the solution. On the other hand, the movement is aware that growth is not unlimited. While Pentecostalism grows, other religious movements are also growing, and the Catholic church does not seem to lose its majority. The movement has thus begun to awaken to such new dimensions of mission as, for example, special ministries to the socially marginalized, or church support for education. Due to its popular nature and the social exclusion of its membership, Pentecostal churches have yet to produce political leaders, but political participation is now beginning to be seen as a desirable option. More congregations are becoming involved in the search for solutions to problems that affect the quality of life in poor neighborhoods.

Final words

Chilean Pentecostalism should not be measured against the yardstick of worldwide Pentecostalism. Claims that Chilean Pentecostalism is theologically poor because it does not clearly distinguish the "works of grace" or because it doesn't recognize the centrality of glossolalia miss the point. In this article I have described Chile's unique contribution to the global Pentecostal community.

I wish, nevertheless, to discourage any triumphalistic interpretations of these remarks. The extreme atomization of the Chilean Pentecostal movement has blurred its identity and has frequently led to confusion. Furthermore, I gladly recognize that Pentecostal churches of missionary origin throughout the world have gone through important processes of renewal, autonomy, and return to popular culture. The Holy Spirit works where and how it will in order to lead all churches, Pentecostal or not, to a greater faithfulness to God.

ENDNOTES:

[1] See Walter Hollenweger, 1976, first chapters.

[2] See Willis C. Hoover, *Historia delavivamiento pentecostal en Chile*, (Valparaíso: Imprenta Excelsior, 1948).

[3] Ibid. p. 14. The pamphlet was sent to Hoover's wife by its author, Minnie Abrams, from Maleri, India.

[4] B. Muñiz, *A Experiencia de Salvação: Pentecostais em São Paulo*, (São Paulo: Dos Ciudades, 1969), p. 54.

[5] Donald W. Dayton, *Raices teológicas del pentecostalismo*, (Buenos Aires: Nueva Creación, 1991), p.6.

[6] See Gabriel Vaccaro, *Identidad pentecostal*, (Quito: CLAI, 1990), pp 11-33.

[7] Christian Lalive d'Epinay, *El refugia de las masas*, (Santiago: Editorial del Pacífico, 1968), p. 42. (p. 11 in the English edition).

[8] Between 1930 and 1960, Chilean Pentecostalism doubled its membership approximately every ten years. In the following decades growth has continued but at a slower rate. In the last national census, done in 1992, it was revealed that 13.2% of the population over 14 years of age is Protestant, of which the large majority is Pentecostal. Concerning the reasons for growth, see J. Sepúlveda in lvarez, 1992, pp. 77-88.

[9] Jürgen Moltmann, *The Spirit of Life: A Universal Affirmation*, (Minneapolis: Fortress Press,

1992), p. 17. My comment about the importance of this book for Pentecostalism has been published in the Journal of Pentecostal Theology 4,1994, pp 41-49: (A Global Pentecostal Dialogue with Jürgen Moltmann's *The Spirit of Life: A Universal Affirmation* "The Perspective of Chilean Pentecostalism.")

[10] Concerning the impact of Pentecostal conversion on daily life, see the recent study by Manuel Ossa, 1991.

[11] See Canales, Palma y Villela, En tierra extraña II. Para una sociolagía de Ia religiosidad popular protestante, (Santiago: Amerinda-SEPADE, 1991).

[12] Many testimonies have a language and structure similar to the miracle-seekers of popular Catholicism in which "giving oneself to the Lord" is the expression of gratitude for favors granted. Of course, instead of a sacrificial pilgrimage to the sanctuary, this form of gratitude among Pentecostals involves a person's whole life.

return to religion-online

In the Power of the Spirit by Dennis A. Smith and B.F. Gutierrez (eds.)

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Chapter 3: Why Historic Churches Are Declining and Pentecostal Churches are Growing in Brazil

Introduction

Without attracting much attention, Pentecostalism began to penetrate Latin America in 1910, almost immediately after its beginning in the United States. Early promoters of Pentecostalism took advantage of existing Protestant community networks in order to make their first converts. At that time Presbyterians, Methodists, Baptists, and other Protestant groups that had been in Brazil since the second half of the preceding century were growing, despite strong pressures from Roman Catholicism. For a long time, these denominations responded to the Pentecostals with indifference, tempered by a certain desire for spiritual revival. Only later did they perceive that this new kind of Christianity posed a threat to their institutions. Those few communities that received Pentecostal preachers suffered schisms and lost members to a movement that would come to dominate the Brazilian religious scene.

Decades passed before historic Protestants reacted by waging a fierce battle against the Pentecostals. This continued until quite recently, when the perceived omnipotence of historic Protestantism collapsed in the face of Pentecostal growth. Facing the empty pews left by members who followed new leaders "full of the Holy Spirit," bewildered historic denominations began to ask themselves, "Why are they growing while we are disappearing?"

This article will attempt to answer the following questions: Who are the Pentecostals? What challenges do they represent for Brazilian Protestants (especially Presbyterians)? What lessons may be learned from the success of this movement? Might these lessons help us to discover where Presbyterians "missed the boat" of history? There are no easy answers; after all, this issue has generated decades of struggle, mutual rejection, angry discourse, and arguments based on

mistaken notions.

It is not enough to analyze this issue exclusively from the perspectives of church history and theology. In the first part of this article, I will analyze Pentecostalism as a religious movement with deep roots in the history, culture and economics of Western society. To put Pentecostalism in context, we must take seriously the pre-existing conditions of Latin American culture, popular religiosity, and pietist Protestantism that gave rise to this new message. Here, the sociology of religion may help us to perceive that religious movements are created, maintained, and abandoned by people acting in history who bear in the present the marks of the past and the potential of the future. History is marked by demands which may or may not be satisfied, but which generate leaders to feed the pilgrims and show them utopias that can be realized in history.

In the second part, I will analyze the dynamism, contradictions, and potential of Pentecostalism as an important part of the Brazilian religious scene. I will consider Pentecostalism as a movement and a mentality, both of which create institutions in the process of accommodation and change.
In the third and final part, I will analyze the interaction between historic Protestantism and Pentecostalism. I will try to answer these questions: What future will come from these ambivalent and dialectical relations, with their mixture of hatred and love, repulsion and attraction, disdain and admiration? Might Presbyterianism appropriate certain Pentecostal practices and experience renewed growth without losing its Reformed identity?

In the pages that follow I will try to keep the flame of hope alight, while recognizing that now, at the end of the millennium, Protestantism is sailing against the tide. Though I will use the tools of the sociology of religion, in the final analysis, the questions facing us are theological, ecclesiological, and pastoral.

I. BRAZILIAN PENTECOSTALISM: A HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

Religious movements do not evolve overnight, and many of them cannot be dated easily. To understand them better we must look at their origins, roots, and causes, as well as the reasons for their successes and failures. Thus, we must look beyond the times and places traditionally cited as the genesis of Pentecostalism (Topeka in 1901; Los Angeles in 1906), to the more remote causes, lodged in the history of the Christian Church, in the movements that marked Western Christianity, events often under appreciated by historians, pro-Pentecostal or otherwise.

Pentecostalism has always stirred up passions. It tends to ignite conflicts over the religious control of the laity and the distribution of religious "goods." A danger to religious institutions, Pentecostalism challenges the status quo because it bears within itself the "savage sacred," as opposed to the more "domesticated sacred" of the historic churches.[1]

At the beginning of this century, certain sectors of Protestantism all over the world were anxious for a wide-ranging spiritual renewal. The "modern Church" was thought to have moved away

from the "primitive Church." The former was bureaucratic, insensitive, rational, cold, and more concerned with its political and social privileges than with the action of the Holy Spirit. The latter was idealized, dynamic, the scene of great miracles and the copious distribution of charismatic gifts. Modern Pentecostalism believes it has bridged the gap between the two, eliminating 1850 years of history and the complex structures of ecclesiastical mediations that had been constructed around the Christian sacred. To accomplish this, Pentecostals elaborated new hermeneutics: intense emotional experience, interior illumination, and internal perception of the sacred. Charismatic leaders became the center of new mediations between the sacred and the profane. A new ecclesiology began to take shape in which the sacred was expressed through a hierarchy that enjoyed direct links to the Holy Spirit.

1. *Antecedents of Brazilian Pentecostalism*

The Brazilian Pentecostal movement did not begin in Sao Paulo (1910) or Belém (1911) or even in Los Angeles (1906) or Topeka (1901). More remote origins can be traced to the charismatic experiences of Christian communities of the first century and the Montanist Movement of the second century. History also records many ecstatic and mystical experiences during the middle ages, both inside and outside of monasteries. Further, many phenomena claimed by Pentecostalism transcend Christianity itself; that is, they belong to religiosity in general.

To understand the rise of Protestantism and modern Pentecostalism in Latin America, we must look back to the religious history of the English colonies and the United States. The occupation of territory, the opening of the frontier, the conflict with native Americans, the constant arrivals of numerous European immigrants, and internal migration created a multitude of eccentric, poorly-adapted people, spread thinly throughout a vast territory. Protestantism passed through a great process of adaptation as it accompanied the immigrants arriving in the new territory. In this context, religion became the greatest single integrating factor for these new inhabitants, giving them the ability to generate symbolic meaning for life in inhospitable conditions.[2] During the pioneer period, the Americans experienced a first wave of spiritual revival that began in 1726 among the Dutch Reformed. This great awakening lasted about 50 years and crossed confessional lines. Among the religious leaders of this period we find Calvinists (Jonathan Edwards, George Whitfield), Anglicans (Charles and John Wesley) and Presbyterians (Gilbert Tennent and Samuel Davies). Many of these preachers used the renewed faith as a weapon against other pastors, whom they called "orthodox pharisees," "learned," "intolerant," "devoid of faith," etc. Anti-intellectualism in several regions led to the burning of theology texts.[3] The growth of the revival in frontier regions, inhabited by people with little or no education, induced "primitive" religious behaviors, such as howling, shrieking, falling to the ground, and contortionism. This great first wave coincided with the rise of Methodism, the Society of Friends, and of sects such as the Shakers.

The second wave of revivals prepared the way for the rise of modern missions (of which Latin American Protestantism would be a result) and for revivalists like Finney, Moody, and Torrey. In the wake of these movements arose groups that focused on the search for holiness. They

emphasized emotional experience, scorned learned theology, and liked fiery preaching and a free liturgy. After these two great revivals, Americans came to value the "inner light," the "burning heart," and "enthusiasm" as ways of attesting to the legitimacy of a faith nurtured outside traditional religious institutions.
Agile and competitive "free" communities, concerned with sanctification, began to compete with Protestant denominations for a place in the American religious market. In many regions there were camp meetings, where sanctification was sought as a "second blessing" within the reach of every Christian. It was in these autonomous communities that the Pentecostal movement would find the powder keg necessary for its first explosion in the 20th century. An important event in this period was the publication of the revivalist R.A. Torrey's book, *Baptism with the Holy Spirit* in 1895, in which the doctrine of sanctification was linked theologically to the "Baptism of the Holy Spirit."

Scholars have considered the events at the Bethel Bible School in Topeka, Kansas in 1901 to be the beginning of modern Pentecostalism. Led by the school's president, Charles Parham, dozens of students entered into ecstatic states and practiced glossolalia. This experience was rapidly disseminated in area churches and in neighboring states.

When a Holiness pastor in Houston was converted to Pentecostalism, it caused a schism in the church where William I. Seymour (born 1870, the son of former slaves) was a member. Seymour followed his pastor into Pentecostalism and preached in a Nazarene Church in Los Angeles in l907.[4] Seymour was expelled from that church, but went on to hold meetings in the homes of sympathizers. Some time later, he and his sympathizers rented an old church building belonging to the African Methodist Episcopal Church at 312 Azusa Street, and initiated a movement called "The Apostolic Faith." Protestants came from all over the world to see and feel what was happening there, as Pentecostalism spread in an ever-widening circle.[5] One convert to Pentecostalism from those meetings was W. H. Durham, later to become an important figure in Brazilian Pentecostalism.

2. *Pentecostalism in Brazil*

Two Swedish followers of Durham, Daniel Berg and Gunnar Vingren, believing that they had received revelations from God, came to the state of Paná in Northern Brazil, and began to preach the baptism of the Holy Spirit in a Baptist church there. They eventually founded an Assemblies of God church. Another follower of Durham's, Luigi Francescon, a former member of the Italian Presbyterian Church of Chicago, also received divine revelations. He went to Argentina and Brazil and founded the Christian Congregation of Brazil (CCB) in the states of São Paulo and Paraná

a) Pre-existing conditions in Brazilian Protestantism

Since the beginning of missionary Protestantism in Brazil--with the arrival of Presbyterians in 1859--there were already signs of difficulty in the assimilation of historic Protestantism by a Latin people, heir to Portuguese popular Catholicism and indigenous and African religions. Due

to the scarcity of Catholic priests, Brazilian Catholicism often depended on religious services provided by lay leadership, far from the eyes of the parish priest.
A first sign of these difficulties arose when North American missionaries tried to fit Jose Manuel da Conceição into the theological mold of Anglo-Saxon Presbyterianism. Conceição was a former Catholic priest who had represented himself as a "Protestant Father" even before the Protestants arrived in Brazil. When he converted to Presbyterianism, he became the first ordained pastor from Latin America (1865). Once ordained, however, Conceição refused to exercise his pastorate in local or urban churches. He visited rural zones and established Protestant nuclei here and there. In his preaching and writing he emphasized the need to approach God through one's feelings.[6]

A second sign of maladjustment of Presbyterian Protestantism to Brazilian culture is the case of Miguel Vieira Ribeiro, a member of a rich and illustrious family from Northeast Brazil who had been influenced by spiritism and positivism. In 1874 Ribeiro was converted to Presbyterianism during a worship service. Some years later, after conflict with the missionaries, Vieira abandoned Presbyterianism and founded the Brazilian Evangelical Church. The point of divergence was precisely the question of interior illumination and the possibility that a human being might receive new revelations directly from God.
At the same time, in Southern Brazil a Messianic and millennarian movement among German Protestant immigrants was developing. It was led by a women named Jacobina who entered into trances and received revelations directly from God. Remembered in history by the name "Mucker," this movement in a rural zone near Porto Alegre was crushed by the military and hundreds of its followers killed. It would seem that, ever since Luther, Protestantism has had trouble reconciling its theology and practice with millennarian movements. Luther's opposition to the peasant revolt in Germany is a good example of this.[7]

b) The "Pentecostal Family" in Brazil

Scholars have tried in various ways to divide the history of Brazil's Pentecostal movement into periods. Paul Freston and others have explained it in terms of **three waves**.[8] According to this theory, the first **Pentecostal wave** brought the Swedish founders of the Assemblies of God to northern Brazil in 1911 and the Italian-American Luigi Francescon to São Paulo in 1910. The latter founded the Christian Congregation of Brazil (CCB) within the Italian immigrant community in Sao Paulo and Paraná. For almost half a century these were the only forms of Pentecostalism known in Brazil, except for the Adventist Church of the Promise (1938), which was totally outside the mold of "historic Protestantism."

The **second Pentecostal wave** came in the 1950s. Its principal emphases were miracles, divine healing and speaking in tongues. The second wave brought denominations such as the Foursquare Gospel Church/National Evangelism Crusade (1953), the Evangelical Pentecostal Church "Brazil for Christ"(1956), the New Life Church (1960), the "God is Love" Pentecostal Church (1961), the House of Blessing (1964), the Wesleyan Methodist Church (1967), and many smaller denominations consisting of less than half a dozen local churches.

In the 1970s, the country was ready for a **third Pentecostal wave**, that coincided with an unprecedented economic crisis set off by the international petroleum crisis and worsened by the inability of the Brazilian military dictatorship to resolve the basic problems of the poorest people. This wave brought the Salon of Faith (1975), the Universal Church of the Kingdom of God (1977), the International Church of Grace (1980) and other autonomous communities. A characteristic of third-wave Pentecostalism is its skilled use of the mass communication media; it successfully penetrated the radio and television networks the military regime had set up to promote national security and to encourage the cultural unification of the country. The third wave brought "the electronic church" to Brazil, a variety of Pentecostalism that has been successful in the U.S. and Central America.[9]

Eighty-five years after its acclimatization in Latin America, the "Pentecostal family" has formed "kinship networks," mechanisms for classifying its members and separating "desirable" from "undesirable" relatives. It has adopted practices, customs, and rituals mostly from its interaction with "close relatives," leaving out of consideration "distant relatives" (Roman Catholics) and those who are in no way relatives, such as Umbanda, Candomblé and Kardecist Spiritism (based on the thought of Alain Kardec). The modifications that have taken place illustrate the dynamism of the various movements that make up Brazilian Pentecostalism, with their many practices and positions, some quite divergent and contradictory.

C) Branches of the Brazilian "Pentecostal family"

Compared to the explosion of the last 45 years, Pentecostalism of the first wave grew slowly in Brazil until the end of World War II. In the 1930s, Brazil had little industry and was a predominantly rural country. Only 25% of its population lived in cities. This percentage grew to 36% in 1950, 68% in 1980 and 75% in 1990. Internal migration gave a great push to the expansion of Pentecostalism.

The Congregação Cristã do Brasil (CCB) [Christian Congregation of Brazil] grew only within the Italian immigrant community in São Paulo and Paraná until 1935, when it began to open to the Portuguese language and Brazilian culture.[10] During its organizational period, the presence of Francescon was very important. Though he lived in the United States, he came to Brazil more than ten times during the period from 1910 to 1948, residing in Brazil for different periods totaling ten years. Francescon was a Waldensian who had been born a Roman Catholic. While living in Chicago, he became a Presbyterian and later converted to Pentecostalism. A partial list of the way the CCB was permanently influenced by Francescon follows:

emphasis on "illuminism" (seeking direct revelations from God);
emphasis on speaking in tongues;
rejection of bureaucracy and formal organization;
distrust of theology and culture;
high value placed on purity of behavior;
resistance to becoming involved with other denominations (a strong sense of exclusiveness

implying that the CCB is a sect); and strongly apolitical views.

The CCB does not publish literature and does not proselytize in public places, on radio, television, or the press. Converts are made through personal contacts, using family and personal networks. The Italian tradition, and also that of rural Brazil, of large, closely-knit families is still prevalent in this denomination. Conflicts among the leaders are minimal because power is reserved for the oldest, who lead the worship services. They blend the spontaneity and improvisational ability of the parishioners with a certain rigidity, thus eliminating charismatic forces that may cause innovation or conflict. The selection of hymns, prayers, and the presentation of testimonies are open to all. The preaching is improvised by whomever feels the desire to do it, but it is supervised by the leader, who is the "bearer of the Word." No offering is collected and there is no official church membership.[12]
Doctrinally, the CCB differs from other members of the "Pentecostal family" by its residual Calvinism. Antônio G. Mendonça correctly observed that the CCB holds the idea of predestination dearly. Since God calls those who are to be saved, the faithful are dispensed from the work of proselytism, so common in other Pentecostal denominations.[13]

The Assambleias de Deus do Brasil (ADB) [Assemblies of God] was founded in Brazil in 1910 by two Swedish Pentecostals who had been living in the United States, Berg and Vingren. Like so many Pentecostals of that era, they were motivated by revelations received directly from God. Arriving in the city of Belém, in the state of Pará, they were sheltered in the basement of a Baptist church whose pastor was also of Swedish origin. Some months later, as soon as they had learned Portuguese, they precipitated a division in the church. Thus, they founded the "Mission of Apostolic Faith" with 19 members. This name was changed after 1914, as it was in the United States, to "Assemblies of God."
Unlike the CCB's history, the history of the Assemblies of God is well- known because they publish biographies of their most illustrious preachers. The Assemblies of God first took root in the North and Northeast and expanded quickly into the South, accompanying the migration of peasants from the Northeast who, for more than a century, have been forced by drought, the increasing concentration of land, and violence, to migrate south in search of work.[14]

During the first three decades of expansion, two important things happened: after thirty years of domination by Swedish missionaries, the ADB came to be controlled by Brazilians (mostly from the Northeast, with strong authoritarian tendencies), and the center of church activities moved from Belém to Rio de Janeiro. The influence of the Brazilian Northeast left the authoritarian and patriarchal marks of that rural culture on the ADB, which still centralizes power in the hands of the pastor.[15] This causes permanent tensions between the institutional and the charismatic, creating schisms and new congregations.

