

CHURCHES IN MINORITY SITUATION: THE BRAZILIAN CASE (x)

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By Key YuasaI. Pre Independence Period: the dawning of the XIX century.

An examination of the socio-economic conditions of Brazil at the time of introduction of Protestant communities, shows that it was a period of very significant and drastic changes, which were mirrored at that time, in the mentality and political life of this traditionally Roman Catholic country. This occurred at the dawning of the 19th century while Europe was being shaken by revolution and war. Despite its distance from Portugal, this colony felt the impact of the European turmoil. American Independence and the French revolution had taken place. Napoleon had come upon the scene. In Britain there were expanding industrial interests as well as a mounting drive for the abolition of slavery which was pressed on other countries.

Knowing of Napoleon's plans to invade his country, King D. João, decided to leave a regency government behind in Portugal and, together with his court, set sail for the long exploited but nearly forgotten colony of Brazil. Thus the colony became the seat of government for its mother country, as D. João, after a brief stay in Bahia, established himself and his court in Rio de Janeiro, in 1808. From there began to flow almost immediately, a series of royal decrees. Brazilian ports were opened to non-Portuguese trade, the Bank of Brazil was established, as were the Supreme Court of Justice, medical and law schools, and a military academy. A council of government was formed with four ministers and the country was open to receive immigrants from other European nations.

Thus was Brazil lifted from exploited to co-partner of Portugal. A decree of 1815 established the "United Kingdom of Portugal, Brazil and Algarves" and a new day was broken for Brazil, opening the gates for its development to the status of a nation. But at the same time its socio-political axis was shifted. Where once Recife and Salvador had been important cities, in fact one-time capitals, power was now shifted to Rio de Janeiro where the capital of the colony had been earlier moved in from Salvador in 1763. Similarly, economic was moving in the same direction. Sugar plantations in the Northeast and the cotton and tobacco crops in Bahia gradually

(+) Although there is in a Brazil, a growing population of Eastern Orthodox Christians, we are limiting ourselves in this article, to the Protestants who generally call themselves "evangelicos".

gave way to new economic power in the South. Gold discoveries in Minas Gerais had already produced significant change in the economic and political balance of the country since the XVIII century. Now coffee plantation was being profitably introduced in further South in S. Paulo, thus consolidating the increasingly prominent position of Rio de Janeiro as the country's economic and political focal point.

In this bustling center the first Protestant community was established in 1819. British citizens living in Rio for trade and industry, started their own Anglican community. So from its very beginning in Brazil, Protestantism had, if not ~~exactly~~ causal, an intimate relationship with the blossoming of a new outlook of society. In the same year 2,003 Swiss people arrived and founded a colony near Rio de Janeiro. Soon German immigrants started to arrive: In 1824 to Rio Grande do Sul, in 1828 to Recife and in 1847 in Espirito Santo. The administrative ~~structure~~ and economic structure of the country was ~~changing~~ being transformed from a colony to a co-equal with Portugal, from a closed to an open country.

II. Independence and Empire (1822-1889)

Brazil was proclaimed politically independent from Portugal, by D. Joao's son, D. Pedro, on September 7, 1822, on advice from his father who feared that otherwise, some "adventurer" would proclaim independence and seize the power; and too, in response to mounting local pressures. The Constituency Assembly of August 1823, in which 15 clergymen participated, approved a draft which contained the following religious clauses: a) a guarantee of religious liberty to all Christian communities and toleration of all non-Christian religions but their exclusion from political rights; b) the establishment of Catholic religion as the State religion to be financially supported by the State; c) the vesting of the right in the emperor to nominate ecclesiastical benefices, ~~and~~ and to d) concede or deny clearance to pontifical documents; e) the vesting in the bishops of the right of censorship of publications on dogma and morals, with the help of the government.

This constitution as a whole was not pleasing to the emperor, who immediately dissolved this Assembly and handed down a new Imperial Constitution in 1824. The new constitution incorporated all but (a) of the religious clauses in the rejected constitution and added the following:

"The Roman Catholic Apostolic religion will continue to be the religion of the Empire. All other religions will be permitted to continue their domestic and private observances in places dedicated to that purpose, so long as they do not have the exterior form of a church"

The establishment of this constitution and growing opportunities, attracted new immigrants, from Germany who established themselves in 1824 in Rio Grande do Sul, 1828 in Recife and in 1847 in Espirito Santo.

