

WALKING WITH THE SPIRIT: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY OF  
CHARISMATIC RENEWAL IN THE GLOBAL SOUTH

By

MATTHEW T. GEESLIN

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MATTHEW TURNER GEESLIN

Approved:

\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Graham Walker Jr., Ph.D.  
Faculty Advisor for Thesis

\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Nancy L. deClaisse-Walford, Ph.D.  
Faculty Advisor for the Master of Theological Studies

\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Karen G. Massey, Ph.D.  
Associate Dean, Masters Degree Programs  
James & Carolyn McAfee School of Theology

\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Greg DeLoach  
Dean, James & Carolyn McAfee School of Theology

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## ABSTRACT

MATTHEW GEESLIN

WALKING WITH THE SPIRIT: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY OF  
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Under the direction of GRAHAM WALKER Jr., PhD

This thesis is a phenomenological study of charismatic Christianity in the global south as it pertains to the spread of charismatic Christianity in the country of Brazil. The purpose of this study is to determine the reasons for the rapid spread of Pentecostalism in Brazil in the last hundred years. Additionally, it seeks to identify any major theological and social trends through an overview of the country's religious, social, and political history. Extensive census data from the PEW Research Institute's study on globalized religion in Latin America will be used as a tool and reference point for this study and will also help frame Brazil in its modern context. The results of this research will conclude that there is a direct tie between Brazil's social, political, and religious history, and the growth of charismatic expressions of Christianity. Additionally, the conclusion will offer theoretical patterns of growth, history, and religious advancement, in an attempt demonstrate their intertwined nature. These patterns will be suggestive for future research in terms of identifying similar patterns or social behaviors in other areas of the global south.

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

In the last 100 years, there has been exponential growth in the global south in the area of charismatic and Pentecostal Christianity.<sup>1</sup> To be clear, the global south is a term used to refer to Latin America, and areas in Africa and Asia. Within this global south, one can observe millions upon millions within the populations of their countries. Further, the countries have all experienced different forms of government, religious voices, economic structures, and partaken in globalization and technological advance in some way. Among these countries is the nation of Brazil, which offers many examples that lend themselves to this study when assessing the religious and social history of the country. This will be a focus point of this research as it pertains to the growth of charismatic and Pentecostal Christianity. Below are some definitions that will be useful going forward:

**Charismatic:** denotes both the faith movement and individual faith method characterized by individual encounter with Jesus as Lord, actionable movements of the Holy Spirit or spiritual power, and an eschatological expectation of the imminence of the kingdom of God.<sup>2</sup> It is important to note that there are charismatic Christians that exist in a variety of faith traditions, i.e. charismatic Catholics, Methodists, and others.

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<sup>1</sup> PEW Research Center, "Pentecostalism in Latin America," *pewresearch.org*. (Retrieved April 7, 2019). <https://www.pewforum.org/2006/10/05/overview-pentecostalism-in-latin-america/>.

<sup>2</sup> Michael Wilkinson, Peter Althouse, *Catch the Fire: Soaking Prayer and Charismatic Renewal* (DeKalb, IL: Northern Illinois University Press, 2014), 25.

**Pentecostalism:** falls underneath the umbrella of charismatic, and is frequently used as title/statement of denomination within charismatic Christianity. There are surely discrepancies between traditions as aforementioned, but even so the two are often used interchangeably. For the sake of convenience, I will use the term “charismatic” when referring to both bodies.

**Globalization:** the process of international integration arising from the interchange of world views, products, ideas and other aspects of culture.

**Democratization:** the transition to a more democratic political regime.

This will be an important factor going forward when discussing religious/priestly hierarchy versus the emphasis on individual spiritual experience seen with the charismatic movement.

#### Questions and Sub-Questions

Primary Research Question: *How has charismatic Christianity influenced theological shifts in the global south?*

As discussed in the introduction, focus will be given to Brazilian charismatic practice specifically in an attempt to identify and understand the factors that influenced the charismatic faith tradition in the last 100 years.

Sub-Questions:

Chapter 2: *What is the history of charismatic Christianity in Brazil and what research has already been done?*

Chapter 3: *What is Brazil’s social and religious history and how does it contribute to their modern religious narrative?*

Chapter 4: *What theological principles interact and inform Brazilian charismatic history?*

Chapter 5: *What patterns of social and religious change might be derived from the study of Brazilian charismatic history?*

### Methodology

This research will utilize a variety of resources to illustrate the phenomenological movements in Brazil. Since this is a phenomenological study, a great deal of historical and socio-cultural context is necessary to accurately frame the modern context in question. Among these tools, census data specific to Latin American religious and social trends will be given from highly reliable sources. In addition to this, the social and religious history of Brazil will be a focal point as a means of creating parallels between the current charismatic renewals taking place. Next, studies and writings done by reputable scholars that are experts on charismatic religion and social theory will be utilized to give pointed assessment of the dynamics at play. By doing so I hope to create two parallel timelines of socio-cultural history and religious history that will lend themselves to an encompassing assessment that lead to a singular conclusion; that Brazilian socio-cultural history plays a direct role in the success of charismatic renewal.

### History of the Study

Large amounts of census data has been made available by PEW Research, a highly respected information database. This study will utilize and frequently reference figures and statistics from the census data as it pertains directly to the subject matter. Additionally, as mentioned before there are many scholars and writers who have taken

interest in both the social and religious aspects of charismatic expressions as well, and these will be used also to add to a fuller understanding of the various angles of the faith group.

## Chapter Outlines

### Chapter 2

In this section the preliminary information from the PEW census will be given to provide an early detailed explanation of the precise growth timeline and numbers. I will argue for and show evidence that there seems to be a significant correlation between the charismatic growth exhibited in the preliminary information from the PEW Research Census, and the First, Second, and Third Wave movements of Pentecostalism present within the timeline of Pentecostal history. Specific attention and details of these movements will be given for the reader's understanding and for its value to tracing phenomenological history. Additionally, to give a more pointed analysis of these growth trends, I will focus specifically on the country of Brazil for its relevance to this study, and will give a more focused explanation of Latin American social and religious trends. As the borders of these countries opened, some for the first time, the door for charismatic missionaries to come into said counties opens, and thus a very pronounced and established presence of charismatic missionaries flooding into Latin America at the start of the 1900s, and this presence continues to grow throughout the century. The Assemblies of God (AG) were among the first charismatics to enter the scene and began

establishing churches.<sup>3</sup> Growing from roughly 40,000 charismatics in the 1910-1930 time frame when missionary presence was first established, and growing to over 26 million self-identifying charismatics from 1990-present.

Another important factor adding to charismatic growth is the presence of liberation theology within Latin American cultures, and the departure from the Catholic Church's hierarchy and grip on culture, politics, and economy. It is a known fact that the Catholic presence within Latin America has been extremely pronounced throughout history. However, at the turn of the 1900s century we begin to see the departure from this tradition, with said transition being departure from Catholic hierarchy into the individualistic-emphasized charismatic community.

### Chapter 3

This section will focus on Brazil's social and political history for the purpose of framing the socio-religious relationships that now exist, and explain why these might be. As discussed already, globalization and democratization of subject countries is one factor, given that the opening of borders and the access to outside cultures and structures has become readily available. These preliminary factors that affect the 1910-2010 period greatly set the stage for the spread of charismaticism in the respective countries. Great attention will be given to discussing priestly versus shamanic religious orders and traditions. The differences between these two structures and how they present themselves in a religious context is essential to understanding an Orthodox Catholic perspective as

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<sup>3</sup> Ibid, PEW.

opposed to a charismatic Pentecostal expression. The tie-ins from Brazil's more primitive religious systems will also play a part in this explanation of spirituality and will be a talking point.

#### Chapter 4

This chapter will focus on the newly built communities of charismatic Christians in Brazil and discuss the possible reasons for their successes in sustained growth. Further, these communities will be assessed to determine what theological or biblical convictions and suppositions push Brazilians charismatics to build community in the ways they do. Specifically, the moral positions and interactions of charismatics with their outside contexts and the political field will be reviewed to give a more pointed assessment of these demonstrations of belief. The goal is to establish a concrete basis of beliefs present that present observable and definable implications. The differences between the charismatic structures aforementioned and the changes that have taken place in the last 100 years will also be revisited to reframe and compare the data presented thus far in the study.

#### Chapter 5

The final chapter of this research will give brief summary of all of the talking points in the previous chapters as well as offer final comments and conclusions on the information. In addition, the relationships present in the dynamics of Brazilian social, political, and religious structure, will be revisited and framed in a cause-and-effect style model in an attempt to simplify the information given and supply a pattern of socio-religious interactions that could repeat themselves in other countries that experience

similar events in their timeline. This chapter will conclude that there is strong correlation between Brazil's historical context and the current charismatic renewal being experienced. The two will be framed as inseparable from one another and detailed explanation will be given of these patterns.

## CHAPTER TWO

### CHARISMATIC RENEWAL IN THE GLOBAL SOUTH

As discussed in the introductory chapter, the global south comprises the world region that will be assessed in this study. This being said, it is important to also note that charismatic expressions of Christianity have existed, and in many cases have preexisted, in other regions of the world such as North America and parts of Europe. The movements present in these northern hemispheres of the world will play an important role in the development of the global south as we will see going forward.

#### An Introduction to Pentecostal Spirituality

In the past twenty years, PEW Research Center, one of the most reputable research and data-gathering agencies in the world, has done extensive published work on religion and socio-economics in the global south. To name a few of the countries in discussion, PEW surveyed Brazil, Chile, Guatemala, Kenya, Nigeria, South Africa, India, Philippines, and South Korea. In the ethnographic study done by PEW, participants were asked specific questions regarding different aspects of their faith and moral beliefs that pertain to Pentecostal/charismatic viewpoints, which I will provide alongside the statistic figures for the knowledge of the reader. Since the focus of Christian growth for this research is centered on charismatic expressions of Christianity, this will be the focus of the statistics. PEW offers the following quote from their executive summary of the information to be presented:

By all accounts, Pentecostalism and related charismatic movements represent one of the fastest growing segments of global Christianity. According to the *World*

*Christian Database*, at least a quarter of the world's 2 billion Christians are thought to be members of these lively, highly personal faiths, which emphasize such spiritually renewing "gifts of the Holy Spirit" as speaking in tongues, divine healing and prophesying. Even more than other Christians, Pentecostals and other renewalists believe that God, acting through the Holy Spirit, continues to play a direct, active role in everyday life.<sup>4</sup>

As seen in the above quote, active engagement with the Holy Spirit, and the involvement with gifts of the Holy Spirit as it pertains to scripture is a key focus of Pentecostal spiritual practice. To give an even more specific number than the one above, by 2010 it is thought that the Pentecostal/Charismatic renewal had grown to around 614,010,000 members, with a supposed average of 36,000 more members being added each day around the world.<sup>5</sup> The gifts of the Holy Spirit mentioned before are based in Scriptural explanations and utterance that guide the Pentecostal perception of spiritual ability, as well as non-Pentecostal perceptions

There are a myriad of scriptural bases that are used or tend to be focused on in terms of Christian interpretation of the Holy Spirit and its involvement with their lives. Some of these scriptures and their general denomination-focuses are as follows:

**Isaiah 11:2**, The spirit of the Lord shall rest on him, the spirit of *wisdom* and *understanding*, the spirit of *counsel* and *might*, the spirit of *knowledge* and the *fear of the Lord*. (NRSV)

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<sup>4</sup> PEW Research Center, "Spirit and Power: A 10-Country Survey of Pentecostals," *pewresearch.org*. (Retrieved November 5, 2019). <https://www.pewforum.org/2006/10/05/historical-overview-of-pentecostalism-in-brazil/>.