In the ADB, the pastor is subordinated to a central church and these are subordinated to certain "ministries" of the National Convention. The worship services are marked by strong emotions, by songs (using popular Brazilian music, unlike the CCB) and by readings from the Bible. Worship is a kind of psychological climax of the tensions of the week. Visitors are strongly

urged to make the "decision for Christ," that is, to convert to the Assemblies of God.[16] Many left this church to begin the "second Pentecostal wave."

When World War II ended, Brazil's political, economic, and cultural situation underwent profound changes: democracy took hold once again, industrialization was taken up anew, the steel industry grew quickly, and European (especially French) cultural influence gave way to North American. The nationalistic populism of president Getulio Vargas was replaced by the optimism of Juscelino Kubitschek, who opened the country to foreign industries. Despite the later political and economic problems (the military coup of 1964), the country continued to grow. Communication networks (radio, telephone, television) were expanded. Distances were reduced by new roads in all areas of the country. And yet despite all this, the gap between rich and poor increased because industry could not absorb all the labor generated by the intense rural exodus.

This was the context of the **second Pentecostal wave**, bearer of a message that was better suited to reach the lowest strata of urban society. New movements began to break the traditional molds of religious institutions. In 1946, Harold Williams arrived in Brazil from Bolivia and founded a church in the interior of the state of São Paulo. Williams, a former actor in cowboy movies, was now a missionary for the International Foursquare Gospel Church. After failing to get a hearing for his revivalist message in the more traditional denominations, Williams joined Raymond Boatright in organizing the National Evangelism Crusade. In the beginning, their venture was interdenominational but by 1955 it had taken the name, Igreja do Evangelho Quadrangular (IEQ) [Foursquare Gospel Church].

The IEQ pioneered the uninhibited use of radio and public space. Its pastors identified more easily with the urban world than did the preachers of the Assemblies of God. Their messages focused more on the concrete needs of individuals. They placed a high value on healing and solving personal problems. In 1991 the IEQ had more than 3,000 churches in Brazil, with about 10,000 pastors, of whom 35% are women.[17]

When he left the Assemblies of God for the National Evangelism Crusade, Manoel de Mello called himself a "missionary." Originally from the Northeastern state of Pernambuco, Mello was a construction worker in São Paulo. In 1956 he founded a small church called "The Bethel Church of Jesus." This name was soon changed to the Igreja Brasil para Cristo (IBPC) ["Brazil for Christ" Church] reflecting the nationalistic mood of Brazil in the 1950s. Mello was the first genuinely Brazilian leader to found a Pentecostal church. Though lacking in formal education, he was an eloquent preacher. He used the radio effectively to communicate directly. His program, "The Voice of Brazil for Christ," was on the air for two decades. His meetings of healing and miracles were held in public plazas and soccer stadiums. In 1958, he filled Pacaembú one of the largest soccer stadiums in Brazil. Near the center of the city of São Paulo he built a church with a capacity of more than 10,000 people. The IBPC works mostly in poor, working-class neighborhoods in east São Paulo, populated mainly by immigrants from Northeast Brazil.

Mello was successful in getting the IBPC into the World Council of Churches and becoming a member of the central committee. Though it caused internal strife, admission into the WCC brought innumerable benefits. Mello won fame as a supporter of ecumenism, a preacher concerned with social action, and a critic of the military government, but he was criticized when he used this prestige as a marketing strategy to bring resources into the church.
In practice, Mello was autocratic. This slowed development of the IBPC compared to its competitor, the Foursquare Gospel Church. Mello's charisma did not survive the internal conflicts which arose when he tried to build a cult around his personality. Pressured by accusations, Mello was forced to leave the leadership of the church in 1986, and he died in 1990. The IBPC lost its impetus to the new charismatic movements, broke with the WCC, concentrated on internal problems, and lost ground among the poorest social classes to the "God Is Love" Pentecostal Church. In the lower middle classes, the IBPC lost ground to the Universal Church of the Kingdom of God.

In 1961, Daví Martins de Miranda founded the Igreja Pentecostal "Deus é Amor" (IPDA) ["God Is Love" Pentecostal Church] in the working-class neighborhood of Villa María in the city of São Paulo. Miranda, from a rural area in the state of Paraná, was 26 years old at the time. Soon the church moved to the center of the city where its headquarters was finished in 1970. Nine years later, Miranda bought an old factory a few blocks from the Praça da Sé (the geographic center of the city). After reforms and repairs but still looking like a factory, it became the "World Headquarters" of the "God is Love" Pentecostal Church.[18]

Huge gatherings called "concentrations of faith" are held here, and here too are located some of the radio studios that Miranda has constructed. Above the bullet-proof pulpit is an enormous light board showing all the radio stations transmitting the worship service at that moment. Many of these radio stations are Miranda's personal property. The IPDA buys time on other radio stations to transmit short-wave programs throughout Latin America. Miranda now mixes Spanish words with his Portuguese and sometimes his exorcisms and healing sessions have simultaneous translation to Spanish, indicating the degree of the IPDA's expansion in Latin America.[19]

The IPDA has established mechanisms to control people by requiring their presence. "Faith cards" are distributed which must be stamped each day of the week (a substitution of the Catholic novena). These also require a financial contribution with each visit. A cashier in an annex to the bookstore works uninterruptedly during worship service to receive payment for the "faith card."

Present in all IPDA discourse is the theme of "divine healing," which includes various kinds of material problems--human relations, the complications of urban living, psychological problems--that is, all afflictions resulting from the near omnipresence of the devil. The cure is found in exorcism, constant attendance at church, and diligent use of various therapies recommended by the sect. These therapies are situated on the border between magic and religion, and include activities such as passing the Bible over the affected part of the body, drinking "prayer" water

(blessed by the "missionary" himself), receiving unction from a church worker at the door of the temple, and bringing unemployment documents, clothes, and photographs to stand in for people unable to come to church. In one therapy, the miracle is effected when the person with the problem puts one hand on a tape recorder as it plays the "faith prayer" and places the other hand on the affected part of the body. The results of the therapy are presented in small testimonies called "Tell about the Blessings, brother." These taped testimonies make up a large part of the radio programs.

IPDA preaching is permeated by an intense moralism which generates many prohibitions. For example a behavior manual ("Biblical Doctrine for Today") requires depilation for women, and prohibits women from using make-up or pants, going to the beach, or playing ball with anyone older than seven years. It establishes rules for the length of skirts and the width of ties. Punishments are established for the first, second, and third back-slides. The rigor of these proscriptions may be due to the sect mentality which requires a life separated from the world. It demands that members obey strict rules so that they can feel "special". For persons coming from an experience of anomie, this exaggerated attachment to norms is part of the process of reorganizing life around new values.

In addition to the churches already mentioned, we can include in the second wave of Pentecostalism some denominations that resulted from schisms in historic Protestant churches, such as the Independent Congregation (1965); Wesleyan Methodist (1967); Renovated Baptist (1970); and Renovated Presbyterian (1972). Still other autonomous churches resulted from the fragmentation of the Pentecostal movement, such as the Church of New Life (1960). The House of Blessing/Evangelical Tabernacle Church of Jesus (1964), Signs and Wonders (1979), and Maranatha Christian Church (1970).
Some churches lost their identity by merging with other movements, or simply changed their names. Among these are the Apostolic Church (The Miracle Hour), the Biblical Revival Church, United Evangelical Pentecostal Church, and the Marvels of Jesus Church. This process is typical of the atomization of Pentecostal movements into small, autonomous churches.

The **third Pentecostal wave** began in the l970s in an urbanized Brazilian society undergoing an unprecedented social and economic crisis. These new sects are urban movements identified with the eruption of mass society. They take on an entrepreneurial style in the production and distribution of religious "goods." The emergence of the new sects is clearly a function of the globalization of both the country's and the world's economy and culture. For this reason, the ability to use mass communications media effectively becomes a question of life or death for these new sects. Only those in the best position to use mass media and modern marketing strategy can now survive in the competitive religious marketplace.

Douglas Teixeira Monteiro observed that old religious systems were disintegrating and "almost impresarial models of conduct, differentiated more by labels and packaging than by the products they offer,"[20] were emerging. The marketplace brings with it all the problems of marketing, that is, it attracts a fluctuating clientele and dedicates itself to managing the insecurities and

afflictions of the masses. Rubem Alves argues that an entrepreneurial mentality and capitalist logic can best explain the success of these enterprises, which specialize in the transaction of spiritual goods and fall within the "logic of the exchange of values."[21]

Through this perspective we can see how when the search for religious goods is frustrated (as in the case of the historic Protestant churches) consumers look for the same goods (spiritual comfort, the support of the sacred for their struggles, positive attitudes that will enable them to carry on with daily struggles, etc.) in other, better equipped agencies. These new religious entities are businesses which provide services. They are committed to satisfying the desires and needs of their clientele and not to propagating doctrines, historic traditions, or organizational continuity. What matters, then, are results. They leave aside the classic characteristics of Pentecostalism: the baptism of the Holy Spirit, glossolalia, the expectation of the imminent return of Jesus, eternal life in heaven, etc. The question now is how to satisfy the needs of the here and now in a clientele that is not worried about the distant future.
In 1975 Edir Macedo and two of his brothers-in-law founded the Faith Salon (Crusade of the Eternal Way). The following year, Macedo and one of those brothers-in-law organized the Church of the Blessing in a former funeral home in the neighborhood of Abolição in Rio de Janeiro and soon changed the name to the **Universal Church of the Kingdom of God (IURD).**

Macedo was better than anyone else in assimilating techniques and strategies from the North American televangelists. His biggest "gamble" occurred in 1989 when he bought a network of television and radio stations in São Paulo for 45 million dollars. In March of 1995 he increased his communication holdings with the purchase of a television station for 15 million dollars.[22] Besides promoting church growth, Macedo has used his media clout to support conservative political candidates. In the 1994 elections, Macedo helped elect a brother, a sister, and various other members of the IURD to the federal Chamber of Deputies.

In addition to its electronic media, the IURD puts out a nationally distributed weekly called the "Folha Universal." Its edition on March 19, 1995 had a printing of 780,000 copies. Macedo's book *Orixàs, caboclos, e guias-- deuses ou demônios* (Orixàs, caboclos, arid guides - Gods or demons,) which demystifies the Afro-Brazilian cults, has sold more than a million and a half copies.[23]

The IURD "boom" in the large and medium-sized Brazilian cities has been sustained by the radio and television networks owned by the church. Typically, the IURD rents an unused movie theater or warehouse and holds worship services characterized by 1) music with a popular rhythm to which the faithful sing and dance and 2) symbols taken from popular Catholicism and Afro-Spiritist religions.[24]

The IURD divides its weekly programs according to the "product" to be "sold" on different days of the week, using a different "chain" (A human chain in which people link hands to form a "chain of prosperity" through which the spirit flows to all) for each day of the week. **Monday** is the day of the "chain of prosperity" or the "chain of the entrepreneurs" which is dedicated to people with financial problems. **Tuesday** is the "chain of the seven apostles" for those who have

health problems. **Wednesday**, the "chain of the children of God," focuses on prayer and Bible study. **Thursday's** "family chain" aims to relieve family problems. On **Fridays**, an important day in the Afro-Brazilian religions, the IURD holds its "chain of liberation" when rituals and prayers center on exorcism and fighting the power of curses, hexes, and spells. **Saturday** is reserved for the "chain of youth and children," and **Sunday** is dedicated to the "chain of Jericho," with the dramatization of the victory of Joshua over his enemies.[25]

The offering is an important element in the IURD ritual. Contributing to the church is not restricted to what a person can give; pastors propose that believers make an act of sacrifice, that is, make a gesture "crazy with faith," such as giving money that has been reserved for food, rent, or paying bills. According to Macedo, this establishes an alliance with God. Not to tithe is to show lack of faith, cowardice, and disbelief in God. Sacrifice is thus monetarized; the worshiper co-opts divinity to solve his personal problems. This is how alliance with God is established according to "Bishop" Macedo.

The IURD has no patent on its successful formula. In São Paulo, its methods, slogans, and words of order are copied by many religious entrepreneurs, for example, the "Catholic Church of Holy Missions," the "Sanctuary of Good Jesus of the Miracles," and the "Sanctuary of Saint Anthony of Categiró."

A powerful syncretism is operating here, combining Roman Catholic, African, and indigenous traditions, all seasoned with a Pentecostal vocabulary. These churches compete for the same clientele--the poor, the miserable, and the powerless--and also attract people from the middle strata of the population, who come to the movement with or without the baggage of a former religion.

When will the growth and fragmentation of Pentecostalism in Brazil end? I have tried to demonstrate, after Otto Maduro, that all religious phenomena owe their growth to a series of historical, socio-economic, religious, and cultural causes that are independent of the good faith or the degree of consciousness of the individual participants.[26] Due to the misery, economic restructuring, and anomie in Brazil, there is still a great potential for growth to continue. Pentecostalism has responded to the psycho-social needs of people excluded from modern capitalism. For them, no other utopia guarantees them a little dignity and the chance to participate in the results of economic development. Perhaps people had been convinced by the rhetoric of capitalist life, which promised but failed to deliver on consumption, prosperity, health, security, and full employment. Where these things are lacking is fertile ground for the effervescence of new religious movements. Throughout history, such situations have made the emergence, development and decadence of religious movements possible.[27] Pentecostalism and Protestantism surely are not ready-made packages dropped from heaven many centuries after Jesus Christ, but movements nourished by historic and social causes, by the dreams and desires of people of flesh and blood, and by their concrete and identifiable needs.

To date, Pentecostalism has not manifested signs of aging or illness. On the contrary, I perceive in Pentecostalism the will and spirit to increase its power in the religious sphere and become a major player in politics. Pentecostalism's strength comes precisely from its identification with a

popular culture born in a pre-capitalist tradition. It is the bearer of the remnants of millennarianism, with a dynamism capable of giving the poor and excluded the strength to live with inequality, emptiness, and misery. From this comes success first among the poor and then among the middle strata, who feel the lack of that symbolic richness without which life loses its flavor.

II. PENTECOSTALISM IN BRAZIL--ACCOMMODATION AND CHANGE

"Historic" Protestantism, transplanted to Brazil during the second half of the 19th century, bore the message of conversion. Its arrival coincided with the expansion of capitalism in Africa, Asia and Latin America. In Latin America, the intellectual elite fancied that Protestantism would stimulate progress and modernization while Catholicism, which was responsible for "backwardness," would be left behind by an enlightened people.[28] This elite was soon frustrated, however, because the Protestantism which took root here became negative and escapist. It preached individualism more than the social transformation many of the elite desired. Thus, it failed to incorporate their hopes and became an ideology that justified the status quo.[29]

By following the expansion of the coffee plantations, Methodist, Presbyterians, and Baptists were able to attract a significant number of converts among the free, landless poor.[30] Historic Protestantism began to show the first signs of decline in growth during the "first wave" of Pentecostalism. This was more easily detected after 1930 when, for all intents and purposes, Brazil entered the 20th century.[31] The political order established by the military coup of 1889 (the Old Republic) collapsed with the revolution of 1930, when Getúlio Vargas took over the government. For more than two decades, Vargas was the most prominent political leader, due mainly to his social policies toward the urban proletariat. During this period, Vargas's policy of industrialization through import substitution accelerated rural migration and urbanization. Vargas's dictatorship withstood internal revolutions while overseeing the repression of socialist and communist movements and Brazil's participation in World War II.

Historic Protestantism was not up to the task of comprehending and responding to this social, cultural, economic, and political change. In this period Protestantism began to lose its vigor and show increasing signs of exhaustion. In the 1930s there was an attempt by some second-generation Brazilian Protestant intellectuals to react. They formed the Evangelical Confederation of Brazil in an attempt to reduce denominational isolation and develop joint projects and strategies. The effort fell short, and the idea that a revival was needed began to grow. Confrontation with Catholicism, the traditional rallying cry, began to wear thin. Indeed, some leaders felt that only the experience of religious persecution could make Protestantism dynamic again.

1. *Changes in the Brazilian religious scene*

The arrival of any new agent into a field necessarily causes the displacement of already established people and institutions. New preachers often take the role of "prophets," adopting the

rhetoric of novelty and transformation, denouncing others as mere "priests" or "sorcerers"[32]. As the following analysis shows, the changes that have taken place in the religious scene since the arrival of the Pentecostals reflect the tensions and disputes between the establishment and the newcomers.

a) Growth of religious pluralism

The social ruptures of the 1950s were mirrored in the religious sphere, debilitating both Catholicism and historic Protestantism. Pentecostalism, however, was not the only competitor; the Afro-Brazilian religions (Candomblé, Umbanda, Macumba), the Spiritism of Alain Kardec, new syncretic sects like the Legião de Boa Vontade [33] ("Good Will Legion") were developing quickly in cities exploding with an influx of rural migrants. The migrants left behind not only their land but also their traditional ways; they tried to understand and adjust to urban life using the symbolic universe of the countryside. Consequently, what Peter Berger calls a "market situation" was established, demanding different kinds of efforts by religions that had previously monopolized the field.[34] In this new setting, institutions and religious groups had to compete in order to maintain or gain space within the disputed "religious market." In this context, the Evangelical Confederation of Brazil, which for 30 years had stimulated cooperation among Brazilian Protestants, became extinct.

b) Schisms and the pentecostalization of historic Protestantism

In the 1950s and '60s, Pentecostalism vigorously influenced historic Protestantism in Brazil. At first, Pentecostal penetration was facilitated by a welcoming attitude. Leaders of historic Protestant churches thought that in order to start growing again they needed a "religious revival." At no cost to the institutions, all denominations promoted "prayer and fasting" campaigns calling for "revival," so that church members would again take up evangelization. Interdenominational revivalists were invited as guest preachers, some of whom were openly Pentecostal. After the first impact, tensions began to rise. In the name of "spiritual" and "trans-denominational" evangelism,[35] the adherents of the "revival" began to question the ecclesiastical institutions openly. New denominations emerged while internal tensions within various historic denominations continued. As soon as a cycle ended, tensions reappeared, as exemplified by the Presbyterian Church of Brazil (IPB) and the Independent Presbyterian Church of Brazil (IPI). Rubem Alves might have been right when he wrote that "Protestantism aged in our continent long before spending its most creative resources. Aging prematurely, it became senile while still a child." (Alves, p. 131)

c) Disintegration of groups and specialization of agents

As a result of the increase in religious competition, "second-wave" Pentecostalism generated new growth strategies. After 1970, Pentecostalism reached into the middle classes. This new clientele prompted the employment of strategies in use since the 1950s by North American televangelists which I will refer to as "marketing the sacred." Marketing strategies divide the population into segments and select a target group, thus establishing a niche of consumers of religious products. The process here is focused not on the product but on the needs of the

consumers who receive "symbolic merchandise."
Certainly, marketing strategies are not always employed consciously. The Universal Church of the Kingdom of God, for example, appears to employ them intuitively; nevertheless, some institutions accept and use marketing techniques openly. For example, the Rebirth in Christ Church, founded in São Paulo in 1986 and now attended by more than 50,000 people weekly, has assigned one of its pastors to head a "marketing department." This church is directed by Estevan Hernándes Filho, a former marketing director of IBM in Brazil. Most of Hernándes' followers are young people who gather for praise services structured around gospel music and evangelical rock in a former movie theater. Obviously, this new era of religious competition demands specialists that traditional theological seminaries are not prepared to produce.

d) Weakening of traditional boundaries

In Brazil, Pentecostalism is both a dynamic movement and a mentality. As such, it has a worldview and a set of practices which can also be found in Catholic movements (such as Charismatic Renewal), in syncretic groups (such as the Brazilian Apostolic Catholic Church, the Brazilian Orthodox Catholic Church, and Holy Missions Catholic Church) and in autonomous groups influenced by Pentecostalism. Pentecostalism discovered elements of piety and utopia in the Brazilian social imagination which had not been perceived by historic Protestantism.

