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THE CATHOLIC CHURCH, RELIGIOUS PLURALISM, AND DEMOCRACY IN BRAZIL

Kenneth P. Serbin

Working Paper #263 – February 1999

Kenneth P. Serbin is Assistant Professor of History and Director of the TransBorder Institute at the University of San Diego. He received his PhD from the University of California, San Diego, in 1993. His research focuses on the history of the Catholic Church and social and reproductive issues and the relationship between religion and democracy in Brazil. He has a forthcoming book on Church-military relations in the 1970s and is writing another on sexuality and social conflict in seminary training. He is also conducting a study of the practice and politics of abortion. He has been a fellow of the Kellogg Institute (spring 1992) and a research associate of the North-South Center at the University of Miami (1992–1993).

The paper will also be published in *Democratic Brazil*, edited by Tim Power and Peter Kingstone (Pittsburgh, forthcoming).

The author wishes to thank Father Alberto Antoniazzi, Philip Berryman, Ralph Della Cava, Dave Dixon, Carol Drogus, Margaret Keck, and Bill Smith for their insightful comments on earlier drafts of this paper. The author, of course, is responsible for any shortcomings. Rogério Alves de Barros provided valuable research assistance. My wife Regina Serbin provided love and support throughout this project.

ABSTRACT

The Roman Catholic Church, which gained prestige and power for helping lead Brazil back to civilian rule in 1985, has faced the difficult and more complex challenge of maintaining its influence in the increasingly pluralistic society that has since emerged. This paper appraises the role of the Church and its new religious competitors in Brazilian democracy.

RESUMO

A Igreja Católica no Brasil adquiriu prestígio e poder ao ajudar o país a voltar à democracia em 1985. Agora, ela enfrenta um desafio mais difícil e complexo ao tentar manter sua influência numa sociedade cada vez mais pluralista. Este trabalho avalia o papel da Igreja e a nova competição religiosa dentro do quadro da democracia brasileira.

The Roman Catholic Church, which gained prestige and power for helping lead Brazil back to civilian rule in 1985, has faced the difficult and more complex challenge of maintaining its influence in the increasingly pluralistic society that has since emerged. This paper appraises the role of the Church and its new religious competitors in Brazilian democracy.

The Church has undergone a paradoxical shift. Between 1968 and 1985 it opposed the military regime and acted as the 'voice of the voiceless' by promoting human rights and social justice for the poor through such structures as the renowned Comunidades Eclesiais de Base (CEBs, or Grassroots Church Communities). After 1985 the Church continued to work for change through support for democratic consolidation, political activism, and criticism of the government's failure to focus on social justice. However, a reaction against Brazilian Catholic progressivism also took place. Pope John Paul II and conservative bishops restricted the clergy's political activities and cut back many of the innovations introduced during the heady days of the dictatorship. The Church also refocused on evangelization and spirituality at the expense of political action. This paradox is partially explained by a changing political climate, the Church's internal situation, and the need to safeguard privileges provided by the state. But the key to understanding the paradox is the Church's exercise of its traditional mission as moral tutor of Brazilian society. The first section of this paper examines the evolution of that mission.

The Church no longer holds a monopoly on power in the religious arena. While a decade ago democratization could be viewed largely from the standpoint of the Catholic Church (Della Cava 1989), today it is impossible to consider democratic consolidation without studying the new religious pluralism created mainly by the rapid growth of Protestant Pentecostalism.[1] Thus the second section of the paper focuses on the growth of

[1] This trend is evident in the shift in scholarly focus from the Church to Pentecostal Protestantism. For reviews of Protestant growth, see Berryman (1996), Stoll (1990), and

Pentecostal denominations and the timid
yet increasing Catholic response to this new competition. Because of the emergence of Pentecostalism, religion is no longer an immutable social given but a private and nonpermanent choice. For the first time in the country's history the notion of an exclusively 'Catholic' Brazil has
been seriously challenged. The Pentecostals have converted their religious success into social
and political power by incorporating their followers into organized churches, electing members of humble origin to public office, and tapping into political networks and state patronage. Brazil has
thus become a "pioneer: the first traditionally Catholic country in the world with a large Protestant electoral and parliamentary presence" (Freston 1993b). As attention to CEBs and other Catholic-inspired social movements peaked in the 1980s, few would have predicted that Pentecostalism would soon act as a different kind of voice for the poor. Though often painted as conservative, quackish, and manipulative, the Pentecostals have achieved what the liberation theologians and others failed to accomplish: the attraction of millions of the poor into their flocks. As one pastor perhaps cruelly but not completely inaccurately put it, "The Catholic Church opted for the poor, but the poor opted for the evangelicals."[2]

The advent of religious pluralism represents significant social change. I therefore examine its impact on democratic consolidation. Religion and religious change can help shape democracy
on different levels by affecting institutional politics and church-state relations,[3] voting

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Martin (1990). There has also been a shift from religion and *politics* to religion and *culture*, although the emphasis on culture may now be giving way to church-state studies (see note 3). For a statistical analysis of pluralism,
see Pierucci and Prandi (1996b).

[2] Quotation and observation from Berryman (1996); also see Prandi and Souza (1996).

[3] Long out of vogue in Brazil as sociological and anthropological studies of religion dominated
the field, studies of church-state relations are once again becoming necessary as

patterns,
and movements in civil society. At each level religion can have a positive, negative, or even mixed effect. I argue two points.

First, I maintain that pluralism has not yet become a crucial factor in democracy from a top-down or macropolitical perspective. Brazilian politics is still largely an extremely conservative and
elite affair which focuses much more on negotiation of interests than ideological or religious issues.[4] The Pentecostals are increasing political participation, but they are doing so in a conservative
way. Their leaders have sought not to alter but simply to adapt to Brazil's socioeconomic structure and political system. Pentecostal politicians are especially known for seeking patronage and privileges. In Brazil the poor do not want to revolt but to ascend the social ladder.[5] The Pentecostal churches reflect this hope. Especially among the newer churches the primary concern of the
leaders is power, and often their theologies are attuned to economic interests. The new churches have little notion of social justice on a national scale.[6]

However, from a bottom-up or micropolitical standpoint religious pluralism reveals the maturation, growing complexity, and mobility of Brazilian society. Religious

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Pentecostals
attain power; see Freston (1993a), Pierucci (1996), Prandi (1996), Giumbelli (1996), Gill (1998).

While church-state relations before 1985 revolved around ideological conflict, under democracy
they have shifted to the more traditional issues of religious freedom, church-state collaboration, and electoral bargaining. For example, the neglected financial angle of church-state relations is now
an important focus; see Serbin (1995, 1996c), Pierucci (1996), Prandi (1996), Gill (1998).

[4] By and large, writes McDonough (1981), the members of the Brazilian elite "have not been acculturated to the cut-and-thrust of doctrinal debate; a lack of metaphysical certitude does not appear to bother them."

[5] This point is also made by Prandi and Souza (1996).