<sup>5</sup> Stanley M. Burgess, *Christian Peoples of the Spirit* (New York, NY: New York University Press, 2011), 1.

**First Corinthians 12:8-10**, To one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, <sup>9</sup> to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, <sup>10</sup> to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the discernment of spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues (NRSV).

This is certainly a shortlist of the examples that could be used, however the illustration within them that communicate understanding of the Spirit are the focal point of this example. Isaiah 11:2 has historically been used by mainline Roman Catholic, Protestant, and Orthodox denominations, while Pentecostals in the twentieth century tend to be drawn towards the 1 Corinthians text.<sup>6</sup> It seems the Isaiah text is more focused towards fruits of the Spirit or demonstration of ones presence with God through their knowledge of God's qualities. On the other side of this in the case of the Corinthian text, there is a clear distinction that Paul believes the gifts are *given* by the Spirit, and that there are variances in the gifts and who receives them. In Paul's description, we observe an intentional representation of the Holy Spirit and the dispersing of the gifts. The gifts as listed in the Pauline writings are true to what modern Pentecostals would affirm, and in some cases the "list" per say may be even longer and more detailed than the Pauline guidelines. Regardless, the basic idea of the gifts has been established. The effects of Pentecostalism on Latin America, and specifically Brazil, in terms of their religious, socio-economic, and political system, is present at an unprecedented level and rate of

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<sup>6</sup> Ibid., 3.

growth. The statistics to follow will demonstrate this fact and give evidences of the movement before even discussing the specifics of each field and its effects.

### The Waves Of Pentecostalism

The First Wave of Pentecostalism is generally focused around the Azusa Street Revival. The bulk of its movement centered in 1906-1909, with some aspects of continued pilgrimage to the location lasting until 1913 roughly. Reports of, baptism of the Spirit, speaking in tongues (glossolalia) and healing, characterized this event, along with an intermingling of different races and cultures that was highly uncharacteristic for the time period.<sup>7</sup> In terms of the full scope of the First Wave as a movement, 1900-1960 is the generally agreed upon time frame. The Second Wave is an interesting case given that rather than the focus being on particular happenings or events, charismatic theologies began to make their way into mainline denominations that were far from traditionally charismatic. Virtually any mainline denomination saw sects of itself embracing Pentecostal tendencies. This include the Catholic, Methodist, Episcopal churches, and others. It is important to note that though these denominations of Christianity are traditionally non-charismatic there still exist break-off organizations rooted in the source denomination that affirm Pentecostal theologies. The timeline for the Second Wave is roughly 1960-1982. Finally, the Third Wave, ranging from roughly 1982 into modernity finds itself at the pinnacle of a fully developed Pentecostal/charismatic expression.

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<sup>7</sup> Michael Wilkinson, Peter Althouse, *Catch the Fire: Soaking Prayer and Charismatic Renewal* (DeKalb, IL: Northern Illinois University Press, 2014), 23-25.

Beyond the continued use of glossolalia and healing ministry, more controversial teachings such as “impartation through laying-on of hands,” the gifts of the Spirit, and other “manifestations” of the Spirit were affirmed and practiced across the Pentecostal community. It is at this point that many independent or non-denominational churches begin to pop up around North and South America.<sup>8</sup>

Regardless of the events that happened within these timelines, the most important thing to remember is the timeline itself. As mentioned previously and as demonstrated by the chart, the timeline of the major Pentecostal growth in Latin America was 1900-2005. This is hardly coincidental given that the primary growth period and explosion point for Pentecostalism in North America occupies the same time period. One primary reason for this trend is that in the early 1900s, Pentecostal organizations began sending missionaries around the world to spread the Gospel and build presence. One of these organizations, The Assembly of God, was founded in 1914 and almost immediately began sending out missionary efforts around the world that included Latin American countries. Aside from American-sourced religious organizations, there were also other international organizations in Europe and other parts of the world that participated in the missionary dispersion, and cooperated with the Assembly of God to accomplish missionary presence.

#### Statistics And Data

Most of the extensive and rapid growth seen in Pentecostalism/Charismaticism has occurred within the last 100 years. I will first show statistics concerning *all* of the

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid., 26.

aforementioned countries in the global south in the preliminary section of this chapter to show that the Pentecostal movements in question are happening simultaneously in different parts of the world, and to demonstrate that this spread of belief system is absolutely not limited to a specific country that could have possibly experienced an anomaly of religious and cultural transition that is not consistent with preexisting trends in world history.

One of the first statistic representations given is the percentage of Protestants in each of these countries that identify as Pentecostal, charismatic/renewalist (an umbrella term used to group together the previous two), or non-renewalist.

**Table 1-A**

	<b>% of Protestants who are...</b>				
	<b>Total</b>	<b>Pente.</b>	<b>Charis.</b>	<b>Non-Renewalist</b>	
United States	10	18	72		n=388
Latin America					
Brazil	<b>72</b>	<b>6</b>	22		n=148
Chile	<b>59</b>	<b>19</b>	22		n=87
Guatemala	<b>58</b>	<b>27</b>	15		n=341
Africa					
Kenya	<b>50</b>	<b>23</b>	27		n=436
Nigeria	<b>48</b>	<b>12</b>	40		n=289
South Africa	14	29	57		n=533
Asia					
India* - - -					
Philippines	<b>37</b>	<b>30</b>	33		n=89
South Korea	9	29	63		n=150 <sup>9</sup>

\*Results for India are not reported here because the general population survey in that country included only a small number of Protestants.

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<sup>9</sup> Ibid., 32.

The bolded numbers in the above figure constitute a 50%+ demographic of Protestants identifying as charismatics or Pentecostals. Notice that in the case of the Latin American countries, this holds true for all of the surveyed countries, and additionally is representative of the highest percentage of Protestant charismatics in the global south per country, with the largest of these populations being present in Brazil and Guatemala. An important point to consider for the purposes of this study is how many of the above Protestants in Latin America converted to a Pentecostal/charismatic denomination as opposed to being born-into or indoctrinated into a set of religious beliefs. This will give a better idea of the shift in religious tendency within the past 100 years being searched for. The below chart represents those within the study who claimed to have transitioned from other religious affiliations into one that is charismatic in root.

**Table 1-B**

**% saying they have not always belonged to their current religion (Latin America)**

	All	- Pente-	Charis-	Other Christians
<b>Latin America</b>				
<b>Brazil</b>	26	<b>62</b>	<b>10</b>	13
<b>Chile</b>	18	<b>39</b>	<b>14</b>	9
<b>Guatemala</b>	26	<b>49</b>	<b>19</b>	14

\*Question wording: Have you always been (insert religion)?<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

In repeat of the trend seen in the first chart, the rate of conversion in the Latin American countries exceeds 50%, with the vast majority of conversions residing in the Pentecostal denomination. In the case of Brazil, the vast majority of all Pentecostals are counted as conversions to their stream of faith. An important aspect to this is recognizing which religions or other denominations of Christianity were transitioned from. In the case of Brazil, Chile, and Guatemala. One-in-four Pentecostals indicate that they were former Catholics.<sup>11</sup> An unlisted section of the above chart that I did not include concerning the same conversion statistic in the Philippines indicates that two-thirds of Pentecostals present converted from Catholicism. A simple trend can be observed here. In countries where Catholicism was the dominant Christian religious presence, Catholicism loses much of its footing to the Pentecostal/charismatic narrative upon its entrance into the country. I will expand on this idea going forward.

In just over 100 years, the presence of charismatics in Latin America has grown from well below a million in 1900 to over 157 million by 2005 as indicated by the above below. I would make the assertion that this growth continued forward after the 2005 census and most likely rests at a higher number now. Even more incredible is the charismatic representation within the entire population, with three-out-of-four Protestants self-identifying as charismatics, representing nearly 30% of the entire population of Latin America. In the case of many of the Latin American countries, the growth has been so exponential that charismatic Christians have accumulated a large sphere of influence

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<sup>11</sup> Ibid., 32-33.

within the political realms of the countries aside from their religious influence. See the chart below published by PEW Research Center shown in the introduction.

**Table 1-C**

**Pentecostals and Charismatics in Latin America (in millions)**

0.01 million -1900

12.6 million-1970

118.6 million -1990

156.9 million -2005

**Pentecostals and Charismatics as % of Total Population**

0.0 -1900

4.4 -1970

26.9 -1990

28.1 -2005<sup>12</sup>

There are a few questions that come to mind when reviewing this information. For instance, why has this growth occurred at such an exponential level in the last 100 years specifically? What are the factors that contribute to this growth? What are the outside elements that are affecting it? Why is the growth being seen in Pentecostal expressions of faith and not others? History tells us that from the early 1900s and throughout the rest of the century, Pentecostalism experienced an explosion-point of growth that resulted in not only simple religious conversion in the Americas, but into a worldwide phenomenon with established organizations and missionary presence.

**Pentecostalism in Brazil**

For the purpose of this study, I will give extensive focus to the country of Brazil, which contains one of the highest population counts in Latin America, in hopes that the

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<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

information within Brazil's socio-economic and religious history will be telling of the effects of the Pentecostal movement on Latin America and in the global south. PEW offers the following information on some important early figures in Brazil during the First Wave.