This dissemination of the Pentecostal mentality among many denominations has eroded traditionally established boundaries. The pietism and puritanism of missionaries from various North American denominations were flattened by the Pentecostal steamroller. Thereafter a "minimum Protestant religiosity" began to emerge: popular, with fluid boundaries determined by the social and psychological needs of the poor, the excluded, those left behind by modernism and post-modernism.

This new religiosity introduced a logic that discards all absolute convictions, all fidelity to religious systems and institutions which came to be seen as absolute. On the other hand, Pentecostalism demanded personal loyalty to charismatic leaders who were no less demanding and who were responsible for rearticulating human relations with the sacred. As a result of this process, long extant boundaries simply became irrelevant. Old adversaries were reconciled and former friends were no longer friendly. A new "ecumenism" (here meaning arrangement of power) is taking place which has nothing to do with the kind of ecumenism found in the World Council of Churches.[37]

Internal mutations in Brazilian Pentecostalism

Every religious movement is a dynamic social process and, once initiated, never ceases to be transformed, discarding old characteristics and assimilating new ones as it attempts to survive and expand. This has happened to Pentecostalism in Brazil and, to a lesser degree, to historic Protestantism. For this reason, the relationship between them does not follow a definite pattern. However, throughout eight decades of history, Pentecostalism has undergone meaningful internal modifications which affected the relationship of the several types of Pentecostalism with

diverse denominations. Let us analyze some of them.

a) Weakening of early emphases

From the beginning, glossolalia was presented as an external sign of the "baptism by the Holy Spirit." Other landmarks of the movement were the expectation of the imminent return of Christ and belief in the interference of demons in daily life. Many early emphases of Pentecostalism were not novelties, but were inherited from revival and holiness movements and were solidly grounded in North American Protestantism. The expansion of Pentecostalism and its penetration of cultures other than the early 20th-century U.S. culture from which it sprang was due to its ability to adapt and incorporate new models with new characteristics while reinterpreting and de-emphasizing old models.[38]

Pentecostal preaching was welcomed to this continent because it fit the needs and interests of Latin Americans. Many witnessed the decline of rural society with alarm. They experienced the hardships of unemployment in the city, the lack of an organizing and integrating center to their existence; they yearned for a feeling of community and fraternity. Pentecostalism adapted its agenda to address these needs, emphasizing one value over another, or discarding values of less importance.

The belief in the second coming and the "end of the world" were promptly accepted by a population facing social distress and anomie. The disintegration of the rural world proved that at least one world was coming to its end. "Speaking in tongues" also had an important sociological and psychological function for these people, because the speaker had the opportunity to be taken over by a higher power, and thus receive a new identity. Glossolalia overcomes the divisions of human language, enabling worshipers to unite with the transcendent sacred. The belief in direct communion with the sacred, without mediation by institutional religion, has old and deep roots in Brazilian culture and popular Catholicism.
And yet, as the 20th century draws to a close, analysts are proposing a new concept-- "post-modernism" --to understand these changes. Pentecostalism adjusted to the new demands of post-modern society more easily than historic Protestantism, which was committed to modernity; that is, capitalism and the "Protestant Age." "Neo-Pentecostalism" of the l980s proposed physical health, prosperity, and relief for psychological problems as the most important things to search for in the sacred. Eschatological concerns and even glossolalia were put aside.

b) Overestimation of different emphases

Pentecostalism develops different programs in different societies, or, in the words of Otto Maduro: "the social organization of production dictates and determines which religious actions are possible, which are possible but not desirable, which are tolerated, which are tolerated to a certain extent, which are acceptable but on a secondary level, which (if any) are convenient, and which are important and/or urgent (independently from the consciousness and intentions of religious agents)."[39]

"Second-wave" Pentecostalism started preaching miracles after World War II, a time of economic recession in underdeveloped countries. In the cities, the crowds of poor people hoping for miracles were increasing. In greater São Paulo, preaching miracles attracted mainly industrial workers from the East side, mostly immigrants from the Northeast and the interior of the South and Southeast. Like the multitudes in the informal economy and the unemployed of Algeria who were studied by Pierre Bourdieu, these people are left only with "magical hope," which is "the future for those who have no future." They await "the miracle that will free them from their situation" because, "in the absence of reasonable expectations, only delirium and utopia are left."[40]

Pentecostalism had a great advantage over historic Protestantism since it preached to both the body and the soul, approaching human needs from a holistic point of view in which one would not have to wait until death and eternal life to fulfill one's hopes. The association of illness and malady with the image of the devil offered its audience an efficient theodicy for times of suffering and uncertainty. The popular Brazilian image of the devil deems him the source of all evil that attacks humans, animals, or objects. Hence the importance given to exorcism, a way of blocking the forces that seek to prevent health, success, and prosperity.[41] The battle against these demonic forces allowed Pentecostalism to claim for itself the term "liberation." It proclaimed a "holy war" against its enemies, the Afro-Brazilian religions and Catholicism. Historic Protestantism is ignored by the "third wave" of Pentecostalism (maybe because it is perceived as posing no danger!). Competition comes from certain trends in Catholicism and African religions which offer less other-worldly discourse.[42]

c) Appropriation of popular symbols

In making its history, each people also creates a set of symbols and myths which are interconnected by a logic that joins them to a vision of the world. This vision, or "imaginary universe," can be described as a "set of representations, objects, and events that have never been seen in reality and that, many times, have no connection to it." While historic Protestantism proposed a break from popular culture, new religious movements found ways to appropriate the use of this "imaginary universe," which has been manifested in the CEBs (Base Ecclesial Communities), Kardecist centers, the African religions, and the Pentecostal cults.[43]

Good illustrations of this assimilation and manipulation can be found in the rituals of the Universal Church of the Kingdom of God. They use water, fire, bread, earth, salt, and objects such as keys, doors, and pieces of cloth, featuring magical mechanisms to attract the sacred and attain a given end. It is curious to note that many of these symbols, as well as the language that accompanies them, are part of Afro-Brazilian rituals. The behavior, practices, ritual, and rhetoric of a "missionary," an "exorcist priest," and a "spiritist counselor" (*pai de santo*) are all very similar. All drink from the same well, this "imaginary universe," a common stock of images endemic to the culture, where Latin American popular religiosity also quenches its thirst.

Theological and ecclesiological changes

Christian Parker, a researcher of popular religiosity from Chile, says that we need to study popular religions in the light of a logic present in the popular "imaginary universe." Pentecostalism of the "third wave" adds to this logic the mentality of the marketplace, the use of marketing, and the establishment of religious businesses and entrepreneurial religions. Consequently there are important changes in ecclesiology and theology during this process.[44]

In terms of **ecclesiology**, "third-wave" Pentecostalism discarded the creation of small communities and networks which had been successful in the struggle against anomie. In its place it adopted the image of the auditorium, a "supermarket" where religious products-- or their ingredients --are on display for all to help themselves. This Pentecostalism shaped its own ritual, turned pastors into indisputable authorities, eliminated representative congregational forms of government, and placed everything in the hands of charismatic (in the Weberian sense) leaders. Liturgically, services have become a source of joy, psychological decompression, a place for music and dance, a place where the world's miseries are left on the doorstep, a time to recharge one's consciousness with optimism, hope, and dreams of utopia.

In terms of **theology**, doctrines that were important for historic Protestantism have been discarded. The principle of *sola scriptura* has been weakened by the adoption of individual revelation and the magical-therapeutic use of the Bible. The doctrines of *sola gratia* and *sola fide* have been limited by the idea of personal effort and sacrifice and the use of emotions to confirm salvation and God's revelation. The "universal priesthood" has been maintained; however, the charismatic leader is seen as the intermediary in relations between the sacred and the profane, and the individual's participation has become merely decorative, lost in the wholesale nature of Pentecostal worship.

Prayer has become the arena for difficult negotiations between God and humankind. The worshiper can practically put God up against the wall. Sacrifice has become monetarized; tithing has substituted for the physical sacrifices of Catholicism, since tithing is the highest sacrifice someone can make in a monetary economy. The "gospel of prosperity" is the cornerstone of "third-wave" Pentecostalism and overshadows all eschatological concern with the end of the world, the second coming of Christ, and the destiny of the soul.

The **temple** is the sacralized space where ritual takes place; it is the "place of blessing" and the "home of happiness;" it is where healing energy enters the photographs of the sick, pieces of their clothing, and bars of their soap to be used in "purifying" baths (against evil spirits). A vibrating power radiates from this place. One of the pastors of the Universal Church of the Kingdom of God declared on television that "even the seats are energized," just like the "rock at Sinai" and the "sacred mantle" consecrated at one of Christ's tombs.

The sacraments have been multiplied: the Universal Church of the Kingdom of God has introduced bread with water, the blessed rose, the anointed oil, the blessed salt, and many other ways to "make visible an invisible grace." Everything is sacred in this worship spectacle, in which the main actor-- the pastor-- throws pieces of his own clothing at the faithful, knocking them to the floor. The traditional contents of demonology, angelology, and anthropology are

combined in the theoretical framework of "spiritual warfare." Human life is the battleground of a daily, continuous struggle between God and the devil. Among Brazilian advocates of this theory, the Pentecostal pastor Valnice Milhomens, wrote, "The fact that our bodies have become the temple of the Holy Spirit does not mean that they could never be taken by evil spirits."[45]

Transformations have also occurred in the conception of ethics. "Third-wave" Pentecostalism abandoned the rigorous demands on personal behavior that were previously required, and adopted a lighter style, leaving to the individual the responsibility to balance his or her desires with a minimum of discipline. The result is a more fluid religiosity. The liberated body gaily dances in worship. A practical hedonism is adopted in daily life, a kind of moral "self-government."

All these changes in Pentecostalism appear to strengthen J.P. Bastian's hypothesis that in Latin America there has been a "domestication of Protestantism" by way of an "acculturation, to the values of popular Catholic cultural practices." The result is a religious practice that expressed more **continuity** than **rupture** with a popular culture loaded with pre-Columbian traits.[46] Pentecostalism has changed in order to better accommodate a culture that is also undergoing rapid transformation. The success of this formula is proof of the effectiveness of its accommodation. Could "what is happening in Pentecostalism be what, in dialectics, is called a "qualitative leap"? Could a new religion be emerging in place of and under the name of "Pentecostalism"? If so, what kind of relations can historic Protestanrism maintain with a religion in a constant process of change?

III. HISTORIC PROTESTANTISM AND PENTECOSTALISM--LOOKING AHEAD

The relationship between Brazil's historic Protestants and Pentecostals has not followed a uniform pattern. Historic Protestants responded to Pentecostals first with a lack of understanding and later with indifference. Presbyterians, among others, looked down on Pentecostals. For these elite Protestants, Pentecostals were "fanatics" who practiced an "inferior type of religiosity." Later, as Pentecostalism multiplied, this attitude slowly turned from indifference to fierce competition, as seen in the multiplication of anti-Pentecostal articles in Protestant publications. The strongest reaction came in the 1960s, in response to "second-wave" Pentecostalism.

The emergence of a **fundamentalist** reaction to Pentecostalism was no mere coincidence. After all, if Protestant identity was at risk, it was necessary to find out who was responsible and name the enemies. Historic Protestantism has long responded to perceived threats by cloaking itself in fundamentalism. Thus, over time, defenders of "sound doctrine" identified their enemies as being the "social gospel," "communism," "theological modernism," "ecumenism," "socialism," and, later, "Pentecostalism."[47] This reaction, however, did little to strengthen and redefine their internal and external borders with Pentecostalism. Despite all efforts --an emphasis on bureaucracy, a concern for institutionalization, and the appreciation of literate culture-- nothing could keep members of Protestant denominations from moving toward Pentecostalism. The desire for new experiences could not even be detained by attempts to stigmatize some types of Pentecostalism as being tainted with magic and contrary to the spirit of the Reformation.

Since 1950, Brazilian historic Protestantism has suffered numerous defeats from the Pentecostal movement. Its reactions have become bitter and suspicious, producing church policies and strategies that mix admiration and fear of Pentecostalism. This panorama has made any serious discussion about the richness and challenges of the Pentecostal movement impossible, for when people are bewildered, their fear prevents any attitude other than outright rejection or naive imitation of the adversary. Many denominations hide envy for the success of their competitors beneath their discourse of abomination. From my point of view, it is exactly this posture that made historic Protestantism especially susceptible to Pentecostal influence on theology, liturgy, and pastoral practice.

Refusal to analyze Pentecostalism and its main emphases has only thrown more wood on the fire on which Protestantism is immolating itself. The need of the masses for religious products different from those traditionally offered by the historic churches, and the inability of those churches to renew themselves and to hear the clamor of the poor and marginalized all result in the loss of members and of their respective places in a society of more than 150 million people.

Much has been written about the causes of the success of Pentecostalism and the feeling of defeat that has overcome historic Protestantism. One of these causes was evident in the above description of the Universal Church of the Kingdom of God and other Pentecostal sects. We saw the Pentecostal ability to identify with the popular imaginary universe, with a magical, miraculous, festive, creative religion, ripe with emotions and permeated with a logic that escapes completely the lettered, rational culture of Protestantism derived from a foreign and capitalistic culture. The progress of Presbyterianism, for instance, took place when large groups of people renounced their culture and sought mechanisms to escape from it. The masses of people, suddenly inserted into the urban world in the last 40 years, brought with them emotions, hopes, and desires still shaped by a world where magic, popular religion, and miracle-working saints were still important. Pentecostalism's divine healing and the syncretic mysticism of the Universal Church of the Kingdom of God have proved to be more effective in nurturing this symbolic universe.

Protestantism is the religious expression of modernity, which made literate culture its articulating center. Pentecostalism has done well in an oral culture, unconnected to scholarly networks. In Brazil, 35 million people are illiterate and, though excluded from formal schooling, they can easily be reached through the mass media of radio and television.[48] Quentin J. Schultze makes an excellent contribution to our understanding when he relates **orality** to **Pentecostal growth** in Latin America.[49] Presbyterianism continues to fight the tendency to use modern communications, and insists on a strongly theoretical Christian and theological education aimed at producing scholars; meanwhile, Pentecostalism trains communicators, emcees, and pastor/actors who lead services as stage-produced spectacles. These pastors, however, do not lose their ability to listen to the needs of their followers. The idea of religious services as worship spectacles was inspired in Brazil by North American televangelists in the 1980s. And yet, in a way, this massification also reminded people of the personal treatment they

once received from the shamans of their original cultures.

Besides living in pre-literate orality, part of the urban masses also inhabit "islands of meaning" organized under the influence of a post-modern culture which has abandoned the centrality of literacy for the spoken word and electronic image. "Third-wave" Pentecostalism reflects the displacement of traditional culture and institutions by the arrival of the "post-modern era."[50] The production, circulation, and distribution of religious goods in "Third-wave" Pentecostalism are part of a different logic that has turned radio, television, and temples into the shelves of a vast religious supermarket. Here, pastors and missionaries are account executives and specialists in marketing strategies, categories that are either unknown to or despised by historic Protestantism.

The world is moving toward globalization, eliminating all boundaries, including religious ones, generating a spirit of ecumenism. What kind of future will so many social, economic, and religious changes bring?

Possible scenarios in the religious field

From the data and interpretations mentioned here, I would like to sketch some possible scenarios in which the relationship between historic Protestantism and Pentecostalism may be played out.

Scenario 1 - Pentecostalized Protestantism

In order to survive, historic Protestantism assimilates Pentecostalism's main theological and liturgical principles, selecting those traits which are closest to its own traditions. In this scenario, Pentecostalism undergoes a process of institutionalization, tones down some of its more aggressive traits, and abandons characteristics typical of charismatic movements in general; it keeps itself free of bureaucracy and its confrontational stance. A fusion between these two poles creates a religiosity unique in the history of Protestantism, and causes a broad restructuring of the religious field, bringing about a reinvigorated Protestantism, better tuned to popular culture and the Latin American imaginary universe. Denominational boundaries are residues of a distant past and no longer delineate exclusive identities. This new Protestantism is qualitatively different from anything in the past because a qualitative leap has brought together Christians separated by a century of polemic and misunderstandings. The question now is whether historic Protestantism still has the strength to impose its preeminence in this process.

Scenario 2 - Protestantized Pentecostalism

This scenario also presupposes a broad process of fusion, this time with Pentecostalism predominating over historic Protestantism. In this case, the churches and denominations of historic Protestantism disappear from the religious map. Their places are occupied by churches, sects, and con- federations of Pentecostal communities, now fully institutionalized. They offer an ecclesial space where the role of emotion and the magical-utilitarian tendencies are reduced. The risk of schism is distant, creativity is restricted to the church hierarchy, and spontaneity

limited by tolerance. Total dependence on charismatic leaders is diminished by the adoption of more representative forms of government. Such a scenario brings back the internal questioning that would soon start anew the dialectic of negation- affirmation-negation that has been responsible for the continuous fragmentation of Pentecostalism.

Scenario 3 - Decline of the Pentecostal movement

Although the weakening of the Pentecostal movement appears to be out of the question today, if Pentecostalism is the result of so many cultural and historical variables, could we not foresee that if the basis for its growth ceased to exist, then that growth would be reduced, leading eventually to its disappearance, as happened to so many movements and heresies in the history of Christianity? In the medium term, this hypothesis appears reasonable. After all, religious movements emerge in history. When conditions are favorable, a movement grows; when it loses its base, it declines and disappears, becoming a "cognitive minority" movement on the margins of history.

This scenario favors the reunion of the survivors of historic Protestantism and the possible recovery of their growth. After 35 years of hibernation, Presbyterianism started growing again in Cuba, an example of this possible scenario. Of all these hypothetical scenarios, surely this one has the weakest appeal to our imagination, for how could an institution that has long been under a slow process of weakening, aging, and death be reborn with the same body?

Scenario 4 - Decomposition of the present religious field

This scenario presupposes the end of the forms by which religion has been expressed and organized for centuries. The logic that made the relationship between clergy and laity plausible disappears. The ways by which institutions maintained themselves disappear. Without the traditional actors, the stage is occupied by new religious forces. Some of them are marginal to and distant from Western reality today. Others are still embryonic. Although this may be the most utopian scenario, it is nevertheless perfectly viable. Perhaps sects considered extinct (such as Gnosticism) are reborn, or the West is invaded by oriental religions (from India, Japan, etc.), or a mysticism emerges which is more attuned to "post-modernity." These may be the lights of a new dawn which may not necessarily be Christian, Catholic, Protestant, or Pentecostal.

In light of this not very optimistic future, historic Protestants, especially Presbyterian and Reformed, must examine their heritage, their strategies, and their church style in a pluralistic society that offers so many alternatives, both religious and secular. Questions need to be answered in light of the Reformed tradition, such as: How will Reformed churches be visible in the context described in the preceding pages? Can we talk about the survival of the "invisible church" while the "visible church" is decomposing in both form and content? The much feared question we posed in the beginning of this work remains: Is there a future for historic Presbyterian Protestantism in Brazil and Latin America? If so, what kind of future will it be? There are no easy answers to these questions. They must be answered by concrete pastoral actions to make an old expression come true: *Ecclesia reformata, semper reformanda*.

ENDNOTES:

[1] These expressions are used by Roger Bastide, the French sociologist, who wrote the following about Brazilian possession religions: "The present-day Sacred prefers a savage Sacred to the domesticated Sacred of the Churches." *Le Sacré Sauvage et autres essais* (Paris: Payot, 1975), p. 227.

[2] In Brazil, the concepts of "pioneering frontier" and "expanding frontier" have been used by Joséde Souza Martins in *Capitalismo e Tradicionalismo* (São Paulo: Pioneira, 1975) to explain the difference in people's behavior in the "pioneering frontier" (where a capitalist logic of production is already in place, along with more or less stable forms of sociability and behavior), and the "expanding frontier" (with adventurism, a sense of every man for himself, a disdain for the intellectual and for rational control). Messianic and millennarian movements in Brazil have occurred predominantly in "expanding frontier" situations. This distinction may help to explain some of the characteristics of the religiosity of the American colonists--their contact with native Americans, their isolation, being at the mercy of their own energies and far from the centers that might control and organize social life. H. Richard Niebuhr, in *The Social Origins of Denominationalism*, (New York: Holt, 1929), shows how European Protestantism was forced to adapt to America, taking on the form of sects and denominations, in order to be better assimilated by frontier people. In consequence Niebuhr speaks of "churches of the disinherited," "middle-class churches," "immigrant churches," and so forth.

