

THE DEVELOPMENT OF RELIGIOUS

PLURALISM IN BRAZIL

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My acknowledgements are due to
Simon Mitchell who always called
for renewed effort when my own
convictions flagged.

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This thesis considers the character and growth of religious pluralism in Brazil and the direction and status this plurality has taken and acquired in the 20th. Attention is focused on the development and formation of folk catholicism, the Afro cults and Spiritualist oriented religions - Macumba, Umbanda and Kardecism.

Primarily, it delineates and describes those specific historical and contemporary socio-structural and religious circumstances in which the differing religious groups have emerged, maintained themselves, and become modified.

Secondly, it considers transformative implications that the various religious groups have had for Brazilian society, and discusses the role of these groups as initiators or mediators of change. On the one hand, it explains the religions varied attempts to make paradoxical or incomprehensible aspects of daily life intelligible and morally acceptable, and describes their efforts to relate both ordinary and unexpected occurrences in the natural and social universe to imminent or transcendent principles of order. On the other hand, this thesis is also concerned with the politico-economic conservative or radical qualities of these religious innovations. Although membership of the various religious groups in Brazil does improve the social status of the individual amongst his peers and often within wider society, I consider whether such improvements tend generally to act as bulwarks against change at a more extensive level, or can be explicitly directed to action in the political sphere.

Initially, these above considerations are introduced through an analytical framework that uses the observations of Peter Berger, Mary Douglas and Victor Turner as a theoretical base. Thus in chapters I and II, I explain how the specific, internal dynamic, or the internal articulation,

construction and maintenance of a religious organisation and its corresponding beliefs, is the focal point for illustrating how a particular religious group is both a "model of" and a "model for" the social conditions out of which it originally arose. The balanced relationship that exists between the beliefs and organisation of a particular religious group is a microcosm of the balance and relationship that exists between this group and the wider society, or other religious groups. That is to say, the mechanisms whereby the various religious groups maintain and construct themselves and socialise new members are a direct reflection of the character of those wider secular exigencies which gave them birth. Similarly, the influence that the religious group has on background social structures is contained, or limited by, both its wider structural origins and its internal dynamic.

By exploring this three way process in the history and development of any religion and studying the way in which this dynamic articulation of beliefs and organisation mediates wider structural conditions, both the historical and present status of C20th Brazilian plurality is illustrated.

Chapter II describes the singular Roman Catholic history of Brazil that has both influenced and impeded the formation of all alternative religious groups. The colonial Church established in the country in the C16th was an exact replica and extension of the one current in Portugal. Roman Catholicism became the overriding institution in most realms of society, continually upholding and defining public morality. However, the Church's influence and monopolistic, supernaturally sanctioned authority over both spiritual and temporal affairs was only maintained and guaranteed through her identification with, and manipulation by, the State and its elite. These latter could, in turn, rely on Roman Catholicism's

moral authority to justify and legitimate their own political activities.

This religious situation remained intact throughout the colony and Empire until the end of the C19th, when the distinct pattern of Church/State interdependence was ruptured by the creation of the Republic in 1889 and the consequent separation of the Church from the State in 1891.

Yet, today, despite a brief period during the early C20th, when the Church sought to attain autonomy in Brazil, many vestiges of her pre-Republican characteristics remain. The State still regards Roman Catholicism as the official religion of the country and continues to monitor the Church's activity.

In contrast, chapters IV, V, VI, VII and VIII describe the effect and impact that this peculiar development of Brazilian Catholicism has had on the emergence of alternative religious groups and their followings over the centuries. Not all Brazilians have been adequately satisfied by official Roman Catholic explanations of their socio-structural positions and of every day events. As a result, these religious groups discarded those aspects of Roman Catholicism which they found unfavourable to their particular socio-economic circumstances and created alternative religious beliefs and salvational comforts better suited to their immediate needs.

Chapter IV examines the way in which folk catholicism has established itself as a continuing separate and plausible religious reality. Chapters V and VI deal with similar features of the Afro cults, while chapters VII and VIII illustrate the increasing influence of Kardecism on these folk catholic and Afro groups and the consequent emergence of Macumba and Umbanda.

Finally, chapter IX assesses the main conclusions reached in this thesis. Although it is demonstrated that the responses of alternative religious groups in Brazil have been limited and restricted by background socio-structural conditions and are constantly being modified in light of differing socio-economic experiences, folk catholicism, the Afro cults and the Spiritualist groups have all asserted alternative world views which reject the authority of the Roman Catholic Church. All have their own religious framework of beliefs about the supernatural and salvation, and all advocate correct patterns of religious and secular social relationships and roles through which these concepts are made tangible and meaningful. These beliefs provide the ethical and intellectual grounds for concrete existential and moral judgements on the appropriate action necessary to bridge the gap between experiences and aspirations. The problems associated with the former therefore become either tolerable or alterable, and moral imperatives make difficult situations endurable.

This thesis affirms that a consonance of structure exists between the actual construction of a religious group (the articulation of its beliefs and organisation) and the character of its socio-structural origins. In general, the less structured a group of people (e.g. folk catholics and the Afro cult members) in relation to the whole of Brazilian society, the less formal and organised their religious response, and therefore the less influential their religion on wider social structures. For the most part, the consonance displayed between the internal dynamics of these groups and their socio-structural origins brings about social change only at the individual level within the established status quo and acts as a brake or conservative force on religious resolutions or proposals for change at the wider secular level.

However, the Spiritualist religions of Umbanda and Kardecism have a wider social influence and are currently gaining popular and middle class support, over and against official Roman Catholicism. Although their political and economic transformative potential is limited by State surveillance, these Spiritualist groups today are beginning to gain a greater national following that fosters a growing awareness of their adherents social and political positions within Brazil.

Brazil has been described as "the most Catholic nation of our time" or "the major Catholic country of present days".¹ In the government census of 1950,² however doubtful self-classification may be, 90% of the population claimed itself Roman Catholic.

Yet, the religious situation in Brazil is far from being as uniform as these figures would illustrate. Although it is quite possible that even 70% of Brazilians have been baptised, this is not necessarily an accurate account of the membership of the Roman Catholic Church, and if measures of religiosity are taken on the observance of sacramental precepts,³ then Brazil emerges as a country quite indifferent, for the most part, to strict Catholic traditions. Orthodox belief, resting on the teachings of Aquinas, has played little part in the lives of the majority of Brazilians. Azevedo writes:

"If to be exact, we wanted to describe the religious spirit of our people, we would have to confess too much "religiosidade", religion far less ---. But religiosidade --- that innate sentimentality, that inborn deep propensity towards mysterious things --- and religion are quite different". 4.

"Our Catholicism is a Catholicism of petty words and exterior acts which does not live in the conscience of the people". 5

1) T. de Azevedo 1960 "Social Change in Brazil" p.58 C. Wagley 1963 "An Introduction to Brazil" p.233.

2) Anuario Estatístico do Brazil 1950.93.5% of the population is recorded as Roman Catholic.

3) T. Cloin C.S.S.R. 1957-58 "Aspects Socio-Religieuses et Sociographiques du Brésil" p.227 Sociaal Kompas V/VI

According to the degree of participation in sacramental precepts, Cloin plots statistics for three groups of practising Roman Catholics: Conformists, Observers, Devotional.

This question of religiosity and its validity as an analytical tool will be discussed more fully in chapter IV, when other indices that have been established to measure the religiosity of Brazilian Catholics will also be explained.

4) Quoted by a Brazilian Bishop in T. de Azevedo 1955 "O Catolicismo no Brazil" p.27

5) T. de Azevedo 1955 op.cit.(Eng.translat)p.257

Brazilian Catholicism, despite its status as the official religion of the country until 1890, and its continuing influence in the 20th, has always been an eclectic rather than dogmatic religion. Although the clergy have always condemned those who have overtly rejected their Roman Catholic faith inherited at birth, they have generally paid little attention to any cooling or religious ardour and the concomitant tendency towards "religiosidade" rather than pure Roman Catholic worship.

Nevertheless, Catholicism has emerged as an all encompassing feature of Brazilian life, traditionally and historically shaping the behaviour of a large part of the population but which in doctrinal and theological terms has become distorted, or has managed to retain only a partial and cursory attention from many of its professed adherents.

It is against this distinctive and historical development of Brazilian Catholicism that the fluidity of religious allegiance in Brazil and the emergence of the present plural situation will be analysed.⁶

During the colonial and Imperial periods, the "religiosidade" described by the Brazilian priest mainly took the form of popular or folk Catholicism (similar to that of Catholic Europe)⁷ but which with the

6)c.f. R. Robertson 1969 "Sociology of Religion" p.163
Robertson prefers to use the term "mixed" rather than plural to refer to such societies as Brazil and Chile, where instead of distinctly competing religious orientations(c.f.U.S.A. or Britain) a greater mixing of religious tendencies relatively alien to each other" has taken place.

However, even though such syncretism occurs, this does not mean that the religions existent in Brazil and Chile do not insist on their separateness and independence from others, although all possess similar elements. In fact, in Brazil, it is very noticeable that Umbanda, a syncretic religion par excellence, insists on independent and separate status as a distinct religion, and makes great efforts to verify this through manipulation of its own history.

7)c.f. M. Kenny 1961 "A Spanish Tapestry: Town and Country in Castile". C. Chapman 1971 "Milocca: A Sicilian Village". R. T. Anderson 1973 "Modern Europe: An Anthropological Perspective". A.L. Maraschini 1968 "The Study of an Italian Village" J.A. Pitt Rivers 1954 "The People of the Sierra".

introduction of slaves from the West Coast of Africa, became tinged with African religious and folk beliefs. Much later, in the 19th, the African cult groups such as Candomblé, Batuque and Xango⁸ emerged, emphasizing and focusing specifically on these African beliefs and traditions.

In 1824, certain non-Catholic religions, mainly the various Protestant groups, were allowed freedom of worship in Brazil. As a result, many Protestant missionaries and evangelicals travelled to the country in search of converts to their faith, while their numbers were swelled by the German and Polish immigrants beginning to settle on the coffee fazendas of the South and in the industrial zones of São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro. Today, however, it appears that amongst these Protestant groups⁹ it is the Pentecostalist sects which are most numerous and rapidly increasing in popularity and personnel.¹⁰

8) The names of the cult groups vary with locality, while it must be remembered that although they emphasized an allegiance to African beliefs and traditions, their members also consisted of the poorer sectors of the white and caboclo population, besides slaves and negro freemen.

9) E. Williams 1967 "Followers of the New Faith" appendix V.

For 1958, he lists 21 major Protestant groups in Brazil, but includes in this the main Pentecostal sects.

W.R. Read 1965 "New Patterns of Church Growth in Brazil" p.214.

He lists the communicant membership figures for 1964 of eight Protestant(including Pentecostal)groups. In fact this book is an extremely useful historical survey of the more recent development of various Protestant Churches in Brazil.

Other statistics can be found in:

E. Braga & K. Grubb 1932 "The Republic of Brazil: A Survey of the Religious Situation" P. Damboriena S.J. 1964 "El Protestantismo en América Latina".

10) B. Muñiz da Souza 1969 "A Experiência da Salvação Pentecostais" p.17

In 1958, 55% of Protestant groups were Pentecostals. In 1960, this figure had risen to 60%.

M. Davis 1943 "How the Church grows in Brazil".
W. Hollenweger 1972 "The Pentecostals". A.Moura 1971 "O Pentecostalismo como Fenômeno Religioso Popular no Brasil", Revista Eclesiástica Brasileira XXXI p.78-94.
A. Walker 1968 "Where Pentecostalism is Mushrooming"
Christian Century LXXXV (Jan.17th)

During the later half of the 19th, Kardecism, a spiritualist religion based on the teachings and writings of Allan Kardec, began to filter into Brazil from America and Europe and in several instances was adopted and modified by various African cult groups to form the basis of a new religion, Umbanda.

Since 1958, Kardecism has, in fact, been recognized as an official religion by the Brazilian government, but Umbanda, the Afro-cults and folk catholicism are still looked upon as 'devious', 'heretical' and 'pagan',¹¹ by some Roman Catholic ecclesiasts, while the first two groups are still often viewed by the state authorities as potentially subversive, as threats to public peace, and are therefore subject to police harassment and official discrimination.¹²

Several other minority groups also exist relatively peacefully in Brazil, numerically headed by such sects as the Seventh Day Adventists, Jehovah Witnesses, and Church of the Latter Day Saints or Mormons.¹³

11) C.P. Camargo 1961 "Aspectos Sociologicos del Espiritismo en São Paulo" p.23

The introduction to this book is written by Boaventura Kloppenburg, the Grand Inquisitor appointed by the Roman Catholic Church to survey and report on all Spiritualist religions.

"Es, sin embargo, innegable, la proliferación verdaderamente espantosa de esos centros de superstición, liviandad, depravación, degradación moral y locura, en que se mezclan prácticas fetichistas --- en un sincretismo bárbaro de nigromancia, magia, politeísmo, demonolatría y hereja".

12) D. Warren 1965 "The Negro and Religion in Brazil" p.210 Race VI,3 pp.199-216

13) W. Read 1965 op.cit.p.205

The Adventists, in 1964, were estimated to have penetrated most Brazilian States, and to total 60,000 members. They operate their own radio and teaching programmes.

The Jehovah Witnesses were mostly urban based and numbered c.300,000. Although not harassed by the police much popular literature is written against them.

For the purposes of this study, it is obviously impossible to analyse the development and contemporary positions of all these groups constituting the plurality of the Brazilian religious situation. The range of this thesis will be limited to the Afro cults, Umbanda and Kardecism, surveyed against the Roman and folk catholic background of Brazil.

Discussing this question of religious plurality, Willems has extensively explained the effect of Protestantism on Latin American traditions (in Brazil and Chile) and its implications for social change. He asserts that Protestantism, paradoxically, both "causes" and is "caused by" cultural change.¹⁴ Several hypotheses¹⁵ are used to test this assertion within a "broad 'structural - functionalist'" framework of "what Protestantism 'does' to the societies of Brazil and Chile and what specific conditions in the texture of these societies have been instrumental in generating Protestant deviation from religious norms and folkways".¹⁶

Any modifications that might have occurred in the Protestant doctrine through its contact with Brazilian traditions are analysed by Willems vis à vis the proliferation of the Pentecostal churches¹⁷ which appear to

14) E. Willems 1967 op.cit. p.12

15) Idem

The three major hypotheses are:

- a) the compatibility of Protestantism with certain features of traditional social structures and "emotional" aspects of folk religion.
- b) the emergence of Protestantism where traditional structures are breaking down.
- c) the sectarian nature of Protestantism which offers a deliberate attempt to find the best solutions for all social needs.

16) Idem p.V

17) Idem part Iv p.103

Specific modifications are those such as "Baptism by the Holy Ghost" and "Speaking in Tongues", features very similar to the spirit possession of the Afro cults and Umbanda groups.

c.f. E. Willems 1966 "Religious Mass Movements and Social Change" in E. Baklanoff (ed.) "New Perspectives of Brazil"

be better adapted to, or better able to cope with, the conditions of Brazilian life, especially as industrialization steadily increases during the C20th.

However, for all this, one gains the impression that the essential fundamentalism of traditional Protestant and Pentecostal evangelism has prevented any form of mergence or modification of beliefs¹⁸ comparable to that which has taken place between the Afro and Spiritualist religious groups themselves and with Roman and folk catholicism. Compatibilities may be found between the Protestant groups and Brazilian traditions (the originally identical Christian base of each obviously attributing to these), and may account for the attraction and popularity of the former religion, but on the whole, these compatibilities have remained distinctly separate alternatives.

On the other hand, the growth of the Afro cults and the Kardecist groups within Brazil is of a rather different nature. Without denying that initially these two religions may have fortuitously possessed certain beliefs and concepts of the supernatural easily compatible with the Brazilian Catholic traditions they contacted, there has, for the most part, been a great deal of mergence, diffusion, and modification between these groups and their Roman and folk Catholic background. The epitome of such syncretism is illustrated by the emergence and character of Umbanda.¹⁹

18)c.f.B. Muñiz de Souza 1969 op.cit.

The author pursues the idea of mergence and diffusion between the various Pentecostal groups in Brazil by placing them at differing points on a church-sect continuum. However, this diffusion is placed strictly within the Protestant (Pentecostal) tradition and has no syncretic interaction with either Catholic or Spiritualist beliefs.

19)c.f. Chapter V

Consequently in discussing the role of religion in the context of a plural situation, this process of syncretization must be adequately explained in its historical perspective and even suggests another question that could be considered: the problem of when a set of beliefs can be defined as (or is defined as such by its adherents) a new religion.

Thus, having discussed the area of study to be employed in assessing and accounting for the present religious plurality of Brazil, initially I wish to take into consideration the fact that religion is so often a neglected dimension in the examination of historical processes of social change. Attention is usually focused on economic underdevelopment, political radicalism or technology, rather than on those elements such as religion whose links with any societal transformations seem less obvious, but which do usually play an influential part in social development. Consequently, the first aim of this thesis is to stress the necessity for exploring the historical impact of religion in the evolution of Brazilian society. The emphasis will be on religion as a system of beliefs, symbols and values, together with the organizational structures these engender, rather than on a discussion of such features as measures of religiosity, recruitment to the religious group or priestly vocation.

There has frequently been a tendency to dismiss religion as a "special category"; one which concerns the supernatural and is therefore not of the same rational order as economic or political activity.²⁰ Similarly, especially during the late C19th, religion was viewed as inappropriate to industrial societies, a phenomenon whose significance diminished as societies evolved to a more advanced condition.²¹

20) A. E. Crawley 1927 "The Mystic Rose" J. Frazer 1922 "The Golden Bough" R. Marett 1914 "The Threshold of Religion"

21) S. Budd 1973 "Sociologists and Religion" p.2-5
The author discusses the C19th. Positivist attitude towards religion.

Today, because of the apparent decline of religion in secular society, religion is often seen as a residue which has outlived its usefulness, and whose impact is now greatest among those groups of people, marginal to the political and economic aspects of modern society.

c.f.E. Evans Pritchard 1965 "Theories of Primitive Religion" p.15-16

From a Marxist perspective, religion may be considered a sop, or psychological compensation for present conditions, blinding men to the fact that they alone are responsible for those conditions. Marx, following Feuerbach,²² sees religion as a form of human consciousness which deforms and inverts reality because it obscures man's assessment of his real situation.

"Philosophy makes no secret of it. Prometheus's admission 'In sooth all gods I hate' is its own admission; its motto against all gods, heavenly and earthly, who do not acknowledge the consciousness of man as the supreme divinity".²³

"Man makes religion, religion does not make man ----- Religion is only the illusory sun which revolves around man as long as he does not revolve around himself ----- Religious distress is at the same time the expression of real distress and the protest against real distress. Religion is the sigh of the oppressed creature, the heart of a heartless world, just as it is the spirit of a spiritless situation. It is the opium of the people".²⁴

The following data and analysis neither negate or oppose this often quoted statement, the task is rather to find an adequate explanation for the religious pluralism in Brazil; the historical factors and reasons for its growth and existence, and the direction this plurality has taken in the 20th. Whether or not this process is to be considered an opiate is open to debate, but such a consideration is marginal to the main body of this thesis.²⁵

22)c.f. L. Feuerbach 1854 "The Truth of Religion" in N. Birnbaum & G. Lenzer (eds)1969 "The Sociology of Religion".

23) K. Marx & F. Engels (reprint)1972 "On Religion" p.13; taken from "The Difference between the Natural Philosophy of Democritus and the Natural Philosophy of Epicurus".

24) Idem p.37-38; taken from "Critique on Hegel's Philosophy of Right".

25)c.f. Z. Barbu 1970 "Sociological Perspectives in Art and Literature" p.12 in J. Creedy (ed.) "The Social Context of Art"

"The first aim of the sociology of art is to locate a work of art in the structure of its society --- This need not necessarily imply the acceptance in toto or even in part, of the Marxist conception of society, according to which art, together with other cultural manifestations, such as religion --- are reflections in human consciousness or economically determined class relationship".

c.f. B. Muniz de Souza 1969 op.cit. p.9.