1910s-1930s: An Italian missionary establishes the pentecostal Christian Congregation in 1910 among immigrants in São Paulo; in 1911, Swedish missionaries establish a church in Belém that becomes the Assemblies of God (AG) (Anderson 2004: 70-71). The AG begins ordaining indigenous pastors in 1921, and transfers leadership to Brazilians in 1930. The total number of pentecostals reaches 40,000 by 1930, including 13,000 members of the AG.<sup>13</sup>

The First and Second Wave influence seen above is critically important to the future narrative of Brazil. The most important perhaps is that early in the 1900s the Pentecostal tradition had already been established within the country, even if the initial numeric representations of it were minimal. Regardless, the Assembly of God is present, an organization with high capability, resources, and trained ministers already placed within the country that were well-versed in the Pentecostal tradition and the signs-and-wonders-focused ministry that characterize many aspects of the tradition. As the 1900s progress, we see the once-small influence of Pentecostalism begin to expand rapidly

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<sup>13</sup> PEW Research Center, "Historical Overview of Pentecostalism in Brazil," *pewresearch.org*. (Retrieved April 23, 2019). <https://www.pewforum.org/2006/10/05/historical-overview-of-pentecostalism-in-brazil/>.

within two decades of its arrival in Brazil, edging its way into the Second Wave in the 1930s.

In the case of Brazil, at the turn of the century near the latter part of our timeline (roughly 1985-2005) we observe a large amount of self-identifying charismatics present within the political field, with many presidential candidates advocating for the charismatic identity as a means to swing the votes of the evangelical population. As of 2005, there were roughly 160 Protestant-identifying representatives within the Brazilian congress. Of those 160, 100 of them self-identify as charismatics.<sup>14</sup> This is a staggering representation of charismatics within the political system, a testament as to the influence of charismatics throughout Brazil in both the religious and political fields. All this to say, charismatic Christianity has not only grown exponentially in number, but has also grown exponentially in influence, perhaps the most important part.

In light of the numeric data presented, I argue that there are fundamental reasons why Pentecostalism grew at such a rapid rate, and caused many shifts in the socio-cultural narrative of Brazil. The first reason I will argue for is the hierarchy and nature of the Catholic Church within 19<sup>th</sup> century Latin America, and the response of the Pentecostal community. This influence was in this case less-than ideal or beneficial for the Brazilian people. I do not intend to bash or discredit other faith-streams in any sense, only to present factual and empirical evidences from an assortment of outside accounts that document Catholic control and its effects on Latino culture in the 1900s.

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<sup>14</sup> Ibid., 2.

With the arrival of Pentecostalism in Brazil, religious space must be renegotiated and adjusted for, and the hegemonic systems in place must be reset. In addition to the response to hierarchy religious practice, shifts in the Brazilian theological narrative are also of utmost important. When comparing the Catholic and Pentecostal focuses of faith and understandings of the movement of God, distinctions become clear. To give a brief introduction to this idea, the most basic summary that could be given would be that the Pentecostal tradition emphasizes the personal and individualistic aspects of the self in relation to the Spirit, whereas the Catholic tradition would emphasize the importance of the group-narrative, necessity of the church hierarchy, and the high priestly order as the path to connect with God, i.e. limited access to God that has the priest as gatekeeper and speaker for the individual. Perhaps the most important of this group is the high priestly order versus individualistic spirituality. Another phrasing for this dynamic would be a shamanic tradition versus a high priestly tradition as described by Jacob Pandian. This will be a topic of great focus in the following chapter. Other issues that will be seen going forward are gender biases for ministry within the Catholic church that are effectively done-away-with by the Pentecostal tradition, an extremely important turning point in Latina history that has effects on both North and South American Latino culture and religious behavior.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Gaston Espinosa, Virgilio Elizondo, Jesse Miranda, *Latino Religions and Civic Activism in the United States* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2005), 198.

The second cultural behavior pattern that must be addressed is the instability of Brazilian government and its politicians from the late 1800s to modernity that brought about serious changes and reforms throughout the preceding centuries. The latter portion of the 1800s was empire that became permeated by civil war, and filled with large amounts of unrest at the civilian level due to economic crises and dissatisfaction with government officials. The empire was effectively dissolved and became a form of a republic in 1891 with the establishment of a constitution, however the temporary stability would not last. Brazil fought alongside the Allies during WWI and suffered economically from the Great Depression shortly after. Around this time the president was overthrown and Brazil was converted into a dictatorship whose leader, Getúlio Vargas, attempted to model the new Brazilian government after the fascist nationalism he observed in the case of Italy and Portugal during the time period.<sup>16</sup> From the 1950s until roughly 2000, the government saw multiple swaps in seats of power and government, with some of said swaps being on grounds of corruption, suicide, and other less attractive events. Only in the late 1990s did Brazil vote for the first time for a president. The specifics of the turmoil is less important than the greater meaning of all of them as an idea. Brazilian history and government structure from the 1900s to modernity was characterized by instability both on a political and economic level, and the dissolving of virtually all trust between the Brazilian people and the state. In essence, the state proved itself unreliable and in some cases highly oppressive to its people.

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<sup>16</sup> Scholastic, "Brazil: Government and History," *scholastic.com*. (Retrieved November 12, 2019). <http://www.scholastic.com/browse/subarticle.jsp?id=944>.

The reader must recognize that there is pivotal importance when it comes to the relationship of distrust between the people and the hierarchy. This shows itself in a couple of ways. The first as mentioned previously is the distrust of hierarchy and institutions, such as the high priestly order in the Catholic Church *and* the distrust of the government hierarchy for its lack of ability to provide stable leadership or economic structure to the Brazilian people. The PEW statistics visited thus far in this research are also reflective of this fact. Further still, PEW assessed the viewpoints of the public in Brazil in regards to their opinions of state institutions in there subjective countries.

**Table 1-D**

	% saying can trust “a lot”			
	The Military	The Media	Local Gov’t	Nat’l Gov’t
<b>Brazil</b>				<b>n= 643</b>
All	5	2	2	3
Pentecostals	1	*	*	1
Charismatics	5	2	2	3
Other Christ.	7	2	2	3 <sup>17</sup>

\*Question wording: I’m going to read a list of institutions and people. For each one, please tell me whether you feel that you can trust them a lot, some, only a little or not at all. First, how about (insert item), do you feel you can trust them a lot, trust them some, trust them only a little or not

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<sup>17</sup> Ibid., 52.

trust them at all? How about (insert next item), would you say you can trust them a lot, some, only a little or not at all?

The study notes that the viewpoint of distrust is particularly high in Latin America, specifically Brazil, where 95% of Brazilian citizens are recorded as being highly distrustful of both institutions and people. This comes as no surprise given the history of the country and its structure as reviewed so far, and most would likely agree that their distrust is well-warranted. The hierarchies that claimed power over the country across the last two centuries demonstrated their ineffectiveness to provide stability and in their treatment of the nation's people. As a result of this instability, there existed the need for the people to be liberated both from the oppressions of the past but also to be guaranteed a hopeful future regardless of the powers at be. This is where the narrative and theology of the Pentecostal tradition began to thrive.

## CHAPTER THREE

### THE HIGH PRIEST AND THE SHAMAN

#### Key Aspects Of Brazil's Socioeconomic Timeline

The Catholic Church arrived in Brazil during Portuguese conquest of the region in the sixteenth century and remained the official religion of Brazil during the time of the Brazilian empire. This would continue until 1889 when Brazil established a new constitution and formed into a republic. This marked a turning point in Brazilian society, with secularization and separation of church and state at the forefront of issues. Within this constitution it was stated that no religious groups or cults should receive benefits from the government body and would not have “a relationship of dependency or alliance with the Government of the Union of the States.”<sup>18</sup> There was resistance to these rulings as one might expect, as the previous relationship between the Catholic Church and the Brazilian governing bodies was one in which the papacy expected the government to heed their commands.

Part of this resistance on the side of the government was because those in power in some instances had an antipapal position. In 1864, under the rule of Dom Pedro, the papacy produced a document that claimed their right to control all cultural activities within the country, with specific attention given to control of educational systems and religious information.<sup>19</sup> Additionally, this document included statements calling for the

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<sup>18</sup> Dario de Bittencourt, *A Liberdade Religiosa no Brasil: a Macumba e o Batuque em Face da Lei* (Rio de Janeiro, Rema Publishing Group, 1940), 169-99.

<sup>19</sup> Donald E. Worcester, *Brazil: From Colony to World Power* (New York, Scribner Publishing, 1973), 116-17.

government to carry out their duty of heeding papal instruction. As we see later in the timeline and in the introduction to this section, the strained relationship of the once-unified church and state became too much to continue forward under the same conditions, and the Catholic Church began a different approach to their interactions with the sociological landscape of Brazil.

Though the relationship between the Catholic Church and the Brazilian government was less than ideal in this case, Brazil was better off than most other Latin-American states in terms of the amount of control exercised over them. The domineering influence of the Catholic Church in Mexico and North America was so much so that the church had its hands in all things financial, governmental, and otherwise. In addition to this, the Catholic Church was also instrumental in in being a preventative barrier to social advancement for the people leading up to the 1900s when Roman Catholicism began to be modified by the Brazilian people and evolve into a denomination of Catholicism all its own.<sup>20</sup>

The Catholic Church refused to promote social action and limited itself to meeting the minimal spiritual needs of the people... (It) was a missionary group that, by its silence, tacitly supported the oppressive conditions under which Chicanos had to live and work... Protestant churches... were not interested in... championing rights or promoting brotherhood.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> T. Lynn Smith, *Brazil: People and Institutions* (Baton Rouge, LA, Louisiana State University, 1985), 570-75.

<sup>21</sup> Gaston Espinosa, Virgilio Elizondo, Jesse Miranda, *Latino Religions and Civic Activism in the United States* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2005), 4.

The entrance of Pentecostal influences did much to help the efforts of the people to advance out of the patriarchal and restrictive systems in place as will be seen later in the chapter, as well as sparked advancements within the Catholic Church that would later benefit the Brazilian people. The focal points of these changes have much to say about the inclusion of women in religious and political conversation, care for the poor, and the ability for non-clergy to play roles of leadership in ministry actively through the promoting and implementation of a community-focused religious system as opposed to a hierarchy. Aside from the politics involved in the relationship between the church and the state, the most important aspect to consider for the purposes of this study is to determine the level of involvement and influence commanded by the Catholic Church with the people of Brazil, namely to what degree the people invested in the Catholic rhetoric and how its influence has shaped religious understanding.