[3] There are sociological and historical causes behind the explosion of "wild" and "undomesticated" religiosity that took place in the English colonies of North America during the great revival. To what extent was it a revolt of the poor and the victims of injustice against an institutionalized religion strongly supported by the state? At that time there were tensions, struggles, and revolts in many regions of the colony. The economy depended on slavery and the newly arrived immigrants were in many cases ex-prisoners or extremely poor persons from England, Ireland, and other regions of Europe. See Herbert Aptheker, *A History of the American People*: *The Colonial Era*, (New York: International Publishers, 1969). On the relations between anti-intellectualism and the religious revival, see Richard Hofstadter, *Anti-Intellectualism in American Life*, (New York: Knopf, 1962). In this book the author outlines the trajectory of the unpopularity of the intellect among North Americans, analyzing especially the importance of the "religion of the heart" and the "evangelism of the revivalists," relating all this to the ethics of business people who prefer utilitarianism and pragmatism to intellectual concerns.

[4] Los Angeles was among North America's fastest growing cities between 1880 and 1910. In 1900 it had 100,000 inhabitants; in 1906 (the year of the Pentecostal explosion), 230,000; and in 1910 it reached 320,000 inhabitants. In that decade alone, 5,500 African-Americans arrived, 5,000 Mexicans, 4,000 Japanese, and more than 30,000 Europeans. In 1910 about 75% of the population were first-or second-generation immigrants. In Chicago, Pentecostalism was started by Swedish Baptist immigrants. This city represents a typical example of how religion can

reflect populational and social mobility with great intensity. It is my opinion that one cannot understand the growth of Pentecostalism in Latin America without taking seriously the correlation that exists between Pentecostalism and urban life.

[5] On the origins, development, and distinct character of Pentecostalism, it is indispensable to read Nils Bloch-Hoell, *The Pentecostal Movement*, (Oslo: Scandinavian University Books, 1964); Donald W. Dayton, *Theological Roots of Pentecostalism*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Francis Asbury, 1987); and Walter Hollenweger, El Pentecostalismo: *Historia y doctrinas* (Buenos Aires: Editorial La Aurora, 1976).

[6] See Emile Leonard, *0 iluminismo num protestantismo de constituiçã recente*, (São Bernardo do Campo: Instituro Ecumonico de Pós-Graduação em Ciencias da Religião, 1988). In this little book and in his major work, *0 protestantismo brasileiro*, E.G. Leonard places J.M. da Conceição at the beginning of indigenous Protestantism in Brazil. Conceição was an ex-priest who, in a "backward, ignorant and Catholic country" (to use the words of the North American missionaries who converted him), made the mystical element the starting point for the preaching of Reformed faith.

[7] See E. Boch, Thomas Münzer: *Teólogo do revolução*, (Rio de Janeiro: Tempo Brasileiro, 1973) and Norman Bimsbaum, "Luther et le millenarisme," *Archives de Sociologie des Religions*, No. 4 (July-December, 1957).

[8] See Freston's article in Antoniazzi et al., 1994.

[9] On the electronic church, see Hugo Assman, *La iglesia electrónica y su impacto en América Latina*, 2d ed. (San Jose, Costa Rica: Editorial DEl, 1988)

[10] The CCB was so closely identified with the Italians that the second hymnal, printed in Chicago in 1924, was completely in Italian. The third edition (1935) had a total of 580 hymns, of which only 250 were in Portuguese, but by the edition of 1943 all hymns were in Portuguese.

[11] This may be the reason for the absence of schisms in the CCB, an unprecedented fact in Brazilian Pentecostalism. Reed E. Nelson, a North American observer of the CCB, notes the importance of the family model for the growth and homogeneity of the CCB and also the relatively anarchic character of the liturgy.

[12] Though figures are unconfirmed, it is calculated that the CCB has between 1.5 and 2 million members in Brazil. CCB temples are disseminated unequally throughout Brazil. There are 5,444 temples just in the states of Minas Gerais, São Paulo and Paraná, distributed thus: 2,906 (53.3%) in São Paulo; 1,391 (25.5) in Minas Gerais; and 1,147 (21.2%) in Paraná. These data were obtained by Paul Fresron, in Antoniazzi et al., 1994, 103.

[13] Antônio G. Mendonça and Prócoro Velasques Filho, *Introdução an proresranusmo no Brasil* (São Bernardo Do Campo: Loyola/Ciências da Religião, 1989), p. 49.

[14] In 1915, the ADB had reached one Northern state and two in the Northeast. Five years later, it was present in 9 states--3 in the North and 6 in the Northeast. By the 1930s the ADB was in 20 Brazilian states. Still, the ADB had fewer members than the CCB. According to Erasmo Braga and K. Grubb, in *The Republic of Brazil* (London: WDP, 1932), the ADB had 13,511 members, compared to 30,800 for the CCB. The total number of Protestants in the country was 166,190. In 1970, the official statisries (Statistics on Protestant Cults in Brazil, IBGE) counted 753,129 members in the ADB and 328,655 in the CCB among a Protestant population of 2,409,094. Still, it must be remembered that in Brazil statistics contain many errors, and when they deal with Pentecosralism, the figures are often increased for propagandistic purposes.

[15] The role of the pastor in the ADB takes on many of those characteristics described in the analysis of Christian Lalive D'Epinay, in his *0 refúgio das massas* (Rio de Janeiro: Paz e Terra, 1970), a work on Chilean Pentecostalism. The pastor is the symbolic successor of the *hacendado*, or large landowner, who maintains an intensely personal relationship with the members of the congregation, demanding of them at the same time a loyalty that is more personal than bureaucratic. Reed E. Nelson is right (op.cit., n.d.) when he calls the administrative style of the ADB "personalistic" in contrast to the "bureaucratic" model of the Presbyterians and the "kinship" model of the CCB.

[16] Emotional pressure on those attending worship services for the first time is very intense. It goes beyond the rules of etiquette and borders on the psychological seduction of the listeners. The pastor's domination of his congregation is absolute. Once I heard a church member give the following response concerning whom she was going to vote for: "I don't know, since my pastor still hasn't told me who I should vote for." To a follow-up question of mine ("But you're not going to vote for so-and-so, the one who helped you get title to your land?") she simply said, "I'll never vote for that candidate because my pastor doesn't like his politics."

[17] The Foursquare Gospel Church is the only Pentecostal denomination in Brazil that ordains women to the pastoral ministry, and one of the few that encourages pastors and lay people to run for elective political office.

[18] In the early 1980s, there was still a great rivalry between Mello and Miranda. At the end of the program of "The Voice of Brazil for Christ" on the former "Radio Tupí," we would hear Mello's appeal that people go to the "largest evangelical temple in the world" in order to worship God and not to an "old factory." The exchange of barbs included Miranda's criticism of Mello's style of dress. Once, referring to Mello, Miranda said that people "shouldn't believe in preachers with sideburns and stylish ties."

[19] In 1991, the IPDA claimed to have 5,458 churches in Brazil with 15,755 church workers; 62 churches in Paraguay; 59 in Uruguay; and 43 in Argentina. They also have a presence in poor regions of Bolivia and Peru. (As with all Pentecostal groups, these statistics clearly owe more to enthusiasm than to reality.) The government and administration of the church are centralized in the person of Miranda, who divides with his wife, daughters, and sons-in-law the responsibilities

of the church (directing the radio stations, studios, bookstores, etc.). Since the 1980s, newspapers have denounced the "miraculous" growth of Miranda's personal fortune (Cf. "Os grandes negócios do 'pastor' Daví Miranda," in 0 Estado de São Paulo, 1/27/85/, p. 22). Stories are now circulating about one of Miranda's sons-in-law, who is pushing to the limit a dangerous confrontation with Miranda about religious charisma. Some observers predict a schism over control of the IPDA. Lately (in 1995), Miranda has been railing against "worldliness," and denouncing certain unnamed "church workers" who are discouraging people from carrying out his personal instructions of doing one night of fasting and prayer every week. One of his daughters has broken with her father and is a member of the Evangelical Pentecostal Church "Brazil for Christ."

[20] "Igrejas, Seitas e Agências: Aspectos de um Ecumenismo Popular," in Edenio Valle, José J. Queiroz
(org.) A Culeura do Povo, (São Paulo: Cortez & Morses, EDUC, 1979).

[21] "A Empresa da Curd Divina: Un Fenômeno Religîoso?î in Edenio Valle, Jose J. Queiroz (org.) A *Culeura do Povo* (São Paulo: Correz & Morses, EDUC, 1979).

[22] At the end of the 1980s, Edit Macedo began to be criticized harshly in the mass media. All called attention to the "financial exploitation" and also the gigantic concentrations in soccer stadiums (Maracanã in Rio de Janeiro and Pacaembsi in São Paulo). Apparently, the reason for the economic and police persecution was his entrance into the world of Brazilian telecommunications, which is the principal generator of meaning in Brazilian society (and where Roberto Marinho, owner of the "Globo" television network, reigns supreme). Macedo astutely presented this harassment as "religious persecution." He was indicted by federal and local authorities for fraud, tax evasion, charlatanism, and false healing and was even incarcerated for several weeks in May 1992. When freed, he disappeared from the scene and since then has directed his empire from the United States and Portugal. His empire includes 16 television stations, 2 radio stations, 1876 churches in Brazil, a radio station in Portugal, a weekly magazine called *Folha Universal,* and *Universal News,* a weekly newsletter published in the U.S. with a print run of 100,000.

[23] These numbers are significant because, in Brazil, a "best seller" sells 5,000 copies, and an important daily newspaper, such as *0 Estado do São Paulo*, prints less than 500,000 copies.

[24] Among these symbols, full-fledged sacraments distributed to the believers, we find: "Holy Oil of Israel," "Blessed Water," "The Sacred Mantle," "Jacob's Staff," "Water from the Jordan River," "The Stone of the Sinai," "Salt of the Dead Sea," "The Anointed Rose," etc. All of these objects contain the unleashed "force" of "powerful prayers" made by pastors and deacons. To help provoke true catharsis, dramatizations and cultic rituals are enacted, for example, "Passing Through the Valley of Salt," "Running the Gauntlet of 70 Pastors," "Passing Hands Over the Stone of Mount Sinai" and "Going Through the Door of Faith." These and other rituals encourage the feeling that the sacred is not distant, but is within reach of the faithful.

[25] In the IURD, there is a single model for discourse, procedures, and rituals. The New York temples (and those in Portugal, South Africa and Geneva) also divide the week into "chasm" and offer the same symbolic products as do the temples in Brazil.

[26] Concerning the social conditioning of the development of religious messages in Latin America, see Otto Maduro's *Religião e Luta de Classe - Quadro Teórico para a Análise de suas Inter-relações na América Latina*, (Petrópolis: Vozes, 1981). Is Latin America experiencing the "end of the Protestant era" (that is, historic Protestantism) even before fully knowing this era? Perhaps Jean-Pierre Bastian is correct when he refers to the present period as the "domestication of Protestantism" by traditional Latin Américan culture, that is, the Catholic and magical cultures showing their strength beneath the new appearances. See Jean-Pierre Bastian, *Historia del Protestantismo en Amdrica Latina*, (Mexico: Casa Unida de Publicaciones, 1990); Luiz Vazquez Buenfil, "Pentecostalisms are substitute Catholicisms, says Jean-Pierre Bastian," *El Faro*, July/August 1994 pp. 108-111.

[27] Concerning Protestantism's links to the historic moment and the social stratification operating in the West, it is still indispensable to read Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*. Nor is it possible to ignore the critical evaluation done by Paul Tillich on the relationship between Protestantism and Western capitalist civilization, *The Protestant Era*, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1957).

[28] Masons, Republicans, and positivists shared this hope. Cf. Daví Vieira Guciros, *0 Protestantismo, A Maçonaria e A Questão Religiosa no Brasil*, (Brasília: Edit. Universidade de Brasília, 1980); J.P. Bastian, *Protestantes, liberales e francomasones, sociedad de ideas y modernidad en América Latina*, (Mexico: Siglo XXI-FCE, 1980).

[29] Rubem Alves, "0 Protestantismo na America Latina - Sua Função Ideol6gica e Possibilidades Utópicas," *Dogmatismo e Tolerância*, (São Paulo: Paulinas, 1982).

[30] António G. Mendonça, 0 Celeste Porvir - A Inserção do Protestantismo no Brasil, (São Paulo: Paulinas, 1984).

[31] In 1930, according to Erasmo Braga and K. Grubb, Pentecostals represented 9.5% of all Brazilian Protestants. In 1964, according to William R. Read in *Fermento Religioso nas Massas do Brasil* (São Paulo: Metodista, 1967), this participation was already 65.2%, with estimates for 1990 of approximately 80%. (At present no dependable data on Pentecostalism in Brazil exist.)

[32] The sociological theory that we adopt here is that of Pierre Bourdieu. Cf. "Gênese e Eatructura do Campo Religioso" and "Uma Interpretação da Teoria da Religião de Max Weber," Sergio Miceli, Ed. *A Economia das Trocas Simbólicas* (São Paulo: Perspectiva, 1982) p. 27-98.

[33] A syncretic religion founded in the early 1950s in Rio de Janeiro by the famous radio broadcaster, Alziro Zarur, who turned "Radio Mundial" into his main instrument of propaganda. This movement is now directed by José de Paiva Nero. It uses the same therapeutic and

communitarian tactics as Pentecostalism, now under the name, "Legion of Good Will--The Religion of God."

[34] 0 Dossel Sagrado - Elementos para uma Teoria Sociológica do Religião (São Paulo: Paulinas, 1985).

[35] Fundamentalist para-church movements were then emerging in Brazil, including Jack Wyrtzen's "Word of Life," which specialized in summer camps, Bible studies, and evangelistic campaigns. Autonomous movements outside the church also emerged, beginning as "churches without signs," suggesting a kind of spiritual anarchy. Groups left the historic churches and added adjectives to their original names: "Orthodox Methodist Church," "Wesleyan Methodist Church," "Presbyterian Christian Church," "Renewed Independent Church," and "Independent Congregational Church." Other movements adopted new names like "Biblical Revival Church," "Maranatha Evangelical Church," and "Church Under Restoration."

[36] In recent years Pentecostal leaders of the Universal Church of the Kingdom of God (Edit Macedo) and of the Assemblies of God's Ministry of Madureira (a split from the National Convention)
have founded the National Council of Pastors of Brazil, (CNPB) which officially promotes "Pentecostal ecumenism," (and according to some observers is loaded with political intentions). This Council had a confrontation with the Brazilian Evangelical Association (AEB), an organization presided over by Caio Esbio Jr., an "evangelical" Presbyterian pastor. For Fbio no negotiations at all are possible with Edit Macedo, who he considers an exploiter of popular piety whose only desire is to fill the safe in his church. Their quarrel has been made public by the press. In a weekly magazine interview, Fábio said, "Edit Macedo is a bird of prey. He has planted a church based on syncretism [which is] a psychological and spiritual assault on people's pockets" (Isto , Jan. 25, 1995).

[37] Belief in the second coming is related to a Messianic and millennarian wing of Protestantism operating in the U.S. in the 19th century. The Seventh Day Adventists, Jehovah's Witnesses, and Mormons turned this into one of the pillars of their doctrines. Los Angeles Pentecostalism, however, was born of an earthquake that almost destroyed San Francisco on April18, 1906. This calamity stimulated the popular imagination and produced "prophecies" and "messages" at Azusa Street, announcing through glossolalia the imminent return of Christ to Earth.

[38] *Religião e Luta de Classes*, (Petrópolis: Vozes, 1982) p. 72.

[39] *0 Desencantamento do Mundo - Estruneras Economicas e Estruturas Temporais*, (São Paulo: Perspectiva, 1979), pp. 102, 135.

[40] See Laura de Mello e Souza, *0 Diabo e a Terra de Santa Cruz*, (São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 1994) and Inferno Atlantico - Demonologia e Colonização nos Séculos XVI e XVII, (São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 1993).

[41] This new type of Pentecostalism is the one that best adapts to the materialistic consumer society. Those who call Pentecostalism the opium of the people are wrong. Due to its conservative ideological function it is "Something more than opium." See Andre Droogers and Frans Kamsteeg, eds., *Algo más que ópia - Una lectura antropológica del pentecostalismo latinoamericano e caribeño* (Costa Rica: DEl, 1991).

[42] Maria Isaura Pereira de Queiroz, "Reflexões Sociológicas sobre o Imaginário," *0 Imaginário em Terra Conquistado,* Texto Ceru, series 2, No. 4, (São Paulo: Centro de Earudos Rurais e Urbanos, 1993), p.4.

[43] Otra lógica en América Latina--Religión popular y modernización capitalista, (Mexico: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1993).

[44] *Batalha Espiritual,* (Sao Paulo: Ministério Palavra da Fé, n.d.), p. 53.

[45] See Bastian, 1990.

[46] *Protestantismo e Represscio,* (São Paulo: Atica, 1979).

[47] The existence of this oral culture explains the success of Pentecostal communication in Brazil through radio and television, especially the Universal Church of the Kingdom of God (IURD). Thousands of Pentecostal programs are broadcast daily throughout the country. Just in Greater São Paulo, the "São Paulo" and "Record" (IURD) radio stations have an average audience of 678,000 listeners, occupying seventh and eighth place, respectively, in the market. "Morado do Sol," another station used by many Pentecostal denominations, is heard by 134,000 people, surpassing traditional stations like "Eldorado." (Data from IBOPE reports of January 1995.)

[48] Basing his studies on W.J. Ong's theories, Schultze pointed out the conflict between literate and oral culture and demonstrated how the Pentecostal movement benefited from the fact that, in Latin America, book culture never established deep roots and was soon replaced by post-literate civilization. See "Orality and Power in Latin American Pentecosralism," *Coming of Age: Protestantism in Contemporary Latin America,* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1994), pp. 65-88.

[49} I avoid the polemies concerning the expressions "modernity" and "post-modernity." Cf. Antony Giddens, As Consequências do Modernidade, (São Paulo: Unesp, 1991).

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In the Power of the Spirit by Dennis A. Smith and B.F. Gutierrez (eds.)

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Chapter 4: Pentecostalism and Confrontation with Poverty in Brazil

Introduction

Pentecostal churches are multiplying in Brazil, especially in the poorest neighborhoods in the largest cities, attracting the people with fewest economic resources and least education.[1] Since Pentecostals are the poorest, the media and members of the more intellectualized social classes tend to conclude that ignorance explains the rapid growth of these churches, which they think exploit the good will of a poor and ignorant people. They criticize the Pentecostal churches for asking the poor for high contributions and for promoting cures and all kinds of miracles. Due to the political positions they take, Pentecostal churches are also accused of distancing the working class from the struggle for its own interests. Critics of Pentecostalism aver that poor people don't recognize where their own interests lie; they argue that the Pentecostal churches have grown more than the (Catholic) Base Ecclesial Communities (CEBs) --groups that propose to defend popular interest, inspired by liberation theology-- because the poor have been fooled by false promises.

This kind of accusation and the explanation that Pentecostalism grows because of the intellectual poverty of the people assume a cognitive inferiority of the least favored classes. By inferring that the poor people who adhere to this faith do not know what is good for them, such arguments take an authoritarian point of view. They presuppose that the intellectual classes are competent to choose what beliefs are better for the poorer and less cultured part of the population.