The historical background of Brazil will be used as the framework within which the role of religion as a significant factor in social change and development will be explored. The major problems of such an exercise are in trying to explain the articulation and interaction of two or more co-existent religions. Consequently, rather than focus on one specific character or ritual of each religion in turn and its relationship to social conditions, the emergence and growth of each religious group will be analysed over a period of time. Primarily, those socio-structural events that influenced the development of the groups will be taken into consideration, as well as the influence each group has had on the others. A model is needed which works convincingly for a particular religious group in society rather than for a specific point in that religion's development; a model which will explain the historical origins of a given religion, its manipulation by historical personalities and groups, and the cross fertilisation of ideas and traditions between such groups. Emphasis will therefore be placed on the historical process of construction of the various religions in Brazil, with specific reference to the total religious and socio-structural situation from which they have emerged and in which they continue to exist.

To summarise, this thesis intends to examine the social, economic and political roles of the various religious groups in Brazil, in relation to specific historical and contemporary socio-cultural circumstances in which these groups have survived, maintained themselves, and become modified or caused transformations.

However, to understand the problems encountered in dealing historically with a number of co-existent religious groups and the theoretical bases out of which a model is evolved to solve these problems, there follows a very brief resume of the major interpretations of the role of religion in social life.

According to Robertson²⁶ any explanation of "religion in general" can be characterized as stating that religious beliefs are found where human beings feel unable to account for and provide adequate understanding of such events as natural catastrophes, physical illness and death.²⁷ Consequently, people have to rely on some force with greater power than themselves which holds the answers and solution to these deficiencies.

On the other hand, many explanations of "religion-in-particular" indicate the type of response created by certain structural conditions and illustrate the internal logic and coherency of such solutions.²⁸

Corresponding to these two viewpoints, the creation, emergence and development of a religious system has frequently been analysed from two contrary, though not conflicting positions.

The "structuralist" perspective, broadly speaking, places emphasis on the social sources of religion in terms of the experiences of individuals located in specific situations within the society. By outlining these social forces which produce and sustain a religion, it attempts to ascertain the conditions (and constant factors among these conditions) under which religious beliefs arise and persist.

26) R. Robertson 1970 "The Sociological Interpretation of Religion". p.25

27) c.f. B. Malinowski 1954 "Magic, Science & Religion". T. Parsons 1952 "Religious Perspectives in Sociology and Social Psychology" in W. Lessa & E. Vogt 1965 "Reader in Comparative Religion" p.128-133.

28) c.f. B. Wilson 1970 "Religious Sects". R. Poblete 1960 "A Sociological Approach to the Sects" Social Kompass V/VI p.383-406.

Basically, this structural, general approach to the genesis of religion is the one adopted by Durkheim when he commits himself to the belief that social phenomena should be explained in social terms and not be reduced to individual or psychological factors.²⁹

"Religion for Durkheim is a social fact. It arises out of the nature of social life itself, in the simpler societies, bound up with other social facts, law, economics, art etc., which later separate out from it and lead their own independent existences".³⁰

Communal sentiments generated by human association are not recognized by the individual as being of his own creation, but are represented in his mind as the creation of supernatural essences or gods, quite distinct from his own private existence. As such, the communal sentiments symbolically transmuted in religious beliefs, are accorded a peculiar respect and reverence denied to the properties of the profane world.

"A religion is a unified system of beliefs and practices, relative to sacred things. That is to say, things set apart and forbidden - beliefs and practices which unite into one single moral community called a church, all those who adhere to them." ³¹

Religious beliefs are manifestations of social life itself, and because of man's subservience to this collective, sacred, social life which surrounds him, are major factors in maintaining the solidarity, cohesion, integration, and continuity of society.

Durkheim set out to prove this theory by taking totemism as a test case and arguing that it was the most simple or primitive form of religion. The social structure of totemism provides a model for the classification of

- 29) c.f. P. Radin 1957 "Social Anthropology"
R. Lowie 1928 "Primitive Religion : Its Nature & Origin"
30) E. Evans Pritchard 1965 op.cit. p.55-56
31) E. Durkheim 1954 "Elementary Forms of Religious Life" p.47. c.f. E. Durkheim & M. Mauss 1970 "Primitive Classification"

natural phenomena through the identification of human beings with plants and animals and the designation of kinship groups in such terms. Durkheim's analysis thus attempts to relate the content of religious beliefs to the general characteristics of the social structure and to illustrate the dependency of religious thought on variations in this social structure.³²

In this respect, the ideas of Marx are very similar, but whereas Durkheim argues that religious views are produced by a synthesis of individual minds in collective action, and once produced, have an autonomy and life of their own, Marx explains that the collective consciousness of religion is a mere epiphenomenon of its morphological base. For Durkheim, religion, once brought into existence by collective action in a given structure, gains a certain degree of autonomy and accrues various influential qualities, which can no longer be explained by reference to the social structure which originally gave birth to it. Marx, on the other hand does not view religion as a direct reflection of set structural relationships between individuals and groups, but as a form of social "super-structure", or mirror of the specific processes of social interaction. In man's attempt to master and understand his environment, processes of social exchange create certain group structures centred on economic production. It is the nature of this process of production and the relations between major groups (socio-economic classes) engaged in this production process that create the conditions under which religion arises. Doctrinal forms always tend to take the form of the economic and political structure of society. They are seen as direct translations of social experience so that there is a one to one relationship between economic and social and political circumstances of the individual and the religious ideas to which he adheres.

32) c.f. G. E. Swanson 1960 "The Birth of the Gods".

The author extends the Durkheimian approach to demonstrate how certain characteristics of religious beliefs, such as polytheism and monotheism, correlate with the specific political and economic structures of the society which pursues these beliefs.

"The sum total of these relations of production constitutes the economic structure of society - the real foundation on which rise legal and political superstructures ----- the mode of production in natural life determines the general character of the social, political and spiritual processes of life. It is not the consciousness of men that determines their existence, but on the contrary, their social existence determines their consciousness ----- . With the change of the economic foundation, the entire, immense superstructure is more or less rapidly transformed. In considering such transformation the distinction should always be made between the material transformations of the economic conditions of production which can be determined with the precision of natural science, and the legal, political, religious, aesthetic or philosophic - in short, ideological forms in which men become conscience of this conflict, and fight it out". 33

Marx and Engels³⁴ contend that in the earliest stages of human development, religious beliefs arose from primitive man's helplessness in his struggles with nature, but under antagonistic class society, the social oppression of the working masses and their helplessness in the class structure give birth to, and foster, religious beliefs, emphasizing an eventual reward for earthly sufferings and a better life after death. Religion is thus one of the elements of the superstructure in class society. It depends on the development of social relations between these classes, and while Durkheim illustrates its autonomy and cohesive influence for social solidarity, Marx and Engels view it as a compensatory mechanism in a situation lacking the sociality of which man is theoretically capable. The ultimate elimination of religion will take place when the social and political conditions which foster it are abolished.

However, what both Durkheim and Marx had in common was the contention that, in principle, the structure of particular religious systems, as well as the perpetuation of religion, could be accounted for by reference to social structure.

33) K. Marx 1970 (intro.M. Dobb) "Critique of Political Economy" p.11.

34) K. Marx & F. Engels 1972 op.cit. p.131

Alternatively, apart from the "structuralist" viewpoint, largely influenced by Durkheim and Marx, there are those "cultural" interpretations of religion mostly influenced by the writings of Max Weber. Here, religious beliefs, analytically independent factors, are seen as a determinant of social relations (rather than determined by them) and as having a significant innovative or transformative influence on social behaviour.

Religious beliefs not only arise in a particular social milieu, but also often have a decisive impact upon it. Insofar as they shape, as well as reflect, the social circumstances in which men must act, religious beliefs dramatise the universal dilemma between the pressures of environmental constraints and the possibilities of innovation, or positive efforts to overcome the debilitating effects of these pressures. As a collective attempt to resolve common problems and locate the causes of common suffering, religious systems are free, within certain limits, to impose their own interpretations on the sources of man's ills and to prescribe remedies for them.³⁵

Weber's investigation of the "Protestant Ethic" illustrates how Protestantism, operating in an industrial, technological setting promoted the values and beliefs characteristic of 19th capitalism,³⁶ and determined "the manner in which (these) ideas became effective forces in history".³⁷ However, in his study of world religions³⁸

35) c.f. T. Parsons 1959 "An Approach to the Sociology of Knowledge".

The author illustrates the complex inter-penetration between the ideal and real elements in a concrete social situation. That is, although religious beliefs may arise in response to a certain situation, their ideal facets will help modify this original situation.

36) c.f. Gerth & Mills 1967 "From Max Weber".
"The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism"

37) M. Weber 1967 op.cit. p.20.

38) For a complete survey of these ideas see
M. Weber 1971 (ed. T. Parsons) "Sociology of Religion".

he shifts his interest from the relationship religious beliefs have with the status, power structure, and behaviour of groups composing a society, to a comparative study of social structures and their associated religious ethics.

"The religious determinant of life conduct, however, is also one - only one - of the determinants of the economic ethic. Of course, the religiously determined way of life is itself profoundly influenced by economic and political factors operating within given geographical, political, social and natural boundaries ---. Here we can only attempt to peel off the directive elements in the life-conduct of those social strata which have most strongly influenced the practical ethic of their respective religions. These elements have stamped the most characteristic features upon practical ethics, the features that distinguish one ethic from others; and at the same time, they have been important for the respective economic ethics." 39

The term "economic ethic" includes those actions and aims which are founded in the "psychological and pragmatic contexts of religions"⁴⁰ and is used to explain the way in which the sphere of religious beliefs influence social action.

These brief outlines of Durkheim, Marx, and Weber's thinking have been given because they have influenced subsequent perspectives in analysing religion and have served to highlight the debate between structural and cultural causality, material and ideal factors of social life.

Yet, methodologically and theoretically, this debate all too often degenerates into open conflict. For instance, emphasis on either of these two viewpoints as a prime source of explanation is frequently very deterministic. Glock and Stark's ideas of "relative deprivation"⁴¹ stress the way in which various areas of structural deprivation, economic, ethical, physical, or social, give rise to religious expressions attempting to solve these inadequacies. However, this type of

39) Gerth & Mills 1967 op. cit. p.267-68.

40) Idem p.270.

41) Glock & Stark 1965 "Religion & Society in Tension".

analysis usually omits to explain why a certain movement of religious solution is selected and adopted, or what may be the creative aspects of such movements, the changes it produces in the lives of its adherents or the reaction of wider society towards it.

On the other hand, cultural determinism lives on in studies where emphasis is placed on the overriding causal potency of value or belief systems for social change or non-change. Lewis' "machismo",⁴² Galjart and Hutchinson's "fatalism"⁴³ and Kahl's "modernism and traditionalism"⁴⁴ are all similar in that these values are seen as independent absolute criteria which continue over lengthy periods of time and determine specific attitudes and actions in varied situations.

This tendency to concentrate on one point of view, asserting the causal features of the chosen bias, neglects important aspects of the other side of the coin. Contrarily, if features of the "opposed" explanation inadvertently creep in or have to be unavoidably admitted to elaborate a conclusion, then analysis of data becomes obscure and muddled.⁴⁵

After the work of Marx, Durkheim and Weber, the sociology of religion was rather neglected⁴⁶ until the 1950's and little theoretical advance was made. However, social anthropologists such as Lienhardt and Evans Pritchard did concentrate on the problems connected with analysis of religious phenomena,⁴⁷ and in the last two decades both sociologists and social anthropologists have tended to view the study of religion as part of a more general sociology of culture and knowledge.

42) O. Lewis 1961 "Children of Sanchez."

43) B. Galjart 1967 "Old Patrons & New"
Sociologia Ruralis VII (4) p.335-347

44) J. A. Kahl 1968 "The Measurement of Modernism:
A Study of Values in Brazil & Chile".

45) For an extensive discussion on the structure/
culture debate and its problems c.f. J.D.H. Peel 1968
(mimeo) "Cultural Explanations of Social Change".

46) R. Robertson 1969 op. cit. p.12

47) G. Leinhardt 1961 "Divinity and Experience:
The Religion of the Dinka". G. Evans Pritchard 1971
"The Nuer". 1970 "Nuer Religion".

This alternative view to either a structural or cultural stand is one which maintains that it is neither desirable or possible to establish a definite pattern of priorities with respect to this structural/cultural relationship. Social structural arrangements create problems and tensions calling for resolution, and dispose individuals to behave and act in specific ways. On the other hand, structural arrangements and re-arrangements come about because people act on the basis of beliefs and values and through culturally provided means of communication.

This move towards resolving the structure/culture problem is achieved by insisting on the continual process of interaction between both spheres, rather than determining which has more causal influence over the other, or trying to abstract arbitrarily absolute, causal qualities of each.

Clifford Geertz attempts such a resolution in his studies of Javanese religion,⁴⁸ despite his fears that ideas culled from the theories of Durkheim, Weber, Freud and Malinowski to construct an analytical framework will lead to "arbitrary eclectism, superficial theory-mongering and sheer intellectual confusion."⁴⁹

Geertz tries to re-define more explicitly the concepts of structure and culture in relation to religious phenomena and to treat them as "independently variable yet mutually interdependent factors ---- capable of a wide range of modes on integration with one another."⁵⁰

48) C. Geertz 1960 "Religion of Java", 1968 "Islam Observed."

49) C. Geertz 1965 "Religion as a Cultural System" p.2 in M. Banton (ed.) 1966 "Anthropological Approaches to the Study of Religion A.S.C.III". c.f. P. Hamilton 1974 "Knowledge and Social Structure" p.145.

Hamilton similarly criticizes Berger's attempts to construct an explanation of the processes of social life:

This leads to the "mistaken assumption" that he can "provide an integration of the sociological theories of Marx, Weber & Durkheim, by treating them as equally demonstrable and available, description of social reality---"

50) C. Geertz 1957 "Ritual & Social Change in Java", American Anthropologist LIX p.32-53.

He stresses the fact that he is primarily dealing with "religion as a cultural system"⁵¹ but aims to illustrate its articulation with the social structure from which it arose, and the constant changes both undergo in this process. His use of dichotomies abounds with variations on the theme of religion, the "really real", as both a "model of and a model for"⁵² reality, the social structure, or experience of a social situation.

For Geertz, religion, as a cultural phenomena, is a system of meaning, symbols, beliefs and values in terms of which a pattern of social interaction (social system) takes place. The importance of religion lies in its capacity to serve, for an individual or group, as a framework in terms of which a wide range of experience can be given a meaningful form. As well as interpreting the base and process of social life, religion, or religious symbols, can also shape social activity.

The study of religion is:

"----- therefore a two stage operation; first an analysis of the system of meanings embodied in the symbols which make up the religion proper, and second, the relating of these systems to social-structural and psychological processes." 53

"Religious patterns (such as those I have been discussing) - thus have a double aspect: they are frames of perception, symbolic screens through which experience is interpreted; and they are guides for action, blue-prints for conduct". 54

The individual uses collectively created patterns of meaning (religious symbols) to give form to and make comprehensible his experiences, as well as to provide a pointer to action.

That religion creates and recreates categories through which men observe and act in their environment is also assumed by Victor Turner in his discussion of Ndembu religion.⁵⁵ Religious ritual actions in which

51) C. Geertz 1967 op. cit.

52) Idem p.7

53) Idem p.4

54) C. Geertz 1968 op. cit. p.98.

55)c.f. V. Turner 1970 "Forest of Symbols", 1968 "Drums of Affliction", 1969 "The Ritual Process".

the religious beliefs of the Ndembu are symbolized and tangibly acted out, serve as "multi-faceted mnemonics".⁵⁶ Religious symbols are "storage units" of information, each facet or unit corresponding to a specific cluster of values, norms, beliefs, social roles, and relationships. Yet, although they act as "storehouses" of traditional knowledge, such symbols are also "power houses" in the sense that they can generate and induce modifications in this traditional knowledge. Via religion, man can assess his immediate experiences over and against traditional knowledge and norms, and accordingly, using religious symbols, can re-focus his knowledge to correspond to and incorporate, or possibly reject these new experiences.

Through analysing the actual content of the ritual symbols of a religious system, Turner specifically and explicitly highlights the working mechanism of the interactive process demonstrated by Geertz. For example, Nkanga,⁵⁷ the Ndembu puberty ritual for girls is the point at which a nubile girl is converted to a mature woman, aware of rights and duties on marriage. However, at the same time, several conflicting principles of Ndembu social organization, matriliney v virilocality, mother's influence v daughter's, bride's kin v groom's kin, are all made explicit, brought tangibly into the public arena of social life, and resolved through "the ritual process".

Turner's analysis of the lives and relationships of immediate actors is a microhistory in which he demonstrates a process of interaction between social structures and religious symbolic systems. Yet, he tends towards a Durkheimian view of the maintenance of social solidarity and cohesion, because the ritual synthesis he studies is not a synthesis at a higher level, transcending both the original thesis (social structure) and antithesis (conflicts inherent in the social structure), but is merely a series of repeated

56) V. Turner 1968 op.cit. p.1.

57) V. Turner 1969 op.cit. p.42.

and balanced oppositions. However, his ideas on ritual symbols as both "storehouses" and "power houses" of knowledge, especially in his analysis of the qualities of liminal rituals and marginal situations,⁵⁸ can be used as an explanatory model for encompassing historical facts and processes.

This historical perspective, however, although lacking Turner's intense emphasis on the actual mechanisms and qualities of the religious process, is illustrated by Geertz when he compares the differential development of Islam in Java and Indonesia.⁵⁹ He examines how varied social-structural situations have affected the practice of Islam in each country.

"They both incline toward Mecca; but the antipodes of the Muslim world, they bow in opposite directions." 60

His analysis includes a comparative, descriptive sequence of religious and social events in both countries, and of the major symbolic conceptual themes which were produced, and which continue or vary throughout time in relation to the social systems of each country.

So far then, a way has been pointed to the theoretical base on which to build an explanatory model for examining the historical process of interaction between a religion and its socio-structural background. However, these still remain problems if the processual analysis already outlined is used in an attempt to handle a plural religious situation such as that of Brazil. In this case, the whole complex of interaction between several co-existent religious groups, some now recognized as established Churches, others of a sectarian nature and still lacking officially authorized existence, must be explained.

58) Idem chap.III.

Turner's ideas on liminality and marginal social situations will be later examined in chapter VI, in relation to the religious groups existing in Brazil.

59)c.f.G. Geertz 1968 op. cit.

60) Idem p.1.

Admittedly, there are analyses of plural societies outlining the relationship and balance between the mixing forces taking place between different religious groups on the one hand, and the conflicting disintegrative forces on the other. Herberg⁶¹ illustrates how in C20th U.S.A. shared common values of "Protestant, Catholic, Jew" counteract differences between the religious beliefs and organization of these groups.

"----- a thoroughgoing secularization of religion in which conventional religion --- has been integrated into the "common religion" of the American Way -- the "common faith" which all Americans have by virtue of their participation in the American way of life". 62

Similarly, Geertz concludes that the conflicts of the religious groups in industrializing Java, (Abangan, syncretic Islam/Hindu village culture; Santri, Islam/peasant culture; Prijaji, Hindu/bureaucratic culture) are resolved through their common allegiance to an overriding belief in national unity. A new elite emerges based on and directing this value, and adopting as its focus certain religious ritual common to all three groups.⁶³

In Brazil there is no such overriding national ideal cementing the various religious groups, although since 1930 nationalistic sentiment has greatly increased.⁶⁴ Comparable to the data presented by Herberg and Geertz, a continued syncretization towards Kardecist values does actually appear to be taking place amongst the African Caboclo and Spiritualist groups but to see this as ultimately modifying and resolving the various religious conflicts and differences would be much too simple an explanation,

61) W. Herberg 1955 "Protestant, Catholic, Jew".

62) W. Herberg 1961 "Religion in a Secular Society: Some Aspects of America's Three Religion Pluralism" p.600. in L. Schneider 1968 "Religion, Culture & Society".