[6] For an alternative view that discusses the long-range sociopolitical implications of Pente-
costalism, see Petersen (1996).

change is part of a long-term socioeconomic and cultural transformation that envelops politics and the process of democratic consolidation: the continued modernization of Brazilian society through ever closer integration into the world capitalist economy but with the country's traditions and colonial legacy always hanging in the balance. Religious change indicates important shifts in people's behavior and views of society. Most religious change has occurred among the poor, where in the long run cultural transformations have greater impact on their daily lives than the machinations of elite politicians. Because Pentecostal churches have become politically active, religious pluralism also means that there are now more intermediaries between the people and the state. Such religious pluralism makes civil society more dense but not necessarily more democratic (Gaskill 1997). Nevertheless, it is a mirror to a Brazilian democracy that, though still highly ineffective, has incrementally improved people's awareness of politics and the political process.

Brazil's milieu of poverty and social exclusion is the common drive behind the quite different outlooks of Catholicism and Protestant Pentecostalism. Brazil continues to have one of the world's worst records of income distribution. The 'lost decade' of the economy in the 1980s was paralleled by a 'feckless democracy' (Mainwaring 1995) in which the elite failed to carry out many basic reforms, most notably, the redistribution of land. Brazil was outwardly democratic but inwardly still oligarchical (Hagopian 1996). Social and economic conditions improved only slightly in the 1990s. For the poor this situation still translates into hunger, underemployment, inadequate housing, ramshackle schools, and a dilapidated public health system. In their

respective utopias, the Catholic Church transforms or at least reforms this milieu, while the Pentecostals offer ways to adapt to or escape from it.

The Catholic Church: From 'Moral Concordat' to 'Moral Watchdog'

The Catholic Church's self-perceived mission as moral tutor of Brazilian society provides the framework for understanding religion, pluralism, and democracy. In this section I explore the development of that mission through institutional growth and political activism.

Since the 1930s the Church's political role, its relationship to the state, and its exercise of moral tutorship have gone through three quite different but not mutually exclusive phases. The first was the 'moral concordat,' the dominant phase from which the others flow. Antidemocratic and antipluralistic, its roots lie in the largely authoritarian, highly corporatist regime of the first presidency of Getúlio Vargas (1930–45).[7] He helped resuscitate the embattled Church as a national institution by granting it privileges and subsidies in exchange for political and ideological support. Close Church-state ties continued during subsequent, democratic administrations (1946–64) and to a certain extent even during the military regime, when the bishops and the generals met secretly in hopes of continued collaboration.[8] The moral concordat led the Church to become a social arm of the state through the building of hospitals, schools, and other projects.[9] It also led the Catholic bishops to become involved in the nation's drive for economic development. Minus this last aspect, the moral concordat has served as a model for other Brazilian confessions that recently have tried to gain political influence.

After World War II the Church underwent a political transformation that called into question

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[7] Fleet and Smith (1997) point out that the positions of the present-day Latin American Church still contain antidemocratic vestiges.

[8] For a discussion of these secret meetings, see Serbin (1996a, 1997, 1998c).

[9] For a detailed discussion of the moral concordat, see Serbin (1995b, 1996c).

its traditional support for the status quo. Some bishops advocated agrarian reform, for instance. In the early 1960s the Catholic Left advocated deep changes in social structure. The important
Second Vatican Council (1962–5) opened Catholicism to dialogue with the modern world, other religions, and even Marxism. The Brazilian Church anticipated Vatican II and radicalized the
Council's region-wide sequel, held in Medellín, Colombia (1968).

These changes occurred as the Brazilian military regime imposed a model of rapid capitalist accumulation and a highly repressive, anti-Communist doctrine of national security. The security forces arrested and abused scores of priests, nuns, lay militants, and even bishops. The result was the worst Church-state crisis in Brazilian history.

The repression moved the Church to enter a second political phase: 'moral opposition'[10]
to the regime. The Conferência Nacional dos Bispos do Brasil (CNBB, National Conference of the Bishops of Brazil) criticized human rights violations and denounced social inequality. Progressive Catholics formed the so-called Popular Church (also known as the Church of the Poor or the Progressive Church), which gained hegemony within the institution and implemented a series of politically important innovations such as the CEBs and organizations to promote agrarian reform,
the independent labor movement, and the rights of Amerindians. These groups fed into the
popular movements that arose in Brazil in the 1970s and 1980s. The Popular Church's theoretical blueprint was liberation theology, which borrowed from Marxism and emphasized social transformation as salvation. The Brazilian Church became the most radical in the world and played a substantial role in the democratic *abertura*.[11] This set

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[10] This phrase is suggested by Lowden (1996).

[11] An avalanche of literature mainly sympathetic to the transformation of the Catholic Church's role in Latin American politics appeared beginning in the 1960s; for the most recent major examples in the Brazilian case, see Azevedo (1987), Burdick (1993), Casanova (1994), Della Cava (1985, 1989, 1992a), Della Cava and Montero (1991),

the stage for the Church's latest phase as 'moral watchdog,' discussed below.[12]

Doimo (1992, 1995), Ireland (1991), Mainwaring (1986), Mainwaring and Krischke (1986), Mainwaring and Wilde (1989), Paiva (1985), Pierucci, Souza, and Camargo (1986), Pope (1985), Sanchis (1992), Teixeira (1988). For critical reinterpretations of the Church's role, see Serbin (1996a, 1997, 1998a, 1998b, 1998c). There is a vast literature of liberation theology; for analyses, see Berryman (1987), Libânio (1987), Sigmund (1990), and Smith (1991).

[12] A somewhat similar analysis of the Chilean Church is employed by Michael Fleet and Brian H. Smith, who employ the term 'overarching moral framework'; see Fleet and Smith (1997).

Conservative Reaction and the Catholic Retreat from Politics

As Brazil redemocratized the Church receded from overt political activism for several reasons. First, the Church was not a political party and therefore encouraged other groups and movements to take the lead. These assumed much of the work carried out by the Church under the military (Mainwaring 1986; Bruneau and Hewitt 1992). While the Church was the glue that held together the Left and other opposition groups before 1985, afterwards the glue became the socialist Partido dos Trabalhadores (PT, or Workers' Party). Significantly, the bishops did not want to jeopardize the legitimacy of the fledgling and fragile democratic government that they themselves had helped to foster (Gill 1998).

Secondly, a conservative reaction within the Church moved the clergy out of politics, rolled back many progressive innovations, and stressed the orthodoxy of the pre–Vatican I I era. The reaction gained an important supporter in John Paul I I , a staunch anti-Marxist. Under him the Vatican punished liberation theologians, reprimanded progressive bishops, intervened in religious orders, censored publications, and divided the Archdiocese of São Paulo, a progressive stronghold. At the fourth continental assembly of Latin American bishops at Santo Domingo in 1992 the Vatican ignored much of the progressive approach. Moreover, John Paul I I appointed conservative bishops and curtailed the power of the CNBB, which had embodied the ecclesiastical nationalism of the 1970s and 1980s. Thus in 1995 the CNBB elected Dom Lucas Moreira Neves, a cousin of Tancredo Neves (the president-elect who died in 1985), as the

conference's
first nonprogressive president in 25 years.[13] A year later John Paul II made him a cardinal.