In 1850, with the cessation of slave traffic from Africa, Northeastern region suffered another severe blow, since their economy was heavily dependent upon slave labor. The South suffered less because of the varying crops, immigrants and also because the possibility to bring slaves from the Northeast existed. And perhaps even more, because the enterprises which were dedicated up to that time to the importation and distribution of slaves, now channelled their energies and capital to new forms of commerce and industry. There was a sharp rise in the value of the stock of existing corporations at the same ~~tax~~ time that new ones were springing up. The Bank of Brazil became an emitting Bank in 1850s, and a telegraph network, and the Central Brazil Railroad started to operate in that time.

New Protestant communities and missions were started in this period. In 1836 the Methodists founded a community in Rio. In 1845 German Lutheran communities are organized. In 1858 Congregationalists and 1859 the Presbyterians start their work in Rio. Other Protestant bodies came later: In 1882 the Baptists to Salvador. In 1890 the Episcopalians. The Pentecostalists who are the largest group today started in 1910, simultaneously to Belém in the Northern extreme, of the country, and in down town S. Paulo.

By 1850s the Roman Catholic Church was starting to have serious difficulties with the government. All through the colonial period it had done important educational work among the indians, as well as ~~tax~~ among the city dwellers, and had always been an important participant in the country's political life, including the movement for independence. But by then there were serious conflicts. In the beginning it was a rather simple question of bringing about some reforms to the religious orders. Senator Nabuco, seeing the decadence of the religious orders began to introduce measures for ~~the~~ reforming them, "with full support of the King and applause of the bishops" (Cruz Costa, p. 124)

The church had adapted herself to the colonial ~~maximty~~ and patriarchal society, enjoying its riches and privileges. She lived in peace with people, without challenging their superstitions radically. The popular religiosity, mixed feasts ~~gafux~~ joyful processions, and fetichist practices, and confused Christian saints with pagan deities. As several writers have demonstrated the clergy also needed some kind of reform. (Cruz Costa, op. cit.)

The new constitution of the Republic proclaimed: "Freedom of conscience and belief is inviolable and the free exercise of religious sects is assured, so long as they are not contrary to public order or good morals.... No cult or church shall have a relationship of dependence or alliance with the government of the union or of the states".

The Roman Catholic Church reacted against these developments in a pastoral letter published March 19, 1890, and in an open letter from two archbishops and fourteen bishops, representing every diocese of the country, directed to the Head of the Provisional Government, in August of the same year. In this letter they say: "Clamorous injustice (was) committed against the Catholic church (which was) excluded ignominiously from all ~~the government's official relations~~ official relations with the State; (being banned) from the schools, colleges, and from all government establishments; and (being) deprived of the grants for support and dignity of worship as had been the duty of national treasury..... (We have already protested) against the falsity of this ominous system, which with the pretext of liberty of conscience, opens wide the doors for all the cults, thus levelling the truth with error, and putting the most holy religion of our Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, in the same category with the sad sects which were engendered by the pride and passion of extravagant men". They continue to say that social atheism is menacing the country and that the government, ~~is escaping~~ ^{is escaping} the law of the Creator ~~and~~ and persecuting the Church in Brazil, as much as, if not worse than, in Turkey. They also state that the church shall resist through all legal means and energies, and shall fight "for the sacred interests of faith and the liberty of the souls" (Reclamacao)....)

Despite the protest of the Roman Catholic church, the constitution was put into force in the following year, 1891. The State, with this step, had in fact passed from the Constantinian era into the modern time, taking its place among the secular states of the world. Perhaps it followed the French and Mexican examples of the secularization of State, but in Brazil things occurred very peacefully.