63)c.f. C. Geertz 1960 op. cit.

64)c.f. B. Burns 1968 "Nationalism in Brazil"
T. E. Skidmore 1974 "Black into White".

and would lose sight of the mechanisms of syncretization and interaction, both historical and contemporary, between, and within, independent religions.

In fact, if the construction and character of Brazil's plural religious situation is to be adequately explained, then besides outlining the interaction of the various religious groups with their socio-structural background, the internal dynamics of each group must be examined.

Geertz's processual analysis demonstrates that religious beliefs and practices arise as a result of experiences within certain social situations. This religious response then acts back upon the social structure which furnished the original experience. This explanation, however, tends to bypass the internal dynamics of the construction and maintenance of the religious group itself. In the case of Brazil, his analysis would tend to concentrate solely upon the interaction between Afro cults/Spiritualist groups and the wider society, without explaining the mechanisms within each group which sustain and maintain this religious reality as a "model of" and "model for" social structures. His analysis might also explain the continual movement towards Kardecism as a result of the values of this group being better adapted to and offering more adequate interpretations of 20th industrial socio-economic experiences than any of the other groups. But, this type of analysis would largely omit to illustrate how these groups continue to exist by, and for themselves, in spite of their incessant interaction with wider social structures.

However, Geertz does point out that different religions do create differing realities:

"It is this air of the factual, of describing, after all, the genuinely reasonable way to live, which given the facts of life, is the primary source of an ethic's authoritativeness. What all sacred symbols assert is that the good for man is to live realistically; where they differ is in the vision of reality they construct".⁶⁵

65) C. Geertz 1968 "Ethos, World-view & the Analysis of Sacred Symbols" p.306 in A. Dundes (ed.) "Every man his way: Readings in Cultural Anthropology".

Different social experiences lead to constructions of different "realities" or explanations of salvations and existence, which are upheld and maintained by certain socio-religious structural patterns. These religious realities provide an interpretation of life's meaning and act as pointers to definite modes of conduct and behaviour.

In the case of primitive society, religion is not differentiated from other socio-cultural spheres and religious roles are merged with other roles.

"Primitive religions are on the whole oriented to a single cosmos ----- they are concerned with the maintenance of personal, social and cosmic harmony -----". 66

"----- there is typically not only a continuity between individual and collectivity, but also between society and nature. The life of the individual is embedded in the life of the collectivity, as the latter is in turn embedded in the totality of being, human as well as non-human -----". Thus, the life of men is not sharply separate from the life that extends throughout the universe." 67

Contrarily, as a society becomes more industrialized and more and more differentiated, so the religious sphere separates out as a sphere concerned only with certain "religious" aspects of life". Religious concepts become less and less the basis for social organization and action, but are relegated to a sphere of distinctly separate "religious" action and beliefs. Similarly, in a plural religious society there are several different religious spheres, each offering their own interpretation of life and general existence, yet also interacting with the wider social (or socio-religious) background. 68

In the case of Brazil, the tie of Church to State until 1890 meant that the whole social situation of the country until the 20th was defined in religious terms

66) R. Bellah 1964 American Sociological Review XXIX p.358-74. "Religious Evolution" p.362. c.f. M. Douglas 1973 "Natural Symbols".

Here, the author is concerned with the desire of most people to achieve "consonance" at all levels of existence and experience and in all types of society.

67) P. Berger 1973 "The Social Reality of Religion" p.69 c.f. M. Douglas 1970 "Purity and Danger" p.99-113 on primitive thought worlds.

68) R. Robertson 1970 op.cit. p.46. P. Berger 1973 op.cit. part II. c.f. B. Wilson 1969 "Religion in a Secular Society".

by Roman Catholicism. The State used the Church to legitimize its political and economic policies. Yet, not all Brazilians were adequately satisfied by the official religious explanation and legitimation of their socio-structural position, and, for many, experiences of such positions were very often distinctly different from their officially designated expectations. To account for such divergent experiences, alternative religious beliefs and salvational comforts were evolved by various sectors of the population. Similarly, post 1890 although the social situation was no longer permeated through and through by a total and monopolistic Catholic interpretation, different groups still adhered to their own religious world views and concepts of supernatural salvation because of their varying socio-economic experiences, or rather, because of their failure to attain the rewards promised by C20th industrialisation.

The Afro cults, Umbandist and Kardecist groups have all asserted alternative world views which reject the authority of the Roman Catholic Church and also offer alternative interpretations and definitions of their own socio-economic status. All have their own religious framework of beliefs about the supernatural and salvation, and a pattern of social relations and roles through which these concepts are made tangible and meaningful. In fact, they have their own internal dynamic, or interactive process, between beliefs and socio-religious organisation. Yet, because of pressure to conform to Roman Catholic tradition, or because of failure to improve socio-economic positions, this alternative has never involved a complete or total rejection of, or withdrawal from, Roman Catholic elements or the material values of Brazilian society. Although the religious beliefs and actions of each group offer ways of overcoming and resolving the debilitating and restrictive qualities of socio-structural positions, such alternative conceptions of reality are obviously impeded and limited by the socio-structural conditions that gave them birth.

"From one perspective, we can see the potential effect that theologically based models of social reality have on the believer's orientation to his mundane affairs. For the believer, these assumptions about the way supernatural powers view human activity determine his concept of the kind of life he must lead. Supernatural directives set priorities for the allocation of his energies and resources and establish an unassailable rationale for his social commitments."69

Insofar as religious beliefs and organisations attempt to make certain paradoxical and incomprehensible aspects of life intelligible and morally acceptable, there is a possibility of, and potentiality for, cultural and social innovation. Yet, in all cases material needs and preconditions limit the effect of new religious ideas.

"The only question concerns the point at which ideas and beliefs enter in the field of interaction: Are they prime movers? Can they arise independent of material conditions and help create new arrangements; or do they reinforce, rationalise and preserve the old? With reference to religion our question is: Is there a source of religious ideas and energy which cannot be traced back eventually to the material conditions or slightly more generally, to the struggle for power." 70

As wider social experiences change and cannot be accounted for by the meaning and social experience provided by the religious reality, so this religious reality must be modified to offer adequate explanation for these discrepancies. The internal interactive process is modified by wider social experience and the emergent properties of this newly defined and alternative world view may then act back upon the structures which produced the initial, unaccountable experience.

However, it is only by looking at the internal processes of interaction between the beliefs, interpretation of life, and the conduct of social experience within a religious group that the world view of this group and its attraction for its adherents can be understood and explained. Differing forms of religious

69) G. Schwartz 1970 "Sect Ideologies and Social Status" p.211.

70) M. Yinger 1946 "Religion in the Struggle for Power" p.11.

belief arise from various attempts to relate both ordinary and unexpected occurrences in the natural and social universes to immanent or transcendent principles of order and therefore they attempt to impose coherence on the alternation between regularity and disorder in human affairs. Consequently, such forms of religious belief will attract certain social strata and repel others, yet at the same time, these beliefs provide the ethical and intellectual grounds for concrete existential and moral judgments on the appropriate actions necessary to bridge the gap between actual experiences and aspirations. The problems associated with the former therefore become either tolerable or alterable, and moral imperatives make difficult situations endurable or tolerable.

It is in trying to resolve the question of how to explain the actual historical processes and construction taking place at the same time within several religious groups, relating these processes to each other, and in the case of Brazil, to the wider religious or secular background from which they have evolved, that analysis such as that of Geertz is found to be inadequate. Although his Durkheim-Weber synthesis does account for the continually changing and modifying relationship between a religion and the society from which it is derived, this explanation is most satisfactory when used to illustrate a "primitive"⁷¹ religious world view, or where there is a repressive monopoly of one religion, and where religious institutions are regulatory agencies for both thought and action.⁷² However, when considering a mixed, plural or sectarian religious situation where religious worlds exist side by side, a third, mediatory phase, outlining the actual organisation of each religious group must be introduced into the "model of"/"model for" process. Rather than a two dimensional model a three dimensional one is needed which is able to account for relationships between religious groups and also within them.

71)c.f. Note 64. R.N. Bellah 1964 op.cit.

72) The world defined by the religious institution in question is the world, maintained not just by the mundane powers of the society, but by supernatural powers as well. P. Berger 1973 op.cit. p.72.

In the previous chapter, Geertz's ideas on religion as a "model of" and "model for" social structure were discussed. To extend this exposition, the present chapter will outline some further theories which have considered not only the development and influence of religion but also how the actual characteristics, beliefs, and internal organisations of different religious groups are related to, and mediate, the societal conditions out of which they have arisen, and upon which they have varying degrees of influence.

To some extent, the problems of analysing the individual characteristics of, and relationships between several co-existent religious realities is solved by Berger when he attempts to "apply a general theoretical perspective derived from the sociology of knowledge to the phenomena of religion."¹ By trying to achieve a synthesis between several sociological theories (notably those of Marx, Durkheim, and Weber) he hopes to offer pointers to analysing the process of construction of a religion: the way in which a religion is maintained and manipulated, and its relationship to, and effect on, the society from which it initially arose.

It is this perspective of Berger's which will first be considered, although note will also be made of similar ideas proposed by Robertson. This latter author devises a schema which illustrates the mechanisms through which several co-existing religious groups interact both within, and among themselves in a plural situation, and with wider secular social structures.

Secondly, Mary Douglas' comments on the qualities of this relationship between religion and

1) P. Berger 1973 "The Social Reality of Religion"
p.7

its socio-structural background will be discussed and, finally, Victor Turner's observations on the same problem.

For Berger, society is nothing but a human product that continually acts back upon its producer. There can be no social reality apart from man, yet, paradoxically, man is also a product of society. This occurs because, in ordering interactive experiences with other men into meaningful, understandable, common coherence, one's social knowledge of the world becomes ontological and gains independence from its constructive process. Religion is that part of this socially constructed, independent "reality" that is a shield against the unknown, the inexplicable, and their consequent psychological tensions. It is social knowledge endowed with a stability deriving from very powerful sources which are greater, and therefore more secure than the historical efforts of human beings. At the same time, because of such superior qualities, religion is a very potent and effective legitimating force. It maintains itself and its socially defined "reality" by relating the insecure existence of empirical societies to omnipotent, ultimate values and truths, and bestows on social institutions an ultimately valid ontological status when it locates them in a sacred, cosmic frame of reference.

Agreeing with Geertz and Turner, Berger writes:

"--- both religious acts and religious legitimations --- serve to "recall" the traditional meanings embodied in the culture and its major institutions. They restore ever again the continuity between the present moment and the societal tradition, placing the experiences of the individual and the various groups of the society in the context of an history --- that transcends them all". 2

Once crystallised as complexes of meaning, these religious legitimations gain an autonomy which may act back upon actions in everyday life, but to uphold

2) Idem p.49.

these legitimating religious institutions, values, and beliefs, a "plausibility structure"³(collective activity)is needed and engendered. A specific community if needed to ensure the continuance of religious legitimations.

"To understand the state of the socially constructed universe at any given time, or its change over time, one must understand the social organisation that permits the definers to do the defining". 4

Social structures are created within which this "reality" is taken for granted and within which successive generations of individuals are socialised in such a way that this religiously legitimated world is real for them. The firmer the plausibility structure or community of a religious tradition, the firmer will be the world based upon it. The practical difficulties in maintaining, through appropriate plausibility structures, the "reality" of religious legitimations and their correspondant social realities, vary with historiaeal circumstances.

As noted previously, in Brazil, this type of religious construction takes place today within a pluralistic context where several religions legitimating realities and "plausibility structures" exist side by side. Berger recognises this problem when he points out:

"A theoretically important variation is between situations in which an entire society serves as a plausibility structure for a religious world, and situations in which only a subsociety serves as such. In other words, the "social engineering" problem differs as between religious monopolies and religious groups seeking to maintain themselves in a situation of pluralisitic competition. It is not difficult to see that the problem of world maintainance is less difficult of solution in the former instance. When an entire society serves as a plausibility structure for a religiously legitimated world, all the important processes within it serve to confirm and reconfirm the reality of this world". 5

3) Idem p.55-56.

4) P. Berger & T. Luckmann 1972 "The Social Construction of Reality" p.134. c.f. P. Berger & T. Luckmann 1963 "The Sociology of Religion and the Sociology of Knowledge". Sociology and Social Research XLVII (July)

5) P. Berger 1973 op.cit. p.56-57.

In the case of religious monopolies, the plausibility structure of the religious world is co-extensive with the social situation and "deviants" are either physically destroyed (e.g. the Spanish Inquisition), segregated, or accounted for in terms of one's own beliefs, as being "mad" or "mislead". In Brazil, monopolistic Roman Catholicism, as an instrument in State hands, included all sectors of the population within its world view and community, assuming that as long as they were initially baptised into the official religion, and as long as they offered no physical or disruptive threat to society, "deviant" religious groups could be left alone. However, each of these religious groups constructed and maintained subsocieties with their own, particular plausibility structures.

"Consequently, sub-universes require sub-societies as their objectivating base, and counter definitions of reality require counter societies".⁶

According to Berger, to accept a religious experience or religious interpretation of one's existence is to "live in a new world, a new reality".⁷ The social organisation of a religious group so constitutes itself as to make possible the carrying out of the mission it believes it has outside of its own world. Thus it stresses the

6) P. Berger & T. Luckmann 1972 op.cit. p.145.

7) P. Berger 1954 "The Sociological Study of Sectarianism" p.481. Social Research XXI p.467-485.

validity of its own reality.⁸

In other words, from the point of view of the State, the Church and their elite, the entire society of Brazil served as the plausibility structure for a religiously legitimated world. This world provided the necessary context for socialisation and resocialisation, and controlled potentially dangerous "deviants". Until 1889 this particular religiously defined world maintained its monopoly on a society-wide basis and could use the entire Brazilian population as its "plausibility structure".

"Worlds are socially constructed and socially maintained. Their continuing reality, both objective (as common, taken-for-granted facticity) and subjective (as facticity imposing itself on individual consciousness), depends upon specific social processes, namely those processes that ongoingly reconstruct and maintain the particular worlds in question. Conversely, the interruption of these social processes threatens the (objective and subjective) reality of the worlds in question-----". 9

8) c.f. B. Wilson 1970 "Religious Sects" p.36.

"The answer to the question, "what shall we do to be saved?" determines the entire quality of the sect. In settling this question, sectarians necessarily establish their conception of the world and of the supernatural and how to behave towards them. Their response to conditions reflects their response to this ultimate religious concern".

The author emphasises the way in which a sect has its own patterns of organisation, socialisation processes and concepts of the supernatural, all of which effect its attitude to society. A number of such religious responses to the world are outlined: conversionist, transformative, introversionist, manipulationist, thaumaturgical, utopian and reformist. Each overlap or are combined, and rarely exist in their "pure" form.

c.f. P. Berger 1954 op.cit. He lists the various "missionary" responses of sects as: the world to be saved/avoided/warned/conquered/irrelevant.

9) P. Berger 1973 op.cit. p.53.

The interruption in the case of Brazil, came in the few years spanning the Abolition, the declaration of the Republic, and the separation of Church from State. Roman Catholicism no longer held a monopoly over the country and the marginal, "deviant", and subsocietal religious explanations of Brazilian society were afforded greater opportunity to insist on the validity and authenticity of their alternative religious interpretations of life.

By using Berger's schema, we are now able to analyse the internal dynamics or processes of construction and maintenance of separate religious worlds. Beliefs and plausibility structures of both monopolistic (where the plausibility structure is co-extensive with the social situation) and subsocietal groups (where differing experiences of social situations give rise to alternate religious realities and plausibility structures, which are not co-extensive with the social situation as officially defined by a religious or socio-economic elite) can be explicitly examined. The specific and dynamic character of each religious world can be used as a focal point to illustrate how the character and the construction of the religious world itself is both a "model of" and a "model for" the society out of which it initially arose.

However, at this point, note must be made of similar ideas and a similar schema put forward by Robertson when he discusses the development and interaction of various religious groups.

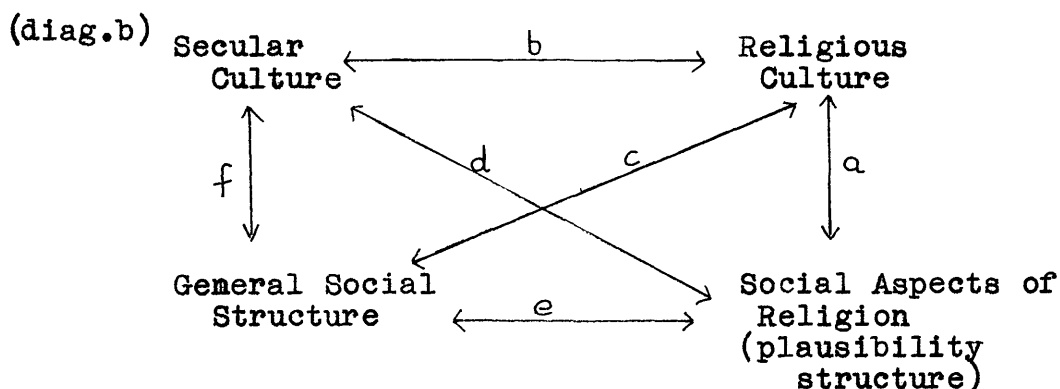
Robertson devises a diagram (diag.a.) in which social aspects of religious activities refer to "beliefs" and values espoused" and cultural aspects to the "social means by and through which these beliefs and values are held and carried".¹⁰

10) R. Robertson 1970 "Sociology of Religion" p.65.

However, in elaborating these ideas, I prefer to interchange Robertson's cultural and social aspects of religious activities so that they are consistent with their use in the previous discussion both in the former and present chapter, and are also consistent with Robertson's earlier exposition of their qualities¹¹ (diag.b). Thus, in revising Robertson's schema, religious culture refers to the beliefs and values held by a religious group, while social aspects of religion can be equated with Berger's concept of a religion's plausibility structure.

(diag.a)

	Religion	Non-Religion
Culture	Religious Culture	Secular Culture
Social Structure	Social Aspects of Religion	General Social Structure



Using the framework of diagram a, but bearing in mind the redefinition of, and way in which the terms "culture" and "structure" are used in this thesis

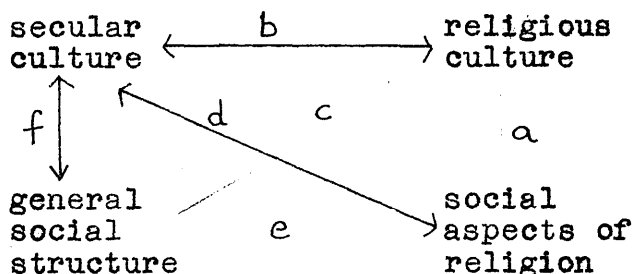
11) Idem p.47.

"Religious culture is that set of beliefs and symbols (and values deriving directly therefrom) pertaining to a distinction between an empirical and a superempirical, transcendent reality;---religious action --- action shaped by an acknowledgment of the empirical/superempirical distinction".
c.f. A.A. Kroeber & T. Parsons 1958 "The Concepts of Culture and Social System". For Kroeber and Parsons culture is "a transmitted and created content and pattern of values, ideas and other symbolic, meaningful systems as factors in the shaping of human behaviour and the artifacts produced through behaviour".

(diag.b), various interrelationships between religious and secular action and belief can be examined. Robertson, however, does point out that this schema draws mainly on the sociology of religion in industrial societies, and that in "referring to pre- or non-industrial societies" it is "somehwat more limited; but in principle, a viable procedure".¹²

It is the viability of such a procedure that this thesis hopes to elaborate, although not all the variables that Robertson uses will be considered here. Rather the relationship between a religious group and its socio-structural background, as previously discussed by Berger, will be of central concern, so that attention will be focused on the way in which variable "a", the internal dynamics of a religious group, mediates variables "c" and "e", the basic "model of" and "model for" relationship illustrated by Geertz (diag.c).