Third, the prestige of the Popular Church deflated as the political context changed. The collapse of Communism and the retreat of the Latin American left (Castañeda 1993) discouraged Catholic progressivism, and disillusionment set in over the Popular Church's failure to bring about deep social transformation (Berryman 1996). Furthermore, the conservative reaction and the end of the heroic struggle against the dictatorship reduced the enthusiasm and membership of grassroots movements.

The Church of the Poor simply did not attract most of the poor. CEBs did not fulfill the
heady goals of progressive leaders, some of whom held elitist attitudes towards the poor. Though perhaps not as few as some estimate, the CEBs include but a fraction of the population.[14]
Moreover, their ideology tends to be *exclusionary* towards such groups as women with

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[13] Dom Lucas spent more than a decade in the Roman bureaucracy before becoming Brazil's archbishop-primate in 1987. In 1998 he returned to the Vatican bureaucracy. For background on him, see CNBB (1984, 1991), Serbin (1991a). There are a variety of interpretations of the conservative reaction; for a comprehensive overview, see Beozzo (1994, chap. 4); also see Libânio (1983), Mainwaring (1986), Cox (1988), Della Cava (1989 and 1992a, 1992b, 1993), Lernoux (1989), Pressburger and Araújo (1989), Martin (1990), ISER (1990), Montero (1992), Ghio (1992), Cleary and Stewart-Gambino (1992), Daudelin and Hewitt (1995), Oliveira (1992), Serbin (1993c), Doimo (1995), Comblin (1996), Berryman (1996), Bernstein and Politi (1996), Löwy (1996), Vázquez (1997); on the Chilean and Peruvian cases, see Fleet and Smith (1997); on Santo Domingo, see Serbin (1994).

Although I employ the terms 'progressive' and 'conservative' in this analysis, I recognize their diminishing utility. For further discussion, see Serbin (1998c).

[14] Pierucci and Prandi (1996b) estimate CEB membership at 1.8 percent of the population; also
see the important (and optimistic) statistical study by Valle and Pitta (1994); for an appraisal of
Valle and Pitta's research, see Oliveira (1994); for skeptical views of previous large CEB estimates, see Hewitt (1991, 1995); Daudelin and Hewitt (1995), Burdick (1993), Drogus (1992).

domestic problems, youths, and Afro-Brazilians,[15] albeit large numbers of the latter do participate (Pierucci and Prandi 1996b). In addition, as CEBs came under tighter control by the clergy and were often torn asunder by internal strife produced by the democratic transition, they became less involved in politics and more focused on religious concerns (Vásquez 1997, 1998; Hewitt 1995; Perani 1987). They are no longer a major priority of the Church and have lost some of their capacity to strengthen citizenship.[16]

Finally, the rapid growth and political ascendancy of Pentecostal Protestant religions in the 1980s posed a threat to the Church's centuries-old politico-religious hegemony and caused it to change its behavior to a more traditional pattern.[17]

A clear sign of this approach has been a focus on institutional needs and religious activities using strategies reminiscent of the pre-1964 moral concordat. Riding a wave of

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[15] See Burdick (1993) for a critical evaluation of the CEBs' unattractiveness to the poor; also see his perceptive essay (Burdick 1994); also see Berryman (1996), Perani (1987). For a rigorous critique of Burdick's postmodernist, microsocial approach see Vásquez (1998), which presents a detailed overview of the crisis over the progressive Church from the perspective of the 'macrodynamics' of the capitalist world-system.

[16] This is the argument of Hewitt (1995). However, if political and economic conditions in Brazil became decidedly worse, it is possible that the CEBs could once again become politically important. Furthermore, the emphasis on the devotional observed in the CEBs should not be seen as diametrically opposed to the political; the devotional can *feed into* the political at particular junctures. Also see my discussion of the *Semana Social* below. Drogus (1997) points out that CEBs help raise the political consciousness of poor women but also notes that they have brought about little social change because of women's continued subordinate position in both Brazilian society and the Church.

political prestige at the start of the New Republic the Church assumed this posture with public support
from Tancredo and then President José Sarney (Freston 1993a). The bishops have lobbied the government and politicians to resolve the Church's problems. One bishop, the progressive Dom Mauro Morelli of Duque de Caxias, served in the government of President Itamar Franco (1993–5)
as head of a poverty relief effort. In 1989 the Vatican and the Brazilian armed forces signed an agreement reactivating the military chaplaincy. Representatives of the CNBB and the governments of Fernando Collor de Mello (1990–2) and Franco tried unsuccessfully to negotiate a Church-state protocol. The Church hoped to reinforce the legal validity of religious marriage, reestablish
religious instruction in the public schools and religious assistance in public hospitals, and create
a legal distinction between the Catholic Church and other religions. Furthermore, the Church
worked to influence the state to safeguard financial assets and its philanthropic organizations' privileges. These needs became more urgent as previously generous European Catholic
funding agencies reduced donations. Continued high levels of poverty maintained state demand for Church social assistance activities such as the Children's Pastoral, which received backing
from the Franco government (Serbin 1995b).[18]

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[17] The Church's specific religious response to Protestant growth is discussed in the section on Pentecostalism. Gill (1998) has observed this pattern as affecting the Latin American Church everywhere.

[18] The Brazilian example paralleled the spectacular turn of events in Mexico, where Church and state renewed relations in 1992 after more than a century of estrangement and violent conflicts. For an overview, see Gill (1995). Doimo (1995) suggests a certain bureaucratization of Brazilian nongovernmental organizations as they have become more

The Catholic Church as 'Moral Watchdog'

Progressivism, however, did not die. Many aspects of the Popular Church survived to create a substantial progressive Catholic legacy. The great paradox of the post-1985 period was that a more conservative Church used that legacy to attempt to shape Brazilian democracy. Conservatism and traditional institutional interests have commingled with the struggle for social justice.[19]

The paradox is resolved by viewing the Church's approach as a coalescence of historical patterns, divergent political actors, and contemporary challenges in which spirituality and ecclesiastical conservatism are not necessarily inconsistent with social justice.

First, the conservative reaction had limits. It focused mainly on ecclesiastical structures and did not seek to interfere directly in Brazilian politics. Moreover, the Vatican could not—nor did it want to—completely wipe out the efforts of the Popular Church. John Paul II found much good in liberation theology, and he has praised the Brazilian Church for its social consciousness. Liberation theology received inspiration from the traditional social doctrine of the popes. Rooted in the nineteenth century, the social doctrine governs all internal ecclesial factions.[20] Moreover, though modified, the CNBB's progressive legacy has become part of Brazil's historical mosaic. The Church is not just an ecclesial institution but a *Brazilian* one as

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dependent on funding from the Brazilian government, North American agencies, and the World Bank.