I begin with the contrary presupposition: If a person chooses something it is because it is good

for him. In this article I try to identify the elements which can have positive effects on the lives of poor people and which explain the attraction of Pentecostal churches.[2] I pose the following questions: "What attracts poor people to Pentecostal churches?" and "How are these churches capable of creating a sense of commitment that persuades individuals to adopt a rigid personal morality and to tithe?" I argue that Pentecostalism offers certain experiences and values to poor people which help them confront difficulties in their daily lives. In other words, these churches help people survive and are, among other things, tools for confronting poverty. In affirming this I do not wish to imply that anyone adopts a religion only in order to survive better or obtain material advantages. Religious sensibility, which motivates the faith of the individual-- what she felt and thought when she decided to join the church or when she held up her hand and "accepted Jesus"-- must be distinguished from the non-intentional consequences, or the "collateral effects" of this adherence. I am not questioning individual religious motivations, but merely analyzing the non-intentional consequences of their conversion. As I am concerned with understanding the attraction of Pentecostal conversion and to search for positive results, my analysis consequently results, as will be seen later, in a criticism of the accusations made against Pentecostalism.

The diversity of Pentecostalism in Brazil

Pentecostalism was brought to Brazil at the beginning of the century by missionaries, some coming from Europe via the United States, and others coming directly from the United States. Brazilian Pentecostalism derived from three churches: The Assemblies of God, the Christian Congregation of Brazil, and the Foursquare Gospel Church (Rolim, 1985). There is presently no way of knowing how many Pentecostal churches exist, but it is known that they make up 60% of the Protestant population of Brazil.

The largest Pentecostal church in Brazil is the Assemblies of God. Founded in 1911, it grew significantly only after the 1960s. From that moment the Assemblies of God in particular and Pentecostalism in general have not only grown rapidly but have divided into various denominations. The new denominations which emerged were created in Brazil by Brazilians. In this way, as Rubem Cesar Fernandes has shown, Protestantism, or better yet, Pentecostalism, is no longer a foreign religion. Brazil has even become an exporter of missionaries,[3]-- not only does Brazil receive missionaries from the United States, it also sends missionaries there.

The fragmentation of Pentecostal churches created wide diversity in Pentecostalism. This diversity can best be demonstrated by a comparison between two kinds of churches: the Assemblies of God and Christian Congregation of Brazil on one hand, and the Universal Church of the Kingdom of God, the House of Blessing, and the International Church of Divine Grace on the other. The first group, which in itself is quite diverse, is distinct from the second group not only in the customs and the emphasis placed on some gifts of the Spirit, but also in forms of administration and the way pastors and leaders are recruited.

In order to understand this diversity, some writers have tried to classify the Pentecostal churches,

distinguishing the traditional churches from the autonomous (Bittencourt Filho, 1991), or differentiating classic Pentecostalism from neo-Pentecostalism (Oro, 1992). Another attempt to account for the diversity among Pentecostal churches is the proposal of Paul Freston (1993) which identifies three waves of Brazilian Pentecostalism. The first wave is characterized by greater emphasis on the gift of speaking in tongues, the second wave on the gift of healing, and the third on the gift of liberation. Although useful in making some important distinctions in Brazilian Pentecostalism, these classifications are not broad enough. They have difficulty, for example, including middle-class Pentecostal churches in general, and distinguishing between middle-class churches and churches born of the charismatic renovation in the historic churches. They also fail to include small churches that cannot be considered classically Pentecostal and at the same time are quite different from neo-Pentecostal churches.

Despite the recognized diversity in the Pentecostal universe, my principal concern in this article is its homogeneity. A great part of the Pentecostal experiences that we analyze here as tools for facing poverty are common to all Pentecostal churches. And besides, almost all these churches are objects of the same kinds of accusations, although most recent criticism of Pentecostalism in the media has focused on the so-called neo-Pentecostal or autonomous churches, and specifically on the Universal Church of the Kingdom of God.

In fact, the Universal Church of the Kingdom of God, the second largest Pentecostal church in metropolitan Rio de Janeiro, and perhaps the second largest in Brazil in terms of church membership, has identifying characteristics, such as the size of its temples, its relation with a television network, its controversial bishop, its emphasis on fighting Afro-Brazilian religions, its emphasis on exorcism, the theology of prosperity, and asking for contributions. It also has a notably lower level of biblical education among both pastors and the faithful (Pereira, 1995). Nevertheless, even in this case it is possible to speak of specific, central, basic elements of the Pentecostal experience that are common to members of an Assemblies of God church and members of the Universal Church of the Kingdom of God. The similarities in their experiences tend to increase, since there is a lot of communication between Pentecostals of different denominations. Research indicates a permeability in the borders between the different Pentecostal churches. This is revealed by the frequent transit among the faithful who share the same identity and experience (Mariz and Machado, 1994). It is about this identity and experience that I wish to speak.

Pentecostalism and politics

The Pentecostal churches have always been criticized for the political indifference of their members or the political conservativism and adventurism of their leadership. Until the 1970s, the Pentecostals, as well as the evangelicals in general, were absent from the political sphere in Brazil. Since the New Republic (1985), which began when the military regime ended, this panorama has changed. The evangelicals, as Paul Freston (1993) has shown, are transforming themselves into political pressure groups and electing their own candidates. Autonomous

Pentecostalism and the Universal Church of the Kingdom of God are not backward in this respect. On the contrary, as Father Jesus Hortal (1994) has observed, "in 1990, the Universal Church of the Kingdom of God was the only Protestant denomination to save itself from the defeat of the evangelical group in Congress."

Unlike the traditional Pentecostals criticized at the beginning of the 1970s for separating religion from politics, the autonomous Pentecostals are criticized for mixing the two, and for using their churches to get votes. The enchanted or magical view of the world of these Pentecostals does not distance them from politics, yet the political behavior of the leaders of these churches is interpreted as "political adventurism" (Hortal, 1994).

Despite all this political involvement, Pentecostals generally declare themselves politically neutral and deny, in principle, a religious motivation behind any activity related to politics. Most Pentecostal discourse demonstrates a concern for maintaining the appearance of neutrality of the religious group. Despite this discourse, the majority of churches tend to accept the slogan, "brother votes for brother," using their religious identity to promote their programs and justify votes and political action on behalf of the group's interests. In this case, political opinion is clearly tied to group interests and the exchange of favors. When this happens, the Pentecostals are criticized for patronage, yet political patronage isn't limited to autonomous Pentecostalism or to evangelicals but characterizes the political vision of popular culture, as well as the dominant political culture in our society. The political behavior of the Pentecostals, then, does not differ from that of traditional religiosity, which also rejects politics and employs a patronage-based model.

The critics of Pentecostalism tend not to question whether the political model-- be it conservative, patronage-based or indifferent-- was created by this religious group or if it was pre-existing. These critics see this kind of political behavior as bad for the poor because they assume that the root of poverty and, consequently, the struggle against it, can be reduced to the political context. Since Pentecostal experience emphasizes personal morality and the search for individual transformation instead of political struggle, these critics accuse it of being alienating and consider it an obstacle to social change. This criticism begins with the false assumption that social change happens only in the realm of politics, and that the stage of history is set exclusively in the political world.

In order to understand the role of Pentecostalism in the lives of poor people, it is important to perceive that, despite its roots in the international political and economic context and in class relationships, poverty is above all experienced as a daily problem in the lives of individuals. In fact, the fight against poverty takes place primarily on the microsocial level of the actions of individuals, alone or organized in groups, and only secondarily on a macrosocial level of political and social struggles. When individuals confront serious personal crises and find it difficult to survive, they usually lack the conditions necessary to develop social consciousness or to become politically involved.

A significant number of Pentecostals have serious personal problems when they join the church. By giving them the means to overcome these personal difficulties, the Pentecostal churches help poor people on a microsocial level, that is, in the daily life of the individual, his family, and organizations. Thus, the political path is not the only one which permits social transformation. Changing individual lives not only does not impede social change, but it can even be an instrument for this change. It is important not to reduce individuals to mere consequences of the social structure.

The analysis of the role of Pentecostalism in the daily struggle for survival can contribute to understanding the process of cultural and social change among the poorer classes. Although this daily struggle may always have intermediate goals, sometimes it has unintentional effects that go beyond its limited goals. These activities have potential for making macro-structural change. Recognizing this helps us to avoid the reification of the social structure and social determinism, and helps us to be attentive to the relative autonomy of individuals and small groups.

As I have already stated in other works, I think that the belief that since poverty is the fruit of the social structure it cannot be changed is almost as damaging to poor people as the idea that they are responsible for their poverty (Mariz, 1994). The poor are not passive and powerless victims of society. They know what they want and how to get it. In order to help them, we have to respect their ways of acting. We must try to discern what strategies they adopt to confront and overcome the privation in which they live. Thus, in this article I do not adopt the concept of false consciousness or alienation because, besides being authoritarian, as I argued above, these concepts do not help us understand the growth of Pentecostalism and its meaning.

To understand the Pentecostal phenomenon it is more useful to identify the meaning and the practical consequences of the religious beliefs and experiences in the daily lives of the faithful than to discuss the degree of political conservativism of their ideology. By concentrating on the analysis of ideology, criticisms of Pentecostal political behavior do not take into account the changes in the culture promoted by this religious experience. In the following sections, 1 will consider how churches help individuals to overcome their crises, and will try to identify the experiences which transform them in personal terms, even those experiences which question the dominant political culture.

Experiences which transform the individual

The extreme material privation and the consequent problems of this privation create a sense of powerlessness, low esteem, exclusion, insecurity, fear, fatalism, and anomie. In situations of extreme poverty and cultural and material marginalization, sometimes aggravated by racism, one's sense of personal dignity becomes impoverished. Other problems, such as alcoholism, unemployment, or the abandonment of women, reinforce this self- hate. Other religions also offer experiences which help people to overcome these feelings and shore up personal dignity. These experiences, which are common to almost all groups which develop strong social ties,

religious or not, are: the sense of belonging to a group, the experience of power, and the creation of a new identity.

Pentecostal churches help the poor to regain their dignity in different ways. The stories of Pentecostals attest to the fact that their first contact with the church contributes to enhancing their self-esteem. The warm welcome they receive when they first visit the church helps them to see things differently. Many interviewees explained that the concern their problems awoke in others contributed to the increase in their self-esteem.

The emphasis on spiritual gifts, as opposed to material riches, is another strategy to fortify the dignity of the poor (Bobsin, 1984). The direct experience of the sacred, the belief in direct contact with God, also opposes the feeling of impotence and increases the self-esteem of those who feel weak.

Another strategy to strengthen personal dignity can be seen in the eagerness of the Pentecostals to build a new identity involved with keeping up a good appearance as decent or "cultured" people. Care given to dress and personal appearance has this function. Men must wear jacket and tie to worship every day. Pentecostal women must also wear clothes that distinguish them from the rest of the poor population. This kind of behavior is common to all Pentecostal churches, though it is most evident in the classic Pentecostal churches. The search for distinction, though it may seem to the poor as a negation of class origin, appears to be more a rejection of the negative stereotypes associated with poverty.

A criticism commonly made of classic Pentecostalism focuses on the rigidity of the customs, or the "doctrine," as they call it, which prohibits people from dressing fashionably and participating in popular forms of entertainment. Nevertheless, some of the faithful cited precisely this strict style of dress as something which attracted them. The dress code protects a poor person from being mistaken for a marginalized one. The men do not want to be taken as thieves or the women as prostitutes, as some researchers have noted (Gilkes, 1985). Part of the Pentecostal project involves constructing a prosperous, "cultured" image.

In addition to self-esteem, the churches sustain the poor person by offering her a mutual support network, an alternative to family and neighborhood ties. Having access to a wider social network makes a person feel more supported, and she begins to feel that she can make something of her life. This also contributes to overcoming what social psychologists call "the syndrome of powerlessness."

This syndrome has been identified as a characteristic of poor populations (Cavalcante, 1987). Those most lacking in economic resources have the fewest possibilities to change their destinies. They have fewer options and are more easily overwhelmed by misfortune or caught by the social structures. To the degree that they offer a supernatural power which compensates for lack of power in this world, religion and the belief in miracles generally attract the weakest of our

number. Through religious or magic power, individuals can overcome the syndrome of powerlessness and stop feeling that it is impossible to determine their own destiny. Nevertheless it does not seem to be the belief in a supernatural power or the experience of miracles that most helps an individual to gain a feeling of control over his own life. Belief in magical power is not always enough. In the life histories of Pentecostals, as well as of other religions, we can note that as much as they believe in supernatural power or magic, they confront miracles which do not happen in everyday life. The sense of power and control over one's life remains, however, when they also are endowed with something Antonovski (1979) calls "lawfulness," that is, when meaning is attributed as much to a miracle as to the absence of one, and people believe that "things will be how they should be."

The experience of "lawfulness" seems more important than direct experience with miracles, and in principle, is found in all religions which accept the idea of divine providence. Faith in divine providence and the idea that God has a specific plan for each person is strongly emphasized in Pentecostalism. It encourages people to feel that irrational events and the suffering of life have meaning and obey a superior logic in which Good will always win. This belief also helps to overcome the fear and insecurity which are inevitable for those who know they have no power.

Before they were converted, many Pentecostals that I interviewed felt they were at the mercy of spirits and spells put on them by personal enemies. Pentecostalism functions as a protection from spells, evil spirits, and black magic. Faith in divine providence, as Weber shows (1972, p. 143), is already constitutive of primitive Christianity for the important role it plays in neutralizing black magic and hexes.

In fact, the poorest people are entirely right to be afraid, since they are the most vulnerable in many aspects of life. The slum dwellers in Rio live daily with the danger of stray bullets, threats, and all kinds of violence from the police, from organized crime, and from the almost constant struggle between the two. In a visit to a church of the Assemblies of God on the edge of a favela in Rio de Janeiro, I heard a preacher clearly express the promise of protection that faith offers. This pastor, black, toothless, dressed in a jacket and tie, preached with emotion about how, when he comes every day to the favela where he lives, he can pass by all the drug traffickers with their AR15 rifles and have no fear. Against their rifles he carries the Bible. A believer can feel strong and have the courage to confront not only evil spirits but also the threats of this world. It is common to find mothers or wives of drug traffickers who are converted by the Pentecostal churches and try to bring their sons and husbands with them.

Pentecostalism transforms the individual not only through the experience of belonging to a community and through direct contact with the sacred-- experiences which other religions offer that are capable of restoring dignity to an individual, offering him power, courage, and "lawfulness"-- but also through experiences that help poor people adapt better to modern society. In this way Pentecostalism is distinguished from most popular Brazilian religions by exposing the faithful to "modernizing" experiences. These experiences occur when Pentecostalism

requires an individual option for the faith and the adoption of a new ethic in daily life, and when it emphasizes the use of the word, reading and studying the Bible, and the intellectual systemization of the faith. The new ethic reinforces rational option over tradition and cultural inheritance. Emphasis on the word and the study and systemization of the faith encourage attitudes and abilities that are useful to poor people in modern capitalist societies.

Pentecostalism breaks with traditional religiosity by emphasizing "rebirth" and conversion as an individual option. In traditional religiosity, there is no conversion. Religion is innate, not the result of personal choice. To be a "medium," for example, is not a destiny that one chooses, and in the Afro-Brazilian religions, each person is born with his or her "saint, which cannot be chosen. Involvement with Pentecostal churches thus represents a rupture with the dominant traditions and their way of living and seeing the world. This view of life is non-fatalist because it recognizes the capacity of the individual to be different and/or to act differently from the norms.

In order to explain a religious option that breaks with tradition, the Pentecostals elaborate a rationalization or a series of ideas which justifies their faith. Contrary to traditional groups, the Pentecostals emphasize the intellectual aspects of faith. To read the Bible and interpret it is fundamental to Pentecostalism. According to some of the Pentecostals who were illiterate before their conversion, the emphasis on the written word and the theoretical elaboration of faith motivated them to learn how to read. It also seems to encourage verbal competence and an ability to argue, fundamental skills in democracy and modern societies.

Another modernizing element is the transformation of the daily life of the believer toward a new ethic proposed by the religious group. The fusion of faith and life defended by the theology of liberation and the CEBs is also practiced by the Pentecostals. According to James Hunter (1989), the rejection of the modern division between public and private lives is characteristic of fundamentalist religions. Paradoxically, in the Pentecostal groups this rejection has modernizing and transforming consequences.

In relation to these modernizing experiences which reinforce individuality, some Pentecostal churches, with their congregational style, offer their members a relationship to power that is innovative compared to the dominant political style of the traditional religions and of our society in general. Although Pentecostal ideology is conservative, Pentecostalism fosters a new political culture that is more egalitarian and participative, and therefore more compatible with the interests of those less favored socially.

Experiences of a new relationship to power

Three aspects of Pentecostal group experience redefine elements of the dominant political culture, especially among the poor. They are: a) participation; b) depersonalization of power by attributing a greater power to the "word" and the law than to people; c) less distance between the leadership and the base.

As Fernandes (1994) pointed out, "to adhere to Protestantism is to participate intensely." Fernandes argues that Protestantism breaks with the model of Brazilian behavior of little social commitment and involvement, observed by W. Guilherme dos Santos. Contrary to the dominant model-- where the poorest are the least committed --in the evangelical milieu, the poorest are those who most participate.

The participation of the Pentecostal believer is broader than merely singing, preaching, praying out loud, or helping in missionary or social works. In some churches, members participate in administrative meetings when practical decisions are taken about where to use the money collected in the offering, or whether to invite a pastor. The participation of church members in this kind of meeting, however, is not common to all churches. It doesn't occur, for example, in the Universal Church of the Kingdom of God. This kind of meeting happens in Assemblies of God churches, as one of our interviewees from the Baixada Fluminense in Rio de Janeiro told us who was very impressed that the leaders accounted for all the money received from the community. In that particular month, our interviewee told us, part of the money went to help two church women who were having trouble, and another part went to repairing the temple.

Pentecostalism is authoritarian in the sense that it strongly emphasizes obedience, but it is a different kind of authoritarianism than is practiced by the Afro-Brazilian religions, the carnival clubs, and other popular Brazilian associations, which depend on a single leader. Pentecostal authoritarianism is based on the law. The leader must submit to law, to the Bible, and to doctrine. The word has more authority than the person. In this way, Pentecostals are breaking with popular culture. The authority of a pastor is legitimated not only by his personal charisma, but also by the institution to which he belongs. Furthermore, the pastors are required to obey a code of ethics that is referred to in some churches as "doctrine." It is legitimate--one can almost say it is common--for a Pentecostal believer to oppose a pastor who has disobeyed the doctrine.

Generally, Pentecostalism is criticized for its lack of theology or for its simplified theologies, such as the theology of the "spiritual war" focused on the struggle against demons, or the "theology of prosperity." It is more correct to say that these criticisms point to an absence of elements of erudite culture in this religiosity and to the lack of intellectual sophistication of its leaders. The pastors are less educated in erudite culture and therefore less distant from the church members. Although they can take authoritarian postures with regard to the members the relationship in cognitive terms between believer from the popular classes and his unsophisticated Pentecostal pastor is closer and less asymmetrical than that in the Catholic Church or the historic Protestant churches, whose pastors have university and post-graduate degrees. Thus, the distance between the producers of the sacred and the consumers is less than in the traditional religions, as others have also pointed out (Canales, Palma and Vilela, 1994; p. 99). Through their participation and their experience of an egalitarian religion, the faithful have their sense of dignity and power reinforced even more.

Improving the material life and the "theology of prosperity"

Despite the fact that many Pentecostal believers experience a new form of political organization in their churches, this does not occur in all churches, and the search for a renewal of political life and culture is not part of the discourse of Pentecostalism. Its discourse commonly refers to changes in the life of the individual and her family, emphasizing the improvement of the material conditions of life after conversion. Pentecostal preaching, testimonies, and the stories of conversions or answered prayers frequently mention solutions to material problems in daily life. Although the emphasis on material life with the acceptance of some kind of "theology of prosperity" varies from one church to another, and is more evident in some churches than in others, the belief that the new faith will bring material benefits is generalized among almost all Pentecostals. In the Universal Church of the Kingdom of God, for example, this theology dominates its discourse. The importance of money in autonomous Pentecostalism, and in the Universal Church of the Kingdom of God in particular, is evident as much in its theology of prosperity as in the request for contributions, which takes up a large part of the worship service (Hortal, 1994). Freston (1993; p. 105) thinks the Universal Church of the Kingdom of God "is the principal port of entry to Brazil" for the North American stream of Pentecostalism known as the "health and wealth Gospel." In other churches, such as the Assemblies of God, they also spend much time speaking about the solution to material and health problems, but in the preaching and in the testimonies they mention other, non-material improvements. In all the churches, however, it is affirmed that the believer always overcomes the crises of life, and that survival will not be threatened when one has faith.