I offer a brief summary of the key points of the 1900s timeline that would lead up to the Pentecostal movement's impression on Brazil as it relates to political and religious instability and transitions. In the 1930s the Catholic voice in Brazil became more progressive under the secularization of Brazil, attempting to regain some footing in the political field and speak into it. Additionally, the Church at the time supported the authoritarian regime of Getulio Vargas, who was responsible for restoring a degree of power to the church and was supportive of its ideologies.<sup>22</sup> There would eventually

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<sup>22</sup> Harvard Divinity School Religious Literacy Project, *The Catholic Church in Brazil*, Accessed November 30, 2019. <https://rlp.hds.harvard.edu/faq/catholic-church-brazil>

become a separation between the traditional Roman Catholic Church and the Brazilian Catholic Church, where motivations and opinions on what the focus of the church should be differed greatly. This was set into motion in large part by the after effects of World War II. After the war and through roughly 1960-1980, the race for advancement in technology and globalization contributed greatly to Brazil's ability to urbanize at a fast pace, which created some issues for the existing Catholic system. With Brazil being a traditionally rural country up until this time, there were many "networks" to the rural communities that deteriorated greatly with the presence of urbanization. With this, poverty levels rose in the rural community which in turn would raise them in the urban settings as well due to rural migration.

Urbanization disrupted traditional relationships in rural areas, including those with the Church and those often mediated by the Church, for example between tenant farmers and landowners, and created demand for new social networks within the urban setting. It presented Brazilians with a wider variety of options in the ideological marketplace, including evangelical Protestantism, African-derived religions, socialism, and communism. These alternative ideologies, especially Pentecostal and evangelical Protestantism, often met the rural migrants' demand for new networks.<sup>23</sup>

Within the same time period of the mid-1960s-1980, Brazil was under the control of a military dictatorship. Under this regime there are many recorded killings of Catholic clergy, torture, and general suppression of Christian rhetoric.<sup>24</sup> By the later 1980s and 1990s, the Brazilian Catholic Church began to take a life of its own and began openly opposing the atrocities of the military regime and also aligned itself in support of

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<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

opposing political and economic parties in hopes of supporting the transition to a democratic system, which they did. This progressive movement of the Brazilian Catholic is an extremely important aspect of the time period. It is representative of a split-off of traditional Roman Catholicism, one that was met by the traditional Roman Catholic system with opposition because of its differing views on what the role of the church should be in Brazil's socioeconomic dynamic.

It emphasized a need for evangelism over political action in the context of a changed religious marketplace—in which Pentecostalism's share grew larger and larger—and in which Catholicism was no longer presumed to be the most powerful and unifying tradition.<sup>25</sup>

Throughout the 1990s, instability and transitions of power were the consistent narrative of the Brazilian government. With the constantly shifting face of governance from democratic forms to totalitarian domination, there is little reason for the Brazilian people to be satisfied with or trust the systems in place. To recall a statistic given in the previous chapter, less than 10% of Brazil's population was shown to be trusting of institutions such as the government, military, and religious institutions. Given the deeper circumstances at play that have been explored in this section, this is an understandable standpoint. Surely these circumstances created a sense of anomie among the people, and thus new avenues must be sought out to reestablish identity and stability within the social structure that defines itself outside of political instability. With the distrust of the hierarchies in play due to showing themselves unreliable, the emergence of social activism inspired by Latin liberation theology, and the seeking of new networks to build

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<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

relationship and trust with becomes a necessity for the people. As mentioned before, here the footing of Pentecostalism begins to strengthen. However, the political aspects discussed in this section are only one part of the narrative. Perhaps the more important point is the predisposition of the religious narrative in Brazil that would allow for a rapid adoption of the Pentecostal narrative. The next section will further explore some of these ideas.

### The Shamanic Tradition

In the modern era, there is no question that Catholicism is deeply rooted in Brazilian history and culture. Across the country there are countless Catholic shrines and relics and that are points of pilgrimage and hold sacred value for many of the people. Many of these shrines and relics are regarded with worldwide prestige for their value to Catholic history.<sup>26</sup> Aside from this, up until the 1960s there was a large degree of school enrollment in Catholic-based institutions that eventually would lose traction due to urbanization. The point here is that the Catholic influence was present in nearly all facets of the average life, with the education system and religious systems largely dominated and mandated by its tenants.<sup>27</sup> The assumption could be made that because of this deep-rooted and highly accessible culture, the Catholic religious influence and commitments would be held in a similarly high regard among the people. This is not necessarily the

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<sup>26</sup> Smith, *Brazil: People and Institutions*, 582-83.

<sup>27</sup> John Burdick, *Looking for God in Brazil: The Progressive Catholic Church in Urban Brazil's Religious Arena* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), 2.

case. Though the history of the country might suggest a high degree of religious homogeneity, the truth is that there is a large degree of pagan practices and influence that exist and still inform the religious identity of Brazil. One writer notes that it is the upper-class and urbanized settings in Brazil that perpetuate a fully committed Catholic narrative, and these groups have in effect “freed” themselves from pagan expressions of spirituality.<sup>28</sup> Regardless of this projection of belief, the culture of paganism, indigenous religion, magic, and extra-religious spirituality is very much present, and plays a crucial role in how the future theologies of the Pentecostal tradition would be interpreted and applied to Brazilian Christianity.

Brazil lives impregnated by magic. The medicine man, the fetisheer, has among our populations a prestige considerably greater than the directors of our destinies... And any prophet with cabalistic formulas or a medicine man with magical concoctions attracts a large clientele. A specter, the power of mana, dominates the festivals, and this adheres to anything that interlaces the multitudes, hypnotizing them into a single force of fanaticism.<sup>29</sup>

A famous Brazilian scholar, Nina Rodrigues, writes that only superficial and dogmatic study could assert that Brazil in the totality of its population is one that is characterized by monotheistic Christians. For Nina this is a severe misevaluation in that it is not a minority of population that practice these rituals mentioned, but a majority. The external account given by the upper class is one that is deceiving and illusory, attempting to preserve an image of civilized Christian society that is absent from the indigenous

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<sup>28</sup> Smith, *Brazil: People and Institutions*, 586.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, 406-8.

rituals and practices of the past.<sup>30</sup> An important note here is that this text was published in 1935, well before the latter waves of Pentecostalism would make entrance and command influence. Though the source is dated, the point here is to establish that Brazil does in fact have a spiritual history of magic and shamanism that has been a part of Brazilian culture for a large period of time, and had great interest in demonstrations of spiritual or magical power. Even so, the recognition of a shamanic and pagan culture in the underbelly of the supposedly committed Catholic rhetoric of Brazil is of utmost importance. The origins of these practices are generally pointed towards indigenous Brazilian peoples, Native Indian practices, and African magic practices. Among these are practices of healing, demonstrations of power/magic, and leading people to a form of transcendence. One form of transcendence or healing treatment practiced by indigenous Brazilians and shamans alike is the use of ayahuasca, a plant found in the Amazon that produces an intense hallucinogenic experience upon consumption. In the practices of the shaman, ayahuasca is a form of medicine used to treat illnesses of the emotions, mind, and spirit. The reason I reference this specific ritual practice is because of the spiritual barriers that are meant to be transcended with its use. This informs us of the motivations of the individual to go beyond their understanding and push the limits of human conscious experience.

A shaman addresses the energetic and spiritual aspect of illness by making journeys into the astral or spirit world; a 'non-ordinary' reality parallel to our own physical reality. There the shaman meets transpersonal forces and benevolent plant, animal and human spirits, who are just 'off stage' from the human drama,

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<sup>30</sup> Nina Rodrigues, *O Animismo Fetichista dos Negros Bahianos* (Rio de Janeiro, Ministeria da Cultura Publishing, 1935), 13.

yet willing and able to constellate within and through us. It is these compassionate spirits who perform the healing work with the shaman only acting as a conduit.<sup>31</sup>

There are a few distinction to point out here in reference to the goals of shamanic and magical practice for these assorted cultures. Regardless of their ethnic or cultural differences, the goals of these rituals based off the above information revolve around a form of spiritual and personal transcendence, or a demonstration of higher/otherworldly power operating in the human reality. For the shamans, it is a form of the spirit world or spectral world. For Christians, it is not much different of an understanding, though a modern Protestant understanding of the spiritual realm may be more focused on heaven and hell (unless you are a Pentecostal) as opposed to a realm of forms and beings that are more spectral in their essence rather than being a part of the Christian spirit-world. If these ideas are broken down to their core motivations based on the information we have about shamanic spiritualism so far, it could be said that the goal of an individual participating in shamanic ritual is to:

- 1) Transcend human reality.
- 2) Encounter the spiritual realm.
- 3) Observe (or participate in) a demonstration of power.
- 4) Receive personal enlightenment through connection with (g)od or the spirit world.

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<sup>31</sup> Temple of the Way of Light, “Ayahuasca and Amazonian Shamanism.” Accessed December 4, 2019. <https://templeofthewayoflight.org/shamanism-ayahuasca/ayahuasca-and-amazonian-shamanism/>

In a like manner, the shaman is a facilitator of these events both for others and themselves, and upon the initial successful transcendence, knowledge of the spiritual realm has been permanently gained, and influence that is surely pervading in the mind of the one who experiences is present for the foreseeable future. Experience is king in this regard. It is one of the few things that is nearly impossible to argue against, the testimony of an individual. We can attempt to rationalize a testimony of experience by our own understanding of what someone is trying to communicate, but we can never understand, feel, or interpret it, in the same way that they have. To give a simpler example, imagine someone who has never gone skydiving before asks someone who has to describe the feeling. The one who has gone skydiving will give to the best of their ability an idea of their emotions, feelings, and their thoughts during the process, but these feelings will not fully translate to the one who does not have the experience. It is seemingly impossible to communicate 100% of our experiential feelings into a diction that fully captures its essence. Full understanding of an experience requires one to experience it themselves. I say all this to draw a comparison between the shamanic understanding of spirituality and Pentecostal understandings of the Holy Spirit and the Christian spiritual realm.