[19] Doimo (1995) notes that the Church is experiencing another paradox: the attempt to reproduce the notion of community in an urban-industrial society in which it must attempt to appeal to the masses.

[20] On the continued importance of papal social doctrine, see Casanova (1997).

well. The Vatican's moves are shaped by local history and conditions.

Secondly, pluralism exists not only in the larger religious arena but *within* the Catholic Church itself. It has a far higher degree of internal complexity than the Pentecostal denominations, with groups ranging from radical liberationists to conservative, quasi-Pentecostal Charismatics. But unlike the highly schismatic Pentecostals, the Church remains whole. Thus liberation theologians could openly support the Left in 1989 and 1994 while moderates could gravitate towards centrist parties such as the PSDB and conservatives to the Right.

Pluralism was also mirrored in ecclesiastical politics, including the bishops' efforts to save progressive programs. By electing Dom Lucas the bishops placated the Vatican. However, they also chose a vice-president (Dom Jayme Chemello) and governing council of the CNBB from the Popular Church. Tensions arose between Dom Lucas and this group, but the balance of power preserved the CNBB's basic structure.

Finally, the bishops' political engagement in the 1980s and 1990s reflected their customary role in politics and a remarkable ability to adapt to the postauthoritarian era.[21] Incentive for such involvement increased with the Pentecostal threat. The Church helped consolidate Brazilian democracy but also sought to keep its politico-religious hegemony, which had regularly served as a political surrogate for the people. Thus a new version of the moral concordat emerged: the Church now acted as the 'moral watchdog' of Brazilian society. Officially avoiding the partisan fray, it pronounced its moral and ethical outline for the country, denounced social

injustice, and criticized governments' inability to solve the country's socioeconomic problems.

The values, ideals, and personnel of the Popular Church interpenetrated political structures and social movements.[22] The prime example was the CNBB. The bishops urged the writing of the Constitution of 1988 and helped set its agenda. Most of the Church's statements echoed the liberationist 'preferential option for the poor' and the union of faith and politics. Six months before the Constituent Assembly elections of 1986 the CNBB issued "For a New Constitutional Order," a document emphasizing the rights and responsibilities of citizenship. It advocated protection of human rights and minority groups, greater economic equality, active
political participation by the populace, the deconcentration of power in the highly oligopolistic
media sector, and agrarian reform (CNBB 1990).

This effort recalled the Church's earlier campaigns to shape the Constitutions of 1934 and 1946. However, in 1986 the Church abstained from endorsing candidates to the Constituent Assembly. It instead urged voters to select individuals who fit a profile described by the Church, especially those dedicated to grassroots movements, social justice, and the struggle against

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[21] The Church went through a similar process during the democratic-populist period from 1946
to 1964; see, for example, Serbin (1992b); also see Casanova (1997).

[22] A similar argument is developed by Cleary (1997), who describes the Church's contemporary
role as 'nation building'; also see Pressburger and Araújo (1989), Altemeyer Junior (1996).

authoritarianism. It warned against candidates who were in politics for personal gain, had ties to privileged groups, or were involved in corruption (CNBB 1990). Moreover, the Church deemphasized traditional, behind-the-scenes lobbying in favor of so-called popular amendments (eligible for consideration with 30,000 or more signatures) and public meetings with Assembly members that focused on the issues. The CNBB set up a special commission to record, analyze,
and publicize the Assembly's work (CNBB 1990, Doimo 1995).

This campaign revealed a vision of Brazilian democracy that often seemed utopian, but it must be seen in the context of the Church's longer historical struggle against unequal social
and political structures that long predated the military regime. The Church had no illusions. It recognized that the new constitution had many shortcomings. Agrarian structures, for example,
were left largely intact. The Church also understood that the even more important task of drafting enabling legislation still lay ahead. Most of this legislation has yet to be proposed.

The legacy of the Popular Church survived in other forms. Thanks to the Church's campaigns of the military era, the concept of human rights is today part of the common discourse of Brazilian democracy.[23] Many grassroots and nongovernmental organizations and also the PT
include people who began in groups such as the CEBs. Started in the 1960s, the CNBB's annual Lenten campaigns have maintained their focus on social issues, for example, hunger, agrarian
reform, abandoned children, racial discrimination, women's position in society, housing, and the subhuman conditions in Brazil's jails (CNBB 1997). A new Children's Pastoral has become highly successful in the battle against infant mortality (Serbin 1995b). The Church continued to demand a more just economic order, and it pushed agrarian reform

through its support of the highly radical Movimento dos Sem-Terra (Movement of the Landless) and the continued sponsorship of *romarias da terra* (land pilgrimages). In 1996 the CNBB intensified focus on the land question by vigorously protesting a police massacre of more than 20 *sem-terra* at Eldorado dos Carajás (Beozzo 1997; CNBB 1996).[24] The Church has also been highly critical of the neoliberal economic policies of Collor and Fernando Henrique Cardoso (1995–). In 1997, for example, the CNBB opposed the controversial sale of the Companhia Vale do Rio Doce, a large and profitable state mining company. Cardoso in turn criticized the progressive Church and liberation theology (Uchôa 1998).[25]

The Church also maintained a number of traditional planks in its platform. It advocated the protection of the family; opposed artificial birth control, the sterilization of women, and abortion; and successfully fought to keep religious instruction permissable in the public schools. In effect, the Church remained as one of the major determinants of the Brazilian moral code. However, the Church's commitment to universal moral laws grates against pluralism and is "not always compatible with tenets and requirements of liberal democracy" (Fleet and Smith 1997).[26] A

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[23] This was an ecumenical effort that also involved mainline Protestant denominations and the World Council of Churches.

[24] On the Church and the land question, also see Iokoi (1996).

[25] As nation-states have become weaker because of privatization schemes and economic globalization, the transnational-oriented Church has stepped into areas neglected by states. It perhaps could even "assume a proactive role in shaping some aspects" of the new globalized system. "In a sense the papacy has been trying to re-create the universalistic system of medieval Christendom, but now on a truly global scale." See Casanova (1997).

[26] For a detailed analysis of the Church's influence on issues related to the family and reproduction, see Ribeiro and Ribeiro (1994); on abortion see Serbin (1995a), Jarschel (1991), Blay (1993), and Ribeiro (1994).

major issue during the Constituent Assembly, abortion pitted feminists against the bishops. In the mid-1990s it emerged again as an important political issue amidst congressional initiatives to restrict or expand access to it. Abortion and related themes created Church-state friction in 1997 when First Lady Ruth Cardoso expressed doubt about the John Paul II's ability to influence congressional debate. She spoke just as the Pontiff arrived for his third visit to Brazil for an international conference on the family.