(diag.c)



Thus, the ideas and schemas of both Robertson and Berger can be used to illustrate the relationship of the internal construction and maintenance of various religious groups to the wider social structures of which they are "models of" and "models for", while any changes that effect the quality of one variable of this relationship inevitably produce changes within the other variables.

This "circular" nature of the problem of the significance of religious beliefs and organisations versus the material factors which they reflect and also

12) R. Robertson 1970 op.cit. p.68.

influence has been discussed previously.

Religious beliefs reflect their socio-structural background in two ways. On the one hand, their formation and dissemination is limited by material conditions, but on the other their attempt to resolve these material difficulties through offering alternative conceptions of man's place in the universe could be seen as potentially innovative. This latter quality is perhaps refractive rather than reflective.

Douglas and Turner, however, tend to concentrate on the former "model of" characteristics of religion, emphasising the way in which the formation and content of religious beliefs and practices correlate with socio-structural features of the religion's secular environment.

Taking the argument of *L'Année Sociologique* as her base, Mary Douglas writes:

"For if it is true --- that the social relations of men provide the prototype for the logical relations between things, then, whenever this prototype falls in a common pattern, there should be something to be discerned in the system of symbols it uses ----. The dimensions of social life govern the fundamental attitudes to spirit and matter". 13

Rather than stress the various implications religious beliefs may have for society, Douglas categorizes belief systems (collectively created patterns of meaning explaining man's relationship to the supernatural) as symbolic representations of a type of social order.

Her central hypothesis is that the character or quality of man's relationship to God is a reflection of the type of social structure in which man is involved. The less structured or articulated this society, then the less structured is man's relationship to God; "unstructure" being most frequently expressed through "possession".

13) M. Douglas 1973 "Natural Symbols" p.11-18.

"The inarticulateness of the social organisation in itself gains symbolic expression in dissociation. The religious culture of trance is material especially suitable ---- as trance is a form of dissociation, it will be more approved of and welcomed the weaker the structuring of society". 14

Conversely:

"---- a social structure which requires a high degree of conscious control will find its style at a high level of formality ---- and wariness towards experiences in which control of consciousness is lost". 15

For the purpose of comparing relationships of structure and unstructure, Douglas uses the idea of "group" (the experience of a bounded social unit) and "grid" (rules that relate one person to another on an ego-centred basis). Essentially, if both group and grid are strong, experience tightly ordered and mediated by social sanctions, and social structures are rigid and inflexible, then the religious organisation of such a society is very formal and "ritualized". There is ritual differentiation of religious roles and situations, ritual distinctions between the religious group and those outside it, and magical efficacy attributed to symbolic acts such as sacraments.

On the other hand, if both group and grid are weak, then religious responses are not formally controlled and "effervescence" occurs. There is a preference for spontaneous expression, little interest in ritual differentiation of the magicality of symbolic acts, and no distinctions between the religious group and outsiders.¹⁶

14) Idem p.104.

15) Idem p.111.

16) Idem p.103-4.

These two examples are extreme cases, and, as Douglas points out later (chapter IX) various combinations of grid and group produce different religious responses.

Douglas demonstrates this hypothesis by comparing three Nilotic communities, the Nuer, Mandari and Dinka. She assesses the quality of their social organisation and then examines how this correlates with their religious ideas. Later she extends these observations of small-scale societies to an examination of the ritual associations of group and grid in modern Western society.¹⁷

As noted in chapter I, in primitive societies or religious monopolies, where religious beliefs and practices are co-extensive with social thought and action, religious ritual is a direct "reflection of" and "reflection on" the socio-religious structures of the community. It is a means through which social problems and incoherency or discrepancy of allotted social roles can be assessed and resolved.¹⁸ Conversely, in a mixed or plural religious situation, several religious worlds exist side by side, each with their own and distinct internal social organisations, and each relating differently to the socio-structural base from which they arose.

In considering this latter type of situation, the characteristics of primitive ritual are similar to the articulation and interaction of beliefs and plausibility structures taking place within the religious group itself. The actual relationship this group has with surrounding social structures, however, adds another dimension of processual interaction. Thus, Douglas' ideas on the degree of "structure" and "unstructure" within the group and grid of a society can be applied at two levels of analysis.

17) Her concern is mainly with the "empty ritual" and anti-ritualism prevalent in the C20th. For example, anti-ritualism is the state of despising or casting off all associations with ritual activity and thus implies a dissatisfaction or "opting out" of the conventions demanded by everyday existence.

18)c.f. A. Van Gennep 1960 "Rites de Pasage".

First, it can be related to the internal mechanisms of the religious group itself - its concepts of man's relationship to the supernatural, the ritual associated with this, and the social organisation it engenders. Secondly, it can be applied to the role of the religious group as a "model of" and "model for" the wider society from which it originally arose. If a group of individuals has a status in that society which is inferior and peripheral to dominant societal values, then their religious response (man's relationship to the supernatural and the organisation of the religious group itself) will similarly express marginality or "effervescence". As a result, their response to wider society, mediated by their religious views, will be as equally incoherent and inarticulate.

If possession is taken to be the epitome of "unstructure", then the more structured a group becomes in its view of its peripheral relationship to society, and therefore within itself, the less likely possession will be tolerated as the religious expression of its condition. Possession will become limited to a few; it will become institutionalised and stabilised and used by those in power and control to authorise and provide supernatural sanctions for their activities. The more entrenched religious authority becomes, the more hostile it is to possession or haphazard inspiration, because:

"--- the religious enthusiast with his direct claim to divine knowledge is always a threat to the established order". 19

Possession is gradually relegated to the background and is treated as a sign of potentially dangerous subversion. Thus, once a religious group becomes more structured in itself, its attitude to society is similarly formalised or "rationalised".²⁰ Formal rules for extra-religious behaviour are established, which either entail, in the extreme cases, a rejection of society, or a means of assimilation with it.

19) I. Lewis 1971 "Ecstatic Religion" p.34.

20)c.f. M. Weber 1971 "Sociology of Religion".

Thus an extension of Douglas' ideas on religious development suggests that there is a pattern of correlation between the socio-structural conditions giving rise to a certain religion, the quality of this religious response, and the impact of this response on the social situation from which it originally arose.

Similar views are held by Victor Turner in his overt application of Van Gennep's "Rites de Passage" to the development of both primitive and world religions.

In examining the history of a Ndembu ritual (micro history in the sense that this chief concern is with the lives and relationships of the immediate actors and immediate events), Turner emphasises the three phases of any ritual. Separation (detachment from set cultural conditions, or social structures, or both); limen or margin (a threshold period which has attributes of neither the past or future periods) and aggregation, (re-incorporation into another state with stable and clearly defined rights and obligations).

Limen is the most important of these phases. Essentially it is a period of instability, ambiguity, uniformity, passivity and lack of structure and status. It is characterised by a sense of community ("communitas") where all are equal and no distinctions between individuals exist. It is a phase when all attributes of normal social structures ("societas") are transcended and ignored.

During the neutrality of limen, however, these social structures are re-assessed and re-evaluated. Contradictions and conflicts within them can be reviewed and reconciled or previous social arrangements can be re-asserted.

Turner then classifies ritual processes into two types: those of status elevation and those of status reversal.²¹

21) V. Turner 1969 "The Ritual Process" chap.V.

In the limen phases of the former, the ritual is irreversibly conveyed from a lower to a higher position in an institutionalised system of such positions. An example of this would be initiation rituals. In status reversal, persons who habitually occupy low status positions in the social structure are either encouraged to exercise ritual authority over their superiors, who must accept this degradation, or inferiors affect the rank and style of their superiors for a brief time, as for example in calendrical rituals.

However, despite its concern with microhistory, this processual model can also be used to advantage in a wider or more extensive historical context. The idea of margin, besides being characteristic of religious ritual can also be applied to liminal periods of history.²² (those characterised by rapid social change and frequently giving rise to millennialism) or to groups of people in a structurally inferior societal position.

These historical instances of liminality have all the qualities of *communitas* described above. Juxtaposed to the established social order or *societas*, the religions that arise as responses to such marginal situations attempt to re-classify and explain man's position in the universe. They attempt to provide more adequate understanding of the established social structure, but in doing so, create their own *societas* or social organisation which mediates behaviour outside of the religious group.

This re-classification, however, can be achieved in various ways. Just as certain types of ritual are characterised by status elevation and status reversal, so are the wider historical periods of *communitas*. For instance, some religions resemble the liminality of status elevation. Humility, patience, and self denial are emphasised.

22) Idem p.121.

"Instead of the seclusion lodge, we have the church". ²³ Life itself is usually seen as a liminal phase of preparation for re-aggregation into a higher level of existence.

On the other hand, in religions with the attributes of status reversal, the structures of the wider *societas* are upended, and the structurally inferior gain prestige and hierarchical rank in the *societas* of the religious group.

Turner then notes that, on the whole, the religious response of any group of people correlates with their experience in wider society; a conclusion already illustrated in relation to the work of Mary Douglas. Religions stressing hierarchy as a general attribute of religious life are generated by structurally inferior groups²⁴ whereas religions characterised by status elevation are often founded by persons of "respectable" status who wish to be rid of all wordly distinctions. Even when a hierarchical structure evolves in this type of religion, self-abasement and *communitas* still remain (institutionalised) through the fact that all, without exception, are considered as "servants of God".

Yet, just as religious responses correlate with the social experience of individuals, they also colour the reaction of the religious community to the society from which it initially arose.

"Men are released from structure into *communitas* only to return to structure, revitalized by their experience of *communitas*". ²⁵

However, Turner views all such processes of religious life (either at the ritual level, within a religious group itself, or at the wider societal level) as basically conservative, merely reinforcing already established structures.

23) Idem p.156.

24) Idem p.180

"--- there is nevertheless, strong evidence that religious forms clearly attributable to the generative activities of structurally inferior groups or categories soon assume many of the external characteristics of hierarchies".

25) Idem p.116.

"Both these types of rituals reinforce structure. In the first (elevation) the system of social positions is not challenged. The gaps between the positions, the instertices, are necessary to the structure. If there were no intervals, there would be no structure, and it is precisely the gaps that are reaffirmed in this kind of liminality ---. Thus humility reinforces a just pride in position, poverty affirms wealth and penance sustains virility and health. We have seen how, on the other hand, status reversal does not mean "anomie" but simply a new perspective from which to observe structure". 26

Both religions of ~~status~~ reversal and status elevation serve to reinforce rather than modify *societas*, and in those cases where groups have had innovatory ideas for social structure, their organisation has not been capable of sustaining these aspirations over a period of time or even successfully putting them into practice.²⁷

This conservatism is, of course, inevitable if as Mary Douglas maintains, "the drive to achieve consonance between social and physical and emotional experiences"²⁸ is one of the major motivating forces of man. This need to neatly categorise events is also noted by Berger:

"Religion legitimates --- marginal situations in terms of an all encompassing sacred reality. This permits the individual who goes through these situations to continue to exist in the world of his society - not "as if nothing had happened" which is psychologically difficult --- but in the "knowledge" that even those events and experiences have a place within a universe that makes sense". 29

Thus, both the analyses of Douglas and Turner, furthering Geertz's and Berger's ideas of religion as a "reflection of" and a "reflection on" social structure, suggest a more elaborate model for explaining the historical development of any religious group in a pluralistic religious situation. The "ritual process" within a religious group is, in fact, a microcosm of the wider process of a religious relationship to society, and at all levels of

26) Idem p.191.

27) Idem p.192.

28) M. Douglas 1973 op.cit. p.183.

29) P. Berger op.cit. p.53.

development there is correlation. The ritual process - the mechanisms whereby a religious group maintains and constructs itself and socialises new members - is a direct reflection of those wider social conditions which gave it birth. As socio-structural conditions change, so do the religious responses they generate. Mary Douglas writes:

"Spare parts can be fitted and adjustments made without much trouble. Occasionally, a major overhaul is necessary to bring --- views into focus in new times and in new company. This is conversion. But most of the time, adjustments are made so smoothly that one is hardly aware of the shift of angle ---". 30

Such adjustments are a reflection of the weakening of group and grid as a result of new socio-structural experiences.

However, she fails to account both for the nature of these socio-structural experiences, and for the way in which adjustments are carried out. Generally, such changes can be seen to occur in two ways. On the one hand, there is a cross-fertilisation of ideas between religious groups, with each group making its own synthesis. Here, the various ideas on syncretism are useful in understanding how this synthesis initially evolved; the character of this synthesis and the effects it has both on the life of the religious group itself and its relationship to wider society.

On the other hand, a prophet³¹ or emissary may arrive with new and authentic explanations of socio-structural events. He will eventually gather around him a number of followers and ultimately, a new religious group will be created.

Yet, although both Douglas and Turner also explain that the ritual process of a religious group is a reflection on social conditions insofar as it offers rules, or directives, for attitudes towards them and attempts to make intelligible and morally acceptable the incomprehensible aspects of life,

30) M. Douglas 1973 op. cit. p.179

31)c.f. M. Weber 1971 op.cit. chap.IV for a discussion on the role of the prophet.

they tend to neglect the potential of this process of religious development for social change. For instance, once a new religion has emerged or a religious group begins to refocus its beliefs and lifestyle, although social conditions may have been favourable at that time, it is possible that a previously peripheral group may gain a supreme dominating position in society because of the religious rules and directives advocated and through the way in which men conceive of their relationship to the supernatural, and of their place in the universe. Religious rules for behaviour become the moral rules of the whole society and act as censors for that society. However, the implications of religious doctrines and beliefs for social change, together with the socio-structural conditions which have limited, impeded, or encouraged such leanings will be more extensively discussed in chapter IX.

Thus, we now have a processual model of religious development which offers an adequate account for the interaction between both the internal mechanisms and construction of a religion and the way in which this religion is a "model of" and "model for" the social structure out of which it initially arose. But, although this processual model works convincingly in a time dimension, it is now necessary to enquire whether it can be applied to the actual history of Brazilian religious pluralism; whether its tendency towards reinforcing the existent status quo can be modified in view of the transitions that have continually taken place between the various religious groups in Brazil.

The following chapters will initially focus on the history and development of the Afro cults, Catholic beliefs and practices, and the Spiritualist-oriented religions, Umbanda and Kardecism. In describing the historical construction of these religious groups, emphasis will be primarily on the way in which socio-structural conditions have affected their growth and

development and the influence each religious group has had on the others. However, at the same time, suggestions will be made as to the limiting effects these "model of" characteristics had on the "model for" potential of the groups.

Chapter III will deal mainly with the co-extensive relationship (c.f. diag.c) between the Roman Catholic Church and Brazilian society until 1890. The period after 1890 will then illustrate how this relationship began to weaken, or become separate, as the Roman Catholic Church lost its monopoly over Brazilian social life.

Chapter IV will focus on those socio-structural and environmental features have moulded and limited the characteristics of folk catholicism, and will examine the way in which this folk catholic response although restricted by material conditions, has resolved many of the difficulties and problems in wider social life, and has established itself as a continuing separate and alternative reality.

Chapter V and VI will deal with the similar relationships and interactive processes found within the Afro cults.

In Chapter VII the introduction of Kardecism to Brazil will be outlined. Originating in France and at first appealing to intellectuals, this religion offered viable and authoritative alternative explanations for the changing social conditions in Brazil at the end of the C20th. However, in order to appeal to a greater proportion of the population, and in order to account for their material and socio-structural conditions, Kardecism has been modified and popularised over the years and has lost some of the purity of its intellectual and scientific origins. Yet, for the most part, even though the concepts of man's place in the universe and in relation to the supernatural have been modified, they continue to be potentially innovative for the position of Kardecist adherents in Brazilian society.

Chapter VIII will then illustrate how Kardecism has increasingly influenced folk catholicism and the Afro cults. The development of Macumba and Umbanda is explained in relation to the socio-structural background of these religions as well as the way in which the membership of the religious groups themselves has effected the lifestyles of their adherents and their positions in Brazilian society.

Finally, in conclusion, the "model of" and "model for" characteristics of each religion will be fully reviewed, compared, and assessed. Further comments will be made on the relationship of the religions to each other, and especially to Roman Catholicism, as well as some speculation on the future of these groups, their impact and influence on Brazilian social structures and their position within Brazilian society.

In accounting for the development of the C20th plural religious situation in Brazil, and in order to establish why different religious groups have emerged and why they have become moulded in certain forms, it is necessary, in this chapter, to refer to those historical processes which have generated and influenced, or limited the growth of these various religions.

The following survey will focus on three main areas of historical explanation. First, the general organisational structures and belief system of the Roman Catholic Church will be outlined to illustrate how these two variables interact with each other to maintain the Roman Catholic faith and its world view.

Second, this religious world view will be assessed in the specific context of Brazil to explore how it relates to wider (secular) features of Brazilian society both in the Colonial and Imperial periods, and during the Republic. Finally, I hope to demonstrate from this preceding exposition that because of its singular historical character, Brazilian Roman Catholicism has never provided adequate solutions to everyday problems or reasonable meanings of everyday life for all those it has claimed as its members, and as a result, alternate religious world views have emerged to compensate for and remedy this inadequacy.

An explanation of some central tenets of the Roman Catholic faith reveals that after the final, authoritative settling of the general policy, principles and dogmas of Roman Catholicism at the Council of Trent (1545-1563), there was little room left for any individual or quietist reaction to the religion. Emotional response was seen as belonging to devotions (individualised religious ardour) or mysticism, and the Council outlined an institutionalised approach to the faith, guided by the C13th teachings of St. Thomas Aquinas; a policy which has continued

until the present day, with only a few slight modifications.¹

Salvation in Roman Catholicism is obtained by adhering to a specific body of doctrine contained in the creed and the twelve articles of faith.² Certain universal and infallible truths are recognised, including the omniscient, omnipotent nature of God, the existence of the Trinity, and the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin Mary.

Complete understanding and acceptance of such truths is gained only by obedience to all the ethical prescriptions and obligations of the Ten Commandments and the precepts (the seven sacraments - Baptism, Eucharist, Confirmation, Orders, Matrimony, Extreme Unction, and Penance),³ while the possibility of reaching perfection can be achieved only gradually through the help of this sacramental grace. However, this perfection is never absolute until salvation after death. Roman Catholicism posits a gradation of sin rather than a totality of sin and no possibility of an instantaneous achievement of a complete moral conversion or change in earthly life.⁴

1) J. McKenzie S.J. 1969. "The Roman Catholic Church".

2) The following exposition of the doctrine of Roman Catholicism is taken from:-

J. McKenzie 1969 op.cit. D. Quinlan 1966 "Roman Catholicism". G.E. Swanson 1967 "Religion and Regime". Palazzini (ed.) 1962 "A Dictionary of Moral Theology". J. Pelikan 1971 "Historical Theology". C. Williams 1969 "The Church". M. Fouyas 1972 "Orthodoxy, Roman Catholicism and Anglicanism". J. Macquarrie 1966 "Principles of Christian Theology".

3) It is Baptism which bestows the necessary basis and ability to participate in Roman Catholic paths to salvation, as this sacrament symbolizes an initial cleansing process of the original sin of Adam and Eve.

4) In contrast to Roman Catholicism, religions such as Pentecostalism and Baptism do allow for a sudden and complete moral conversion.

The focal role of the sacraments is seen in the way in which the Roman Catholic Church defines itself as:

"--- a body of men united together by profession of the same Christian faith, and participation in the same sacraments under the governance of lawful pastors more especially the Roman Pontiff, the sole vicar of Christ on earth". 5

The Church is the only proper and infallible teacher of the Scriptures and Tradition (extra Scriptural statements on faith and morals contained in the decrees of the Councils and the official pronouncements of the Papal See), and is the source of all saving truth and moral discipline.

Christ is continually incarnated in the Church which he established and which is regarded as his mystical body. He teaches in and through the Church, and through it, administers the sacraments.

However, controlling and directing this Church is the ecclesiastical body which acts as mediator between man and God and which, therefore, has strict control over the issue of sacraments and rites. Thus, the ecclesiastical hierarchy is, through its administration of Church doctrine, the key figure in the dispersion and accessibility of the essential necessities for salvation. Ultimately, it is the authority of the Church, the Father-Confessor, which guarantees assurance of salvation and can decide against any questioning of the authenticity or infallibility of the ecclesiastical body acting as God's emissary.