During this period of bitter church-state struggle, the Protestant missions developed steadily. This development was parallel with ~~the~~ some important sociological trends: the development of coffee plantations in the South, rubber ~~plantations~~ production in the Amazon region, with concomitant migration of people to these regions, and industrialization and urbanization throughout the country. Especially important was for the country the coffee plantation, and the industrialization of Southern states. The Protestant development was not a unified one. There were internal tensions, such as, schisms within denominations, frustrated

efforts among different denominations, or cultural isolation like that of the Lutherans in the South, isolation of the Pentecostalists, etc. The Pentecostalists who started in Amazon ~~xxx~~ area, accompanying the migrants, expanded to the Northeast and then Southward. While the other group was expanding from down town S. Paulo, in all directions, accompanying the railroad lines. But despite these tensions positive developments took place. Educational institutions were established at the secondary level, in several cities, and one of them ~~xxxxx~~ in S. Paulo, became Mackenzie University.

One can appreciate the significance of these schools by reading a UNESCO report which states: "When Brazil was mainly agricultural and slave-labor based exporting economy, the only young people who could aspire to secondary education were those belonging to the well-to-do classes, who took it as a stepping stone to higher education. Despite the abolition of slavery in 1888 and the beginning of the industrial development in the last years of the empire, this state of affairs in secondary education persisted with slight changes at least until 1930" (UNESCO p.266)

Further a look at the literacy figures at this time will give an indication of the need for educational opportunities beyond those available. At the time of proclamation of Republic 80% of the adult population was illiterate. In 1920 75% of the total population was illiterate. ~~xxxxxxxxxxxx~~ a non Protestant educational sociologist, and author of a recent study on Brazilian Culture says: "If the evangelical work developed (in Protestant churches) shows a notable power of expansion... it is not smaller ~~xxxx~~ (their cultural work).... The American schools introduced into the country at the dawning of the Republic... have contributed extraordinarily, not only towards the changing of methods, but also for the intensification of education" (Azevedo p. 33) According to this author, the Sunday Schools of which there were 3.912 by 1934, collaborated in "the broadening of public education".

As the number of Protestant churches, their institutions, and their converts increased, the frictions with the Roman Catholic church ~~xxxx~~ kept apace. Particularly scandalous and sacrilegious for the R. Catholics were the spontaneous removal and destruction by the new converts, of images from their own homes. Cases of physical violence inflicted by R. Catholics on Protestants, and damage to Protestant places of worship ~~xxxx~~ occurred here and there. Out of these frictions a sort of apologetics was developed. And the famous controversies ~~xxxx~~ took place, some times, in the public square, some times through the local news paper or radio. Some times with printed books.

Perhaps the most representative piece of these controversy, is that which was done between Eduardo Carlos Pereira ~~and Rxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ (O problema religioso em America Latina) and Father Leonel Franca ("A Igreja, A Reforma e a Civilizaçao " 1st edition 1922, 7th edition 1958, Agir, Rio de Janeiro) 476 pages). Father Leonel Franca wrote books in answer to Ottoniel Motta and other protestant authors. and is quoted very often, when the idea is to make an argument about the validity of Protestantism.

Yet we should not over-emphasize the importance of these controversies. We are now witnessing very rapid and deep changes on the side of Roman Catholics attitudes both toward the Protestants and toward the society at large.

IV- From 1930 to the Present time.

By 1930 Brazil had already gone through a history of significant change as we have described. Along with the evolution of economic, political and religious change, Protestantism was gradually becoming established. It had survived the pressures from the outside and its own internal struggles. At the beginning of the period beginning with 1930, the condition of Protestantism might be described by listing the following data:

- a) Theological education: there were at least seven theological seminaries: in Recife (2), Rio de Janeiro (1), S. Paulo (2), Porto Alegre (2). (Scoop es)
- b) Protestant church membership (not including the Lutherans) was distributed as follows:

all the percentage

}	Baptists (30%); Presbyterians 24%; Methodist 11.5%
	Indep. Presbyterian 10%; <u>Pentecostalists 9%</u> , Adventists 5%
	Congregationalists 3%, Episcopalians 2%, Others 4%. (Read)

- c) New Immigrant communities brought with them Protestant churches: The hungarian, the Armenian, the Dutch, the Japanese, etc.
- d) There were some coordination started among the Protestant communities for cooperation. And the first survey of Protestant movement was being prepared.