Insofar as it is a set of values and beliefs, any religion can be useful to the material survival of the poor, whether it provides the individual with experiences, such as those we have described above, which strengthen the dignity and self-esteem of the poor, or because it creates motivations and proposes new values and a new economic culture which lead to new, more productive economic behavior. In its values and world view, Pentecostalism does not seem to create a new attitude or motivation regarding work. As several anthropologists have noted (among them C. Flora, 1976, and J. Hoffnagel, 1978), Pentecostalism places value not on producing or working more, but on consuming less. Through its rigid doctrine opposing the "vanities," drink, and worldly distractions, Pentecostalism-- and especially classical Pentecostalism-- motivates people to save. Although saving is valued by poor Brazilians of other religions, only the Pentecostals attribute a religious meaning to the restriction of superfluous consumption.

Different religious communities or groups can also contribute to the struggle for survival by poor people in other, more direct, ways, such as (1) the donation of goods, or "charity," (2) the creation of remunerated positions for church leaders, or (3) the creation of a network of mutual support. As religious groups, the Pentecostal churches tend to differ from the dominant religions of Brazil by giving less emphasis to charity, which is central to Catholic and Spiritists religiosity. The poorest Pentecostal churches, especially, de-emphasize charity, particularly when it is for the non-evangelical poor. Although some churches, such as the Universal Church

of the Kingdom of God, use a missionary strategy of giving material aid to beggars and street people, most Pentecostal churches take only the Bible to their missionary work.

Since the majority of Pentecostal churches are poor, their members don't receive or hope to receive any material aid from them; on the contrary, they contribute to maintain their churches. Nevertheless, in a moment of crisis they know that they can count on help from the mutual support network and the support of the church. This happened in the above-mentioned case in the Baixada Fluminense which gave part of its monthly income to two sisters in the faith who were living in penury. It is also frequent in the popular neighborhoods that believers who are temporarily without shelter live in a room next to the sanctuary (Pereira, 1995).

Although they do not contribute in a regular and direct way to the daily survival of their members, the churches sometimes provide the only source of income for their leaders. Thus, they become an alternative source of employment, usually for men, though there are cases of Pentecostal churches accepting women as pastors.

The network of mutual support can be seen as another kind of strategy for material advancement developed by different religious groups, including the Pentecostals. These networks, as we have noted above, do not substitute for, but combine the traditional kinship and neighborhood networks which form spontaneously in poor neighborhoods. The religious networks have the advantage of wider social and geographical reach. Through their churches, evangelicals enter into contact with people from other neighborhoods, cities, and even distant reaches of the country.

Another kind of support which the church offers the poor is exemplified by the story of a plumber from an Assembly of God church in a favela in Rio de Janeiro. He told about the festivities commemorating the birthday of an elderly pastor who for many years taught music to the members of the church, especially young people, so that they could play instruments in the worship services. Many former brothers in the faith who had turned aside from the gospel and left the church showed up at the festivities. They were ex-students of this pastor who had become professional musicians in the "world." In this way, the church had offered them a profession.

Although poor people who convert generally tell about the improvements in their lives after adhering to the Pentecostal faith, many people, including the media, see the Pentecostal churches as exploiters of the poor because they emphasize the importance of tithing and other contributions. The harshest and most frequent criticism-- which is made especially of the neo-Pentecostal churches and specifically of the Universal Church of the Kingdom of God-- is that they exploit the poor and enrich the pastors by asking for too much money. In fact, it is shocking to see poor people who are skinny, toothless, and poorly dressed give money to young pastors who are well-dressed, healthy, own cars, and look like the upper classes. Still, to say that people give money because they are ignorant is not sufficient.

Many anthropologists ask themselves why poor people give away such a large part of the little they have. Ari P. Oro (1992) argues that with their donations they are trying to make a pact with the divine. To give is to be a patron, to become a creditor. To be God's creditor is to have power. In a magical world view, or a non-secular one, much value is placed on spending for the sacred and for the supernatural world. It is a logical and legitimate expense. Popular religiosity in Brazil in its different expressions is always characterized by donations. In the Afro-Brazilian religions, there are rituals, "cults," and donations to the spiritist counselors. In Catholicism there are promises to be paid for prayers that have been answered. In this view of the world, the believer does not care how the money will be used. What is important is the material sacrifice that the believer has made for the saints or for God. The concern for the destination of these donations -- whether they are robbed or used for non-religious purposes-- is a secular concern, that is, characteristic of those who do not share the "enchanted" vision of the world. In this symbolic vision, donations as well as sacrifices make sense and are useful in themselves.

There are other reasons and motivations than the value of sacrifice, the magical vision of the world, and the desire to make a pact with God which can explain why poor people make such proportionally large donations. In the act of tithing and making donations the poor discover the capacity to give. Whoever gives has power, whoever receives has no power. Poverty, weakness, and submission are reinforced symbolically when one receives. In potlatch, as in Carnaval, whoever spends the most and gives the most is the most powerful. To receive is to be dependent. With alms comes humiliation. Everyone yearns to be one who does charity. Since Pentecostalism generally doesn't give to the poor, but asks them to give, it makes the poor cease to be poor, subjectively.

The faithful who tithe and contribute donations say that they receive double what they give, and that after they began to give their economic life improved. We can suppose that these persons changed their self-image, and even, as Freston (1993; p. 109) suggests, that these donations represent a commitment to a new lifestyle and substitute for former spending on drugs and medicines. Further, there are indications that members give less than they are asked for, and that they do not wholly accept the discourse of some pastors and churches (Freston, 1993; p. 109) on unchecked donations.

The theology of prosperity and the emphasis on tithing link material riches to faith and adopting a Christian life. Although this discourse is open to criticism, it is important to recognize the instrumental role it plays in the survival of the poor by rejecting the theodicy that the poor are redeemed through suffering.

Pentecostal support for the family

The Pentecostal churches are also strategic in combating poverty when they motivate members, especially men, to give up alcoholism and other vices for family life. In fact, a large part of masculine conversions to Pentecostalism are related to alcoholism. These conversions are

frequently preceded by the conversion of their wives and mothers. In this way, Pentecostal churches provide support for the families of problem drinkers as well as for the problem drinkers.

Feminists have criticized Pentecostal discourse on the family for adopting a patriarchal model and defending the predominance of masculine power. Nevertheless, Pentecostalism notoriously attracts more women than men and it is less macho than the rest of Latin American society. Some anthropologists even suggest that Pentecostalism could be reform Latin American *machismo* (Brusco, 1994).

Through its sexually rigid morality and defense of ascetic behaviors, Pentecostalism changes the attitude of men in relation to family and alcohol, playing an important role in reinforcing family relations and preserving domestic unity. In this way, it not only protects women, but allows an economic improvement in the family unit. As R. Parry Scott (1988) showed, the presence of the couple in the domestic unit tends to avoid a greater deterioration in the conditions of life of the poor family.

Although Pentecostalism does not overcome the subordinate feminine condition, it protects women in their daily lives, helping them to obtain advantages in specific day-to-day questions. In fact, Pentecostal churches attract men to the domestic world and redefine the *macho* role, proposing new values for masculine behavior. Pentecostalism, then, seems to redefine the masculine and feminine roles in the public and private spheres by opening space outside of the home for women and by "domesticating" the masculine sex.

Some writers argue that Pentecostalism helps women, then, by creating a new model for men, especially in Latin American societies where the *machista* model is widely adopted. Salvatore Cucchiari (1990) points out the differences between characteristics of Latin masculinity and the image of God in Pentecostalism. For Cucchiari, the fact that among the Pentecostals God has qualities held to be feminine in the *machista* world, means that it can bring about a new relationship between the sexes.

The redefinition of the masculine role is accompanied by a redefinition of the way of conceiving the individual, who is now seen as a fragile prisoner of the demons. With their conversion, women "discover" that when their husbands drink or abuse them they don't do it of their own free will, but because they are possessed by demons. Someone who acts negatively or in error is seen with tolerance by the Pentecostals since, as a 26-year-old woman we interviewed says, "they don't do evil because they want to, it's because they're being used (...) These people are being used and they're unhappy." In this way, all the oppressors are seen as oppressed by the demons.

Oppressors are thus considered victims for whom one should pray to God. On seeing her spouse also as a victim, the woman feels stronger; she tends to adopt a more tolerant attitude toward her

spouse and tries to deal with marital conflicts more peacefully (Machado, 1994). Symbolically inverting the relation between power and oppression, Pentecostal women don't interpret marital conflicts as the result of the opposition between masculine and feminine interests, but as a result of the man being possessed by evil. Unlike feminist discourse, the discourse of the Pentecostal woman does not oppose the man and his interests, but the demons. Since liberation from demons only occurs through the Holy Spirit and the individual option for Jesus, the evangelical, although always hoping for the conversion of a family member, must respect him and wait until "Jesus touches his heart," as they say.

This attitude of tolerance reflects a new way of understanding the individual that is well described by a 63-year-old Pentecostal domestic worker as she tells about how her behavior toward her children changed. "In the church, we learn that we have to accept people how they are. Even to convert someone we have to know how to talk about God, but not to insist (...) if he doesn't want to go on. If his heart is hard, no one can do anything." The new concept of the individual and his relation with evil implies changing the strategies for conversion as well as the way of reacting to conflicts and aggression. It redefines family relations without necessarily redefining the discourse about the family.

Conclusion

The struggle for survival is the principal daily concern of the poor person. It affects his life style, values, and the organization of his groups. His religious option cannot escape this concern and is also immersed in this struggle.

Pentecostalism is efficient in supporting individuals in situations of extreme privation or family crisis. When the believer who used to confront precarious material conditions joins the church, he overcomes crisis and misery, and experiences an improvement in the material standards of his existence. Pentecostalism

For Pentecostals, poverty is not a political question, but a personal or supernatural one. Thus, we find no Pentecostal innovations in political life. Pentecostal innovations are found at a personal level when they motivate the believers to adopt an ascetic lifestyle and dedicate themselves to the family. Besides showing men how to be more concerned for their families, Pentecostalism engenders in women, through its vision of the individual as a victim of evil, a critical but compassionate and tolerant opposition to their irresponsible or aggressive spouses. Pentecostalism smoothes out family conflicts. By perceiving that their spouses are also victims of evil and not responsible for it, women try to convert them without attacking them, which contributes to the preservation of the family. Strengthening the domestic group and asceticism have proven to be instrumental for the survival of the poor.

Pentecostalism also helps the poor by offering a mutual support network and the subjective experiences of power and dignity and of belonging to a community --experiences shared by

members of traditional religious groups. Unlike these other groups, the Pentecostal churches encourage experiences which tend to modernize behavior. Since the modernizing aspect is Pentecostalism's novelty and what also makes the motivational strategies for confronting poverty of the Pentecostal groups more adequate and useful in modern capitalist societies, it can be concluded that perhaps these elements are the strongest attraction for the poor.

ENDNOTES:

[I] For a socioeconomic profile of Pentecostals in Brazil, see the data of Prandi and Pierucci, 1994.

[2] The present article summarizes ideas developed from data which I collected while doing research on Pentecostals in Brazil. The methodology and general conclusions of this research have previously been published.

3] Brazilian Pentecostal churches, especially neo-Pentecostal churches, also send missionaries to other countries in the southern cone of South America. (Frigerio, 1994).

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In the Power of the Spirit by Dennis A. Smith and B.F. Gutierrez (eds.)

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Chapter 5: Between Pentecostalism and the Crisis of Denominationalism: The Future of the Historic C

Pentecostals and historic Protestants: the global picture

Studies of Protestantism in Latin America generally make a basic distinction between Pentecostals and historic Protestants, the latter being non-Pentecostals in churches of immigrant (Lutheran) or missionary (Congregational, Presbyterian, Methodist or Baptist) origin. The nomenclature makes less and less sense as time goes by; while younger than their historic brethren, the Pentecostals have been installed in Latin America since 1909. At first, the going was hard. Signs of rapid growth in parts of the region (Chile and Brazil) only date from the 1950s. But by the 1980s there was almost generalized growth, as well as a new relationship to public life in a few countries (notably Guatemala, Brazil and Peru). It is now possible to talk of a region-wide phenomenon, "Pentecostalism in Latin America."

The precarious statistics available give an idea of its importance. Protestants (historics and Pentecostals) now constitute about 10% of the Latin American population, or some 45 to 50 million people. Brazil, about 15% Protestant, leads the way in absolute numbers (25 million). Chile, the other long-standing mass Protestantism in the region, is somewhat higher in percentage terms; Guatemala and El Salvador may now be higher still. Pentecostals make up at least 60% of all Latin American Protestants (being a much higher percentage in Chile, and much lower in the Andean countries).

Some comparative data give an idea of the relative importance of Latin American Protestantism. Brazil now has the second largest community of practicing Protestants in the world, behind only

the United States. One Brazilian denomination alone (the Assemblies of God) has more members than all the Christian churches in Great Britain put together. Only some peripheral regions of Europe (Scotland, Northern Ireland, Western Norway) have a higher percentage attendance at Protestant churches than Brazil.

Protestant growth rates seem to be accelerating in Brazil and Chile, although they may have peaked in Central America. Not surprisingly, Pentecostalism has now replaced the Catholic Base Ecclesial Communities (CEBs) as the academically fashionable subject of research in the sociology of Latin American religion. A survey carried out in Greater Rio de Janeiro in 1992 (Fernandes 1992) discovered that an average of one new Protestant church was registered per weekday. The number of Protestant places of worship now exceeds that of Catholics in the city as a whole; in the very poorest districts, the ratio rises to almost seven to one. The survey concludes that Protestantism is an "option of the poor," in a reference to the less successful Catholic "option *for* the poor." The needier the district, the higher the percentage of Protestants: according to a 1988 survey, nearly 20% in the poorest areas of Greater Rio versus 6% in the rich South Zone.

The Rio survey also found that 61% of Protestant churches are Pentecostal, a percentage which increases daily: 91% of new churches registered are Pentecostal. Of the 52 largest denominations in Greater Rio, 37 are of Brazilian origin, virtually all Pentecostal. We can thus conclude that Protestant (and especially Pentecostal) religion is a national, popular and rapidly growing phenomenon.

Towards a History of Brazilian Pentecostalism

Although the study of this vast Brazilian Pentecostal community has advanced rapidly in recent years, little attention has been paid to its overall historical development. This may betray an unconscious belittling: since the Pentecostals are not *historic* Protestants, they must have no history worth studying! In fact, they have had a dynamic relationship to Brazilian society and culture in their more than 80 years of existence.

One can characterize the history of the main Brazilian Pentecostal churches in terms of three "waves" of institutional creation (Freston 1994a, 1994b, 1994c and 1995a). The first wave dates from the 1910s, when the Christian Congregation and the Assemblies of God arrived. This wave corresponds to the Pentecostal movement's origin in the Los Angeles revival of 1906 and its rapid international expansion by means of American missionaries in contact with events at home (as in Chile), and the many immigrants in the USA in contact with their homelands (like the Swedes who founded the Brazilian Assemblies of God) and with countrymen elsewhere (such as the Italian who founded the Christian Congregation among Italians in São Paulo). The initial reception, however, was limited.

The second wave corresponds to the beginnings of rapid growth in the 1950s. Urbanization and

mass society, especially in São Paulo, facilitated new forms of Pentecostalism. New churches used enterprising methods, galvanizing Pentecostalism's relationship to society. The Foursquare Gospel Church imported a new model from California, the birthplace of modern mass media: the use of circus tents to take the message outside the churches; emphasis on divine healing; a relaxation of behavioral taboos and greater adaptation to the sensitivities of consumer society. But the Foursquare Gospel Church was soon overtaken by an innovative nationalist version, the Evangelical Pentecostal Church "Brazil for Christ," which took the Pentecostal message into secular spaces such as cinemas and stadiums, besides making the first large-scale use of radio and even a short-lived incursion into television.

The third wave started after the authoritarian modernization of the country by the military regime. The now overwhelmingly urban population was feeling the effects of the waning of the "economic miracle," and nowhere more so than in the former capital, Rio de Janeiro, beset by violence and economic decadence. The Universal Church of the Kingdom of God (now the fastest-growing, most politically powerful, and most controversial Protestant church in the country) and similar smaller groups, often referred to as "neo-Pentecostal," once again updated Pentecostalism's relationship to Brazilian society.

The concept of waves emphasizes Pentecostalism's versatility in theology, liturgy and ethics. Although older groups can and do evolve over time, newer ones are freer to innovate, both by adaptation to recent changes in society and culture and by greater boldness in delving into the country's religious tradition in a search for more efficient communication. The latter practice can be regarded positively as "contextualization" or negatively as "syncretism" (a common Protestant accusation against the Universal Church of the Kingdom of God); in any case, the Universal Church's success has a lot to do with its capacity to build effective bridges linking it both to what is most traditional and religious and to what is most modern and secular in Brazilian culture.

Pentecostalism and the Mass Media

Brazil would seem to be the world's second largest producer of evangelical television programs. Several characteristics of its Protestant community help to account for this: the doctrinal emphasis (more favorable to the use of impersonal means of communication than sacramental traditions); the evangelistic imperative; and the impulse towards alternative socialization, creating a range of cultural activities parallel to those of the larger society. Entry into the media is facilitated by the relatively open and market-oriented media system in Brazil, by the high rate of national production of television programs in general, and by the breach between the secular culture industry and the Catholic Church.

Radio still dominates Protestant use of the media in Brazil. Several Pentecostal churches of the second and third waves have made it a central part of their strategy. Other Pentecostal churches and some historic ones have used it moderately. The use of television is more limited but still

important. There have been two main experiences of Protestant ownership of channels. The current president of the Brazilian Baptist Convention had a short-lived and unsuccessful experience in the 1980s; and the Universal Church of the Kingdom of God has, since 1989, owned the fifth- largest network in the country, "TV Record."

Large-scale Protestant use of television dates from the late 1970s, when the medium already reached the vast majority of the population. In the 1980s, it followed the same course as Brazilian television in general: nationalization of the programs. By the early 1990s, foreign evangelical programs had disappeared. Although Pat Robertson had returned by the mid-1990s, Brazilian evangelical television remained overwhelmingly national. It was also heavily Pentecostal: about three quarters of the 25 or so programs aired weekly in Rio or São Paulo are Pentecostal. Pentecostals alone make more use of television than all the other religions put together. While definitely not the most technically developed segment of national television, the Pentecostals are certainly the poorest sector of the population to produce their own programs.

The contribution of the evangelical mass media to rapid church growth in Brazil is uncertain. In the United States, televangelism is a reflection more than a cause of a large evangelical community. In Brazil, the Protestant media may be somewhat more efficacious evangelistically; but they also, and primarily, have important internal functions, fortifying the self-image of an expanding minority, structuring the Protestant (and especially Pentecostal) field and providing a way into politics.

Pentecostal Politics

Pentecostals were virtually absent from electoral and parliamentary politics until after Brazil's return to democracy in 1985. Since then, several leading Pentecostal churches have elected official candidates to congress. About 40 members of Pentecostal churches have held seats in congress in the last few years. The majority of these have been official candidates of the Assemblies of God and of the Universal Church of the Kingdom of God. Most Pentecostal and some historic Protestant congressmen have had links with the electronic media, either as presenters of programs or as owners of stations. In the 1994 elections, the federal deputy with by far the largest vote in the state of Rio de Janeiro was the owner of evangelical radio stations. He himself has a very nebulous relationship with the churches (he seems in fact to have invented an ecclesiastical affiliation for himself), but his media power has enabled him to make alliances with many pastors and become famous in the vast Pentecostal community.

Official candidates of Pentecostal churches are typically one or more of the following: men who have achieved prominence in the church as itinerant evangelists, singers, or media presenters; sons and sons-in-law of head pastors; and Pentecostal businessmen who reach accords with their ecclesiastical leaders.