The Church and Elections

The Church viewed voter education as one of its primary contributions to democracy. It continued to use the type of profiles developed for the 1986 election. These favored the Center-Left because of their emphasis on social transformation. They criticized traditional patronage politics—the venue of the conservative, rural-based parties. Profiles rather than endorsements allowed the Church to remain officially impartial in terms of party politics but still supportive of social change. Thus the Church could still seek relations with successful candidates who did not fit the Catholic profile.[27] However, the line between electoral pedagogy and actual involvement was often fine.

The most visible engagement occurred among the progressive clergy. These priests and CEB members frequently backed PT candidates such as Catholic activist Luiza Erundina in her surprise victory in the 1988 São Paulo mayoral election. In the 1989 presidential election the

CNBB appealed once again for deep transformations in Brazilian society in its document "Ethical Demands for the Democratic Order" (CNBB 1989). While the CNBB was officially
impartial, progressive priests openly supported the PT's Luís Inácio Lula da Silva against the conservative Collor. For example, progressive leader Frei Betto issued a biography of Lula
(Betto 1989).[28] Individual bishops kept their preferences private. Many Catholics were said to
have supported the centrist Mário Covas of the Partido da Social Democracia Brasileira (PSDB, or Brazilian Social Democratic Party) during the first part of the two-stage election.

In the less polarized 1994 contest between Lula and PSDB intellectual Cardoso the
CNBB distanced itself from radicalism and carried the fight for social justice into the political mainstream. For example, the CNBB held a *Semana Social* (Social Week) during which the term *excluídos* replaced the liberationist 'oppressed.'[29] This event

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[27] This point is suggested by Gill (1998). However, led by Dom Eugênio Araújo Sales, the cardinal-archbishop of Rio de Janeiro, some bishops issued explicit recommendations against certain candidates in the 1998 elections but apparently with little success.

[28] Betto had a long history of involvement with the Workers' Pastoral of São Paulo and as an
advisor to Lula.

[29] The *excluídos* were also the focus of the CNBB's 1995 annual Fraternity Campaign; see
Revista Eclesiástica Brasileira (1995). 'Exclusion' is not new; it originated in discrimination
against social groups such as African slaves during Brazil's colonial era. In contemporary Brazil
the concept denotes a lingering political inequality that not only prevents social and economic integration of the poor into society but often demonizes them as 'bandits' requiring elimination;
see Nascimento (1994); also see Almeida and Tavares (1995), Andrade (1993), Ventura (1994). Exclusion worsens as Brazil absorbs new technologies that further widen the gap
between those inside and outside the new 'technical culture' (Valle 1995).

gathered hundreds of leaders of local pastoral organizations to propose grassroots alternatives to national development schemes. They also debated some of the dominant themes of Brazilian democracy: the state and society, citizenship, corruption, ethics, the environment, and ethnicity.[30] Thus the Church sought not to transform but to *reform* an unequal democratic-capitalist society into whose structures it hoped to integrate the 'excluded.' The Social Week ended with a CNBB-sponsored nationally televised presidential debate. Instead of journalists, grassroots leaders questioned the candidates—a historic first for common citizens in Brazil. With an estimated 36 million people watching, the Church attained its largest press coverage in recent years and reinforced its moral status (CNBB 1994a). The progressive Church again voted heavily for Lula (Pierucci and Prandi 1996b). Though he lost, the Social Week had helped the *movimento popular* move into the media limelight and the formal democratic forum.[31] This transition reflected the movement's shift from an emphasis on grassroots organization to working through political institutions and organized civil society as a publicly recognized interest group (Doimo 1995).

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[30] See CNBB (1993, 1994a, 1994b), *Zero Hora* (1994), Archdiocese of Belo Horizonte (1994), Poletto (1995). The theme of ethnicity gained prominence at the Catholic grassroots as the progressives' focus turned from economic to cultural oppression, a shift powerfully evident in the protests by Afro-Brazilians and Brazilindians against discrimination by 'white Catholicism' during the seventh national gathering of CEBs at Santa Maria, Rio Grande do Sul, in 1992 (Libânio 1992).

[31] Constrast this trend with earlier progressive fears that traditional political channels could harm the popular movement; see, for example, Perani (1987).

The Catholic Church's concern with institutional and religious interests must be seen against the background of increasing social and religious pluralism and competition from Protestant Pentecostals. Democratic freedoms, the growth of the media, and the growing complexity of an ever more urban society have increased pluralism and Pentecostal growth. Like the CEBs, Pentecostalism has offered a way for the poor to seek economic betterment, social dignity, and political participation, though in a conservative manner.

Pentecostal Growth

Protestant Pentecostal missionaries first came to Brazil at the turn of the century. They were distinguished from more traditional, so-called mainline Protestants (such as Lutherans) by their emphasis on the gifts of the Holy Spirit, for example, speaking in tongues.[32] In the 1950s a second wave of Pentecostals increased membership through faith healing and revivals. Led by the Igreja Universal do Reino de Deus (IURD, or Universal Church of the Kingdom of God), in the 1980s yet a third wave of new denominations added to Pentecostal growth.[33] In 1950 more than 90 percent of Brazilians still adhered to Catholicism. Today the Catholic Church itself

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[32] In Brazil all Protestants, mainline and otherwise, are sometimes referred to as *evangélicos*. This term should not be confused with the subgroup of North American Protestantism known as 'evangelicals.'

admits that as few as 75 percent of Brazil's 160 million people now belong to this faith (Cipriani 1994; Pierucci and Prandi 1996b). Protestants' share of the population has grown from two percent in the 1930s to four percent in 1960 to approximately thirteen percent in 1992.[34] In 1996 the figure was estimated at 15 percent (Berryman 1996). One study states that a new Pentecostal temple opens daily in the greater metropolitan area of Rio de Janeiro (Fernandes 1992).

Brazil's recent political history furnishes a partial explanation for increasing pluralism. Catholic-military conflict during the authoritarian era provided an opportunity for other religions to expand through accommodation with the state. Although most of the armed forces remained Catholic, some sectors promoted Afro-Brazilian religion and Pentecostalism as a way to offset progressive Catholicism.[35] But Protestants were not especially strong supporters of the dictatorship.[36] Moreover, while some denominations expanded with aid from North American sponsors, causing Catholics to allege an imperialist conspiracy (Assmann 1986; Lima 1987), most have become 'Brazilianized' and autonomous and have gained a momentum of their own.

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[33] On Protestant growth, see Freston (1993a), Mendonça and Velasques (1990).

[34] Statistics on the number of Protestants are precarious; see the discussion in Freston (1993a).

[35] Chesnut (1997); on Afro-Brazilian religion, see Negrão (1996), Brown (1994), Della Cava (1985).

[36] Freston (1993a). As Freston points out, the history of Protestant-military relations has yet to be written.

The new churches are uniquely Brazilian and entirely independent.[37] They are part of a more dynamic, syncretistic *neo*-Pentecostalism.