As a result of these mediatory qualifications, there is a distinct difference and separation between the roles of clergy and laity. The former, via the hierarchical rungs of the ecclesiastical structure, have a primary allegiance to teaching God's will and play a primary role in assuring contact with the Creator. It is the clergy who have control over the

5) G.E. Swanson 1967 op.cit. p.10.

administration of the sacraments that atone for sin, while the fact that the priesthood itself is a sacrament (one step on the ascent to purity) sets this ecclesiastical body quite apart from the layman. Such exclusiveness or remoteness is also underlined by other details such as the purity of celibacy, or the separation of the priest from the congregation by the balustrade before the altar, or the confessional box.⁶

This outline of some central features of orthodox Roman Catholic doctrine is brief, but sufficient to underline the important role the ecclesiastical hierarchy plays in maintaining a Roman Catholic world view. The beliefs of Roman Catholicism demand a body of clergy to act as mediators with an omniscient God; to carry out Jesus Christ's work on earth and to act as a channel for salvatory grace. At the same time, in carrying out these mediatory tasks and placing much emphasis on their necessity, these ecclesiasts continue to uphold the established Traditions of Roman Catholicism. The authority and validity of the Roman Catholic Church rests ultimately on the belief or Tradition that the visible Church is indeed Christ's mystical body.⁷ If this belief is challenged, all doctrines dependant on it lose their foundation. Only the Scriptures remain as the sole source of God's will on earth and, as revealed by the numerous Protestant groups which have emerged since the Reformation, these can be interpreted in numerous ways.

Consequently, to maintain the supreme authority of the Roman Catholic Church as the ultimate arbiter between man and God, the ecclesiastical hierarchy has always been concerned with preserving the established Traditions of the Church rather than insisting solely on the correct interpretations of the Bible. Yet, as

6) M. Fouyas 1972 op.cit. p.66. G. Poggi 1967 "Catholic Action in Italy: The Sociology of a sponsored organisation". p.242

7)c.f. G.E. Swanson 1967 op.cit. D. Quinlan 1966 op.cit.

will be seen later, today it is these Traditions which are causing much conflict between the various Roman Catholic factions trying to reform and reinterpret the Church's outlook and world view in accord with changing social conditions.⁸

Turning to Brazil, a chronological survey of Roman Catholic history explicitly reveals that the monopolistic and supernaturally sanctioned authority of the Church has been repeatedly identified with, and manipulated by, the secular State. The State maintained its power and influence over the Church until 1889 and those socio-economic classes whose interests defined State policies used the Traditions of Roman Catholicism to legitimise their status, social positions and activities. Throughout the Colonial period and Imperial era, Roman Catholicism realised its monopolistic and universal claims because of its singular relationship with the Brazilian State. The Church's aim was to gather all into the Catholic fold, while that of the State, still dependent on the advice and dictates of her Mother country, was to secure the economic and political subordination of all people and institutions to furthering Portugal's own aims of wealth and prestige in Europe.

Thus, it was to the advantage of the State to make use of the Church's desire for supreme moral authority. If salvation could only be gained through adherence to Roman Catholicism, and if the Church was determined to save all lost and stray souls, then this same religion, whose aims were God-given and therefore unquestionable, could also be used to justify and legitimate the economic and political aspiration of the State. Those who swore allegiance to Roman Catholicism would automatically vow allegiance to the

8)c.f. B. M. Reardon 1970 "Roman Catholic Modernism". Y. Congar 1962 "Priest and Layman". R. McAfee Brown 1967 "The Ecumenical Revolution". G. Poggi 1967 op.cit. F.C. Turner 1971 "Catholicism and Political Development in Latin America". D'Antonio & Pike 1964 "Religion, Revolution and Reform". E.de Kadt 1970 "Catholic Radicals in Brazil". I. Vallier 1970 "Catholicism, Social Control and Modernization in Latin America".

State. Church and State became inseparable, while the latter carefully vetted all ecclesiastical relationships with Rome lest these should spoil the socio-economic and religious harmony now established in Brazil.

Yet, during the early Colonial days, the religious history of Brazil can be understood only in the context of Portugal's religious history. The Reformation and Counter-Reformation brought about a change in the organisation of many of the European Catholic Churches, but Portugal tended to remain on the periphery of such revisions because of her geographical isolation and very strong monarchical power.⁹ Consequently, the model of the Portuguese Church that was established in Brazil was basically very similar to that of pre-Reformation Europe.¹⁰

The discovery and settlement of Brazil was in part an expression of a joint venture by the Portuguese State and Catholic Church to further what had begun as a crusade against the Turks into a mission for the souls of the New World. The Portuguese Church model was extended to Brazil through a granting of patronage to the crown by the Papacy. The Papal Bull of 1551 denominated the Portuguese Kings "Permanent Grand Masters of the Order of Christ" and permanent administrators of Jesus Christ and the Roman Catholic Church in both temporal and spiritual realms.¹¹ This "padroado" allowed the Portuguese monarch permanent powers of appointment and patronage of all secular clergy as well as the sale of all episcopal preferments, the building of churches, and the delimitation of territorial jurisdiction of the Church. Regular clergy, on the other hand, were answerable only to the

9) D. Warren 1968 "The Portuguese Roots of Brazilian Spiritism" p.7. Luso-Brazilian Review V (2) p.3-33.

10) T. Bruneau 1974 "The Political Transformation of the Brazilian Catholic Church". chap.I.

The model he outlines for Brazil before 1889 is very similar to the "Christendom" Church model that existed in Europe before the Reformation. c.f. H. Jaguaribe 1966 "The Brazilian Structural Crisis" p.2 Latin American Research Programme Seminar I, University of California.

11) F. Pike (ed.) "The Conflict between Church and State in Latin America" p.14.

Pope, although his authority was curtailed by the fact that the King had to grant permission for the founding of new religious orders, convents and monasteries in Brazil.

At the same time, as an extension of an already existing Portuguese tradition, the King held the financial reins of the Brazilian clergy by having collective and distributive rights over tithes, the ecclesiastical tribute originally destined to be spent on clerical stipends, but which, of course, could be handled as the King wished.¹²

As a result of these papal concessions, the monarch could meddle extensively in ecclesiastical affairs and the Church could never enjoy complete autonomy or independence. In fact, the Portuguese Crown seems to have kept a much tighter control over its colony than did the Spanish Crown in Latin America. The latter delegated full powers over the Church to the colonial viceroys, but the Brazilian Church was administered directly from Lisbon by the Board of Conscience and Military Orders, the Overseas Council and the Secretaries of State; the Brazilian viceroys were responsible only for the removal of clergy from office for disciplinary reasons.¹³

This centralised control by the Crown continued throughout the 16th. and 17th., culminating in the absolutist policies of Pombal in the 1750's. The Marquis de Pombal, Prime Minister to Joseph I from 1750-1777, believed that only through the restoration of strong monarchical authority could Portugal regain her former greatness and influence in Europe after the collapse of her Far-Eastern Empire as a result of the union of the Portuguese and Spanish Crowns, 1580-1640.

12) C. Prado 1967 "The Colonial Background of Modern Brazil" p.377-378. — T. Bruneau 1974 op.cit. p.15

13) E. B. Burns 1968 "Nationalism in Brazil" p.5.
D. Alden 1968 "Royal Government in Colonial Brazil" p.32-33
Alden notes that the Portuguese viceroys never devoted discussions to the status of the Church in their terminal reports, although the Spanish viceroys always did so.

J. Dornas Filho 1938 "O Padroado e a Igreja no Brasil"

Brazil became Portugal's "milch cow" and the colonization of the country became more definitely economic in character. Brazilian products, especially sugar and cotton for the European market, became the primary means of sustaining the Portuguese monarchy from 1640 until her definitive and recognised peace with Spain in 1668. Brazil's economy, therefore, became entirely subordinated to supporting Portuguese prestige, and functioned solely for the production and export of raw materials.¹⁴

As a result of these policies, as well as the finding of gold in 1694 and diamonds in 1729,¹⁵ this period was one of population expansion, and the Roman Catholic Church seized this opportunity to strengthen her authority in Brazil. The Bishopric of Bahia was elevated to Archbishopric, while to the Bishopric of Rio were added those of Pernambuco and Maranhão. More regular and secular clergy were introduced into the colony, and consequently more schools, hospitals and churches were created, especially by the Jesuits.¹⁶

At the same time, because Pombal was determined that all Brazil's resources should be directed towards the economic and international benefit of Portugal, all organizational structures in Brazil, including the growing Church, were subordinated to the State and the absolute authority of the Portuguese crown during this period.¹⁷

14) C.R. Boxer 1964 "The Golden Age of Brazil" p.222-223. K. Maxwell 1968 "Pombal and the Nationalisation of the Luso-Brazilian Economy", *Hispanic American Historical Review* XLVlll p.608-631.

15) Idem p.30-61

16) C. Wagley 1963 "An Introduction to Brazil" p.206
M. Silveira Camargo 1955 "História Ecclesiástica do Brasil" part II chap.IV.

17) New legislation was drafted for the colony, which included the extinction of all but one of the private captaincies. In the 16th there had been no direct colonisation of Brazil, but the crown had given settlement to private entrepreneurs or donatories in the form of captaincies to defend, populate and develop. After Pombal's reforms, the whole of Brazil's local administration was securely tied to the centralised government with the crown of Portugal as ultimate court of decision and appeal.

However, concomitant with overriding economic aims was the fact that the Portuguese crown feared that the powers of the Roman Catholic Church, allied to Papal authority, might contradict State intentions, and therefore, prevent or hinder the State from maintaining its political and economic directive powers. Any papish supporters not legally bound to the King could freely ally with those foreigners and opinions who were hostile to the State.

These fears found their expression in Pombal's reaction to the Jesuits¹⁸ as well as being reflected thereafter in the policies concerning the orders of regular clergy, whenever the State felt in a vulnerable or threatened position.

Since their arrival in Brazil, the Jesuits had been distrusted by many of the colonists. In fact, in 1601 and 1687 the order had been expelled from Brazil¹⁹ but without effect. For administrative and economic reasons the crown wished to extend complete power over all its subjects, including Indians, but the religious orders had direct control of these people and their education through the mission villages, thus the authority and prestige of the priests was a solid wall behind which Royal power was considerably reduced.

In 1775, a royal decree issued by Pombal, abolished the temporal power of all regular orders - Carmelites, Franciscans, Mercedarians and Jesuits, although, in accordance with the ordinances of the Church, it left them as "spiritual directors" of the population.²⁰ However, by continuing to run their Indian aldeias as autonomous enterprises, the Jesuits insisted on systematically ignoring this new law. As a result, all commerce with them was forbidden in 1758 and their missions were transferred into government

18) Pombal's policies should not be viewed in isolation, as they are a reflection of a universal movement of the predominance of civil over ecclesiastical power and the attempted absorption of the 18th. State over the whole of the Roman Catholic world. For example Gallicanism in France, Josefismo in Austria and Febronianism in Germany.

19) C. Wagley 1963 op.cit. p.234.

20) C. Prado 1967 op.cit. p.451 n.16
D. Alden 1968 op.cit. p.441.

villages. In 1759, the Jesuits were expelled from Brazil, although the other regular orders retained their positions. However, the Church was forbidden to admit novices to these orders unless it had royal consent from Lisbon in each case, while a new Pombaline teaching system was introduced that prohibited Jesuit books and teaching methods, formerly the only education available.

Yet, monastic institutions were still feared and disliked because of their wealth and ultramontane sympathies. The regulation of novices by the crown was intended to limit the mostly foreign composition of the regular clergy, which was thought to be threateningly anti-national, while the withdrawal and solitude of some orders was also suspected of providing potential for conspiracy against the crown.

Even after Independence, State control of the Church was still intense and coercive. For example, the 1824 constitution retained the rights of "padroado" and thereby allowed the Emperor to appoint all Bishops and lower clergy.²¹ He also had the right to grant or withhold the exaquetur to conciliar decrees, papal letters and other ecclesiastical legislation, while only with government aid could the Bishops censor all publications on dogma and morals. As in colonial days, the administration of tithes meant that the secular clergy continued to be supported out of the treasury.²²

A law of 1828 once again subjected the intake of novices of the regular orders to the direct surveillance and approval of the crown and incorporated their property into the national patrimony,²³ while, on the whole, the State continued to maintain its hold over the Church throughout the Empire. However, a series of clashes and conflicts ensued in the later

21) P. Pike 1964 op.cit. p.126.

22) L. F. Hill 1947 "Brazil" p.25.

23) J. L. Meham 1966 "Church and State in Latin America" p.267.

1840's and early 1850's between Papal and Imperial superiority when the Ultramontane faction of the Roman Catholic Church began agitating for independence from State control. Fearing opposition to State policies, the Emperor reasserted his authority by ordering all power of nominating benefices and dignitaries to be his alone, independent of the advice and counsel of the prelates, while no act issued by the Pope or Curia could be carried out in Brazil if it had not been confirmed by the placet of the Imperial government.²⁴ Similarly in an attempt to stop further criticisms of State activities, novitiates of the regular orders were completely closed in 1857 and remained so until 1888.²⁵

However, ^{the} "Religious Question", the clash between Church and State, was seized upon and used by Republican sympathisers so that by 1891, two years after the declaration of the Republic, Church and State eventually became independent of each other.

Yet, this brief account of Church/State relations is incomplete without an examination of that group of people which formed the nucleus of State interests; the colonial and Imperial elite who commanded all wealth, power and authority, defined the direction of State policies, and monopolised their practice until 1889, and who dictated and dominated all political, economic and ethical aspects of Brazilian life.²⁶

As Willems observes:

"Since these classes concurrently had a political power monopoly, the existence of regional cultures did not represent a disquieting problem. It could be largely ignored. The ignorance and superstition of the lower classes were acknowledged with benevolence. One did not believe that these plantation workers, cowboys and small farmers would be able to represent their own interests in a responsible manner. Rather they were to be protected, with a fatherly but strong hand, against the consequences of their own ignorance and irresponsibility." 27

24) J.P. Calogeras 1939 "A History of Brazil" p.224

25) Idem p.222 F. Guerra 1952 "A Questão Religiosa do Segundo Império Brasileiro".

26) E. Willems 1967 "Followers of the New Faith" p.42

27) E. Willems 1969 "Religious Pluralism and Class Structure: Brazil and Chile" p.201. in R. Robertson 1969(ed.) "Sociology of Religion" p.195-218
T. Bruneau 1974 op.cit. p.17

In fact, it has even been argued that for the first three centuries of Brazil's history, political institutions founded by the Mother country preceded any spontaneously generated forms of social organisation in the colony. From the beginning, even before there was any substantial population, a complete mechanism of central government was established which dictated the formation of future Brazilian society.²⁸

During Colonial days, due to their wealth culled from the cultivation and export of sugar, tobacco, and cotton, the authority of the landowners was absolute, and as well as controlling the working life of their employees, they also dictated the limits of all social activities. Generally, these men adopted the role of patron towards their inferiors, claiming concern for the welfare of their employees and social subordinates as long as these inferiors dutifully fulfilled their allotted tasks and accepted their given positions.

These oligarchical patterns, originating in the rural areas, were transferred almost untouched to the urban centres, and even here, in the larger towns the rural population continued to predominate in prestige and wealth because the elite urban society was drawn from the fazendeiros, Senhores d'Engenho and the richcopyholders. Absenteeism was the rule among the landed proprietors. They directed the running of their estates from their town houses and insisted on the same respect and regard from the lower class urban poor as from their own employees. As a result, urban centres in Colonial and Imperial times, to a great extent, reflected prevailing rural traditions.²⁹

28) C. Antoine 1973 "Church and Power in Brazil" p.11. Quoting Alceu Amoroso Lima, he notes that:

"Brazil was created backwards. There was a crown before there was a people. There was a parliamentary system before there were elections. There was education before literacy --- in nearly everything, it began at the end. It has been a work of inversion".

29)c.f. C. Prado 1967 op.cit. J.P. Calogeras 1939 op.cit. C. R. Boxer 1964 op.cit. H. Livermore 1953 "Brazil and Portugal"; W. Dean 1971 "Latifundia and Land Policy in 19th Brazil" Hispanic American Historical Review 11 (4) p.606-625.

Thus, all the power in this Colonial society rested in the hands of a few with the rest of the population being both economically and politically impotent. The division between master and slave does, in fact, aptly characterise the balance of colonial authority. Slave labour was a purely physical and material relationship of servitude that gave rise to only the most elementary of social relationships and never lead to the creation of a broad and complex superstructure. At the same time, the fringe sector itself, made up of people living a poverty-stricken, unstable existence, loosely organised and lacking coherence, offered little basis for extending social ties, while manual labour was very much despised and classed as occupationally inferior.³⁰

However, despite these sharply distinctive economic disparities between the mass of the Brazilian population and the elitist group dictating State policies, Roman Catholicism theoretically united the whole of the colony into one community with common interests. Cultural and national unity was a political fact dictated by the State and its elite to weld together the population of Brazil against forces which might disrupt the socio-economic and political powers of this oligarchy. By using the Roman Catholic faith as a legitimator of its activities, the State could claim supernatural sanction for the punishment of all social and religious heretics or critics. The wrath of God no longer took the form of inexplicable illness and excommunication but descended upon disbelievers and the disobedient in the form of the State's criminal laws.

There are numerous accounts of this insistent imposition of unity and conformity focused on Roman Catholicism, but here, only a few will be outlined. Although there were no nationality restrictions for entry into Brazil, the Portuguese criteria for selecting colonists was essentially a religious one. In the first

30) The phrase "trabalho e para cachorro e negro" is often quoted to illustrate this Brazilian (and Portuguese) contempt for manual work

c.f.G. Freyre 1970 op.cit. D. Pierson 1967

"Negroes in Brazil" p.69. C. Wagley (ed.)1952

"Race and Class in Rural Brazil". T. E. Skidmore 1974

"Black into White" p.48. C. Wagley 1963 op.cit. p.122

two centuries of colonisation, Portugal's policy regarding the admission of foreigners into Brazil was fairly liberal, providing, of course, the potential settlers were Christian (i.e. Catholic).³¹ The colony was thus ostensibly united against French Calvinists, Reformation Dutch and English Protestants for religious rather than economic or political reasons.

Freyre reports that in the mid 16th., to protect her new acquisition from invaders, Portugal would allow no traveller into Brazil unless he first took Roman Catholic communion on board ship in the harbour, or was converted and baptized.³² Likewise, the Huguenot missionaries of 1558 were treated with hostile suspicion as possible emissaries of a French invasion, although objections to their presence were initially couched in religious terms. Later their persecution, together with that of the French pirates raiding the Brazilian coast highlights the basically political rather than religious motivations of the colonial elite as the French "invaders" were doing their utmost to divide and rouse the Indians against the Portuguese.

Hostility to the 17th Dutch occupation of Brazil, although well disguised by religious objections, became especially vehement after the Dutch granted freedom of worship to the submissive workers of Paraiba and to their pastors. The Bishop of Bahia ordered all Roman Catholic clergy to withdraw from Dutch occupied territory, but this order was condemned in Lisbon by the Board of Conscience with the argument that if the people lost their pastors they would think it a tacit admission that the home government despaired of re-conquering lost territory, and they would, therefore, the more easily submit to the Dutch.³³

31) G. Freyre 1970 op.cit.p.41 n.107. Freyre calls this policy the "quarantine or heretics". Even in 1813, they "inquired into one's religious beliefs and passport, luggage, political creed, personal habits and state of health".

32) Idem p.42-43

33)c.f. C.R. Boxer 1967 "The Dutch in Brazil 1624-1654".

The 1824 Constitution is another instance which highlights the use of Roman Catholicism as a cloak for political activities. Religious liberty was granted to most Faiths:

"Todas as outras religiões serão permitidas com a seu culto doméstico ou particular, nas causas destinadas para isso, sem forma exterior de templo".