~~In 1934 the Evangelical Confederation of Brazil was founded~~

One of the most striking aspects of the development of the Protestant communities from 1930 to this date, was as presented by Mr. Read, the extremely rapid growth of Pentecostalism comparatively to other communities. So that by 1964, the Pentecostalists make more than 65% of the total protestant community, even including the large Lutheran communities.

It would be interesting to investigate some of the socio-cultural factors operative in Brazil, following 1930. Up until that time, there was a distinct elite which directed the destinies of the country. The same elite which dominated during the time of the Empire, continued its old over the country through the time of the Republic: the great land-holders. "La politique refleétait donc la structure d'un Brésil essentiellement agraire, avec son dualisme, classe haute et peuple, seigneurs et clients, qui se maintenait à travers toutes les révolutions" (Bastide, 329). The political structure was created by and for this elite. Urbanization and industrialization had changed the faces of the cities, but not the social structure of the country.

1930s were a time when this previous imbalance began to be broken down, and new political factors entered the scene. The children of immigrants (besides those already cited, Spanish, Syrian, Lebanese, Italian) were Brazilian by birth and were adapting themselves to life in the Brazilian setting. But they were not ~~xxxxxxxx~~ willing to adapt themselves ~~xxxxxxxxxxxx~~ to the feudal clan system of the landed elite. Thus they formed an important force for change, especially when they were somewhat successful ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ in their economic endeavours.

At the same time, the industrial proletariat in the cities increased in number and in their socio-political importance, at least potentially. The population growth in the urban and sub-urban regions as compared with the rural areas, is as follows in recent times.

<u>Decade</u>	<u>POPULATION GROWTH</u>	
	<u>Urban and Sub Urban</u>	<u>Rural</u>
1940-50	46%	16%
1950-60	70%	17%

In the rural areas, on the other hand important changes were occurring. Large land holdings were in the process of being divided and sold. To be sure, the vastly larger portion of the land remained in the hands of the relatively few. But the number of property owners greatly increased at 1930s. For instance, in the State of S. Paulo, in 1930 there were 110,975 individual properties recorded. Only four years later this number had more than doubled to 274,740. (Bastide 330).

The new trends in city and country here described had immediate political consequences. They all tended to diminish the power of the traditional elites. They could no longer manipulate political decisions as they had previously. This explains at least partially, the political conflicts of the early 1930s, and the coming into power of Getulio Vargas in 1934 with the support of these new forces.

The shift of political power from the elite and middle class parties to the labor party is reflected in the ~~shift~~ composition of the Federal Congress between 1945 and 1962. ~~Резекнтативизм~~

Percentage of seats in the Federal Congress by parties

<u>Year</u>	<u>PSD</u>	<u>UDN</u>	<u>PTB</u>	
1945	53%	27%	8%	PSD: Social Democratic Party
1954	35%	23%	17%	UDN: National Democratic Union
1962	30%	23%	27%	PTB: Brazilian Labor Party

These figures indicate a drastic decrease in the influence of the PSD which was mainly supported by the rural upper and middle classes. While UDN, partly rural as PSD, but also supported by urban middle class seems to have compensated with the latter, its loss in the rural area. It shows a less drastic but, nonetheless significant decrease. By contrast, the PTB has received the support from the growing urban working class, as well as from the urban sub-proletariat, since there are no other more extremist popular parties. (table and analysis indepted to Soares pp. 325,ff).

It is very interesting that this development of the Labor Party, which means a progressive evaluation of the lower strata of society has in the Protestant Churches a significant parallel.

All the denominations grew in the period we are considering. Six new higher level theological schools were established, as well as dozens of Biblical Seminaries so that today we may count about 14 institutions of the first type, and more than 55 of the second type. Protestants were also able to elect many of their representatives to various levels of government: city council, state congresses and the Federal Congress.

Cooperative work among the Protestants increased, through different kinds of programmes, and the Evangelical Confederation of Brazil was founded in 1934. Coordination was worked in many different spheres of church activity: Christian Education, Chaplancies, Religious education in public schools, and more recently an Association of Evangelical Theological Schools ~~xxxxxx~~ has led a series of Seminars and Conferences on different theological subjects, with wide participation. From 1955 a programme of studies on Church and Society was launched by the Ev. Conf. of Brazil, as well as beginnings of orientation towards social action.