As discussed in the introductory chapter, the Pentecostal belief in the spiritual gifts and the inherent involvement of the Spirit in the human realm is at the forefront of theological beliefs, a metanarrative that is founded on the belief in and interaction with the transcendent and otherworldly. Similarly to the ambitions of the shaman or the shamanic-participant, the goal of the Pentecostal outside of personal relationship with Christ is essentially the same as the shamanic when we apply the above four points to a

Pentecostal narrative as opposed to an indigenous spirituality. Both groups seek the spiritual transcendence that allows them to participate in the otherworldly and be changed by it. By experiencing and believing, one can then transition into becoming a shaman of sorts themselves, leading themselves into the spiritual and transcendental because of their experiential knowledge, and eventually others as well. The commonalities here are unavoidable. It is for these reasons the Pentecostal tradition could be referred to as shamanic in nature. In both expressions, there is no distinct need for a priest or prophet, though these roles certainly still play a part in Pentecostal ministry organizations. Each person in a sense “becomes their own priest,” and can transcend and communicate with the spiritual of their own volition upon transcending.<sup>32</sup> This eliminates a dire need for any kind of structured hierarchy in terms of religious leadership, since the power to travel more deeply into one’s spirit (or the Spirit of God) lies within their own control and perception of faith, some informed by sacred texts. Structure in this sense provides a community of experiencers who can share their journeys with one another and connect in a way that can only be understood by others who have traveled their path in some way, rather than being structured through hierarchy that mandates what the experiences and practices must be and look like. Going back to the example of shamanic use of ayahuasca, two people from different cultures who have virtually nothing alike between them would assumedly be able to connect and understand each other in some way if they had both undergone the effects of ayahuasca because they have participated in the same

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<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

spiritual or transcendental experiences. The same assumption could be made about Pentecostal expressions of spirituality as well, and is evident given the global network of Pentecostals who hold fast to the teachings of Holy Spirit experience and belief in the spiritual gifts. Commonality of experience is a connective fiber that can bring people who have no other similarity together. They have in essence traveled the same or a similar enough shamanic path to understand the narratives at play.

Herein lies a critically important distinction in religious understanding, a shamanic tradition versus a high priestly tradition. The shamanic represented by indigenous pagan and magical practices, alongside its Pentecostal expressions of spirituality, and the high priestly order represented by Catholic priesthoods and hierarchy. The shamanic order is one of individuality, where the power of the religion lies in the spirit of the shaman. The priestly order is one where structure and hierarchy are depended upon to set religious precedents and inform the mind of religious identity in the participant. The question now becomes, what are the characteristics of a high priestly order and why might these characteristics be met with opposition when facing a shamanic tradition that subverts its traditional methods and authority?

#### The Dynamic of Christian Voices

In Hans Küng's book, *Christianity: Essence, History, and Future*, he examines the characteristics of the contemporary ecumenical period and offers critique of the traditional understanding of the priestly order. In the early section of the book, Küng states that there is a crisis within the hierarchical church that is centered on ecclesiological politics. The hierarchy in this sense is decidedly separated from the

people in terms of their position and religious rank. He notes that much of this tradition comes as a result of religious rhetoric over the course of history that effectively elevated the high priestly order to a position of inequality with the rest of the ecumenical community.

Küng argues instead for an ecclesiological community that requires an increased responsibility from all members of the community and rearranges the position of the priest, simultaneously creating an environment of equal footing between minister and laity.<sup>33</sup> The main point here is that Küng is calling for a restructure of the church that places the priest on the same level as the congregant. By doing this, he imagines a community that produces “liberty, equality, and fraternity.”<sup>34</sup> Building a sustainable ecumenical environment that emphasizes equality and the above qualities certainly sounds ideal, but it requires some restructuring. Küng notes that he has a great deal of aversion to the term “office” when referring to a pastoral or priestly role, and much prefers “function,” or “service” instead. He further believes that the idea of an “office” is not biblical given the sinful nature of all which must necessarily lead on to an ideology of equality among humans, with no group or position subverting the spiritual truths of all people.<sup>35</sup> This is not to say the role of a pastor is not one that must be dealt with

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<sup>33</sup> Hans Küng, *Christianity: Essence, History, and Future* (New York: Continuum, 1995), 24.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, 39.

responsibly and held to a high esteem, but rather that individuals themselves do not need to be elevated to such heights, nor should the responsibility to be such be forced upon them. Küng's sentiments in reference to the language used when addressing religion and otherwise is understandable, but the important point here is that an egalitarian community must be created and sustained in order to create true community.

Beyond this, there are a few other Catholic tenants worth mentioning because of their effects on the cultures they speak into. For example, earlier in the chapter it was mentioned that the Catholic priestly order presents an issue when it comes to the involvement of women in ministerial leadership positions. Many sects of the Catholic Church have been bound to this tenant for all of their history.

Our participation in that priesthood needs to be as full and visible as possible; “maleness” is one such sign; celibacy is another. The first is an absolute, while the second is not – although the appropriateness of the sign of celibacy touches very closely on the nature of the priesthood.<sup>36</sup>

Based on the above declaration of position, “maleness” is a requisite for being capable of taking the position of a priestly order. As recently as 2018, the Pope and a Synod of the Bishops met in regards to women's position within the church. The critique from women in the Catholic community outside of exclusion from priesthood is that there is also total exclusion from leadership as it pertains to the structure and actions of the Church. The all-male nature of the priestly order presents some obvious obstacles to

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<sup>36</sup> Peter M.J. Stravinskas, *Priestly Celibacy: Its Scriptural, Historical, Spiritual, and Psychological Roots* (Newman House Press, 2001). Via: The Catholic World Report, Accessed December 6, 2019. <https://www.catholicworldreport.com/2018/05/24/christ-the-eternal-high-priest-and-the-meaning-of-priestly-celibacy/>

promoting the community of liberty and equality as proposed by Küng. The mentioned synod involved a 60-page report written by 267 male prelates. The report has much to say in terms of framing the nature of the Catholic priestly order's position on the rights and inclusion of women and laypeople. I offer a few excerpts from National Catholic Reporter where Joshua McElwee, a longtime Vatican correspondent, gives summary and direct quotation from the document for consideration:

The absence of women's voices and points of view impoverishes discussion and the path of the church, subtracting a precious contribution from discernment," it states. "The synod recommends making everyone more aware of the urgency of an inescapable change.<sup>37</sup>

Picking up one of the central themes Francis' five-year papacy, the document ends with a call for the church to become more "synodal," referencing a Greek root that means to "walk together" and possibly indicating a future move towards decentralization and more sharing of authority between bishops and laypeople. As the text says, a "synodal" church would be "participative and co-responsible ... welcoming with gratitude the contribution of lay faithful.

Based on these statements, it would be fair to say that large consideration is being given by the Catholic Church to reconstruct their systems of making decisions, including the voice of women and the voices of the laity, "decentralizing" the traditionally patriarchal religious order in exchange for one that is more supportive of an egalitarian community. Through this study of recent events, it is evident that the woes of religious history, and Brazilian history in this case, particularly as it pertains to the relationship between the Catholic Church, women, and laity, are very much alive and well. The question now becomes, why has the Catholic Church waited so long to make such a

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<sup>37</sup> Joshua J. McElwee, "Synod ends, calling women's inclusion in Catholic leadership a 'duty of justice,'" National Catholic Reporter. Accessed December 6, 2019.

transition in ideology? I argue it is because the system no longer works as it used to. The traditions kept in Catholic practice throughout the 1900s aforementioned encounter much difficulty in current social and religious context. Exclusion of people groups based on gender, race, social standing, or religious disposition, is no longer a profitable business, nor one that will be accepted by the people under its influence. Recall the earlier section where the late 1900s saw a rapid increase in Pentecostal influence in Brazil. The Pentecostal system in this case, specifically in Brazil, offers not only a new kind of community network that is inclusive of peoples and also encourages an egalitarian rhetoric, but also a familiar religious system that echoes the traditions of the past. This is in reference to the shamanic tradition discovered previously. There is evidence to suggest that a large amount of those who have departed from strict Catholic doctrines in Brazil are women and young adults. With the entrance of other religious movements that present a narrative outside of traditional Roman Catholicism, more options for establishing religious identity have been made available.

The rise of competing religious movements has been the strongest challenge to the Catholic church in the current century. While Brazil remains the largest Roman Catholic country in the world, the number of Roman Catholics has fallen steadily from 95% of the population in 1940 to approximately two-thirds in 2009. Much of the exodus consists of women, young people, and the middle classes. However, since 2000, 'no religion' has become the primary replacement. This competition has prompted a number of responses, including a deepening of social justice activism inspired by liberation theology, as well as the emergence of charismatic Catholic worship that echoes Pentecostalism.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> Harvard, *The Catholic Church in Brazil*.

Note that the above statistic where it states that the Catholic population in 2009 is roughly two-thirds. It is critically important to recognize that this percentage of “Catholics” includes an extremely large amount of charismatic Catholics who are not a part of Pentecostal denominations. Aside from Catholic charismatics, there is an even larger demographic of Protestant Pentecostals as seen in the previous chapter. Aside from this, it seems that some expressions of Catholic worship have begun to be influenced by Pentecostal expression. What is seen here is a once-dominating religious influence creating space for new expressions to be necessarily progressive and inclusive. Here we see the colliding of the priestly and shamanic tradition that must be addressed by both parties if communication and inclusivity between them can be accomplished as opposed to conflict and dismissiveness.

According to the 1991 census, Protestants make up 9% of the population, over half of whom are Pentecostal. By the 2000 census, the number of Protestants grows to over 15% of the population, or about 26 million people, and 68% of the Protestant community is Pentecostal. New Pentecostal groups continue to grow rapidly; the Universal Church, for example, has over 2 million members in 2000, an increase of 1.8 million new members between 1991 and 2000 and a six-fold increase in their share of the Brazilian population.<sup>39</sup>

With the Catholic Church rapidly losing members, especially with women and young adults, they embrace new forms of religious communication and expression. In a way, the Catholic Church has been forced to reconcile the space between themselves and the newly present Pentecostal worldview in their midst. With the existence of competing

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<sup>39</sup> PEW Research Center, “Historical Overview of Pentecostalism in Brazil,” [pewresearch.org](https://www.pewforum.org/2006/10/05/historical-overview-of-pentecostalism-in-brazil/). (Retrieved April 23, 2019).  
<https://www.pewforum.org/2006/10/05/historical-overview-of-pentecostalism-in-brazil/>

religious narratives, what does it look like to have reconciliation among similar expressions of Christian faith rather than dismissiveness and a struggle for domination between them? I draw on notions from Miroslav Volf's *Exclusion and Embrace* to better frame this idea.