However, political rights were restricted. Non Roman Catholic clergy could not vote in parochial assemblies and non-Catholics were not eligible to election as deputies.³⁴

As Meacham points out, this clause shows a "frank and legitimate disavowal of religious equality"³⁵ as the Roman Catholic Church confirmed itself as the privileged faith. Yet, it seems that at base, because of the civil disabilities imposed, political motives were the grounds for any disagreement with, and antagonism towards, non-Catholic religions, rather than an over emphatic concern for the doctrinal orthodoxy and purity of the Roman Catholic liturgy and dogma itself.³⁶

However, no description of the political uses to which Roman Catholicism was put is complete without reference to the actual attitudes of the State to the spiritual aspects of the Church.

It is difficult to find information on this question, but one can conclude that Roman Catholicism defined the national unity of Brazil, not because of its spiritual appeal and concern for the whole population, but because of its enforcement by the landed elite as an official religion.

The landowning minority, as leading upholders of the Roman Catholic faith, made sure of a supreme and almost monopolistic access to ultimate spiritual

34) Although granting freedom of worship, the 1824 constitution also declared: "A Religião Católica Apostólica Romana continuará a ser a religião do Imperio". c.f. F. Pike 1964 op.cit. p.129.

35) J. L. Meacham 1966 op.cit. p.263

36) E. Willems 1969 op.cit.p.212 cites instances of intolerance to Protestants and other religious groups that settled in Brazil in later Imperial years. He suggests this prejudice is a result of local and regional factors, and as such, points to the fact that certain regional landlords might have encouraged this intolerance, fearing their own political power to be jeopardized by these groups.

grace and to a concomitant supernatural sanction of their politico-economic activities. This elite group alone could afford the priestly fees associated with acquiring Roman Catholic salvation. Social prestige was gained by being a "good" Catholic, attending the requisite number of ceremonies, and donating an acceptable amount to Church collections and funds. At the Church festivals the local aristocracy could compete with each other in patronising and financially backing the most resplendent processions and public feasts. Again, this competition is revealed, albeit deliberately latently, in the magnificence of dress, especially of women, and the quality of offerings and adornments made to the saints.

"An immense diamond brooch sparkles on her breast (Nossa Senhora da Gloria of Rio): this was vowed to the Virgin by Donna Francesca, the consort of the Prince de Joinville". 37

Freyre contends that the Catholicism of the majority of the ruling classes during the later colonial and Imperial periods was a listless yet formal observance of the faith. Orthodoxy was maintained without personal conviction, while concern for the extension of this faith to others was again a mere formality. For example, note the attitude to Baptism of the Negro slaves, but rarely an insistence thereafter on continuous teaching and expansion of the religion.³⁸ Similarly Azevedo notes the distinction

"--- between an aristocracy superficially devout and the herds of illiterate and miserable spectators of the ostentatious expressions of the former's faith". 39

At first, entry in the Church was limited to those of "pure" blood, which meant that only a select group of people, members of the aristocracy,

37) J. Fletcher & D. Kidder 1879 "Brazil and the Brazilians" p.94.

38) G. Freyre 1970b "Order and Progress" p.305
J. Fletcher & D. Kidder 1879 op.cit. p.97 & 187.
c.f. N. Rodrigues 1932 "Os Africanos no Brasil"
D. Pierson 1967 op.cit.

39) T. de Azevedo 1960 "Social Change in Brazil"
p.63

could train for the priesthood. Consequently, every colonial family aspired to have at least one of their members as a friar or padre, to prove the superiority of their Portuguese origin.⁴⁰ A coloured or indigenous Brazilian of poor family needed special dispensation from Rome and the Portuguese Crown to enter the Church, although this seems to have been an easier process if the "correct" people were known.⁴¹ At the same time, through lack of suitable jobs, landowners would often donate large sums of money to have their sons enter regular orders or a secular seminary.

This differential access of the landed classes to the attention of the Church is also illustrated by State control of ecclesiastical posts throughout the centuries. For example, until 1801, as previously explained, the padroado allowed State selection of secular clergy and, at various times the regular orders also came under similar sanctions. This, of course, meant that men whom the Crown could trust, or were known to be sympathetic to State intentions, were usually appointed to ecclesiastical office, regardless of their spiritual zeal and inclination. Clergy were rewarded with secular positions within the central government for services and support rendered to the State - the greater the service or potential service, the greater the monetary value of the parish or administrative post to which the priest would be appointed.

Similarly, as clergy were linked to national structures through their administrative posts, many of the secular priests in the rural areas were securely tied to the landowner and lived with him in his casa grande. As a retainer of the plantation owner, the priest would depend on his employer's largesse for a living, especially if the regular

40) G. Freyre 1970a op.cit. p.420

41) C. Prado 1967 op.cit. p.327. The author cites the case of Luis Antonio da Silva Sousa, poet and historian, who found a way into the Church because of the patronage of the Portuguese minister to the Vatican.

stipend was insufficient or not forthcoming. He would officiate at the regular services in the private chapel and conduct prescribed rites such as marriage and Extreme Unction. He would also be responsible for the catechism of the Indians and African slaves and would serve as schoolmaster for the landlord's children. Quite frequently, the padre of a case grande would be one of the sons of the landowner himself.⁴²

Consequently, in this period, as throughout much of Europe, the Church became a bureaucracy for rewarding public service; an administrative structure in the employment of the Emperor, with the clergy as paid functionaries. As the Crown still controlled the distribution of stipends, finding a position in the government was frequently the best means of eking out a meagre living. The Church became a profession for social elevation rather than a vocation, and became the only way any non-landholding freeman could gain prestige and financial comfort. The priesthood became the intellectual career par excellence and Church seminaries disseminating a conservative Roman Catholic ideology, came to have the same status as universities. As a result, during the Empire, when native-born Brazilians sought to fill political positions, it was chiefly from the Church that candidates were recruited while it is not insignificant that the regent for Dom Pedro II, from 1835-37, Fr. Diogo Antonio, was an avid agitator for policies which would bring the Church absolutely under State control.⁴³

The State dictation of Church personnel had a severe effect upon the qualities of priestly vocation. On the one hand it has continually caused a shortage of priests in the country. For comparison

42) C. Prado 1967 op. cit. p.432.

43) F. Pike 1964 op.cit. p.164. C. Prado 1967 op.cit. p.328. Prado quotes Frei Antonio da Vitoria, Father Superior of Rio Franciscans: "Today there is no longer a true vocation for the religious state, nearly all seek it as a profession ---".

in the 18th, the diocese of Bahia had two priests, whereas an equivalent area in Europe had an average of 600. Similarly in the 1950's, Brazil had 6,000 priests for a population of 50 million Roman Catholics, while the United States had 44,000 priests for 30 million Catholics.⁴⁴ On the other hand, many entered the priesthood for social prestige and elevation or as the sole means of acquiring an education. The cassock also served as a protection against military service, and comparable to the landowner's sons entering regular orders, the composition of many convents was not that of nuns who had entered from any personal conviction, but rather was that of unmarried daughters of rich families. The convent offered a relatively luxurious and comfortable life similar to that to which these women had been accustomed.⁴⁵

Most of the regular orders and higher secular clergy did, in fact, live in conditions of opulence and wealth and were renowned for their laxity of

44) For literature dealing with ecclesiastical vocations in the 20th. c.f. T. Cloin C.S.S.R. 1957-58. "Aspects Socio-Religieuses et Sociographiques du Brésil". Social Kompas V/V1 p.200-236. T. de Azevedo 1955 "Catholicism in Brazil".

Despite re-organisation of ecclesiastical structures during the early Republic period, there is still a shortage of Roman Catholic clergy in Brazil, especially if this number of clerics is viewed in relation to the number of Roman Catholic ecclesiasts in European countries.

The problem is accentuated in Brazil by the number of foreign clergy, especially in the regular orders - Germans, Italians, Spanish, Portuguese and French - who were recruited from abroad during the 1920's and 1930's when the Brazilian Church was trying to regain her former prestigious position in the country, and was trying to restore her depleted religious personnel. Many foreign secular clergy were also invited to take care of the rural population and consequently, this did little to reduce the alienation of the Church from the masses or focus the Church's concern on national problems. c.f. E. de Kadt 1967 "Religion, the Church and Social Change in Brazil" p.194. C. Véliz (ed.) "The Politics of Conformity in Latin America". For further statistics c.f. A. Gregory 1965 "A Igreja no Brasil".

45) C. Wagley 1963 op.cit. p.235.

spiritual and Biblical knowledge as well as their non-celibacy.⁴⁶

Such priestly qualities caused several divisive tendencies within the Church itself, diminishing the spiritual zest and concern for teaching the Catholic faith. For instance, desire for social geographical mobility and beneficial monetary posts caused competition within all ecclesiastical ranks and was the origin of antipathy and antagonism between the higher and lower secular clergy. There also appears to have been a certain friction between regular and secular clergy over the question of the papal allegiance and wealth of the former. Donations from abroad or from landowning families were frequently received by the regular clergy and contributed to their luxury. Fletcher and Kidder comment on the *fradres of Jurujuba*:

"---- lazy, lounging, greasy, acclimated *fradres of San Antonio* --- live at ease in their huge conventual buildings, situated in the loveliest and healthiest portions of the city". 47

At the same time, regular clergy, with their papish connections often considered themselves to be superior and more "holy" and thus caused resentment among secular ranks, with the result that this array of ecclesiasts hardly presented a united front to the layman.

These qualities of the priesthood also had repercussions on the attitude of the clergy towards their teaching of Church doctrine and degree of concern shown towards their "flocks".

As mentioned previously, thorough exposition of the tenets of Roman Catholicism was seldom found. Allied to the State and landowners rather than to Rome, the Church was forced to gear its teaching to

46) G. Freyre 1970 op.cit.p.445. C. Wagley 1963 op.cit. p.235. J. Fletcher & D. Kidder 1879 op.cit. p.140. J. P. Calogeras 1939 op.cit.p.235; A. Rolim 1967 "Quelques Aspects de la Pratique Dominicale au Brésil", Sociaal Kompaas XLV. p.457-468.

47) J. Fletcher & D. Kidder 1879 op.cit.p.111.

the maintenance of this civil authority. Stress was placed on the Roman Catholic tenets of spiritual obedience and conformity to God's will, obedience to the master, and the submission and humility of the weak who would gain their rewards in heaven. Similarly, the 1824 constitution which granted Bishops the censorship of publications of dogma and morals only with government aid meant that all teaching programmes were under State surveillance.

However, before 1889, although information is scanty, but perhaps this very scantiness is significant, there seems to have been little vociferous objection to State policies.⁴⁸ Presumably, this was because most of the higher clergy were materially tied to the State, landowner or patron and were not economically independent and self-sufficient. Their allegiance to the State was rewarded in financial terms as well as by salvation after life they were assured through maintenance of the orthodox Roman Catholic rites. On the other hand many priests in isolated areas would be too far away for any effective voice to reach the central government.⁴⁹ Yet in the midst of the prevailing laxity and somnolence of the clergy, one must mention the contrary cases such as the missionary zeal of the Jesuits, or the good works of the Lay Brotherhoods and several regular orders such as the Dominicans, who cared for the sick and old.

At the same time, the emphasis on the sacerdotal and sacramental aspects of the clergy and their religious superiority as mediators rendered them inaccessible to most people.

"With five words they can bring God himself down in their hands, and with another five they can open the gates of heaven to a sinner and close those of hell. The first five words being those of consecration, and the second five of absolution". 50

48) c.f. T. Sanders 1968 "Religion and Modernization: Some Reflections".

49) C. Prado 1967 op.cit.p.430.

50) Nuña Marques de Pereira Quoted by C.R. Boxer 1964 op.cit. p.132.

Most frequently, the poor could not afford the priestly services that were essential for publicising their faith and obtaining the necessary rites of salvation, and so, the consequence was a recourse to the saints and an insistence on the efficacy of folk beliefs. Tithes were one of the great scourges placed on the colonial and Imperial population. These had to be paid in cash rather than in kind as law allowed. Many were thus obliged to raise money on a substantial part of their produce not yet sold and this was a sum more or less arbitrarily determined by the "Dizimeiros" or tithe collectors. Often these men would not collect annually but would demand the total due for their period of contract in one lump sum. Dizimeiros were also empowered to recover debts due to them by restraining property or imprisoning debtors.⁵¹

Besides these tithes, the clergy would charge fees for their religious and judicial services; the ministration of the sacraments; dispensations; and the costs of cases coming within ecclesiastical jurisdiction. Another source of priestly income was the "desobriga", or pascal duty paid by all communicants during Lent, while all Catholics over seven years old were obliged to receive Holy Communion at Easter.⁵²

At the same time, because of the necessity of communicating and travelling long distances the priests had little contact with many of the rural inhabitants and could sometimes visit them only once or twice a year. In the more isolated ecclesiastical units, the priest lost contact with other priests and Bishops and therefore lost sight of the orthodoxy of dogma and liturgy demanded by the Roman Catholic Church.

However, in 1889, the declaration of the Republic heralded the separation of Church from State.

51) C. Prado 1967 op.cit. p.379.

52) Idem p.388.

The Roman Catholic religion was no longer official and the Church was suddenly excluded from the public realm and all associated positions of power and influence.

In contrast to the period until 1889, when the landed aristocracy had continuously considered the Roman Catholic Church an aid to amassing national unity, the new Republican government focused its nationalistic aspirations on the development of industry and rejected the contribution of Roman Catholicism. The Church found itself having little real power in a Roman Catholic country and it had no institutional foundations on which to build as these had been depleted by its reliance on, and alliance to, the State during the past four centuries. As a result, the main objective of the Brazilian ecclesiasts until the 1930's was to regain an autonomous base of influence for the Roman Catholic Church, to regain its lost political power, and try to persuade the political representatives in Brazil to grant it a similar leading social and political position to that which it had occupied in the past.⁵³

Rather than being subject to State commands, the Church was seeking to carve an institutional niche for itself in Brazil and from 1891, concentrated on building up its physical organisation. For the first time since its settlement in the Portuguese colony, "normal" relationships with Rome were established. The Brazilian Church denationalised itself to emerge as an institution related more to a universal Catholic position than to local conditions. Reforms in the appointment of clerics and their methods of teaching meant that the goals and structures of the universal Church of Rome superseded those of the State in directing Brazilian Catholicism. At the same time, influenced by the changes in Catholic

53) T. Bruneau 1974 op.cit.p.5-6 & 33

thinking and doctrine taking place, especially in France, the Church increased its intake of foreign personnel to compensate for the scarcity of its clergy and imitating its European counterpart, campaigned against Socialists, Protestants and Masonry, while ignoring the growth of Spiritualism and the rapid population expansion in the cities.

During these efforts to strengthen its position in Brazil, the Church had little time to spare for its lay followers, particularly those poorer sectors who could not provide resources to finance its promotion programme. Rather, through emphasising the internal reforms it was making, the Church began to appeal to the emerging middle classes, the new industrialists who were slowly gaining wealth, power and prestige. These could afford monetary aid as well as a strident and influential political voice, so that opposed to Republican days when the Church was the tool of the landed elite, the institutional organisation of Roman Catholicism now gained its support from this new sector of the elite. Clergy were educated in seminaries ruled by middle class purses and values and therefore, regardless of their personal backgrounds emerged with middle class preoccupations and tastes. Likewise, the Church still used methods of teaching that were European oriented and most appropriate to the middle classes, while schools, levels of sermons, and even the type of dress one was expected to wear in Church or school conformed to these values of the middle sectors.⁵⁴

Later, during the first Vargas era, when plans for increased industrialisation, and greater national progress and solidarity were being introduced, Roman Catholicism was once again explicitly singled out to provide legitimation and approval of these policies.⁵⁵

54) Idem p.35.

55) K. Lowenstein 1942 "Brazil under Vargas": J.D. Wirth 1970 "The Politics of Brazilian Development 1930-5".

The relationship of Church and State was once again one of co-operation at the national level and at the regional level, the Church, as in the pre-Republican period, remained integrated with certain families and local power groups. Consequently, despite the period of internal reform and search for autonomy during the old Republic, the Church post 1930 continued to be covertous of its own physical well being, the money and power fed into its organisation, rather than with any intensive pastoral concern for the majority of professed Catholics.

The second Vargas period in the 1950's, continued these aims of gradually ensuring Church-State co-operation and integration. There was an increase of official acts preceded by religious ceremonies; State organisations promoted religious funerals for Statemen who had died in Office, and most civil servants were once again commemorated with religious festivals.⁵⁶

For the past two decades, the State has continued to overawe and influence the Church to a considerable extent. After the military coup in 1964, and especially from 1967, the military government has ensured that it has effectively completed Vargas' policies in gaining strict, dictative control of State institutions and activities.⁵⁷ Yet, the outlook of many Brazilian clergy has radically changed in this time. A conflict now exists between those clergy still inspired by images of the past and religious influece gained via the State and those who are aware that the Church must reform many of its basic doctrines.

56) E. Brody 1973 "The Lost Ones" p.357. C. Antoine 1973 op.cit.p.135. C. Wagley 1963 op.cit.p.236. T. de Azevedo 1955 op.cit.p.255.

57) Unpublished data from Brazil in the 1960's indicates an overwhelming dependence by the Church on the government for both its temporal and spiritual ministries. In addition to this dependence on the State, the Church relies heavily on foreign missionaries and financial assistance for its various religious and social activities.

c.f.E. de Kadt 1970 op.cit. p.138-138

B. Smith 1974 "Religion and Social Change: Classical Theories and New Formulations in the Context of Recent Developments in Latin America" p.19. Latin American Research Review p.3-34.

58) c.f.7)

Bruneau writes:

"It seems that the Church has to make a choice between, on the one hand, support of the State, power and the subsequent neglect of reformed teachings, and on the other hand, attack of the State adherence to new goals and little secular power, which also means in the Church's view, no influence." 59

Since 1960,⁶⁰ the Church has been busy with the task of elaborating a new kind of social thinking which will rejuvenate its historical aim of encompassing the whole of Brazilian society. As a result, the State

59) T. Bruneau 1974 op.cit.p.238

60) Idem p.55 c.f.A. Gheerbrant 1974 "The Rebel Church in Latin America"

The 1963 Central Commission of the National Conference of Brazilian Bishops took up a strong position on the necessity of reforms in Brazilian Catholicism and directed themselves towards "the advancement of the masses on the fringe of the production and consumer society". Similarly, after the second general conference of the Latin American Episcopal Council (Consejo Episcopal Latino-Americano-Celam) in 1968, many Brazilian ecclesiasts denounced "institutionalised violence" and the "international imperialism of money". They also placed responsibility for social and economic injustice on those with "the greater share of wealth culture and power" who "jealously retain their privileges, thus provoking explosive reactions of despair" c.f. "C.E.L.A.M. "Peace", The Church in the Present Day Transformation of Latin America in Light of the Council" II; T. Stransky 1967 "The Decree on Ecumenism of the Second Vatican Council" 1962-65.

Such declarations by the Church have caused several authors to comment optimistically on the socially transformative role of Brazilian Roman Catholicism. For example, T. Bruneau 1974 op.cit. p.6 writes:

"In the simplest terms, the Church is moving from a position as unifying force in the creation and support of a cultural system to a revolutionary and disruptive force in the present political situation".

c.f. the less emphatic comment of B. Smith 1974 op.cit. p.24.