By 1964, the Protestant population was 2,592,000 full communicant members and a Protestant community of at least 5,184,000 people, with strongest concentration in ~~Southern States of: Rio Grande do Sul and Sta Catarina (with heavy German communities)~~

~~RaxxandxSxxRaxixx~~ in Rio Grande do Sul and S. Paulo, and more than one hundred thousand in Sta. Catarina, Parana, Rio de Janeiro and Minas Gerais. And all the states of the Union had fast growing Protestant communities.

The Pentecostals who made ~~a~~ less than 9% of the total protestant populaion in Brazil, in 1930 have grown to 65,2% in 1964 and according to Mr. Read's estimates they ~~shxixxhxaxxaxixix~~ should have grown to like 76.2% by 1974. Prof. Candido Procopio F. de Camargo, of the S. Paulo School of Sociology and Politics, has prepared the following table, comparing the expansion of Pentecostal and non-Pentecostal protestant groups, with data taken from the official government statistics:

State	1956		1961	
	<u>Non-Pentecostal</u>	<u>Pentecostal</u>	<u>Non Pentecostal</u>	<u>Pentecostal</u>
S. Paulo	136.000 (47%)	153.000 (53%)	152.000 (38%)	245.000 (62%)
S. Paulo City	47.500 (46%)	56.000 (54%)	53.000 (38%)	86.000 (62%)
R. Grande do Norte	3.450 (28%)	8.500 (72%)	4.150 (23%)	13.500 (76%)
Sta. Catarina	185.000 (95,5%)	6.220 (3,5%)	206.000(94%)	11.000 (6%)

S. Paulo, the state of greatest industrialization and urbanization is highly representative. The Pentecostal during the 5 years above considered grew 60% while the others grew 12%. In the city of S. Paulo the growth of Pentecostals is a little smaller (51%). Apparently this growth occurs more intensively in the first phase of urbanization, that is to say when the state to anomie is the acutest. Santa Catarina is of old Protestant tradition, mainly German. Here the Pentecostals grew 67% while the other protestants grew 11%. In Rio Grande do Norte where the Pentecostals are the oldest and largest group, they grew 59% while the rest grew 20%.

(table and analysis indebted to Candido P.F. de Camargo p. 35)

It is clear from the above that the group which more significantly grows in Brazil is the Pentecostal. Many studies indicate the social function of religious conversion, be it in relation to the Protestant church, some ~~axax~~ sporadic messianic movements, or the nowadays fast expanding spiritualism (Willems, Pereira de Queiroz, Candido de Camargo) The spiritual needs of the populations recently moved from their original villages, to a town or to a big city and its neighborhoods, is underlined by the recent proliferation of spiritualistic afro-brazilian cults, all over. Studies are indicating that if the pace of industrialization has been high, higher still has ~~ixx~~ been the process of urbanization, so that the existing industries cannot absorb all the man power available in the cities. There is a disproportionate growth of terciary activites together with large masses without productive work.

(Soares)

recent

Now it would be interesting to compare some of the Protestant figures with the Roman Catholic ones: The data are of the governments annual statistics:

Places of worship

XXXXXXXXXX	<u>1962</u>	<u>1964</u>	
Protestant	15.920	18.432	(temples and halls)
Catholic	41.038	42.208	(temples, public and semi-public chapels)

Clergy Ordained

Pastors	7.974	10.000
Parish Priests	9.609	9.936

Officers, clergy included:

Pastors, Deacons and Elders	33.347	39.465
Parish Priests and religious personnel	43.649	47.199

This kind of data, plus the recognized fact that only 10 to 15% of nominal Catholics are practicing, have given rise to serious concern among Catholic leaders. "In Latin America the time is fast approaching when there will no longer be Christians except through evangelization", says one of them (Segundo). Other writers ~~xxx~~ in Brazil are beginning as well, to realize that the condition of diaspora of the church in modern world is already a fact in Brazil. Therefore evangelism should be given preeminence in all programs. Financial and missionary efforts of Catholic Churches abroad should carefully consider whether or not, they are preserving, helping to preserve, or trying to revive, obsolete ecclesiastical structures or privileges (Bernardo Catao, and Ivan Illich)