Everything depends, however, on how we understand the final reconciliation and its implication for life in a world of enmity. I will offer here only three brief disclaimers. First, the final reconciliation is not a work of human beings but of the triune God. Second, it is not an apocalyptic end of the world but the eschatological new beginning of this world. Third, final reconciliation is not a self-enclosed "totality" because it God who is but a perfect love. The hope for such "nontotalitarian" final reconciliation is the backdrop against which Christians engage in the struggle for peace under the conditions of enmity and oppression.<sup>40</sup>

Similar to Küng's expression of an ideal religious community, Volf envisions a similarly framed "nontotalitarian" community by emphasizing the need for spiritual and personal reconciliation between all people. Reconciliation in this sense eliminates oppressive bodies, offers forgiveness and understanding in the place of enmity, and speaks to the future of Christianity in a light that brings dissimilar people and ideas together for the good of the faith. This seemingly kingdom-minded understanding of Christianity is one that is in some cases seldom found among different denominations of Christian faith. Differences in sacrament, worship expression, and biblical interpretation have for centuries been the hang-ups of Christian reconciliation. Though it is impossible to say whether such a "nontotalitarian" community may ever exist, believers in the midst of multiple contexts can make efforts to be reconciled and inclusive of one another. In the

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<sup>40</sup> Volf, Miroslav. *Exclusion & Embrace: A Theological Exploration of Identity, Otherness, and Reconciliation* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1996), 84.

case of Catholic charismatics, Pentecostals, and orthodox Catholics in Brazil, space has been necessarily reconciled to a certain degree, and as seen in the testimony of those where are within the community and participate in it, a more progressive understanding of Christianity as a whole seems to be on the horizon.

The shamanic tradition and the high priestly order found in native Brazil collide with one another in the 1900s, taking the form of Pentecostal Christianity and traditional Roman Catholicism. The space between the two movements grows ever-smaller with the continuing growth of charismatic expression on an individual and corporate level. Even more important is the negotiation of space seen from 1980-2000 between the two groups, a representation of the advancement of the faith for the good of the people, but also a statement of where Christian theological identity has shifted in the Brazilian context. Going forward to the next section, a discussion of the particulars of charismatic spirituality as it pertains to specific theological beliefs, biblical interpretation, and the transition towards a shamanic order is necessary to properly frame the Brazilian religious context's phenomenological journey.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### SIDES OF THE COIN: SOCIAL AND RELIGIOUS DYNAMICS

#### Characteristics Of Charismatic Communities

In the previous section of this study, great attention was given to Brazil's political and religious history in order to draw a detailed timeline that adds the story of Brazil's socio-cultural evolution. The instability and ever-changing condition of Brazil's government led to a great deal of unrest within the country's population, and also led to a general distrust of government organizations as indicated in the PEW census. Second, the study of the Catholic Church and its role in Brazil's history over the last 100 years is an important element in the redefinition of Brazilian religious expression as it pertains to the transitions from traditional Orthodox Catholicism, to Brazilian Catholicism, to Charismatic Catholicism, Protestantism, and mainline Pentecostalism, that has accumulated for itself a sphere of large influence in nearly all of Brazil's communities. The last section also notes that this rapid spread of charismatic streams of faith and the redefining of religious thought has forced space to be negotiated for reconciliation between tradition, religion, and community.

This section will argue that theological frameworks and convictions within the Pentecostal metanarrative push individuals towards establishing community, and therefore a united, reconciled, Kingdom of God, which exists in the Spirit and is lived out on Earth. Alongside this, comparison will be made between the socio-economic and religious sides of this discussion, of which have fundamental differences but are

inseparable in method and end-goal. The final results of the PEW study on charismatic growth in Brazil will also be noted for its value to the study as whole.

#### Sustainable Social Community

A highly respected voice in the Christian academic community as it pertains to research of Pentecostal communities is that of Harvey Cox. In the late 1990s, a critical time of growth for Latin American and Brazilian Pentecostalism, Cox released his book *Fire From Heaven: The Rise of Pentecostal Spirituality and the Reshaping of Religion in the Twenty-first Century*. A professor at Harvard that focused greatly on the study of urban ministry, Cox gives valuable insights from an outsider perspective (a self-identifying Baptist) on the strengths and nature of the Pentecostal movement in the twenty-first century. Cox was interviewed at Harvard one year after his book release, and gave some valuable insights that contribute greatly to this study and also explain his interests in Pentecostalism and Latin America. When asked what the motivations were for his work, Cox interestingly enough cited the growth of Pentecostalism in Latin America and other parts of the global south as a primary motivation. This framed well into his study of urban ministry.

I began to notice many years ago that the Pentecostal movement in Latin American countries was growing very rapidly. I noticed that it was in many ways not just a reflection of North American Pentecostalism; it had its own qualities and strengths. So I decided when I finally bit off writing this book that I would deal with the whole worldwide picture of Pentecostals. People have written things about this or that part of its history or theology or some special study. I really

wanted to write a book that would talk about the global emergence of this new stream of Christian vitality.<sup>41</sup>

Cox points out two very important distinctions in this statement that highlight key talking points in regards to the social science of this study.

- 1) Latin American Pentecostalism is not simply a reflection of North American Pentecostalism.
- 2) A globalized study of Pentecostalism is required to understand its vast reach across multiples of countries and cultures.

The separation of Pentecostalism in Brazil from North American Pentecostalism is critically important. To prove that Brazil's Pentecostal communities are able to grow on their own and do so consistently would strongly imply that they are self-sufficient, not needing the attachment to another country's cues or trends. In North America over the last 100 years, Christian belief has been on a steady decline, with more people each year identifying as non-religious, agnostic, atheist, or simply "no religion." In a PEW study on the decline of Christianity in the United States, polling data shows a 12% decrease of self-identifying Christians. In 2007 it was 77%, with a harsh drop to 65% by 2018. It is not improbable to say that this decline will stay consistent. Further, those claiming to be religiously unaffiliated rose from 17% in 2007 to 26% by 2018.<sup>42</sup> This is a far cry from

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<sup>41</sup> John Lathrop, The Pneumatic Review, "Fire From Heaven: An Interview with Harvey Cox." July 8, 2015. Accessed January 30, 2020. <http://pneumareview.com/fire-from-heaven-an-interview-with-harvey-cox/>

<sup>42</sup> PEW Research Center, "In U.S., Decline of Christianity Continues at Rapid Pace." October 17, 2019. Accessed January 30, 2020.

the exponential growth seen in Pentecostalism in Latin America, certainly Brazil. Though the initial organizations affiliated with the Pentecostal movement got the ball rolling for the growth of the Brazilian communities (the AG and others) it is clear that the patterns of growth and how community is navigated is much different than in the United States. Note also as mentioned in the previous section that it was not only United States-based ministries that entered Brazil during the conception of the Pentecostal movement occurring there.

The PEW Research on Brazil referenced throughout this study conveniently locates itself leading into the same timeline seen above, but with very different conclusions.

1990s-present: According to the 1991 census, Protestants make up 9% of the population, over half of whom are pentecostal. By the 2000 census, the number of Protestants grows to over 15% of the population, or about 26 million people, and 68% of the Protestant community is Pentecostal. New Pentecostal groups continue to grow rapidly; the Universal Church, for example, has over 2 million members in 2000, an increase of 1.8 million new members between 1991 and 2000 and a six-fold increase in their share of the Brazilian population. The findings of the Forum's 2006 Pentecostal survey suggest that Brazil's expanding Protestant population is increasingly Pentecostal, with **approximately eight-in-ten Protestants interviewed indicating they were either Pentecostal or charismatic**. Survey results suggest that the AG is the single largest Pentecostal church, accounting for four-in-ten Pentecostals. Roughly half of Brazilian Catholics interviewed can be classified as charismatic.<sup>43</sup>

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<https://www.pewforum.org/2019/10/17/in-u-s-decline-of-christianity-continues-at-rapid-pace/>

<sup>43</sup> PEW Research Center, "Spirit and Power: A 10-Country Survey of Pentecostals," [pewresearch.org](https://www.pewforum.org/2006/10/05/historical-overview-of-pentecostalism-in-brazil/). (Retrieved November 5, 2019).

<https://www.pewforum.org/2006/10/05/historical-overview-of-pentecostalism-in-brazil/>.

Brazilian Pentecostalism has been growing by the millions in the last 50 years alone, not only claiming new members to fundamental Pentecostal faith, but also converting and adopting many individuals based in a Catholic tradition to charismatic spirituality. With the opposite pattern taking place in North America, it is fair to say that these movements are not only operating independently of one another, but also that Brazilian Pentecostals are capable of self-sustaining growth and building community within their own context. The idea of globalized Christianity and the ability for communities to deconstruct and reconstruct their own narratives based on new information and changes in value system, in this case a religious system, is a trend seen across the global south.<sup>44</sup> As mentioned in the previous chapter, the departure from hierarchy and continued aversion to its influence plays a part in the rapid growth of localized community, given that the experiential focus of Pentecostalism is the driving force behind it, the community experiences and grows together through individual encounter that informs group narrative. The rejection of traditional hierarchy-based faith expressions, and the need for a community of believers is clearly seen within this movement and is illustrated by Harvey Cox well.

The major strength is that Pentecostalism is solidly based on the direct, personal experience of the Spirit. It's based on an experience in a time when many churches have an audience format in which the experiential dimension has been lost in either the creedal or the institutional aspects of the church... **The other strength I see is the community. It provides a sustaining, nurturing community for people who have been dislodged in some way, who need this**

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<sup>44</sup> Like the departure from hundreds of years of Orthodox Catholic tradition.

**kind of familial context. This is a desperately needed counter measure in a world where community is being disrupted and destroyed.**<sup>45</sup>

Here, community is the key word and an important idea worth spending some time with. Sustainable community is another matter altogether, a slightly different issue that will be addressed later in the section. Cox points out that those who benefit from and need basic community the most are those who are dislodged, or to put it another way, marginalized or oppressed. Recall the earlier section of the study where Brazil's socio-political history revealed a great amount of instability, uncertainty, and oppression, throughout the structure of the country. The marginalized individuals in this scenario are the economic and social low-class people of Brazil, whose government had failed them, who had been dislodged from any form of national identity because of its lack of consistency and principle, and who were forced into anomie that could only be reconciled by instead finding identity in religious tradition via native religion and Catholicism until the arrival of the Pentecostal narratives. These would eventually would gain a strong influence in helping to rebuild and restructure identity, all the while drawing on elements of the preexisting shamanic tradition embedded in Brazil's history. Liberation and the restructuring of said identity in this case must occur from within the community itself, since institutions and hierarchies are no longer reliable to produce a sufficient narrative or a trustworthy code of ethics. There has been much scholarly work done in the field of ethics and social theory from marginalized and oppressed perspectives. These viewpoints

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<sup>45</sup> "An Interview with Harvey Cox."

will be useful in supposing just how this change occurs and is essential to understanding what is likely occurring specifically in Brazil's charismatic communities. It is important to note that there is both a social and spiritual aspect to these processes, with both sections bearing weight in the success, or lack thereof, in forging the type of community in question.