"The Church can play an important role by serving as a bridge between old and new values --- critiquing structural inequalities --- providing interior resources and communal solidarity ---. However, it is equally clear that one should not expect the Church to act as a dynamic and consistent force for the social and political transformation of Latin America".

c.f. Frei c. Alberto 1975 "L'Eglise que Nous Voulons", La Revue Nouvelle LXII(2)p.469-476; T.Sanders 1968 "Catholicism and Development: The Catholic Left in Brazil", K. Silvert(ed.) "Churches and States": The Religious Institution and Modernisation; C. Masters 1975 "Au Brésil, une Eglise qui Naît du Peuple", Informations Catholiques Internationales No.489(Oct.) p.14-20.

in the form of the military, has once again turned towards her, because for a government trying to form stable organisation and looking for electoral strength, the nationalistic and omnipotent aims of the Church represent a favourable and legitimating support.⁶¹

Although the current Brazilian government insists that it maintained a neutral position towards the Church it is obvious that the more conservative elements of ecclesiastical opinion have been sustained and encouraged in the hope that they will not openly voice hostility to military political and economic strategies. Hence, in government manifestos, considerable effort has been made to limit the Church's public voice and most stress has been placed on the purely spiritual role of the Church and traditional Christian values.⁶² Public opinion campaigns have been waged against those sectors within the Church which are not in political agreement with government administration. For instance, Antoine notes the attack of 1968 was developed on three broad fronts; financial corruption among the clergy and especially the Bishops, communism among the clergy, and sexual perversion in Catholic colleges. The campaigns organised by the T.F.P. (Tradition, Family and Property)⁶³ were particularly vigorous when they identified the Church's opposition to the military with terrorism and subversion.

61) P. Flynn 1974 "Ten Years of Military Control" Current Affairs Bulletin 51(2)p.5-16, *ibid* 1974 "Brazil, Authoritarianism and Class Control", Journal of Latin American Studies VI. (2)

62) E. Brody 1973 *op.cit.* p.356

63) C. Antoine 1973 *op.cit.* p.45, 75, 146.

"The Brazilian Society for the Defence of Tradition, Family and Property" consisted mostly of middle and upper class families and intellectuals concerned with the defence of the absolute right to private property. Class distinctions were also viewed as necessary:

"It is an injustice and a utopian view of things to suppress the inequality of classes. What is important is to strengthen the co-operation between them in an harmonious inequality".

"With colleges run by Nuns turned into schools of sexual education for primary schoolgirls and with priests instructing unmarried girls to use the contraceptive pill ---. Priests and Nuns teach Marx , Marcuse and sex in institutions which once upon a time were very strict; they advise their pupils to say nothing at home because their parents would not understand. This is what subversion means ---". 64

Under the institutionalised dictatorship of 1969 and official repressive policy against all anti-government circles was effectively put into practice. Campaigns have been established against certain clergy considered to be subversive and left-wing, while many priests and nuns hostile to the military have been arrested and tortured.⁶⁵ Even certain factions of the Church itself have more intensely and vociferously disowned all but the most conservative Roman Catholic elements.

As a result of this State intervention in the life of the Church, the attitude of the majority of ecclesiastists has become, of necessity, a very cautious and traditional one; that of changing society without actually changing the balance of forces within it. Appeals are made to the ruling classes who possess political and economic power and wealth to change the status quo while reminding the masses that if their rewards are not immediately apparent, it is because their meekness and poverty finds its own reward in Christ.⁶⁶

As Sanders has observed, many Brazilian Bishops continue to function as they always have, despite their formal acceptance of new goals for the Church

64) Idem p.155

65) C. Marighela 1971 "For the Liberation of Brazil" p.14-15. T. Bruneau op.cit.p.217-236.

H. Camara 1971 "Spiral of Violence" p.17-23.

For example, Dom Waldyr and Dom Camara have both been continually harassed by the police for their speeches and views against the military regime. Dom Camara has been accused of being a communist, and another Conselheiro, wishing to "rouse the rabble" and undermine all moral values.

c.f. C. Antoine 1973 op.cit.pp.68, 113, 130, 149, 195, 268. A. Stepan 1971 "The Military in Politics Changing Patterns in Brazil".

66) The speech of the Pope at Bogata, 1964
in C. Antoine 1973 op.cit.p.269.
c.f. D'Antonio & Pike 1964 op.cit.

and society. "

"They accept without tension, the older theology and practice and do not question the Church's linkages with the powerful, its estrangement from the majority of the population. They yield to the innovations of the Vatican Council out of respect for the voice of the Church, but they make little effort to apply them. They usually sign progressive statements of regional and national bishop's conferences --- because they do not sense the contradictions between them and their own ideas". 67

Thus, throughout the centuries, the pattern of Church-State relations seems to have altered little. Until 1889, the power of the Church was guaranteed by the State and the care of the masses was assigned solely to Christ. Similarly, since 1889, the Church's fight to regain her former influence initially precluded her paying any attention to the poorer sectors of Brazilian society. Even after the 1930's, when this plight became an area for more attention and concern, successive State policies securely ensured that the Church first attended to the desires of the elite proportion of the total polity. Any notions of religious reform were repressed by the government which commended the historic inclination of the Church toward State patronage and support.

Thus, despite a brief period of autonomy from 1900-1930, the Church is once again under the power of the State, although now, those openly hostile to this arrangement are much more vociferous in their objections.

In conclusion, it is noted that the religious heritage of the colony and Empire has generated and maintained into the 20th two distinct attitudes of the Roman Catholic Church. The first has already been explored in this chapter and is characteristic of the pre-Republican period. Roman Catholicism has continuously upheld and defined public morality.

- 67) T. Sanders 1970 "Types of Catholic Elites in Latin America", in R. Tomasek (ed.) "Latin American Politics" p.186-187

It has been controlled and directed by the State , has gained its influence from such associations, and has tolerated all faiths and religious practices that have offered no outright opposition to, or questioning of, official interpretations of national unity.

The alternative attitude, the creation of alternative religious explanations of daily life, is the one which is examined in the following chapters. In the C20th, different religious groups, especially Spiritualist ones, have proliferated, and it is against these that the Roman Catholic Church is fighting to regain its former influence and prestige. This attitude highlights the fact that in the past, the majority of the population tended to discard the inaccessibilities of the official world view, and instead, they created alternative religions through synthesising elements of Roman Catholic orthodoxy with folk beliefs and practices, and thus provided the basis for the development of the plural religious situation that exists in Brazil today.

In the following chapter, the historical development of folk catholicism among the marginal sectors of Brazilian society will be outlined. The "model of" and "model for" characteristics of this religion will both be discussed, although emphasis will be mainly on "external" socio-structural features and pressures such as geographical criteria, ecclesiastical attitudes, and State policies which have moulded, directed, and limited the form of this religious response.

First, the elements of Portuguese folk catholicism that were transferred to the colony and were influenced by indigenous Indian and African religious beliefs will be examined.

Secondly, taking into consideration the influence which State manipulation of Roman Catholicism had on Church organisation and the ecclesiastical hierarchy (c.f. chap.III), the effects of this Church/State relationship on the marginal sectors of society, both before and after 1889, will be analysed and will illustrate how this situation nurtured and encouraged the growth of folk catholicism.

Thirdly, the way in which the actual character of the folk catholic response (its belief and plausibility structure or ritual process) has reflected socio-economic conditions, and the negligent attitude of the Roman Catholic Church to the poorer of its flock will be investigated. On the one hand, folk catholics refocused and reinterpreted the Roman Catholic doctrine to meet their own needs and uncertainties. Yet, on the other hand, the quality of this refocusing has been greatly limited in its innovative potential by background material conditions. Thus, finally, the way in which these limitations have given rise to the essentially conservative character of folk catholic beliefs and practices will be outlined.

Although African and Indian beliefs have contributed to the development and singular character of Brazil's religious situation, it is folk catholicism, together with its more orthodox counterpart that has formed the basic religious orientation of the country,¹ and has remained the backcloth against which the Afro cults and Spiritualist groups have emerged. Several reasons for this can be suggested.

Initially, in their everyday lives, slaves and indigenous Indians were much more likely to come into contact with folk catholic forms of religion rather than with any strictly orthodox aspects of the official Roman Catholic Church. Similarly, in the C20th, Spiritualist evangelists in the urban centres are preaching to communities which are generally folk catholic in origin, sympathy and orientation.

The quality of folk catholicism has changed little over the centuries. In the rural areas, social structures have remained relatively unchanged. The saints still provide comforts and rewards in life and have not been superceded by other supernatural powers claiming or effecting greater potency.

Rural migrants carry their beliefs to the urban areas, but even here different social experiences do not detract from the power of the saints. Their popularity does not diminish as they are still able to offer immediate solutions to any problem, and tangible directions for attaining material rewards.

Yet another reason for this popularity of saints over time and continuance of folk catholicism over and against the Afro cults and Spiritualist groups is the fact that this religion has been regarded only as "misguided" by Roman Catholic

1)c.f. Chapter I notes 1 and 2; 90% of the population call themselves Roman Catholic.
C. Wagley 1963 "An Introduction to Brazil" p.233
T. de Azevedo 1963 "Problemas Metodológicos da Sociologia do Catolicismo no Brasil Revista do Museu Paulista XIV p.345-370.

Crusaders tried to recapture Jerusalem for Christianity.⁷ In fact, the first 16th colonisers were mainly from the southern region of Portugal, an area noted for its Moorish influence and beliefs,⁸ while certain groups of negro slaves shipped to Brazil, Barnu, Peuhls, Madingues and Hausa were Islamised peoples and also contributed to this Muslim influence.⁹

It is, of course, almost impossible to isolate distinct Moorish elements, although some evidence for their survival can be found in those protective amulets and charms which guard against the "Evil Eye" and "bad luck".¹⁰ Several authors¹¹ also note that Moorish influence can be detected in the intimate connection many of the saints have with the life cycle of their human supplicants. For example, the identification of Jesus as Cupid; of the Virgin Mary (Our Lady of Expectation being modelled as a pregnant woman) with the power of procreation and love rather than chastity and aestheticism; of various saints, especially John and Gonçalo, as matchmakers

7) D. Pierson 1967 "Negroes in Brazil" p.116
E. Willems 1949 "Acculturative Aspects of the Feast of the Holy Ghost" American Anthropologist p.400-408
The author reports on the stylized dances symbolizing fights between the Christians and Moors at the Festa do Divino Espírito Santo in Cunha, São Paulo.

8) G. Freyre 1970 "Masters and Slaves" p.221.

9) R. Bastide 1960 "Les Religions Africaines au Brésil" p.63.

10) T. Ewbank 1856 "Life in Brazil" p.22.
G. Freyre 1970 op.cit. p.222.

11) G. Freyre 1970 op.cit. p.226. J. Fletcher and D. Kidder 1879 "Brazil and the Brazilians" p.96-8

these Portuguese folk catholic values were responsible for the growth of Brazilian folk catholic beliefs and practices.

For example, one such Portuguese folk catholic belief that was carried to Brazil is that of the return of Saint Sebastian,⁵ the King who was killed in the battle of Alcacer-Kiber in 1578, while fighting Moorish invaders of Portugal's African colonies. In rural Portugal, as well as in some areas of North East Brazil, it is thought that his reappearance will herald the creation of a "New Jerusalem", the "promised land" where there will be no more suffering or hardship. In the first half of the 19th, there were two messianic movements in Brazil centred on this hope: those of Santa de Pedra and Pedra Bonita in Pernambuco, while a popular verse of the 19th links this return of Sebastian with Antonio Conselheiro.

"Oh wretched ones are they
When election time comes around
It's down with the law of God
And up with the law of the hound! (Republicanism)
The Anti-Christ was born
That he might govern Brazil
But here is our Counsellor (Antonio Conselheiro)
To save us from this ill! (civil marriage)
Dom Sebastian our King
On a visit to us is bound
And woe to that poor sinner then
Who is under the law of the hound". 6

The Moorish elements of Portuguese and Brazilian folk beliefs spring from Portugal's contact with the Muslim and Arab world during the 11th-13th when the

5) M.I. Pereira de Queiroz 1958 "Classifications des Messianismes Brésiliens" p.111. Archives de Sociologie des Religions V p.111-120. Together with St. George, St. Anthony and other military saints, Sebastian was originally conceived of as the defender of Brazilian Catholicism against heretic invaders.

6) D. Warren 1968 "The Portuguese Roots of Brazilian Spiritism" p.20. Luso-Brazilian Review V (2) p.3-33.

This passage is quoted from "Os Sertões" by Euclides da Cunha. The rhyme links the return of Sebastian with the leadership of Antonio Conselheiro. Both had ideals of founding communities based on egalitarian principles which would remedy the poverty and oppression of the vast majority of Brazil's population.

officialdom. It has never been viewed as explicitly "heretical" or "pagan",² as have the Afro cults and Spiritualist communities, and therefore, it has always been a socially acceptable, if inferior religion. By retaining a claim to saintly protection, many of the Afro and Spiritualist group members have also been able to claim an affinity with recognised Roman Catholic values, and, as a result, social acceptability that would, otherwise have been denied them.

An account of the bases and origins of Brazilian folk catholicism immediately illustrates two distinguishing features which determined its initial growth: first, the folk elements and Moorish elements of Portuguese Catholicism that were transferred to the colony and secondly the attitudes of the official Church towards these and towards the integration of indigenous Indian and African beliefs into the Roman Catholic religion.

The first colonisers took many of their distinctive Portuguese-Catholic beliefs to Brazil, as the elite carried with them the national religious culture of their country. This was a nominal adherence to the formal tenets of the Roman Catholic faith as these were interpreted and used by the Portuguese Crown. On the other hand, the rural labourers³ and small merchants took with them local beliefs⁴ which were reinforced and intensified once the people found themselves constantly pushed towards the periphery of the colonial society. Their folk values increasingly became a source of comfort when they were denied the same material and spiritual consolation as their superiors and, as a result,

2) E. Brody 1973 "The Lost Ones" p.351-365

3) At first, Brazil was used as a penal colony for Portuguese convicts. These became, together with captured Indians, the first rural and urban labourers, and, as such, they formed the lower strata of Brazilian society.
c.f. C. Prado 1967 "The Colonial Background of Modern Brazil"

4) The literature on local folk catholic creeds of Spain, Italy, France and Portugal was cited in chapter I note 6.

and protectors of love and marriage.¹²

Likewise, indigenous Indian, and to a lesser extent African beliefs, have become mixed and fused with folk catholicism. Both were catalogued and integrated with Portuguese beliefs, especially by the Jesuits, who until 1756 had both temporal and spiritual control over many Indian villages or aldeias and who provided the only religious education available in the country.

As the Afro religions and their influence will be discussed in a later chapter it is sufficient here to note the Jesuit attitude towards Indian beliefs. Their main policy in Christianising the free souls of the Indians was to adopt Tupí¹³ music, dances, songs and language for use in the worship of the Christian God. Similarly, they translated or made equivalent Indian concepts of the supernatural with those of Christian belief. For example, Tupí songs were translated or constructed by the Jesuits to reconcile both Christian and Indian imagery.

At the same time, the Jesuit preachers persistently threatened sinners with vivid descriptions of the torments of Hell, and to help them avoid such suffering would re-baptise the Indian gods, giving

12) D. Pierson 1966 "Cruz das Almas" p.312

13) J. Steward (ed.) 1963 "Handbook of South American Indians" I (6).

Tribal designations of the Indians vary a great deal. At one extreme are terms like: Arawak, Carib, Tupí or Guarani designating widespread peoples, each with great linguistic similarity and some cultural homogeneity, but lacking any political unity. Other terms are more restricted. For example, Tupinamba which comprises a large number of Tupí peoples who although actually homogeneous linguistically are split into independent and locally scattered named groups. For the debate on these problems of classification. c.f. J. Steward & L. Faron 1959 "Native Peoples of South America" p.24.

Here, the linguistic definition will be employed, especially as the Tupí-Guarani groups were the ones most frequently contacted by the early settlers and a simplified form of Tupian eventually became the lingua franca in Amazonia. Obviously beliefs differed in detail from tribe to tribe, but in general, the quality of their belief systems was very similar.

the Christian histories. The most popular were usually characterised as demons¹⁴ while the most vague and nebulous, and therefore the least contaminated with "pagan" heresies and associated religious ritual, as a superior being on a par with, and corresponding to, the Christian God.¹⁵

All these missionising activities, although less forceful and intense after the expulsion of the Jesuits, did encourage indigenous Indian beliefs to survive and mingle with, and modify the Roman Catholic doctrine, which, as will be seen presently was much neglected in its dissemination amongst the Brazilian population.

14) The capricious, mischievous Jurupara was seized by the Jesuits as the god with the most favourable satanic assets. Because this god constantly interfered in human life and was the deity who was responsible for many illnesses, he assumed a focal role in Indian belief. Attempting to prevent his continued influence over the Indians, the Jesuits assigned him a purely evil and malevolent personality.

J. Steward (ed.) 1962 op.cit. V p.564;
L.C. da Cascudo 1962 "Dicionário do Folclore Brasileiro";
ibid 1965 "Antologia do Folclore Brasileiro"; E. Schaden
1959 "A Mitologia Heróica de Tribos Indígenas do Brasil: Ensaio Etno-Sociológico".

The authors note that many Indian groups called this deity by many different names. For example, Izi by the Tainan; Kocu by the Aruak and Jemenary and Yurupari by the Trumai and Cubeo respectively.

c.f. R. Murphy & I. Quain 1966 "The Trumai of Central Brazil" p.175; I. Goldman 1963 "The Cubeo" p.255;
J. Steward and Faron 1959 op. cit. p.307; M. J. Harner
"Jivaro Souls", American Anthropologist 1962 LXIV
p.258-272.

15) In the colonial period, Tupã or Tupan was identified by the Jesuits with the Christian God.
c.f. G. Freyre 1970 op.cit. p.170.

However, rather than being omniscient and omnipotent, this divinity was, in fact, conceived of by the Indians as the principal creator of culture or as the god of thunder. c.f. J. Steward (ed.) 1963 op.cit. III p.147-86; A. Metraux 1928 "La Religion des Tupinamba et ses Rapports avec celle des autres Tribus Tupi-Guarani".

The "Grandfather" cult of the Tupi also centred on this thunder god, Tupã, a messiah whose descent to earth would lead to the creation of Utopia. Obviously, such beliefs were manipulated by the Jesuits who could relate them to the second coming of Christ, and could use them to emphasise the supremacy and authenticity of the Christian faith. c.f. E. Schaden 1959 op.cit.

Yet, although Portuguese folk catholic, Indian and, less forcefully, African beliefs contributed to the development and singularity of Brazilian folk catholicism, the attitudes of the Church, manipulated by the State, also directed the form of folk catholic belief and practice.

Until 1889, Roman Catholicism was the official religion of the country. To ensure political and economic conformity of the marginal societal groups, the State pursued two distinct policies. On the one hand, its aim was to control and integrate all sectors of the population into an unquestioned Roman Catholic morality which would prevent any criticism of political and economic ends. On the other hand, it turned a blind eye to any activities that did not openly threaten or question this economic, political and religious unity as defined by the State and its elite.

Likewise, the attitude of the Roman Catholic Church towards the activities and religious practices of the marginal sectors corresponded with that of the State. The official Church and her personnel upheld and condoned elitist interests because strict control of the State over ecclesiastical views and ethics enforced Catholic approval of all government activities. This domination meant also that the idea of Roman Catholicism defining the absolute unity of Brazil could be constantly used by the State to sanctify its actions and to ensure a political conformity that had the blessing and favour of God. As a result, there was the State-dictated policy of instilling a certain minimum awareness of Roman Catholicism to the majority of the population.

For example, Indians of the aldeias, and negroes were baptized into the Roman Catholic community, despite the fact that usually there was no further explanation of this act or teaching of its associated doctrine. Without explanation, ecclesiastical authorities exhorted their congregation to conform to the minimum religious requirements laid down by the State: compulsory attendance at Easter

mass and the 10-15 half-day holidays or saints days.¹⁶ They also insisted on frequent attendance at weekly masses. Through emphasising the salvational merits of participating fully in the Church sacraments, the clergy were enabled to line their own pockets with the associated fees as well as make explicit and literal use of the Biblical message that the poor and humble would eventually be strong and find a heavenly reward for their earthly tribulations.¹⁷

However, although conformity was emphasised it was never insistently applied or enforced. As illustrated in the previous chapter, many priests were illtrained, while others lived luxurious lives, concerned more with material wealth than spiritual perfection.¹⁸ Moreover, the numerical lack of priests prevented any effective enforcement of formal doctrinal practice. This laxity of the clergy in teaching their religion, the nature of their personal lives and their rare appearance amongst the poor must have intensified the general confusion and misunderstanding of orthodox Roman Catholicism by the majority of the Brazilian population. Clergy who could indulge their own whims and still be favoured by God, yet who could persistently dictate the proper behaviour of others were in effect setting themselves apart from their congregation.