The concern for the renewal of the Roman Catholic church in recent times, has been steadily increasing since 1930's. An important contribution in this line was that of the Catholic lay study and action movements, among whose leaders were men like Jackson de Figueiredo and Alceu Amoroso Lima. These lay movements were coming to grips with the question of the church's mission in the world, and were open to biblical renewal and, more recently, to the ecumenical movement. And they produced a creative ferment among the youth, the lay and some of the clergy, thus preparing a relatively small, but very significant portion of the church, for the developments of the Second Vatican Council.

The recently published overall pastoral plan for Brazil, approved by the national council of bishops, is very well attuned with the Vatican II, but indicates ability in applying the decisions, to the particular Brazilian situation. It includes a chapter on ecumenical mission, which is already been fostered in many places. The concern for the poverty stricken masses, have led the Archbishop Dom Helder Camara, to establish a new theological seminary in Olinda, where the idea is to form "priests for the development". "All the traditional theological and philosophical themes shall be examined side by side with new ones, in an ecumenical climate, in the climate of the Vatican II and in the light of the experience of the Third World" (Camara). By 1967 there seems to be priests and bishops in Brazil, who although solidly based on previous papal and conciliar pronouncements, would like to go beyond the Vatican II. They would avoid any triumphalist simplification of the issues, knowing that the discipleship to Christ today in Brazil, requires again boundless fidelity to the Word of God, which became ~~xxxxxxx~~ flesh and chose the way of the Cross.

V. The Protestant community as Viewed from the Inside.

Let us now examine briefly some of the socio-theological ethos prevalent in Protestant communities. ~~xxxxxxx~~ We shall comment on three types of ethos: The church of the Saved; the Church ~~of~~ in the World, and a third nascent one, for which we did not find an adequate name. Occasionally there are developments from one to the other. Sometimes a denomination may be identified with one of these forms of ethos, but we should avoid any rigid judgement at this point. Sometimes they all subsist in a single denomination. Sometimes they are causing ~~generational~~ conflicts of generations. Sometimes, they subsist in different aspects of the life ~~of~~ of a single congregation, and even sometimes, within a single individual. Instead of rigid concept, what we need in order to describe the phenomena correctly, is to discover "notions which are somewhat liquid, capable of describing phenomena of fusion, ebullition, and interpenetration and which would adapt themselves to living realities in a never ending transformation" (Bastide p. 16)

1. The Church of the Saved.

To many new converts, the experience of conversion means a sharp denial of their lives and religion. Now they have left the world behind and have joined the Church of the Saint, and Saved. They have put away all intermediaries between themselves and God, be they the saints, the priests, the spirits or the Virgin, in order to rely only on Jesus Christ as revealed in the Scriptures and by the Holy spirit. The transformation of life is underlined by the abandonment of vices and "worldly customs". Their entire lives become oriented towards the church and its activities.

Their time and energy are devoted to grasping and propagating the central realities of the evangelical salvation story. They have a more or less intense expectation of the second coming of Jesus.

As far as the state or society are concerned, there is generally a kind of indifference. The persecutions of the "world" are patiently tolerated as a testing by God. In certain communities there is a withdrawal from political life, but a positive recognition of it as an order established by God, therefore deserving of respect and obedience. This sort of socio theological ethos, might perhaps be ascribed to the two-thirds of the Protestant community in Brazil.

By and large, these groups are not members of the Evangelical Confederation of Brazil, and view ecumenism directed from Geneva or from Vatican with suspicion. These sorts of ecumenism are seen as apostasies and as a giving over of the church to the world. But often they are not opposed to a "biblical and spiritual" sort of ecumenism. The declaration of the General Convention of the Assemblies of God in 1962 differentiates between these "two types of ecumenism": a) "fusion of denominations and different religions, without a defined confession of faith (and) b) the Biblical Christian union". If the first of these is accepted, according to this document, they "would be betraying Christ and the Bible; (they) would be denying bluntly the causes which gave rise to the Reformation of the XVIth century, causes which (they recognize remain real in our days; (they) would therefore be betraying and becoming unworthy of those who have been martyred for the love of the faith..." (Mensagem de Paz, 1962).