The prime example is the IURD. It combines elements of Pentecostalism and Catholicism, and its use of exorcism indirectly confirms the existence and power of the spirits of the Afro-Brazilian *Umbanda*. It embraces an economically oriented, individualistic 'prosperity theology,' relies on the media to propagate its message, and is heavily involved in politics.[38] Started in 1977, by the mid-1990s the IURD had temples across Brazil and several million members. It collected as much as $1 billion per year in tithes and owned Brazil's third largest television network, thirty radio stations, two newspapers, a bank, and other interests. The IURD rapidly spread to other parts of Latin America, the United States, Europe, and Africa.[39]

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[37] The principle churches founded in Brazil are: Brasil para Cristo, Casa da Benção, Nova Vida, Deus Amor, IURD, Internacional da Graça Divina, and Renascer em Cristo.

[38] The definition of Neopentecostalism is an unsettled issue among scholars. The criteria listed here provide a good working definition. The class base of Neopentecostalism may vary across the region. It is mainly a lower-class phenomenon in Brazil, but in Guatemala, for instance, Neopentecostalism has grown among the middle and upper classes. On Guatemala, see Steigenga (1997); on prosperity theology, see Mariano (1995); on individualism also see Freston (1993a).

[39] For an overview of the IURD, see Serbin (1996b); also see numerous articles since the mid-1980s in such Brazilian dailies as *Folha de São Paulo*, *Jornal do Brasil*, and *O Estado de São Paulo*; Almeida (1996), Berryman (1996), Barros (1995), Giumbelli (1996); also on the Universal Church and for an overview of Neopentecostalism, see Mariano (1995); on Brazilian religious expansionism, see Oro (1995).

Social and cultural factors provide additional explanation for Pentecostal growth. Pente-costals have largely built membership among the poor, uneducated, and politically excluded
(Pierucci and Prandi 1996b). The number of Protestant pastors, most of whom are poor, is
double that of Catholic priests, most of whom achieve a middle-class lifestyle (Berryman 1996).
In recent decades denominations have raised thousands of temples in poor
neighborhoods. In Belém, for instance, worshippers are typically migrants employed in low-paying service jobs,
domestic service, or the informal sector. Many are jobless. Many hope to open a small business—
a trend reinforced by ‘prosperity theology’ (Chesnut 1997).

Pentecostal pastors practice the most effective methods for attracting the disenfranchised and generating a feeling of welcome: greater lay participation; efficient mass communication; emphasis on the Bible; emotional spirituality and mysticism; revivals, miracles, exorcism, and faith healing; moralizing against drinking and adultery; creating a sense of belonging for migrants;
personal attention to church members; and the acceptance of people with afflictions not addressed by Catholicism. Many Pentecostals are Afro-Brazilians, whom the Catholic Church has

had great difficulty in assimilating (Burdick 1993). In short, Pentecostals have had greater
success because they have responded more effectively to people's suffering, immediate needs,
and fears than either conservative or progressive Catholicism (Vásquez 1998; Chesnut 1997; Berryman 1996; Burdick 1993; Comblin 1993; *Revista Eclesiástica Brasileira* 1993a; Gomes
1992). During the economic crises of the 1980s church membership burgeoned. In addition,
in contrast with an uncompromising Catholic stance, the IURD has shown signs of greater
flexibility on abortion and birth control (Machado n.d.).[40]

Persecution as both a mode of self-victimization and attack on other religions has been another attention-winning strategy. The IURD, for example, disseminates the notion of persecution by Catholics and other groups in sermons and mass meetings (Fonseca 1996). It has gone on the offensive by encouraging a 'holy war' against Afro-Brazilian religions (Berryman 1996), in some
cases literally attacking their followers. Like all Protestant churches, the IURD rejects the sanctity
of the Virgin Mary. Attacks on her are part of its anti-Catholic repertoire. In 1995 an IURD pastor caused a national, media-generated scandal by kicking an image of Our

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[40] At the same time, it should be remembered that the Pentecostal churches rely on a great reservoir of popular religiosity built by Catholicism and Afro-Brazilian religions over five
centuries. There are a number of similarities between Catholicism and the Neopentecostal
religions, for example, the IURD's highly hierarchical structure. Though the search for the new
tempts some to speak of the 'decatholization' of Latin America, continuities should also be
studied and will become more evident as time passes.

Lady of Aparecida on television on October 12, the national holiday in honor of Brazil's patroness.[41]

Pentecostal expansion has produced "the first popular religiosity in Latin America that does not even implicitly recognize the institutional hegemony of the Catholic Church" (Freston 1993b). Catholicism was always a public and civic religion into which all Brazilians were born and spent their lives. Now they *choose* a religion in an ever more varied religious arena. Conversion is commonplace, and the dissatisfied believer can switch (Prandi 1996; Pierucci 1996). Religion is no longer a unifying force; the tendency is towards the *separation* of the populace into distinct religious groups (Prandi 1996).

Yet while Pentecostal growth is a watershed in Latin America, it must be acknowledged that the same forces of modernization behind this phenomenon have also spurred the growth of the CEBs and the Catholic Charismatics (discussed below). All three categories stress *active participation* in contrast with the passive nature of traditional Catholicism. Pentecostalism is not necessarily an anti-Catholic phenomenon but part of larger qualitative changes in Brazilian society and religion (Berryman 1996). CEBs and Pentecostalism lie in denominational tension but share

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[41] The incident prompted the police and federal authorities to look into IURD activities and finances, although the investigation dragged on for years without apparent results. On the incident, see Serbin (1996b), Pierucci (1996). Aparecida was recognized as Brazil's patroness by the Pope in 1931. The government designated October 12 as a national holiday in 1980.

some sociological roots, for example, helping the poor to cope with poverty (Mariz 1994; Berryman 1996), albeit the CEBs have worked to *transform* structural conditions, while Pentecostals merely *manage* and may even *legitimize* them (Gaskill 1997). Thus sociological reality does not necessarily inform political reality.

Pentecostals and Politics

To bolster their institutional bases Pentecostal churches have sought formal political power. A principal aim is to end the Catholic Church's status as Brazil's semi-official religion. In the 1930s progressive Protestants unsuccessfully sought to keep the Brazilian state religiously neutral. Now the Pentecostals and in particular the IURD have sought to become *allies* of the state. Edir Macedo, the founder and self-designated head bishop of the IURD, nearly achieved his goal of giving the invocation at Collor's inauguration (Freston 1993a). Such an act would have had enormous political impact—far more than Lutheran Ernesto Geisel's (indirect) election in 1973 as the first Protestant president to serve a full term and the (military-controlled) Congress's subsequent approval of a divorce law.[42] The IURD subsequently used its influence with Collor and Cardoso administration officials to help build its business and religious strength. The Pentecostal churches have been especially successful at employing their

new media might to reinforce their political power and vice-versa (Freston 1993a; Almeida 1996.) Because they are a
both a minority and newcomers, their efforts have been aggressive, whereas the CNBB has
rested on its tradition of speaking for all Brazil.