### Sustainable Spiritual Community

Theologian James H. Cone reminds us that it is from within the oppressed black community (and I would add any oppressed community) that Christ continues to bring about liberation from oppressive structures. For this reason, Jesus Christ, as understood by the disenfranchised faith community, becomes authoritative in how ethics develops within marginalized groups. For them, the incarnation—the Word taking flesh and dwelling among us—becomes the lens through which God's character is understood.<sup>46</sup>

De La Torre via Cone highlights some key aspects for this discussion. First, as mentioned already, it is from within oppressed community that liberation begins. The beginning is not simply with people, but with Christ and people working together against oppressive structures. More important perhaps is the understanding of who the authoritative Jesus is in the eyes of the oppressed community (assuming a Christian narrative of course). It is from this understanding that all actions taken against oppressors are predicated on. Alongside Christ, Cone notes the dedication to the incarnate Word of God dwelling among the people as the guide for perception and action. De La Torre also adds that liberation can only occur through *radical* social change, noting that simple

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<sup>46</sup> Miguel A. De La Torre, *Doing Christian Ethics from the Margins*. Maryknoll, New York, Orbis Books, 2017), 6.

reforms to the current system is often just an aesthetic scapegoat to temporarily silence the voices of opposition and maintain the dominant culture's lifestyle and methods under the guise of progress.<sup>47</sup> If the reader recalls the previous section, a point from Volf's *Exclusion and Embrace*, was that community could not be reconciled outside of a directly divine-facilitated process, aka a radical change as phrased by De La Torre. These two ideas stand alongside each other. Fortunately for the Brazilian marginalized community, radical social and political change has been the common theme throughout the progress of the country because of the hierarchy's repeated failings, so it is not unimaginable that during these drastic shifts in power that the door is opened wide for liberation-hopefuls to make a serious impact on their communities—these hopefuls being the highly motivated charismatic community crying out for the grips of oppression to be loosened and removed to make way for the new community of faith. Now knowing these to be fundamental aspects of Christian efforts towards liberation of the oppressed, the question then becomes, what is the Christological/incarnate Word of God's framing of what a realized and liberated Christian community looks like? Is it an imagining of the Kingdom of God language used by Christ or a practical application of social justice agendas? In this study of Brazil, this is an increasingly important question. With the high level of involvement and interaction in Brazil between socio-cultural and religious structures constantly being reframed and restructured, understanding the motivations of the charismatic community and how community is being built will give the greatest indicator

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<sup>47</sup> Ibid., 20.

of the core values of the movement that have contributed to the exponential growth being seen.

As seen so far in this study, the Pentecostal movement in Brazil is dependent upon Christ firstly, as is highlighted in the statements on liberation by Cone, and also on individual and personal interactions with the Spirit that then lead the same individuals into community through shared spiritual experience. The transcendental understanding of the nature of the Spirit is highly important here. In the Pentecostal context, the Spirit is both fully within individuals and fully present in the physical world, acting in and through both points for the purpose of advancing the Kingdom of God. In Molly T. Marshall's *Joining the Dance*, the strong commitment to the Word of God incarnate discussed in the previous section becomes increasingly important. If a strong commitment to the Scriptures exists as it does in Brazil, then the logical deduction is to assume a large deal of commitment to biblical accounts of the Spirit, or God interacting with humanity directly and powerfully to accomplish the goals of the Kingdom. Marshall argues that based on Old and New Testament accounts of the Spirit's interaction with individuals that "the role of the Spirit is most clearly discerned in forging and sustaining community, a gathered people."<sup>48</sup> Marshall notes that throughout the Old and New Testament the Spirit consistently uses unlikely individuals who have "failed spectacularly" on many occasions to help build community. She lists Samson, Saul,

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<sup>48</sup> Joshua Paul Smith, The Archives Near Emmaus on Molly T. Marshall, *Joining the Dance* (January 30, 2014. Judson Press, 2003) Accessed February 6, 2020, 38. <https://nearemmaus.wordpress.com/2014/01/30/a-summary-and-review-of-molly-t-marshalls-joining-the-dance/>

David, Moses, Joseph, and others as brief examples. An intriguing point made here especially when it comes to Saul/Paul, David, and Joseph, is that the Scriptures record these individuals all playing a part in both the socio-political and religious boundaries of their contexts being restructured. The New Testament is surely not secretive or ambiguous about Christ's interaction with his social and religious context either. Jesus' primary conflicts in the Gospels were between him and the structures of power in place such as the Pharisaic order and the Roman Empire, and his critique of them was public and frequent. Paul for example believed himself to be empowered by the Spirit to continue the work of Christ, and was influential in the breaking down of Jewish restriction of Gentile worship of Yahweh, and worked for all of his ministry to assure the inclusive future of the first churches, calling all to repentance and the pursuit of the Kingdom rather than nationalism or Jewish exclusivism. Marshall further argues,

A discernable pattern emerges: the Spirit consistently acts in contrast to socio-political and religious boundaries that serve only to exclude and alienate. Throughout the entire Bible (and especially in the New Testament), the Spirit is revealed to be no "respector of persons," but rather a weaver skilled in the art of bringing together unexpectedly dissimilar strands of thread. The Spirit of God is, in its very essence, a border-crossing Spirit that seeks to draw the excluded into the perichoretic dance.<sup>49</sup>

The point here for Marshall is that the Spirit is at the head of operations so-to-speak in terms of the breakdown of socio-cultural dynamics while working

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<sup>49</sup> Ibid. Perichoresis- a term used to describe the relationship between each person of the Godhead. <https://theopedia.com/Perichoresis>. Accessed February 2, 2020.

alongside Christ and the followers of Christ to accomplish the will of God. What does a people group motivated both by social justice and spiritual duty look like?

Pulling together the ideas in the studies of both Harvey Cox and Marshall, there are a few points to pay attention to. Cox' angle in this particular scenario is the effectiveness and usefulness of the Pentecostal narrative in communities, particularly disenfranchised and marginalized communities—a focus centered on the socio-cultural needs of a given group. Marshall's angle in this case is on the spiritual and scriptural, providing a scriptural framework to explain basic ideas of Holy Spirit agency in human lives, and the supposed role of the Spirit in consistently disrupting exclusive or abusive hierarchies. As mentioned previously, the idea of the Word of God incarnate is a fundamental influence in Pentecostal or charismatic circles. Both angles give sides of the coin that play a large role in what is observed in Brazil.

We have learned already from Harvey Cox' observation of Pentecostal community, he asserts that those who are in the most need of community and where it thrives the most is in communities that have been dislodged, disrupted, or destroyed.<sup>50</sup> Check the socio-political needs box for Brazil. The demonstrated government instability and the oppression of hierarchy over the last 200 years absolutely finds itself in the midst of Cox' assessment. Further, this study has also demonstrated the large degree of Brazilians that were disenfranchised and sent into anomie due to the lack of ability to put trust in their nation, and thus the people must depend on themselves and their immediate

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<sup>50</sup> “An Interview with Harvey Cox.”

communities instead. This led to a serious aversion to political interactions on the part of Brazilian Protestants and Pentecostals alike, especially considering the privileges afforded to the Catholic Church by the government leading up to the time period until roughly 1985-1990 when the opportunity to be a part of constitution-rewriting as demonstrated in the PEW survey, a testament to the nature of the strained relationship between people and nation. By the early 2000s, an increasingly large number of Pentecostals make their way into the political arena. On a basic level, this is the resurgence of religious peoples advocating for themselves, readily willing to be seen and heard by all, an important point for Marshall's assessment as we will see.

In the post-junta elections of 1986, voters select a Constituent Assembly to rewrite the constitution. Attracted by the chance to recreate Brazilian politics, more Pentecostals abandon their apoliticism. Achieving legal equality with the Catholic Church and maintaining restrictions on abortion and same-sex unions become major Pentecostal goals. As of 2004, more than 60 Protestants are serving in congress, 10% of Brazil's nearly 600-member congress. Two-thirds are official candidates of the Universal Church, AG and Church of the Foursquare Gospel. Of the approximately 160 Protestants serving in congress between 1987 and 2006, about 100 are Pentecostals.<sup>51</sup>

It seems likely that Brazilian Protestants recognized that their lack of presence in the political field only harmed their chances of gaining influence in their country and community. With the rapid growth of political involvement seen above going into the 2000s, it is clear that fighting for the conservative values held in high esteem by Brazilian Protestants and Pentecostals was likely the primary motivation. Unsurprisingly, the PEW

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<sup>51</sup> PEW Research Center, "Historical Overview of Pentecostalism in Brazil," [pewresearch.org](https://www.pewforum.org/2006/10/05/historical-overview-of-pentecostalism-in-brazil/). (Retrieved April 23, 2019).  
<https://www.pewforum.org/2006/10/05/historical-overview-of-pentecostalism-in-brazil/>

data above demonstrates a conservative evangelical value system that is indicative of a conservative take on scriptural interpretation as seen by Brazilian Pentecostals petitioning against same-sex marriage and abortion. Here enters Marshall's study of the role of the Word of God incarnate in Pentecostal spirituality and community. As mentioned before, Marshall's focus point is that the Spirit consistently disrupts and socio-political and religious boundaries that alienate and marginalize, using individuals of faith to carry out its will.<sup>52</sup> Relate this to the above census data. The once-polarized area of Brazil's government which was absent of Protestant voices because of the aversion to political dealings has now seen a large influx of charismatic voices that have disrupted both the representation of communities present in Brazil's government, and also bring with them conservative evangelical values that clash against political moral boundaries. Brazilians charismatics are no longer content in letting the government continue without their voice, and now have chosen to jump into the fray themselves in an attempt to change the course of the country's history forthcoming. On a deeper level, one representative of their commitment to the Word incarnate mentioned before, Brazilian charismatics are acting upon the Word they have received and believed in. This representation of communities

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<sup>52</sup> Smith, "The Archives Near Emmaus." (Accessed February 6, 2020). <https://nearemmaus.wordpress.com/2014/01/30/a-summary-and-review-of-molly-t-marshalls-joining-the-dance/>

that have been newly formed in terms of timeline (latter 1900s) is a testament to the strength and size of the charismatic community in Brazil.

#### Connecting The Dots

In this section I have covered two fundamental aspects of Brazilian charismatic tendency and history. The first, framed for us by Harvey Cox, is the focus on building community and the path taken to do so. Cox' study shows that the Brazilian Charismatic movement was able to build a community for itself and establish that community independently of the charismatic movements in the United States and other parts of the world, evidence that Brazil's community is self-sustaining at this point in history. The self-sustaining nature is critical in establishing authenticity of the movement's independence and the hope for its future continuation of influence for its communities. Simply put, this is the social and economic perspective.