But within the groups which ascribe to this ethos there have been many changes. Some are beginning to approach the Evangelical Confederation. As their community grows, they are beginning to be sought out by politicians for their potential support, creating a beginning of political awareness. Some members of these groups have even been elected to government^{al} posts, including one State and a Federal Deputies.

This ethic of thrift, industriousness and abstention from "illicit" pleasures have determined better economic standards, and higher educational possibilities for many families. Some people have prospered, from their small shops into midum size industries, with all the attendant consequences for human and social outlook. There are cases, ~~where~~ where a small programs for assistance among the "brethren" have developed into general public service agencies.

We should, perhaps always open to the possibility that the seeds of the "Una, Sancta, C_atolica Apostolica", are present and alive even in situations where a rather sharp sectarian attitude can be detected. If we examine the

asceticism, the hymns, and the language used, it is possible to see that, at least partially, the socio theological model for this ethos, is the Biblical narrative of Exodus. Israel had to leave Egypt, and solely trusting God, had to cross the desert to reach Canaan. Egypt is the world; it may indicate the places where they have come from, to start a new life in the cities. As Scarpati has indicated for the Italian situation, it might well be the case that this type of ethos, helps people through the passage from a pre-technical civilization to the modern technical civilization.

2. The Church in the World.

Some denominations have a solid doctrine of the Church's presence in the world. Others are growing toward this type of outlook, partly led by new sociological realities with which they are living. For instance, the member of a church which started among the poor may be developing into a middle class type of life. Members of these churches may be starting to enter the university or graduating from it. Or else an immigrant community, which once functioned in a foreign language and culture, may see their second and third generations becoming a part of Brazilian life. This means a complex of new relationships with social, political and cultural environments. For the Italian, German and Japanese communities, the eclosion of the Second World War, was a turning point in this sense. Too opportunities for social mobility in the present Brazilian society, brings these changes very rapidly to all churches. While there are always new members being recruited in the lower strata of society, the older members of these churches are rapidly ascending socially. Another factor tending in the same direction is the establishment and evolution of the Protestant institutions.

The evolution of these institutions might give us further clarification how the "church in the world" ethos has developed: some of these institutions (schools, hospitals, etc.) began as an (a) instrument for self defense, of the minority group; they straved to fulfill certain conditions which would permit them to be recognized by the city, state or federal authorities as being of (b) public utility; in some cases institutions ought excellency in the quality of service rendered, eventually becoming a kind of (c) model institution. In a few cases, leaders in these institutions, or pastors of churches have been called to participate in the (d) formulation of some regional or national policies.

Many examples could be cited for the last point. A Methodist pastor was invited by a city government to sit on the projects-examining committee for social development of the city. A Baptist medical doctor, who haveing been the director of a kind of model evangelical hospital, had helped to change the medical

policies of the city in order to provide better service to the masses, was recently named Secretary of Health of his State. A Presbyterian pastor and law professor was named Secretary of Education for his state. Another Presbyterian pastor was made a member of the Federal Council of Education. The Federal authorities for the Children's Welfare programme have invited the Evangelical Confederation of Brazil to send a representative to ~~the Board~~ be a member of their Board.

Additionally many protestants have been elected either to political posts or are occupying higher level administrative positions. All of this indicates that the Protestant community ^{ies} are becoming full partners in the socio-political ^{structure} of the country. And the Church has to define herself as a church in the World.

^{must?} What does a minority church do, which has reached this position? What kind of spiritual and human vision are the protestant communities offering their members? What kind of feed back comes from these people to their communities? One can see at least, that there is a tremendous task for theologians in Brazil in coming years, for deepening and broadening the socio-theological ethos, all the while taking ecclesiological questions seriously.

^d By in large, the socio-theological model of the "church in the world" ethos is that of Israel among the nations. As Israel ^{wishes} to have a king like the other nations, so the Protestant church in Brazil may be sometimes, be trying to achieve status among other institutions of the country. This model, although giving a certain degree of satisfaction to many, seems to be too prone to the temptations which are inherent in this type of ethos, as was the case with Israel. One can ask whether this ethos is helping creatively, those who participate in the making of decisions affecting the masses of the country.