In 1986 the Pentecostals showed an impressive performance in the Constituent Assembly election with eighteen successful candidates. Including other Protestants, the so-called *bancada evangélica* (Evangelical coalition) totaled 36 representatives. This was comparable in size to an informal and very discrete *bancada católica* (Freston 1993a). The Pentecostal *deputados* were
not members of the traditional political elite but new politicians elected on the basis of church connections. In the 1990 election the *bancada evangélica* dropped to 23 members, but the
IURD increased its share from one to three members and in 1994 to six. Protestant represen-
tatives have been twice as likely to win re-election as non-Protestants (Carneiro 1997). The
bancada rose to 35 after the 1998 election. The IURD elected fourteen members, including one
of its top bishops, to become the largest Protestant contingent in the Congress.

The *bancada evangélica* is best described as part of the slightly rightist *centro fisiológico*
(the 'clientelistic center'), which is more concerned with patronage than ideology. The *bancada*
has openly defended the interests of its churches, sought government resources and privileges
in competition with the Catholic Church, and obtained valuable television concessions in

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[42] President João Café Filho (1954) was also Protestant. He was elected vice-president in 1951 and served out only part of the remainder of Vargas's term after the latter

return
for support of Sarney, in particular his successful bid to extend his term. As a result the *bancada* gained a reputation for practicing the crass deal-making for which the Brazilian Congress is
famous. The *bancada* is *not* an equivalent to the 'new Christian Right' of US politics. In fact, it voted slightly to the left of the Constituent Assembly as a whole. Its centrism, however, came into
sharp relief during the Collor impeachment proceedings, when it remained ambiguous about
its position until opting for removal at the end (Freston 1993a). In addition, *bancada* members are
less supportive of the government than other conservative politicians. Within the *bancada* denominational differences cause varying political behavior (Carneiro 1997).

The Pentecostals used their media resources and direct appeals to the faithful to support conservative candidates in presidential and other elections. In 1989 they openly supported Collor and demonized Lula as a Communist. Pentecostals rejected Lula more than any other religious grouping in the 1994 presidential election (Pierucci and Prandi, 1996b). In
other elections pastors urged followers to vote for candidates sympathetic to IURD interests. Because of these churches' apparent ability to shape the vote, candidates from several parties
have sought their support and tailored their rhetoric for Pentecostal audiences (Fonseca 1996).

Although the *bancada evangélica* was one of the largest coalitions of representatives, Pentecostal involvement has not led to any significant change in Brazilian politics from a top-
down perspective. Pentecostals play along with the system, not against it. They run on existing parties' tickets but also engage more frequently than other politicians in the

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committed suicide in August 1954.

common practice of party-switching. They do not embrace parties but view them as necessary evils that are subject to corruption (Freston 1993a, 1993b). Because they are a minority, they must rely on coalition-building. Moreover, the schismatic tendency of Pentecostalism and its divisive effects on the *bancada* have has cast doubt on Pentecostals' ability to affect democratic consolidation (Gaskill 1997).

However, at the grassroots level Pentecostal activity is incorporating the poor and illiterate into political structures (Pierucci and Prandi 1996b). Indeed, in their quest for votes and influence Pentecostal churches often act like political parties. In fact, in terms of organization and discipline they actually outdo much of the Brazilian political system, which is infamous for its ephemeral, baseless parties. In this sense the Pentecostal churches stand in contrast to the *movimento popular*, which historically has channeled its energies more into specific demands on government and less on elections.[43] Only a small fraction of Pentecostals have participated in the *movimento* (Doimo 1995).

In the IURD, for instance, politics is an integral part of missionary work. The church teaches the faithful to elect candidates who will attend to its needs. This link between faith and politics strongly resembles the position of liberation theologians and the CNBB, although the long-term goals and political style are far different. The IURD emphasizes the vote for a fellow Pentecostal as support for a 'brother' who truly understands persecution and acts as a bridge between the faithful and the outer world. The church has developed a number of

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[43] The *movimento*, however, may be shifting towards greater electoral involvement; see Beozzo (1997); also see the discussion of the *Semana Social* above.

explicit practices for organizing political activity. The leadership coordinates electoral strategy to ensure
that its candidates do not compete with one another in legislative contests. In the IURD the
"'official candidate' exists as a function of the church; without the church he represents nothing
and nobody" (Fonseca 1996). The IURD publishes a newspaper with a political page that provides an alternative to the unfavorable coverage of the church in the mainstream press. Through the paper the IURD's elected officials seek to offer accountability to their supporters.
In addition, the church encourages voter registration. During campaigns members work as canvassers, and temples hold meetings for introducing candidates. Successful candidates try
to maintain their electoral base by acting as 'brokers' between members and government agencies. The IURD has also plugged into traditional patronage networks once considered
the domain of the Catholic Church. In Rio de Janeiro, for instance, IURD *deputado* Aldir Cabral became head of the state Secretariat for Work and Social Action and promptly filled top positions
and other jobs with Pentecostals (Fonseca 1996).

Nevertheless, Pentecostals' new political structures do not necessarily encourage democratic practice (Gaskill 1997; Carneiro 1997). Hierarchy is what counts. The candidates themselves are usually humble members of the church who have worked their way up the ranks.

In the case of the Assemblies of God a modified form of clientelism described as 'participatory authoritarianism' has developed. The pastor-president of each church extends patronage and positions to loyal followers but retains the power to make political decisions and name candidates (Chesnut 1997). This and other examples suggest that Pentecostalism reinforces traditional

patron-client practices (Gaskill 1997; Berryman 1996). Significantly, however, IURD members participate very little in political work such as community organizations. Revealing the particularly
authoritarian nature of this church, they also express a high level of support for a (hypothetical)
return to military rule (Carneiro 1997).

The Catholic Response

The Catholic response to Pentecostalism has been slow.[44] Criticisms and warnings about the so-called *seitas*, or sects, have long been common in the Catholic message, but only in the 1980s did the Church begin to study the Pentecostal phenomenon more carefully. It is important to recognize that the Brazilian Church, which established ecumenical relations with mainline Protestant denominations such as the Lutherans in the 1970s, has not viewed Pentecostalism through the prism of pure competition. The life of religious institutions, especially traditional ones such as the Catholic Church, is far more complex than a zero-sum battle over the faithful. The Church believes it is for *all* Brazilians. Moreover, the common view that Pentecostal growth results from Catholic flight is erroneous. Historically most Brazilians have been only nominally Catholic and have had weak links to the clergy (Gomes 1992; De Groot 1996). Yet in recent decades probably more people than ever have become *active* members of the Church (Gomes 1992). Nevertheless, Pentecostal success has moved the Church to go beyond denunciation to outlining specific though tentative strategies for increasing its followers.