We cannot go into detail here regarding the reasons for the politicization of Pentecostalism in

Brazil (see Freston 1993 and 1994d). Suffice it to say that the main beneficiaries of this corporate politics have been the church leaders themselves. The upward social mobility of their families has been furthered, their public status advanced, their ecclesiastical positions strengthened and their projects financed. Unlike the historic churches, with their traditions, middle-class clientele and professional and bureaucratic standards, the Pentecostal field is, by comparison, young, fast-expanding, popular and *sectarian*. (When in italics, *sect/sectarian* and *denomination* always bear their non-pejorative, sociology-of-religion meaning. As an ideal type, *denomination* signifies a body that sees itself as one among many expressions of the true church. The sect rejects the dominant religion and preaches voluntary affiliation and independence from the state; leadership is established by charismatic criteria, with little or no formal training; the faithful generally come from the lower classes, and are expected to show a high level of group participation and theological consensus; their lives are rigorously controlled by the leaders, who expect separation from the "world." Primitive Christianity was *sectarian*). Pentecostal pastors often suffer from a double status contradiction: as holders of a de facto power which is not legitimated by sectarian ideology (which tends to be egalitarian and anti-clerical); and as leaders in the church but marginalized by society (Wilson 1959). These contradictions are not new, but they become more acute as Pentecostalism grows. More importantly, it becomes possible to attenuate them. Going into politics, or sending in a relative or protegé, can reduce tensions and help professionalize one's religious field. The public connection helps internal structuring, strengthening positions and organizations. Politics also helps access to the media, another powerful way of establishing leadership in the evangelical world.

Like all *sects* which are not geographically isolated, Pentecostals oscillate between their own status system and society's. Although "despising the world," they often accept "worldly" opinions about themselves when favorable. That is why many Pentecostal leaders value so highly the freedom of the city and other symbolic honors to their persons and activities. But politics also gives access to more concrete resources which help to structure this vast popular religious field whose rapid expansion is always producing new leaders anxious to strengthen their positions.

Protestant and especially Pentecostal politicians have acquired a reputation for conservatism, moralism, time-serving, and (in some cases) corruption. In all the scandals which have rocked Brazilian politics in recent years, Protestants have been involved: not only politicians but also denominational leaders, charities and organizations claiming to speak in the name of all evangelicals. This political activity, together with the money-raising activities of the newer churches, has badly damaged the public image of the Protestant community.

On the other hand, at the micro level, there has been a more positive re-evaluation of the cultural effects of the Pentecostal phenomenon by sociologists and social analysts. After a phase in which analyses were dominated by former Protestant or liberal Protestant academics who emphasized its alienating character, a new generation of non-Protestant scholars has nuanced the picture. Now, for the anthropologist John Burdick (1993), Pentecostalism's supposed

"alienation" is precisely the source of effective changes because it creates transformative communities that break with normal social identities. It therefore has greater appeal than the CEBs for the poorest of the poor, for women, for young people and for blacks. For the anthropologist Elizabeth Brusco (1993), evangelical religion confronts *machismo* more effectively than feminism does. Despite its patriarchal rhetoric, it resocializes men away from the destructive patterns of machismo and redefines male aspirations to coincide with their wives'. For another anthropologist, Luiz Eduardo Soares (1993), Pentecostalism represents the emergence of a new egalitarian society. In its "aggressive" posture towards popular spiritism, it rejects the complacent tolerance typical of the traditional hierarchical social order. "It is the purified religious language of warring Pentecostalism which is making our modernizing revolution."

Political scientist Aspásia Camargo says that evangelical religion points to the birth of a true civil society in Brazil (Folha de São Paulo, 1/ 27/95). Rubem César Fernandes, a prominent anthropologist of religion, says the evangelicals are currently the movement which speaks of a radical change of life in the most convincing way. In an interview in the main Brazilian news magazine in 1994, an influential leader of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) was asked whether there was anything vibrant in the shanties except drug-dealing and violence. The evangelicals, he replied. In modern Rio, they are the alternative to the drug-traffic, the main resistance movement in terms of the forging of identity, values and respect for the force of the community. "It is time we stopped viewing the pastors in jacket and tie who go and preach the Bible in public squares as depoliticized imbeciles" (Veja, 26/10/94). Or as the well-known author of a book on Rio says: "More than the police, the courts, the Catholic Church, the family or the schools, [the evangelicals] are the counterculture to drugs....Who knows, they may be doing beforehand what the Roman church did too late, after the empire had fallen: the conversion of the barbarians" (Ventura). 1994).

The Situation of the Historic Churches in Brazil

Pentecostals are now (1995) probably about two-thirds of all Protestants in Brazil, but this numerical predominance is recent. The only census figures which distinguish between "traditional" (i.e., historic) and "Pentecostal" Protestants are from 1980 (the religious results of the 1991 census are still not available). In that year, historicals (51%) were still just ahead of Pentecostals; due to differences in age structure, the historical advantage (54.4%) was greater among the adult population. An important factor in this was the (largely nominal) Lutheran population in the South, the state of Espirito Santo, and parts of the new agricultural frontier in the North-west. Rondonia is the most Protestant state in the country, being the only case where the two types of Brazilian popular Protestantism (Lutheran and Pentecostal) coincide geographically. Non-immigrant historicals are strongest where Baptists and/or Presbyterians managed to create a weak form of popular Protestantism. Such is the case in the border region between Minas Gerais and Espirito Santo, where many towns were founded by Presbyterians. Even today, the region (due to economic stagnation and the church's educational institutions) is

a source of pastoral vocations for the Presbyterian Church of Brazil.

Historic Protestantism in Latin America, says David Martin (1990:230), "provided a vehicle of autonomy and advancement for some sections of the middle class, conspicuously so in Brazil . . .This Protestant seed came with its flowerpot - 'the world view, the ethos and the ideology of the . . . expanding capitalist countries'. . . .The whole Protestant style remained remote from the largely illiterate millions." Sociologically, the historic churches are *denominations*, with all the usual implications of greater individual freedom, weaker community life, and less ascetic rigor, in comparison with the Pentecostal sects. From the 1960s, Pentecostalizing ("charismatic") schisms arise in all the historic churches. But rather than the descent of the historic churches to the Brazilian masses, these represent the ascent and adaptation of Pentecostal phenomena to new social levels.

Historic Protestantism arrived in Brazil in the mid-nineteenth century, along with other foreign currents such as Kardecist spiritism and Comtist positivism. The latter currents were transformed in Brazil into mystical religions. Protestantism also found its mystical version, Pentecostalism, but only 50 years later and by means of separate institutions. Of all the imported currents of the period, Protestantism was the exception to the rule, in that it was introduced (and, in its initial development, controlled) by foreigners. It could have been different.

Protestantism could have entered Brazil as it had entered Northern Europe, by means of a reformation of the national church. There were Jansenist and royalist tendencies among the clergy favorable to such a move; in the 1830s, several attempts were made in Parliament to separate the Brazilian church from Rome. The first Protestant "project" for Brazil (by American Methodists in the 1830s and 1840s) was a national reformation, in which the political desire for a breach with Rome would be supplemented by a reform of doctrine and practice stimulated by ample distribution of the Scriptures.

A second possibility was that Protestantism would enter Brazil as spiritism and positivism did: in the "baggage" of Brazilians returning from abroad who would then spread it autonomously. The problem was that intellectual contacts were much stronger with France than with the Protestant countries. A third possibility was that missionaries would limit themselves to founding autonomous congregations of new converts. The first Brazilian ordained to the Protestant (Presbyterian) ministry, the former priest, José Manoel da Conceição, seems to have dreamed of this possibility. "He did not desire the establishment of a transplanted Protestant church but a movement of reformation.. . which would lead to the creation of a Brazilian evangelical Christianity rooted in popular tradition and habits" (Ribeiro 1979:206). We can speculate that Conceição, once disabused of the idea of reforming the national church, would have supported this solution, leaving an indelible mark on nascent Brazilian Protestantism (greater understanding of popular religiosity; Franciscan simplicity of life free of bourgeois tendencies; a mystical spirituality closer to the Latin heritage).

What happened, of course, was the transplanting of foreign denominations, or more specifically an insertion of the "American pattern" of religious organization into a Brazil still marked by the traditional "Latin pattern." According to Martin (1978), the "American pattern" is of generalized denominationalism, with no established church but an almost unlimited pluralism associated with a popular and almost universal religious culture. Religion itself is not seen as politically problematic. In the "Latin pattern," on the other hand, religion is monolithic and allied to the state, making it politically problematic.

This "American pattern" of exuberant Protestant denominationalism, separate from the state but forming almost a cultural establishment, was brought to Brazil specifically by sectors marked by two recent historical experiences: the colonization of the American frontier and Southern slavery. Not surprisingly, the missionaries did not find it easy to relate to a secularized intellectual elite formed in the "Latin pattern." As Erasmo Braga, one of the few Brazilian Protestant leaders capable of such a dialogue, recognized, "Brazilian Protestantism is on the one hand too Anglo-Saxon and on the other hand too ignorant to impress the intellectuals . . . The cultured class should be reached by a literature closer to that of French Protestantism . . . to take advantage of the prestige of French culture" (in Ferreira 1975:137,59).

Although the historic churches invested heavily in schools to reach the elites, the result in conversions was negligible. Nine members of the 1934 Constituent Assembly were alumni of the Presbyterian Mackenzie Institute, but not one of them was a Protestant. Another disappointing result was the inability to win or even to produce intellectuals. Frontier pragmatism was ill-equipped to create an intelligentsia capable of gaining the respect, much less the allegiance, of intellectuals trained in the "Latin pattern." The siege mentality, the suspicion of aesthetic values and the foreignness of the denominational solution led to the creation of an illustrious list of lapsed Protestants.

Richard Niebuhr showed how, in the North American context, even the old territorial churches tended to become more democratic (1929:205). In Brazil, on the other hand, even democratic denominations became more authoritarian. The clearest example of this is the Presbyterian Church of Brazil (IPB).

The IPB paid for its early success in rural Brazil. Even today, a third of its members are from the "Zona da Mata" region of Minas Gerais and Espiriro Santo. In São Paulo and Paraná as well, the church grew on the agricultural frontier and acquired a strong rural ethos. Not surprisingly, the IPB went through a severe crisis in urban regions in the 1950s and 1960s. This questioning led to a reaction, which preceded but was later emboldened by the military coup of 1964, and consisted of internal repression, manipulation of the electoral system, and isolation from international Presbyterian networks.

The crisis of the IPB, previously the leading Protestant church in Brazil in social and intellectual influence, seriously weakened the historic churches' contribution to Brazilian Protestantism

(especially through the virtual abandonment, after 1964, of the main trans-denominational organ, the Evangelical Confederation) and increased Pentecostal isolation. The IPB thus lost its chance to supply the leadership for Protestantism's new public relationship with Brazilian society in the 1980s and 1990s. Today, the IPB operates an elitist model of pastoral training (four or five years in full-time residential seminaries), but without the investment and academic seriousness which characterize the Catholic equivalent, and without the Catholic advantages of social prestige and/or access to the masses to compensate for the lack of secular qualifications. At a time when secular educational possibilities were mushrooming, the IPB chose the worst possible route. It neither freed itself from the elitist model (which had previously attracted capable people because it meant social mobility, but no longer does so) nor took the model seriously in the context of modern Brazilian society (which would mean raising the academic level and integration into the university world).

The other main Presbyterian denomination, the Independent Presbyterian Church (IPI), has followed a somewhat different route. In sociological and political terms, it is half-way between the IPB and the more (at the top) left-leaning and ecumenical Methodist Church. With a much poorer geographical distribution (heavily concentrated in São Paulo and Paraná), the IPI went through a weak form of the IPB's ecclesiastical repression in the 1960s and 1970s. But from 1981, during the military regime's "opening," it also began a cautious ecumenical opening, besides investing heavily in theological education and accepting theological pluralism in the seminaries. The result was a weak version of the schism between leadership and grassroots which characterizes the Methodists.

The relative (or in some cases absolute) numerical stagnation of the historic churches has a lot to do with Catholic changes since Vatican II, which allowed greater internal pluralism and thus discouraged conversion to Protestantism. Another factor is urbanization, which has made the middle classes either more secularized or more attracted to privatized forms of (often esoteric) religion without dogmas or communitarian demands. Where historic churches do grow, it is often due to their charismatic sectors.

Charismatic renewal began in Brazil's historic churches before the parallel Catholic phenomenon. Being initially repulsed, there were schisms in all the main historic denominations between the mid-1960s and early 1970s. The charismatic offshoots have placed Pentecostal phenomena in a new format (more orderly and less taboo-ridden) which is more acceptable to the middle class.

However, the charismatic denominations which resulted from these schisms have been less successful than expected. Recent Protestant expansion in the middle class has been mainly due to the independent charismatic "communities" (whether totally autonomous or joined together in networks). Although these are not as important as in Central America (where they make up the major part of middle- and upper-class Protestantism), they have made a significant impact in Brazil since the late 1980s. They are part of an international trend which mirrors post-modern

tendencies in which the large traditional denominations lose much of their importance. In middle class Brazil, as in the developed West in general, denominationalism itself is in decline. As Grace Davie (1994) says, people "believe without belonging; " religious practice (Christian or not) goes on without the controlling presence of large religious organizations. Although one has to be cautious of translating such Western tendencies into the Brazilian context, there would seem to be a case for viewing the pulverization of middle-class Protestantism partly in this light.

Pentecostalized Historicals and Historicized Pentecostals

For some years, it was fashionable among analysts of Latin American Protestantism to say that the historicals had no future. They were supposedly destined to be squeezed out of existence by the Pentecostal explosion on the one hand and by renewed post-Vatican II and post-Medellin Catholicism on the other. In fact, the internal evolution of the Catholic Church has been quite different from that envisioned in the wake of the Vatican Council, and all measures tried have been ineffective in stopping Catholic losses. The Charismatic Renewal has gained ground as a possible Catholic answer to the Pentecostals, but its effectiveness is largely among the middle class. As such, it is one more strong competitor for the historic Protestant churches.

As for the Pentecostal explosion, it has, of course, led to a progressive increase in the Pentecostal percentage of the Protestant field, but not to an absolute decline of historic Protestants. In addition, as the vast majority of both the older and newer Pentecostal churches see themselves as part of a broader community of *evangélicos* which includes their historic brethren, the latter have been able to bask in some of the reflected glory of Pentecostal growth. Greater social and political visibility has led to a multiplication of projects to unify the Protestant field and address areas of national life previously distant from Pentecostal concerns. This has opened up space for a contribution from historicals, based on their middle-class cultural capital if on nothing else.

Historicals thus still have an important role, especially perhaps in Brazil where they are older and more firmly rooted than in many parts of the region. At this moment of Protestant arrival at public visibility, there are new demands that historic Protestants are best equipped to meet, such as recovering the history of broader Protestant experience in politics, having well-qualified lay people in various roles related to the wider mission of the church and developing theological reflection on all the new questions which Pentecostals had previously thought irrelevant. The new questions and controversies caused by Pentecostals' public presence will oblige them, albeit grudgingly, to rethink the sense of omnicompetence that usually characterizes *sectarian* mentality. Although Wallis says that sects tend not to concede the possibility of a non-member having any valid view on their structure or behavior (1979:211), the new public responsibilities of Brazilian Pentecostals (perhaps unequalled in the history of Christian sects) may lead them to discover that they can learn from sympathetic non-members about the world and about their own role in it. A sect cannot take on a wider role without attracting qualified people for a whole range of new tasks.

Much will depend, however, on historic Protestants' attitudes. Non- Protestant academics are now often more comprehending and less elitist in their view of Pentecostalism than are historic Protestant thinkers. Too often, the latter have imagined they were a cultured elite bringing light to their benighted brethren. Recent studies of Pentecostalism should be read to overcome elitist prejudices (Burdick, Mariz, Ireland, Antoniazzi et al, Garrard-Burnett & Stoll eds., Boudewijnse ed., Freston, Martin, Stoll, Soares, Fernandes...). Historic churches and individual historic leaders must adapt to the new reality of the religious field in Latin America: a market situation in which institutional loyalties are precarious, middle-class denominationalism is in decline and the Protestant community is overwhelmingly Pentecostal. But the adaptation must be a theologically consistent one, not mere sociological opportunism. The historic churches' intention should not be to duplicate Pentecostalism but to complement it. It is not easy to be a multi-class church in a religious market situation, as Catholic attempts to confront Pentecostalism show. Hierarchical and elitist tendencies almost always win out in such a church, making it difficult to be really popular (i.e., tuned in to the popular classes). A flow of recent sociological literature on the relative failure of the CEBs as compared to Pentecostal success is instructive reading for all historic Protestants (see Burdick, Hewitt, Teixeira et al. . .). A true multi-class church would need several forms of pastoral formation, appropriate for different social con- texts, without any trace of hierarchical ranking among them.

It is probably time to revise our traditional image of the Protestant field in Latin America. Although it is still useful to employ the "Pentecostal" and "historic" terminology, these should be seen not as two watertight compartments but as ideal types at the two extremes of a continuum on which most real cases are a highly variable and creative mix. Not only that, but all denominations and individuals are in fact in constant movement along the continuum. This movement is in both directions: towards a Pentecostalization of historic Protestantism and a historicization of Pentecostalism.

The Pentecostalization of the historic churches is fairly well known and illustrates Pentecostalism's capacity not only to grow but to influence other groups inside and outside the religious field. In a study of the 1994 general elections in Brazil (Freston 1995b), I point out that Afro-Brazilian religious leaders now wish to present official candidates because the *evangélicos* do so; that some left-wing candidates now imitate the right by apparently opportunist affiliations to evangelical churches; and that some historic denominations try to copy elements of post-1986 Pentecostal politics, creating ecclesiastical spaces for candidates belonging to the denomination to present their views (Methodists), taking pains to stress how many Presbyterians were elected (IPB), and even attempting to officialize candidacies (IPI).

Recent studies of Argentina's fast-growing Protestant field have stressed not only its Pentecostalization, such as the diffusion in historic circles of Pentecostal forms of worship and theological themes such as healing, prosperity and "spiritual warfare" (Wynarczyk et al. 1995), but also the growing interaction and development of a genuine pan-evangelical allegiance. This is not just a question of uniform practices, but of a shared identity, common goals and unifying

public figures. In this sense, it resembles the "new social movements" in Latin America. Of course, there are divisions, as in all the social movements; but "unity" is precisely the word used by evangélicos themselves to speak of their common efforts (Marostica 1994).

In the Brazilian case, the multiplication of para-church organizations since the 1960s and of pan-Protestant representative entities in the last decade has not only hastened the declining importance of middle-class denominationalism (intellectual leadership and reforming initiatives stemming increasingly from para-church circles peopled mainly by historicals but with some Pentecostal penetration). They have also greatly increased the transit between historic and Pentecostal tendencies. In addition, evangelical television programs have popularized models of preaching and worship beyond denominational boundaries. The greater visibility for Protestants as a whole in Brazil also means that denominations can no longer live in such isolation: the public image of *evangélicos* affects all sectors and the desire for power leads to alliances which overlook denominational polemics.

A parallel tendency is the historicization of the Pentecostal field. Sociology of religion is familiar with the phenomenon of the evolution of the *sects* towards *denominational* forms (Niebuhr 1929). This is not as automatic and uniform a tendency as Niebuhr detected in the North American context, but it alerts us to the fact that historic Protestantism can have a role beyond the borders of the denominations with which it is usually associated. For many reasons (passage of time and, especially, of generations; social pressure; political expediency; upward social mobility of membership; intra-Pentecostal rivalry, especially between older and younger churches), sectors of Pentecostalism begin to adopt more historic theologies and practices. An interesting recent example in Brazil is the rivalry between the Evangelical Association (AEVB), led by Pastor Caio Fábio, and the Universal Church of the Kingdom of God, led by Bishop Edir Macedo. Faced with the media's "discovery" of Caio in 1994 as the "anti-Bishop Macedo," and the sympathetic coverage they have given to Caio's social projects in the dramatic social scenario of Rio de Janeiro, Macedo perceived that he also needed to invest heavily in social projects. Thus, whatever the motives, the competition which characterizes the new religious market and the new Protestant public visibility can have a cross-fertilizing effect.