Should it not be a matter for serious self examination by the churches that the overwhelming majority of the Protestant politicians are on the side of the present military government? The positive, appreciative words which Protestant communities have been hearing from the country's highest authorities on the occasions of their General Conferences, or anniversary celebrations, should not soften the role of the "salt of the earth" and "light of the world". Prophetic voices are needed in our contemporary life in Brazil.

Being in a situation of minority does not necessarily prevent a church from having nostalgia for the Constantinian era. If not for its revival, at least to experience it. In this situation, should not one study carefully the Israel's dispersion, the lives of prophets, and the way in which Jesus dealt with the

reality of Israel and ~~nations~~ other nations? The question here seems to be one of the nature of God's promises to Israel and to the nations. It is the question, very much discussed today, of the nature of Christian vocation in the world.

3. What would happen if the Brazilian Protestant community were to begin and understand sympathetically the history of the nation? What would happen if it began to realize the wholeness of the dimensions of new life to which is called, its heights, depths, breadths and lengths? What would happen if this new life were expressed in community life, and in its style of participation in worldly affairs? What if it grew in communion with the saints, "in all places, and all times"? Would new creative thinkers be produced? Would artists, musicians, architects and poets appear who would help to give new life to Brazilian culture, and outlook to life and history? Would new creative politicians appear on the scene?!

There are voices today in Brazil, outside of, or on the edges of, the so called Christian churches, which are asking for, and praying for these possibilities to become realities. One such is the eminent Brazilian cultural anthropologist, Gilberto Freyre, who in the Conference on Church and Society held in Recife, in 1962, put this challenge to the churches: "Despite the growth in numbers of Evangelical Christians in our country, there has not yet appeared a Brazilian of genius born Protestant, nurtured in the Evangelical milieu and identified with the Evangelical interpretation of Brazilian life and culture, who has become a great writer of prose or poetry in the Portuguese language; or a musician who composes Brazilian music made by this inspiration or interpretation; or an architect ... who ~~is~~ developed for the Evangelical churches in the tropics and architecture which is not an imitation of the Roman Catholic nor a reproduction of Anglo-Saxon or Teutonic Protestant style... It is curious that, up to now, Evangelical Christianity has only contributed important grammarians to the Brazilian culture: Otoniel Motta, Educardo Carlos Pereira, Jeronimo Gueiros. It is time that Brazilian Evangelical Christianity goes beyond this and contributes ... a writer of the magnitude and revolutionary flame ... of Euclides da Cunha; a poet of the stature of Manoel Bandeira; a composer like Villa-Lobos, who would compose (music) which would be an Evangelical and Brazilian interpretation of Bach. Or a revolutionarily evangelical caricaturist or playwright who, through the means of their art could denounce the abuses of the rich which preserve a system of class privileges, and yet pretend to pose themselves as the defenders of religious traditions or what they sometimes call, pompously and hypocritically Christian civilization" (Freyre pp. 62-63).

This third ethos which is only nascent, would englobe all the things, "ta panta", of the life in Brazil. Would bring forward the needs of the masses, and the church would find herself identified with ~~it~~ them. Would recognize that she is part of the same humanity, a part, which by grace have come to know the Lord above all.

Therefore in a time of great opportunities and important advances achieved does not rest at the contrary following the example of the Master Jesus Christ King of the universe

Wasn't it for something like this, that invited a Protestant politician invited the evangelical communities to grow, when he said: "We are not in this position to represent the interests of the Protestant communities in particular. We have been elected by the Brazilian people, and we should be representing their real needs and hopes"!

There is today in Brazil, among the Evangelical communities a growth in awareness which comes about slowly, now through a secular event, or a biblical study, then through painful strife with obsolete structures and reactionary forces. Important advances have been made. Tremendous opportunities lie ahead. But exactly herein lies the great temptations of the moment: either to rest and preserve these achievements, or to be caught in the race towards the attainment of always greater status and privileges in the society.

The calling of the moment seems to be to carefully scrutinize the authentic life resources of the church, and to move from an achievement orientation to a servant orientation.

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