Initiative came from the top. In the 1980s Pope John Paul I I called for a 'New Evangeli-

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[44] Berryman (1996) discusses Catholic lethargy in this respect. Gi ll (1998) argues that the Latin American bishops have long had a vigorous and explicit strategy to compete with Protestantism, but his evidence is not highly convincing.

zation' in Latin America. The 1992 Santo Domingo meeting worked to plan this campaign. Fundamental is the revival of pre–Vatican I I spirituality and rituals. In this process the Church seeks its roots but also mimics the techniques and spectacles of the Pentecostals. Conservatives in particular have led this trend (Serbin 1993a; Oro 1996). Some clerics have resorted to miracles and exorcism (Dias 1994). In effect, sectors of Brazilian religion have undergone a 'pentecostalization,' with Catholics and others taking ideas from one another (Machado 1996). The Church is also improving its media resources. Despite Pentecostal success it still has Brazil's largest network of religious radio stations and publishing concerns (Della Cava and Montero 1991; Beozzo 1997), though it recognizes that it has used these tools less effectively than its competitors (Oro 1996).

At the core of the Catholic response is a group of transnational conservative movements, in particular the Catholic Charismatic Renewal, a 'pentecostalized' movement born in the United States in the 1960s and exported to Brazil in the early 1970s. John Paul II has strongly encouraged these movements, which stress prayer and traditional spirituality, express loyalty to the Pope, and enjoy the support of a number of bishops. In São Paulo, for example, the Charismatics fill churches in both conservative and progressive areas. Charismatics make up approximately 3.8 percent of the population—more than double the number of CEB members (Pierucci and Prandi 1996b). Even liberationists praise the Charismatics for revivifying faith and building a sense of community and participation within the

Church. Charismatic support is mainly middle class, but the poor are also joining.[45] While the Charismatics emphasize personal salvation and shun liberation theology, they share CEBs' interest in the Bible and charitable work. Some participate in politics. Though generally seen as conservative, their orientation varies. In 1994 the proportion of Charismatics that voted for Cardoso was higher than that of any other religious group (Pierucci and Prandi 1996b). Some groups have become involved in progressive movements (Prandi and Souza 1996) and in at least one community surpassed the CEBs in this regard (Theije 1997).

Because of their conservatism the CNBB waited until the mid–1990s to grant Charismatics official status. By then it was clear that they were the best option for stemming Pentecostalism. Even so, the CNBB set strict controls to keep the movement in line with official post–Vatican II beliefs and practices (Oro 1996; CNBB 1994b). The Charismatics have also met resistance from liberationist clergy (Prandi and Souza 1996). Such tensions have kept the Church from building a united front against the Pentecostals, leaving different groups to emphasize their own strategies.

Conclusions

As Brazilian democracy proceeds, the Catholic Church will undoubtedly continue as a watchdog over the political process and governments' social and economic policy. It is clearly committed to democracy, though its approach and particular positions are

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[45] On the Charismatics, see Theije (1997), Prandi and Souza (1996), Oro (1996), Machado (1996), Berryman (1996), Della Cava and Montero (1991), Lernoux (1989), Bernardes (1995); for a critical appraisal, see Wanderley and Boff (1992); on their relative lack of strength, see Comblin (1993).

sometimes anti-
democratic.

Less predictable is the Church's reaction to Pentecostal growth and the new pluralism.
The Church's historical religious monopoly and political dominance have saddled it with bureaucratic inertia and overconfidence about the Catholic nature of Brazilian culture. The job
of interpreting and reacting to pluralism will fall to a new generation of Catholic leadership that
matures not in the comfort of monopoly but in the challenge of competition. That generation has
yet to emerge.

Religious pluralism has made Brazilian society and church-state dialogue far more complex. People are increasingly active in their religious choices. People's experience in church could ultimately strengthen democracy through a demonstration effect.

Seeking growth, respectability, and power, the Pentecostal churches have stepped into the breach in Brazil's highly fragile political system to offer alternatives to the poor, the disenfranchised, and frustrated aspirants to upward mobility. They are conservative but, like the CEBs, grassroots movements, and the country's myriad of nongovernmental organizations, these churches are helping to build civil society and are acting as intermediaries between the poor and the state. As Carneiro (1997) states, "Nobody goes to a church in order to join a political party but could maybe join a political party through going to church." They are also teaching political consciousness by encouraging voting and attention to ecclesial demands on the state. Pentecostals' electoral clout has helped their churches to fill some traditional Catholic spaces in the political system.

Because it has been politically active for only a decade, it is still too early to gauge Pentecostalism's long-term impact on Brazilian democracy and whether that impact will be conservative or progressive.[46] In the words of Gaskill (1997), "there is no invariant relationship between Protestantism and authoritarianism *or* democracy."

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[46] Observers of the Pentecostal phenomenon disagree about its long-term impact. Some see it as a clearly conservative force; see Chesnut (1997). The opposite view holds that it has potential for progressive political action; see Burdick (1993), Freston (1993a), Berryman (1996). From this perspective the Left and labor unions have much to learn from Pentecostalism because of its community-based action; see Berryman (1996). I concur with Gaskill (1997), Freston (1993a) and Fonseca (1996) that because of the recentness of its appearance in politics the long-term political consequences of Pentecostalism are unpredictable. Gaskill further argues a very obvious point unfortunately lost on many social scientists: that the assertion about an 'incipient' or 'latent' Pentecostal contribution to democracy is tantamount to foretelling the future(!). Finally, as Gill (1998) points out, survey evidence demonstrates that political views among Protestants in other Latin American countries do not vary greatly from those of the general populace.

The tendency for at least the larger and older churches is towards institutionalization, even to the point of acquiring some of the characteristics of the Catholic Church (Freston 1993a) that cast the historical mold for public religion through the moral concordat. As they consolidate their religious and political bases, Pentecostals will demand a role in the moral concordat (and with it increase their claims on the state). Church-state issues will be a constant theme in Brazilian democracy. But with time and growth Pentecostal churches will become part of the religious status quo. Moreover, Pentecostal leaders will have the added responsibility that accompanies institutionalization. Aggressive proselytization will diminish, while increased acceptance in society could increase the desire to win middle-class converts. The IURD has already cast its net towards the middle class. If Pentecostals continue to win election to public office, church leaders will increasingly feel the need to please their constituencies. And because their followers are predominantly poor, they could also come under pressure to work for social transformation rather than simple short-term alleviation of poverty through alleged miracles or incremental measures such as abstinence from alcohol. The need to expand member-ship into different social sectors could cause the same internal tensions that the Catholic Church has experienced since the advent of liberation theology. It could also lead to further denom-inational splits.

While in the short-run religious competition highlights the potential for competition over believers and patronage, in the long run a convergence between the Catholic and Pentecostal style and interests could occur. As North American Catholics are strongly influenced by the dominant Protestant values and culture, so will Brazilian Pentecostals feel the weight of

their country's much longer Catholic (and Afro-Brazilian) past. Brazil was never fully Catholic, and Pentecostal growth makes it even less so, but Catholicism will continue to be the defining matrix
of Brazilian religious culture.

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