Caio Fábio can be seen as a paradigmatic figure of the new Protestant moment in Brazil: a charismatic leader (in the sociological sense) of elitist social origin, but self-taught because of a youth spent in the drug culture; a Presbyterian pastor (IPB) with charismatic tendencies (in the theological sense) and a broad acceptance in both historic and Pentecostal fields; head of his own parachurch organization and presenter of his own television program. The AEVB's capacity to remain the major pan-Protestant unifying entity, despite being besieged by Bishop Macedo's National Council of Pastors (CNPB), depends heavily on Caio. Although the AEVB has many Pentecostals in it, the space for historic perspectives in the new Protestant field also hinges very much on the AEVB's survival, which in turn hinges on Caio's willingness to depersonalize its workings and create a greater density of theological and practical interchange.

The new challenges facing Brazilian Protestantism also require a creative theological response. A merely pragmatic and piecemeal union of Pentecostal and historic elements will not produce a healthy integration or orient a project for Latin America's mushrooming Protestant community.

In 1994, 1 was invited to attend a study meeting of theologians and social scientists connected with the progressive wing of the Catholic Church. In several moments, the desire was expressed for a synthesis capable of uniting the best in the Base Communities and the best in Pentecostalism. I expressed sympathy with this project, but added that it demanded a new theological basis firm enough really to integrate the desired elements and not merely juxtapose them. I suggested a key element in this might be eschatology: the Biblical vision of the resurrection of the body and the New Earth gives meaning to our individual lives and to our participation in public life. Death, which takes us out of history before the end, appears to make these mutually exclusive options. But the dichotomy of public and private worlds is healed in the New Jerusalem, the consummation of public history and the end of each soul's journey.

The same emphasis may be fruitful in the historic-Pentecostal dialogue. In addition, the recovery of what can be called, in a broad sense, the Protestant ethic, is vital at this moment in Brazilian Protestantism. By Protestant ethic, I refer to three things. Firstly, the classic reformed view that revelation has to do with the whole of life and that, in Niebuhr's (1951) phrase, Christ is the transformer of culture. Secondly, the classic Protestant attitude towards work and worldly goods, summed up in diligence and frugality, which sees work as having a positive finality in fulfillment of the will of God, and consumption as being controlled by criteria which differ from those of the surrounding society. Thirdly, the biblical worldview which underlay the development of modern science: a desacralized view of the natural world and an ethical rather than ritualistic approach to life within it.

This ethic has been largely lost or seriously attenuated in Brazilian Protestantism (see the conclusion to Freston 1994e). Instead of the active ethic of social transformation, we have, on the one hand, the passive and legalistic ethic of the good functionary, and on the other hand, the triumphalism of "dominion theology" which dreams of a divine right of evangelicals to temporal power. Instead of the ethic of diligent work and frugal consumption, we have "the theology of prosperity" and its ideal of rapid enrichment by ritual means. And instead of the desacralized worldview which contributed to science and to the ethical treatment of problems, we have the modern version of "spiritual warfare" with its return to a pagan view of the world. If the recovery of this historic Protestant ethic is vital at this moment of unprecedented numerical presence, public visibility, and social responsibility, then the historic churches, and above all those that lay claim to the Reformed heritage, must first of all rediscover their own past and apply it creatively to the Latin American present.

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return to religion-online

In the Power of the Spirit by Dennis A. Smith and B.F. Gutierrez (eds.)

Dennis Smith is a mission worker for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and works as general coordinator of the Latin American Evangelical Center for Pastoral Studies (CELEP). He has lived and worked in Latin America since 1978 and now lives in Guatemala City with his wife and two children. EM>THE POWER OF THE SPIRIT, was edited by Benjamin F. Gutierrez & Dennis A. Smith It was published in 1996 by the Presbyterian Church (USA) and AIPRAL/CELEP, and translated by Peter Kemmerle. This book was prepared for Religion Online by Ted & Winnie Brock.

Chapter 6: Provocations

Introduction

This is a working document. Its purpose is to help pastors and church leaders articulate contextualized pastoral strategies for responding to the challenges presented by this particular moment in Latin American history. No solutions are offered, just stories, questions, and a few tentative clues.

You will need to ponder and assemble these disjointed pieces to see if they respond to your particular situation. But the puzzle will remain unsolved unless you add the pieces unique to your particular context.

This is a biased reflection. It gives special attention to reality as it is experienced by the excluded majorities in our countries. If your pastoral call is to other sectors of society, this document maybe of little use to you.

Before I forget, let me ask a favor of you. If this document (or the others included in this collection) provokes you to put some thoughts down on paper, send them along to us. (You'll find the address at the beginning of the book). We'll do our best to circulate your comments.

Pieces of Evidence:

Helpless

A few weeks ago, Leonardo died. At 35 years of age, his liver could no longer resist the ravages of alcohol. He left a wife and four children. Leonardo and his family, Kaqchikel Mayas, had left their village 30 years ago to seek their fortune in the city. They built a shack on the periphery of the city. Leonardo became an ironworker.

When he went on a binge, Leonardo would beg for money to pay for his next drink. His family would find him collapsed on the street in a drunken stupor. They would take him home, but he would leave again, helpless before alcohol's fury.

Leonardo was a timid person. He was not a violent drunk. He did not beat his wife and children. Rather, he seemed perplexed, sad, silenced before his inner demons.

He had tried many times to control his alcoholism. He had tried attending Alcoholics Anonymous. He had gone to the meetings of the Catholic charismatic renewal. He had asked a Pentecostal pastor to pray for him. He had joined the church choir. But the fury always returned, the fury rose up within him, and he was helpless before its power.

Have you met Leonardo?

Luz María Coto, a Salvadoran pastor, shares this testimony:

Three years ago, when Consuelo was five months pregnant, she decided to tell her father and mother that she was expecting. Her father has not spoken to her since. She had to go to live with a friend of her mother. The father of her little girl never helped her in any way. After Gabriela was born, she had to abandon her studies and go to work.

Looking for a companion for herself and a father for Gabriela, Consuelo became pregnant again. It was the same story. The father abandoned her as soon as Marta was born. She gave up her search for a companion and confronted life alone with her daughters. She has raised them by herself and has been an example to them of what a woman can do, even without a life companion. Both girls study while she works.[1]

Have you met Consuelo and her daughters?

David Stoll, American anthropologist, relates what he has observed in El Quiché, Guatemala:

By the late 1980s... the town's youth were no longer following their older siblings and parents into the churches. Many of the earlier generation of converts had left (Sacapulas) to pursue careers in the capital, leaving the town's congregations smaller than before. When I quoted the

1984 health census, that 33 percent of the family heads in town were evangelical, a disappointed pastor replied: "The majority of this town may have passed through the evangelical church, but where are they?" The ambience had changed, another leader explained. Through cable television, youth were becoming absorbed in worldliness and drugs. Jesus Christ had been very popular with the teenagers of this town in the 1970s; now their successors were more interested in rock music and videos. They were being converted to consumer capitalism as represented by the town's new satellite dish. Where Protestantism still boomed was on the dry, scrubby ridges above town, in hard-scrabble aldeas that clustered around government schools and Church of God chapels. Here, evangelical leaders claimed, their members were outnumbering Catholics.

Already in Nebaj, a second generation was emerging in the evangelical churches, of adolescents who were more interested in acquiring sunglasses than imitating their parents. According to one such youth, who was already "fallen" due to drinking, Protestant as well as Catholic youth engaged in the same kind of behavior because of the influence of their friends. The more prosperous households were acquiring televisions and, by 1992, there were three video parlors on the plaza specializing in Rambo-style violence. Young Ixils were being bombarded with images of sex, status, speed and mobility. Like so many millions of other Latin American youth, they were being taught to imitate urban consumption patterns far beyond any visible means of attainment.[2]

Have you met the young people from Nebaj and Sacapulas?

Xavier Gorostiaga, a Jesuit economist, shares alarming data

...When the world was largely rural, a social fabric protected the poor. But today's urban poor are isolated, alone, without community . . . This process of marginalization is filled with contradictions. The free-market economic system pushes people out of rural areas because it promotes only the export-led growth of powerful agro-industry. Urban migration has created cities of 20 million that are unlivable: Mexico City, Rio de Janeiro, Calcutta, Shanghai, and Cairo. In these cities, people arm themselves because crime and insecurity create a permanent war among the citizenry. In the United States alone, there are 200 million guns in the hands of private citizens. Just think. They try to defend themselves from a product that their own society has created.

. . .Most sadly (we have created) a civilization of hopelessness. And, where there is no hope there is no life . . . As the possibility for hope is slaughtered, what remains is mere escapism where people seek consolation in things like drugs. According to a declaration of 132 nations that met in Naples,Italy in November, 1994, the yearly global expenditure on drugs, prostitution and arms totals $732 billion, a sum equal to 40 percent of the per capita income of humanity.[3]

Do you find your region reflected in the data cited by Gorostiaga?

I Know Her

Up at dawn.
Life is numbness, noise, being pushed, pushing back, going through the motions.
Do we have water today? No, *no water*.
What about breakfast? *Just enough for the kids. You know how it is-- as a woman, I'll get by.*
Do we have electricity? Yes,*for the moment*.
She turns on the radio. Country music.
For a moment, she identifies with the woman's musical lament.
Life is numbness, noise, being pushed, pushing back, going through the motions.
Going to work. An hour and a half in buses. Exhaust fumes, crush of people.
When it rains, mud. When it doesn't, dust.
Careful with those guys at the corner! Are they thieves?
Here come the cops.
Are my papers in order? if not, they'll hit me for a bribe.
Got to hurry! if I'm late, I'm fired!
Going home. Another ninety minutes.
She arrives exhausted.
And *the kids?*
(Her mother stays with them all day).
Not sick, are they?
Fix some food. And do some wash if there is water.
There's a meeting at church. Does she want to go?
They want to form a committee to demand clean water and a health clinic.
She's not up for a meeting tonight.
Maybe tomorrow.
Tonight, just switch on the tube and catch a soap.
Just as she settles down, she hears noise from the neighbors. *He's drunk again*.
Their boom box is shaking the walls. No rest tonight, but tomorrow, up at dawn.
She begins to think.
Think? Maybe *think* is too strong a term.
Life is numbness, noise, being pushed, pushing back, going through the motions.
Think.
The reflection of what once would have passed for thought -
A moment of nostalgia.

Who can she count on when push comes to shove?
The neighbors? *Sometimes, when they're not drunk.*
The father of her children? *No way*! *Cost me an arm and a leg to get rid of that jerk.*
People from back home? *Sometimes. But here in the city nobody stays in touch anymore.*
The family? *Yeah, sure, my family. Most of the time.*
The church? I *think* so. *I'm not sure. Sometimes they're all talk.*
God?
Yes, God. God has not abandoned us.
We still have someplace to live. We're not on the street.
We have life. Today the kids are well. . .

But all around me, nothing seems to make sense anymore. .
so many things I just don't understand...

She goes back to watching TV...

The Emptiness Within

A group of us were meeting, pastoralists from several Latin American countries. The task for the morning was to identify the religious feelings of people we work with, especially among the excluded majority.

A spiritual laundry list for our time:

We yearn to feel that we belong to a community.

We long for meaning in our lives. Noteworthy are those preachers who offer people the discipline they need to survive the current social and economic crisis. Noteworthy are those who claim they have the authority to conquer alcoholism, dishonesty, domestic violence.

Violence and aggressiveness dominate interpersonal relationships.

We feel exhausted, harried, empty, pushed to the limit.

In our hearts, we long for tenderness and affection.

We yearn for joy, for celebration.

Maybe we don't know how to express it. But somehow, we yearn for a personal experience with God. We long to abandon ourselves in God and savor the mystery of God's absolute otherness.

We yearn to become channels of divine grace.

In the cities many want to "consume religious goods," but without losing their anonymity, without risking discovery.

People are fed up with religious institutions and with the organized religion industry.

More evidence:

Slipping Out the Back Door

In 1988 a Costa Rican evangelical businessman became concerned by the claims of local preachers that a quarter of the population had become Protestant. He consulted with a respected local public opinion firm and they decided to study the religious preferences of Costa Ricans. The study was carried out in July, 1989. They interviewed 1,276 adults. They discovered that:

8.9 percent of those interviewed identified themselves as Protestants. (The word we use in Central America is evangélicos).

81.7 percent of those interviewed identified themselves as Roman Catholics.

72.8 percent of the Protestants were born into Roman Catholic homes.

Besides the 8.9 percent who identified themselves as Protestants, an additional 8.1 percent admitted to having been Protestants at some time in the past. This represents a desertion rate of 91 per-cent.

Of this 8.1 percent of those surveyed who abandoned Protestantism, 62 percent returned to the Roman Catholic church, 1 percent became Jewish, 6 percent became Jehovah's Witnesses or Mormons, and 31 percent ceased to profess religious belief.

Let me run that by you again. Of the 8.1 percent of Costa Rican adults who abandoned evangelical churches (the author of the study calculates that we are talking about approximately 42,500 people), 31% ceased to profess religious belief.[4]

It's the Real Thing

Kristian Führer is the pastor of Nikolai Church in Leipzig, Germany. His church played a key role in the movement that brought down the Berlin Wall. In the autumn of 1989, despite the threats of the secret police, 200,000 people came to Monday night prayer meetings at Nikolai

Church. Last year an American journalist asked Führer if it was tougher keeping their spiritual life alive now that they formed part of the capitalist world. His reply:

For 40 years we had in the East the experience of theoretical materialism, and atheism. In the past two years we are confronted with something new --actual materialism. Materialism used to be a theory; in this integration with the West, it is a fact... Before and during 1989 there was a genuine spirit, a true reform light, and our church was filled by no other means than word of mouth... But today, even if we put out 1,000 posters, we would not get so many.[5]

The All-Consuming Gospel

It's not as if there were a dearth of religious options out there. They're everywhere! And not all the religious options come in the guise of churches. Take televison, for example. TV's gospel is called *the consumer society*. Human worth, preaches television, is measured by the "exclusiveness" of the products that one consumes. Those assured of salvation by this gospel are the young, the beautiful, and the successful. (Don't be surprised if most of them also happen to be white!) Everyone else must scramble to buy a bit of salvation (and identity) by collecting some of the crumbs that fall from this exclusive table: a pair of **Nike** tennis shoes, a **Sony *Walkman***, **Calvin Klein** jeans, or whatever the commercial badges of the moment might be.

The pure and undefiled religion of the consumer society is beyond the reach of the great unwashed multitudes. All that it offers to the excluded are carefully measured and mediated dreams and expectations. Television suggests to the excluded concrete ways for dealing with the frustration produced by their exclusion. First, violence. Armchair Rambos frequently live out their TV-generated fantasies by beating up on the women closest to them. Second, sex. Television tells us that ultimate human meaning can be found in the mechanized, mindless practice of the sexual act. Sex, of course, is closely related to violence in televisionland. Again, women are usually the objects, not the subjects, of the sexual act.

Don't be surprised to find that some of the new religious movements have quite successfully adapted themselves to the gospel of the consumer society. Since Constantine, churches have always had to define themselves in relation to the gospels preached by those in power. Some remain faithful to the Gospel of Jesus Christ; others go with the flow.

Today, for example, the theologians of the consuming gospel explain that God wants us all to be healthy and wealthy. What about the poor and the sick? Simple! Either they lack faith or are living in sin. But this all- consuming gospel grants them the authority to grab God by the throat and **DEMAND** material blessing. Your God isn't big enough to give you a new car? Try mine! The result? The excluded continue to be excluded for having committed the gravest of all sins: having been excluded in the first place!

Where do we go from here?

Back to that meeting of Latin American pastoralists.

We ended our time together by compiling another laundry list. Why? Its our way of encouraging you to rethink your pastoral strategies and, if necessary, to provoke you to design strategies that are appropriate to your particular context, strategies that respond to this particular moment in history:

Christian churches have lost our monopoly over the institutionalization of spirituality in Latin America. Every day less of the spirituality experessed by average folks is channeled through the churches. The range of alternatives is enormous: from *Umbanda to* New Age, from the consumer gospel to ancient Mayan spirituality. Our churches must abandon our historic triumphalism and assume our minoirty position with dignity. Furthermore, without abandoning our principles, we must learn to establish relationships of mutual respect with both ancient and new spiritualities that proclaim values not wholly alien to the Reign of God.

Faced with our minority status, historic churches, both Roman Catholic and Protestant, can no longer afford to dismiss Pentecostals as the enemy. We must learn to be allies.

Our common identity with other Christians grows out of our common faith in Jesus of Nazareth. This is sufficient. Enough of competition! Enough of numbers! Enough of our self-promoting arrogance! The time has come to set aside our sectarianism and live out the Gospel. Together! (We always suspected as much. These are the values we have celebrated in the lives of so many of our local saints. "Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us." Hebrews12:1).

We urgently need to design pastoral strategies (and even select the times for our meetings and worship services) according to the needs of that great mass of excluded people who form part of non-traditional families: single mothers, families divided by divorce, grandmothers who raise their grandchildren, widows, orphans, street children, etc. We must accept the fact that women are the protagonists in many Latin American families. Women take the initiative in creating and defending family spaces. Women administer the family budget. Women take the initiative in promoting gospel values and celebrating God's presence in the home. At the same time, we need to hold up responsible male role models that break with machismo, insensitivity and violence.

We need to rescue a spirit of celebration and not get lost in rationalism. We need to develop contextualized, coherent and celebrative liturgies, balancing form and content. This will grow out of a permanent conversation between Pentecostal and historic churches. It is not enough to

pentecostalize the liturgies of the historic churches.

Kleptocracies. Narcocracies. "Formal" democracies (that is, governments where the army and the economic elites have retreated to run things from behind the scenes). These are the political systems that dominate the Latin American landscape. How do we move from corrupt, manipulative and abusive politics to the responsible administration of public resources for the common good? As Christians, we need to articulate an ethic for public servants and a theology of power. As Christians, we need to participate in the decentralization of the functions of the state and strengthen regional and local democratic institutions. When the excluded begin to participate in local boards and commissions, democracy begins to take root.

We are flesh. We are spirit. But we have divorced one from the other. Our human dignity, rooted in our divine parentage, resides in the holistic integration of flesh and spirit. For this reason, aggression against a human being is an aggression against God. But there's more. We also must learn to decipher in our own selves the constant conversation between body and spirit. And how to we comprehend the closely-related mystery of our sexuality? Or the mystery of our spiritual yearning? Or the enormous impact that these yearnings have on our physical beings?

The principal source of values, dreams and expectations in our world is the communication media, especially television. At this point in history, any serious Christian Education program must include media literacy: criteria and methodologies that facilitate a critical perception of media messages.

Preaching is in crisis. We must train our preachers to preach simple, creative, prophetic, humane, tender, contextualized sermons. ï

Many people slip out the back door of the neo-Pentecostal churches feeling deceived, defrauded, damaged. But the same thing happens in many historic and Pentecostal churches. We must humbly ask ourselves if we are prepared to provide caring communities, communities of integrity, for some of the many people who have become fed up with organized religion.

We need to review our theologies in light of our increasingly pluralistic world. What contribution can the Christian faith make to humankind's common reflection on the human condition at this moment in history? In this process, the members of our churches must learn to articulate their own beliefs, not so that they can proselytize more effectively, but so that their living faith becomes a useful tool in building the common good.

ENDNOTES:

[1] "New Ways of Being Family: Testimonies from Guatemala" by Luz María Coro de Peña in *Latin American Pastoral Issues,* Year XVIII, 1994. CELEP, Guatemala. p. 19.

[2] David Stoll Between *Two Armies in the Ixil Towns of Guatemala*. Columbia University Press, New York. 1993. pp. 275-6.

[3] "World has become a 'champagne glass.' Globalization will fill it fuller for wealthy few" by Xavier Gorostiaga in *National Catholic Reporter*. 27 Jan 95. Kansas City, MO, p.9.

[4] "La crisis evangélica costarricense en cifras," by Juan Kessler. Mimeographed paper, fourth revision, Aug., 1989.

[5] "We Lost Our Fear and Went Onto the Street" Robert Marquand interview of Kristian Führer

in the *Christian Science Monitor*, Aug. 19-25, 1994.

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