The second, the perspective of the spiritual, seen through James H. Cone and Molly T. Marshall emphasizes the role of Christ, the Word Incarnate, and the Spirit, in liberating marginalized communities, establishing reliance on the Word Incarnate as hope and faith for the future, and the inseparable tie between believers and the Spirit that help to navigate, influence, and disrupt oppressive socio-cultural hierarchies. The Brazilian Pentecostal community is led by their spiritual experience, the Word of God, and the hope in faith for continued liberation and representation of their community.

In the final section of this study I will illustrate a pattern of community and charismatic faith in an attempt to tie together both sides of the coin and create a coherent system for understanding Brazilian Pentecostalism—and on a deeper level the pattern of

events that lead the marginalized into being liberated by Christ. In the most simplified way of phrasing possible, the two sides of the coin are:

- 1) The Social and Economic
- 2) The Spiritual and Religious

## CHAPTER FIVE

### PATTERNS OF THE SPIRIT

At the close of the last chapter, a framing was mentioned that splits the issues of Brazilian Pentecostalism and community into two fundamental categories in an attempt to illustrate a simplified pattern of socio-religious movement and change. These two framings were communicated through Cox' study of community in reference to Latin American social and economic trends, and through Molly T. Marshall alongside James H. Cone's assessment of liberation and spirituality as it pertains to marginalized community. In essence, this is a socio-economic take compared to a spiritual or religious take. These two fields together give us the fullness of Brazilian Pentecostalism as it pertains to this study.

In this chapter, these patterns will be shown through a modified cause-and-effect model that will show the timeline of processes that apply to Brazil's socio-cultural evolution, but also will provide a framework for how this effectual model can be seen in different parts of the world. Understand that these processes are not exclusively Brazilian though they do reflect the information presented in this study, but are wholly human, existing to liberate, inform, build community, and show the inseparable nature between social and religious advancement in the Brazilian context and assuredly others. The goal of this chapter and the forthcoming diagrams is to give some degree of finality to this study through the establishing of a system of socio-economic and religious effects working alongside each other and providing a foreground for further study.

### Models Of Interaction

With each section of the model that is given, a brief comment or clarifying description will be given as needed to fully explain the connections being made, especially in regards to how it ties into the Brazilian context. The arrows indicate the “result” of the preceding category. I have created these models to better illustrate the findings of this research. The first categories addressed will be the social and economic.

#### Table 5-A

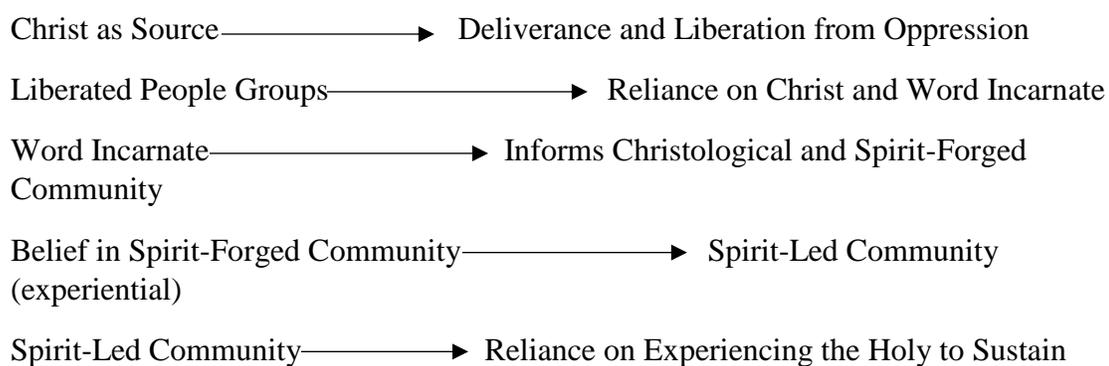
##### **Socio-Economic Model: (Cox, Volf)**

Oppressive Hierarchy —————> Marginalized and Disrupted People Groups  
 Marginalized and Disrupted —————> Need for Community  
 Newly Growing and Constructed Community—————> Desire for Representation  
 Representation—————> Ability to Influence Social and Political Context

This particular model emphasizes the social process we have seen in this study as it pertains to Brazilians who were marginalized or sent into anomie because of oppressive and illegitimate government systems, and the oppression of the Catholic religious system as it relates to indigenous peoples and the lower class. Further, with the entrance of the Pentecostal metanarrative that has influenced thoughts in social and religious ethics, the marginalized begin to fight for representation of the new belief system. In essence, the oppressive hierarchies create the foreground for the rejection of the traditional system and the adopting of the new system that better serves the people and represents their ideals without the chains of hierarchy or strict tradition attached to its communication. As these communities of the marginalized grow in number and influence, they are no longer able

to be ignored by the preexisting structures, space must be created for them, and thus their beliefs are sent forth and represented by political or social representatives as seen in the PEW research data on the influx of Pentecostals and Protestants in the Brazilian government, to name one clear example.<sup>53</sup>

**Table 5-B**  
**Spiritual and Religious Model: (Marshall, Cone)**



In the previous section’s source material a statement by James H. Cone notes the importance of Christ and the belief in the Word Incarnate for a marginalized community. Further, this reliance on the Christological narrative is continually bringing liberation from oppressive structures. In this regard the Word of God is authoritative for the marginalized community and is the basis for how ethics and spirituality develop. Alongside this, Molly T. Marshall’s study of the biblical Spirit emphasizes the role of the Spirit that is focused on building community and disrupting the narratives of oppressive

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<sup>53</sup> PEW Research Center, “Historical Overview of Pentecostalism in Brazil,” [pewresearch.org](https://www.pewforum.org/2006/10/05/historical-overview-of-pentecostalism-in-brazil/). (Retrieved April 23, 2019).  
<https://www.pewforum.org/2006/10/05/historical-overview-of-pentecostalism-in-brazil/>

structure.<sup>54</sup> This disruption works against marginalization and instead brings together community that draws in the excluded. The two ideas working alongside each other show Christ as the source of liberation from oppression, and the Spirit as the force that takes forward the revolution of liberation started by Christ, all the while informing the marginalized through the Word of God.<sup>55</sup> The continual involvement of the Spirit going forward from this process is the point of dependence for the newly forged community. Since the Spirit is looked to as the informant and advocate for the Spirit-forged community, the experience and enlightenment that comes from relationship with the Spirit becomes the most important factor for sustained and continually-growing community for Pentecostals.

The information presented in the models above could likely be applied as singular units to a myriad of other countries, people groups, or otherwise. What makes the case of Brazil so interesting is the incredible amount of involvement of both systems happening simultaneously, and this research argues inseparably so. This being said, it makes the situation much more complex and difficult to give pointed assessment from the perspective of an outsider who does not have the benefit of a lived-experience in the

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<sup>54</sup> Joshua Paul Smith, The Archives Near Emmaus on Molly T. Marshall, *Joining the Dance* (January 30, 2014. Judson Press, 2003) Accessed February 6, 2020, 38. <https://nearemmaus.wordpress.com/2014/01/30/a-summary-and-review-of-molly-t-marshalls-joining-the-dance/>

<sup>55</sup> Miguel A. De La Torre, *Doing Christian Ethics from the Margins* (Maryknoll, New York, Orbis Books., 2017), 6.

context of the community in question. The forthcoming model is an attempt to show the simplest finalized resolve of the two models' interaction with one another based off the observations and study of Brazilian Pentecostalism and its interaction with its former and present contexts. The intention is to show the resolve of the Brazilian Pentecostal community as it stands based off its history of interaction with its social and religious history and environment.

**Table 5-C**

**The Resolution Model:**

Liberate the Marginalized

Removal of Oppressive Hierarchies

Spirit-Led Community

Word of God Incarnate as Fundamental

Christologically Informed

Motivated by Experience of the Holy



Sustainable Spiritual Community

(Final Result)

With the accomplishment of the causes on the left side of the pattern, a sustainable and inclusive community of faith is the end result. As seen in the last section, the importance of Brazil being able to sustain its own religious revolutionary movement was predicated on the idea that they be able to establish and build their own system of belief and social action to ensure the survival of their communities apart from any supporting movement. Since a clear separation between Brazilian Pentecostalism and the North American expressions was established, the idea of an independent and sustainable community in Brazil is much more probable. The question that must be asked now that these patterns have been established must be, is this sustainability and growth here to

stay? To put it another way, is the stability provided by the newly established faith community able to be maintained? Stability is the key point here.

It is too large a leap to say that stability is assured. What we might say instead is that this socio-religious revolution has provided a rigid stability that has served its primary purpose: to liberate the marginalized, create an opening for new community to be established, and provide real precedence for the new community to be represented in Brazil's socio-cultural dynamic in a significant way. In terms of this modern form of stability compared to Brazil's political history, this is leaps and bounds ahead in terms of basic stability. Based off the information in the PEW study and the other sources in this research, it seems that on a basic level Brazilian Pentecostals have succeeded in all of these efforts. Political representation has been achieved, once-marginalized communities now have a community of their own, the traditional hierarchies that bound religious and social expression have been effectively removed, the number of those who continue to join and build the Pentecostal movement has continually and exponentially grown, and finally perhaps most importantly, identity is able to be established for those who never had the privilege of it before that is not founded in nationalism. The rapid growth of Pentecostalism in Brazil is unprecedented and impossible to ignore for the global theologian, minister of the Gospel, or ethnographer. The now hundreds of millions of Brazilians effected by Pentecostalism and its theology has reached even beyond the confines of a strict Pentecostal metanarrative and has effected the spiritual practices of even other denominations of Christian faith. Beyond this, the effects of Pentecostal communities on the political and social boundaries of Brazil are also unavoidable. A clear

and concise conservative evangelical ethic is clearly observable in the political representation mentioned in the PEW research, and it is clear that the massive community behind these leaders has disrupted the Brazilian government systems over the last 30 years at minimum.

### Conclusion

The future of religion in the global south is unfolding before the eyes of the world, and it is effecting community and cultural context in massive ways. The future of religious advancement is one that seems to have limitless possibilities. Outside of Brazil, trends of similar kinds of explosive Pentecostal growth are reported on by PEW and other research organizations in virtually every other Latin American country, and beyond Latin American in countries like the Philippines (second highest Pentecostal growth next to Brazil), Korea, and other parts of Asia. The patterns of reform and revolution in Brazil also inform us of what the future may hold for other countries to undergo similar changes and walk through similar patterns. Time will be the true test, however with the information we already have concerning Pentecostalism in these countries, it is clear that the system works, is self-sustaining, and capable of accumulating massive influence.

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