Additionally, policies such as maintaining the Church services in Latin which the priest alone could use or know, and the lack of Portuguese Bibles, hymns and texts¹⁹ meant that full understanding of the

16) C. Prado 1967 op.cit. J. Fletcher and D. Kidder 1879 op. cit. p.145.

17) These heavenly rewards were viewed by both clergy and State alike as consolation for lack of material assets in this life and as a result would tend to stifle any earthly dissatisfaction or revolutionary resentment of poor daily conditions. c.f. J. Fletcher and D. Kidder 1879 op.cit. T. Ewbank 1856 op. cit. D. Kidder 1845 "Sketches of Residence and Travels in Brazil". J. Candler & W. Burgess 1853 "Narrative of a Recent Visit to Brazil".

18) R. Bastide 1960 op.cit.p.152.

The author compares the ostentacious funerals of the nobility and clergy with a pauper's burial or a negro's body slung away without the last Rites.

19) J. Fletcher & D. Kidder 1879 op.cit.p.255-58

religion was reserved and only possible for a small minority groups and the specialised clergy. The poor or illiterate could aspire to no more than partial participation, while the service in any Roman Catholic Church allowed little active participation of the congregation as all rites and worship were conducted by and through the priest.

"Frequently because of the distance of the priest, his gestures are invisible and are made very rapidly. The congregation walk in and out of the church, talking all the time. Children run up and down the aisles. Babies cry. The "faithful" rarely have a prayer book and wait impatiently for the end of a ceremony which they don't understand". 20

Priests would reject pleas by their flocks to issue sacraments such as mass and marriage if the associated fees were not forthcoming,²¹ but the majority could not in fact afford these fees demanded. Consequently, most of the population felt less secure in their ability to consistently or definitively attain and acquire the Grace and salvation offered by the official Church. They felt rejected from contact with the Roman Catholic God because the mediatory paths to his benevolence, symbolised and made tangible by the priests were blocked and thwarted by the demands of the clergy.

Such clerical practices as those above were ambiguous and contradictory. They must only have confused the majority who, on the one hand, were urged to take part in all religious worship, but on the other, were prevented from fulfilling those requirements laid down by the Roman Catholic Church. The State and Church at once deliberately excluded the marginal sectors from full participation in society but at the same time kept them within easy reach of reprimand. Although persistently regarded

20) E. Pin 1963 "Elementos para una Sociología del Catolicismo Latino" p.33. F. Houtart & E. Pin 1955 "The Church and the Latin American Revolution" p.180.

21) G. Freyre 1970 op.cit.

as distinctly inferior and "separate" from the rest of the Brazilian population, the poor were continually reminded of the necessity of their support of, and allegiance to, all State policies and could always be drawn more tightly into the administrative care of the State if the need arose.

However, when these colonial and Imperial periods are contrasted with the period after 1889, it is noticeable that the State focus on Roman Catholic unity is superceded by a more explicit and literal focus on Brazil's economic potential as a nationally unifying force.²²

"Order and Progress,"²³ became the article of faith for Republican leaders who adopted August Comte's Positivist philosophy with its formula for a regimented social order and unlimited material progress. Economic development through industrialisation was fervently seized upon as the overriding criterion²⁴ by which Brazil's prosperity would increase. Yet, despite an initial surge of industrial development after the First World War,²⁵ and which

22) The Republicans sympathised with the Masonic orders of Brazil who wished to sever the Church from State dictates. These dictates, they maintained, adulterated the orthodoxy of doctrinal and theological principles.

c.f. C. Fernandes 1948 "A Religião nas Constituições Republicanas do Brasil", Revista Ecclesiástica Brasileira p.83-858. G. Perez & Lapagneur & Gregory 19 "Cause & Collapse of the Brazilian Empire". G. Boehrer 1968 "The Church and the Overthrow of the Brazilian Empire", Hispanic American Historical Review XLVlll p.380-400. I. Lins 1964 "História do Positivismo no Brasil". J. Cruz Costa 1964 "A History of Ideas in Brazil".

23) Adopted as the motto for the Brazilian flag by the Republicans.

24)c.f. E. Burns 1968 "Nationalism in Brazil" J.P. Calogeras 1939 "A History of Brazil" J. Saunders (ed.)1971 "Modern Brazil".

25)c.f. R.E. Poppino 1968 "Brazil: The Land and the People". E. N. Baklanoff 1969 "External Factors in the Economic Development of Brazil's Heart and: the Centre South, 1850-1930". in E. N. Baklanoff (ed.) "The Shaping of Modern Brazil". H. Jaguaribe 1966 "The Brazilian Structural Crisis".

was then intensified during the periods of the Vargas administration,²⁶ the social status and position of both the rural and urban lower class did not change substantially over the years.

Although educational²⁷ and employment opportunities have increased and have generated a greater complexity and diversity of social roles,²⁸ the possibility of social mobility has been much more pronounced in the

26) c.f. R. Alexander 1962 "Prophets of the Revolution"
R. Levine 1970 "The Vargas Regime, 1938-38"
E. Burns 1968 op.cit. C. Furtado 1971 "The Economic Growth of Brazil".

27) For an outline of educational policies and their effects c.f. J. Saunders 1971 op.cit. p.3-8
R. Weisskoff 1972 "The Political Economy of the Educational System p.371-398 in H. Rosenbaum & W. Tyler 1972 "Contemporary Brazil: Issues in Economic and Political Development".

Access to Secondary schooling by socio-economic group 1964 (p.384)

<u>Socio-economic group</u>	<u>% of Age Group</u> 12-18 in each Socio-economic <u>Group</u>	<u>% of</u> Secondary school <u>enrolment.</u>
<u>Brazil:</u>		
High	5	15
Middle	15	55
Low	80	30
<u>Sao Paulo:</u>		
High	6	18
Middle	17	51
Low	77	31
<u>Pernambuco:</u>		
High	3	15
Middle	12	56
Low	85	29

High and middle class groups claim 70% of secondary school places, but, as a whole, these groups represent only 20% of the Brazilian population.

28) L. Salmen 1972 "Urbanization & Development" p.415-432 in H. Rosebaum & W. Tyler op.cit.
T. de Azevedo 1960 "Social Change in Brazil".
J. M. Bello 1968 "A History of Modern Brazil".
W. Baer 1965 "Industrialization and Economic Development in Brazil".

middle sectors of the population²⁹ than in the lower classes of Brazilian society.

On the whole, in the rural areas, social structures and values remain very similar to those of pre-Republican days when only the patronage of a landlord safeguarded against an uncertain material existence. Traditional aspects of life continue as

29) Many of the middle classes are comprised of the descendants of the European immigrants whom the government encouraged to flock to Brazil during the Republic, because of their technological skills and because of the higher value placed on "white" European labour at that time.

c.f. E.N. Baklanoff 1969 op.cit. P. Martin 1933

"Slavery & Abolition in Brazil" p.190-192

Hispanic American Historical Review Xll (2)

T. E. Skidmore 1974 "Black into White". J. Johnson

1958 "Political Change in Latin America. The Emergence of the middle Sectors".

These people began to enter the managerial and technological posts of industry, or the commercial extensions of industrial enterprises - wholesale merchandising; export-import trade and banking. This meant that many sons of middle class families moved into the upper middle class and acquired elite status derived from financial holdings rather than from land or inherited position. Frequently, such people have also moved into the established upper class through marriage and acquired the traditional prestige and wealth associated with the ownership of land.

Those of the upper middle classes who married "well" form the "classes conservadores" or property owners of Brazil, continuing to hold themselves separate from the rest of the population.

The wealthy majority of the urban middle class form the "arrivistas" or "nouveaus riches", without the tradition of the former groups, but prospering in trade and industry. These mostly identify themselves with the old and new property owners, thus emerging from a marginal participation in Brazilian society to one of central importance.

in the last century, and social mobility remains limited.³⁰

However, many rural labourers have been, and still are, attracted to the wage opportunities offered in the towns, especially in the South.³¹ Yet, arriving there rural migrants invariably enter at the bottom of the social scale.³² Lacking city manners, education and adequate technical knowledge or training they cannot compete with the more highly qualified immigrant descendants and those migrants who are already established in the city. Many remain unable to ameliorate their conditions,³³

30) Social mobility still remains limited by such factors as family status, occupation, amount of property or income and physical type.
c.f. C. Wagley 1952 "Race and Class in Rural Brazil".
H. W. Hutchinson 1957 "Village and Plantation Life in North East Brazil". C. Wagley 1967 "Amazon Town".
J. Saunders 1971 op.cit. p.19-26. M.C. de Andrade 1964 "A Terra e O Homem do Nordeste". M. Harris 1957 "Town and Country in Brazil".

31) For tables and figures on rural urban migration patterns.
c.f. L. Salmen 1972 op.cit. p.416-421. J. Saunders 1971 op.cit. p.10-12. Anuario Estatístico do Brasil 1970 XXXI p.38.

32) Migration usually takes place in steps, through a series of small towns to larger ones. On arriving in the towns, the major difficulty encountered by most migrants is not in finding a job but is in securing employment which will offer sufficient remuneration to provide for minimum needs and a possibility of increased income in the future. Although the industrial sector does potentially offer upward socio-economic mobility to the unskilled and semi-skilled in Brazil, this sector has only been able to absorb a fraction of the growing labour force. This new migrant labour force, is therefore, employed mostly in the service sectors where under employment and poor pay are the usual occupational hazards. At the same time, service jobs do not prepare people in any way for acquiring more rewarding industrial jobs.
c.f. I. Horowitz 1964 "Revolution in Brazil" p.238-40
L. Salmen 1972 op.cit.

33) R. E. Poppino 1968 op.cit. p.300. T.E. Skidmore 1974 op.cit. p.48.

and through lack of education find difficulty in obtaining any technological skills and training.

At the same time, in these urban areas, the pressure of population on resources thwarts aspirations for a better life; the availability of goods and services is not adequate to support this increase in population and their living standards. Wage levels remain continually low.³⁴ Trade unionism has always been equated with subversion and political violence and dealt with accordingly by the authorities.³⁵ Housing is poor, and health and social welfare organisations non-existent or negligent.³⁶

Consequently, despite the socio-structural changes that have taken place with industrialisation, many of the lower classes are essentially in a similar position to that of pre-Republican days. They still retain their peripheral position in relation to the other social sectors of society and they are still excluded from equal access to the materially rewarding positions in their country's social structure.

At the same time, as demonstrated in the previous chapter, although The Roman Catholic Church has been reconsidering its social position since 1889, it has been too concerned with its own well-being and relationship to the State to offer guidance to the

34) R.E. Poppino 1968 op. cit. p.236-38

35) Idem p.238. F. Marcondes 1971 "The Evolution of Labour Legislation" in J. Saunders (ed.) op.cit. chap6.

During the 1920's, strikes were regularly suppressed by force; trouble makers black-listed by employers and agitators periodically rounded up by police. This government formula still persists. In 1964, the military removed all "subversive union officials, thereby virtually abolishing any power to strike. Furthermore, from time to time the government suspends union officers, and as a result, there is little possibility of group action to enforce the payment of legal minimum wages.

36) J. Rios 1971 "Cities and Urban Development" in J. Saunders (ed.) op.cit. chap.II. C. Maria de Jesus 1962 "Child of the Dark" p.43.

problems encountered by the urban lower classes. Church personnel and opinions have been increasingly and persistently tied to the dictates of the State since the 1930's, not to explicitly define national unity as formerly, but to invest economic progress with the moral authority of Roman Catholic approval. Even though many Roman Catholic clergy are becoming more concerned with helping to solve the material discomforts of the rural and urban poor, their ideals are often thwarted and condemned as "subversive" by Church and State alike.³⁷ According to one historian, the social action of the Church has been so limited as to consist solely of "nice words, noble sentiments and the absence of concrete solutions".³⁸ As a result the Church remains alien from the majority of the population, who therefore, cling to their folk catholic values for comfort and compensation.

Initially, these neglected sectors of the population created groups and associations for themselves through which they could find the identity denied them in a society controlled by the State and certain elitist groups. They created alternative interpretations of the "separateness" assigned to them, interpretations mostly ignored as long as they did not hamper the economic livelihood of the country or threaten the political security of the Brazilian State.³⁹ The marginal sectors called upon various omnipotent and omniscient metaphysical forces to provide explanation and justification of daily events. To these people, rejected yet

37)c.f. E. de Kadt 1970 "Catholic Radicals in Brazil". C. Antoine 1973 "Church and Power in Brazil".

38) J. Tôrres 1968 "História das Idéias Religiosas no Brasil" p.232.

39) Only messianic movement such as Contestado and Juazeiro have been harassed by the State which feared their political potentiality for inciting rebellion among the peasants.

regimented into political and economic allegiance with their superiors, such powers could offer comfort and assurance. More importantly, unlike Roman Catholicism, where the salvation offered was mediated by an unapproachable clergy, the salvation or spiritual and material rewards offered by this alternative set of religious beliefs and practices was tangible and immediate.

However, in order to clarify the way in which folk catholicism has diversified from, or modified, Roman Catholic orthodoxy, some preliminary observations will be made on the contrasting features of these two religious orientations.

Orthodox, formal Roman Catholic dogma has already been described in chapter III. Basically, it consists of an adhesion to a specific body of doctrine contained in the creed; obedience to the ethical prescriptions; ritual obligation to the ten commandments and identification with the universal hierarchy and teaching of the Church.

Popular or folk catholicism is a body of beliefs derived from Roman Catholicism, but impoverished in its dogma and doctrinal content. It has an ethical system adopted from the formal model but from which it selects only certain elements. Secondary significance is accorded to the sacraments and to the priests, while the cult of saints, domestic liturgies and localised shrines replace the ecclesiastical conformities and hierarchy.

Azevedo aptly characterises the deviation of Brazilian folk catholicism from the orthodox form when he comments:

"What upsets every estimate of the number of Church members in Brazil is the truth, rather cultural and sociological, than religious, that everybody was baptised --- baptism came to be a custom, a tradition, a sociological trait in our culture, more so because of the celebration, the cakes and the compadres, than because of the gift of the Holy Ghost, and of the renunciation which the acolyte lazily preaches". 40

40) G. Corção quoted by T. de Azevedo 1960 op.cit. p.71-72.

Folk catholicism may be a Catholicism of "exterior acts" and "petty words",⁴¹ but it is not condemned by the official Church, for as long as its adherents have been baptized, then there is a hope that doctrinal purity may eventually be effected.

However, neither of the two types of Catholicism, folk or orthodox, exist as isolated extremities, rigidly and socially bound, but do overlap at various points.⁴²

Orthodoxy insists on seven sacraments. Popular belief maintains three at the most - Baptism, Confirmation and Matrimony. Their significance is listed in descending order, according to the extent to which they assume a focal role in the daily lives and social organisation of their adherents. For most of the poorer sectors of the population, these three occasions are the most memorable personal ones and are all, of course, especially concerned with the continuity and fertility of the community. Yet, although these three sacraments hold a primary position in folk belief, the occasional mass is also attended, generally at such times as Easter, Christmas or when there is a death in the family.

Houtart and Pin⁴³ distinguish between "cultural" and "popular" Catholicism, the former is a "moral order of conscious identification, a result of birth and nationality" or the orthodox Catholicism originally adhered to and manipulated by the Brazilian elite. "Popular" Catholicism however, is a "spontaneous and unconscious" cultural motivation of the majority.

Extending this typology, Azevedo⁴⁴ uses Spitzer's⁴⁵ analysis of Catholicism in rural Mexico as a base on which to develop a model of the continuum of Catholicism in Brazil. In this, he

41) F. Houtart & E. Pin 1955 op.cit. p.185

42) For analytic purposes, this dual typology of Catholicism will be continually referred to, as it more distinctly emphasises and reflects the contrast between the marginal and elite sectors of Brazilian society.

43) F. Houtart & E. Pin 1955 op.cit.

44) T. de Azevedo 1963 op.cit. p.359

45) A. Spitzer 1958 "Notes on a Merida Parish" Anthropological Quarterly XXXI (1).

distinguishes three types of religious behaviour as focal points of the spectrum - formal, traditional and popular.

- 1) formal - a tiny group ^{of} "good Catholics" who explicitly follow the main tenets and prescriptions of orthodox belief and liturgy.
- 2) traditional - "nominal" Catholics, interpreting Catholic doctrine in their own way; describing themselves as "Católicos" or "muito católico" yet of whom a devout priest or a "good Catholic" might say that they had no real sense or knowledge of the practice and perception of the essential Roman Catholic religion. They are conformist in so much as they identify with, and use, Roman Catholic values, yet their interpretation of these is usually very individualistic and directed to material rather than spiritual ends. This group retains those qualities that since colonial times have defined Brazil's Catholic character (c.f. Houtart's "cultural Catholics"). According to Azevedo, these "traditional" Catholics have:

"--- um sistema vago e fluida de valores do proveniência católico, incorporados, ja sem sentido religioso, a cultura vigente. Seria antes, um modo de avaliar a doutrina, os preceitos, o papel do catolicismo formal em seus elementos naturais e simplesmente culturais". 46

- 3) popular - of which there are many local variations but generally corresponding to the "folk" practises outlined previously. Catholic beliefs are infused with various indigenous Indian and African elements.

Considering these typologies,⁴⁷ the problem of

46) T. de Azevedo 1963 op.cit. p.361.

47) Many other typologies of the varieties of Brazilian Catholicism have been constructed. However, for the most part, these tend to assess religious practice from a rather "devout" or "pious" viewpoint. c.f. T. Cloin 1957-1958 "Aspects Socio-Religieuses et Sociographiques du Brésil" Sociaal Kompas V/Vl p.200-236. E. Pin 1963 op.cit. C.P.Camargo 1967. "Essai du Typologie du Catholicisme Brésilien" Sociaal Kompas XIV.

In this chapter an attempt has been made to assess these varying practices solely by their degree of correspondence to, and recognition of orthodox prescriptions.

Brazilian Catholicism amounts to a question of labelling the focal points of a continuum of religious behaviour, which on the whole, has : "o 'facies', ambulatorio, infixo, irregular".⁴⁸ Beliefs and practices, apart from orthodox prescriptions, have no exactly determined, immutable attributes with rigid, encompassing boundaries, but swell, expand and alter form at will, according to their various interpretations by differing sectors of the population. As such, they are constantly able to adjust to and account for all situations and events.

In fact, despite its preference for ecclesiastical hierarchy, the Roman Catholic Church has always left a back door to salvation slightly ajar, with the acceptance and recognition of a certain mysticism or sudden conversion. Such is the case of many of the saints who have received heavenly visions and communications with God. They too are given a place as intercessors with God, vis a vis the clergy. From the focusing of doctrinal attention on the role of the saints, it is easy to trace and outline the transition and revision of the position of these saints in folk catholic beliefs. Here, the saints occupy the centre of the stage, rather than the bottom rung of the celestial ladder. They are no longer the formally canonized beings of the Roman Catholic Church, exemplary mediators between this world and God, but almost oust God from his dominance. In fact, although there is an immediate presence of God, and a constant contact with him he is conceived of as a very distant and alien being, indulgent and benevolent rather than wrathful.⁴⁹ It is the saints to whose intervention and control most events are attributed.

48) L.C. da Cascudo 1947 "Geografia dos Mitos Brasileiros" p.62.

49)c.f. E. Pin 1963 op.cit.

Jesus and the Virgin Mary take a predominant place in the saintly pantheon, but are not distinguished by the superior qualities allotted to them by the Roman Catholic Church.⁵⁰ Instead they have a multiplicity of roles, e.g. Nossa Senhora dos Remedios/do Socorro/da Conceição.⁵¹ There is also a great range of saints for every disease, e.g. Sta. Appellonia of toothache, to whom wax jawbones are offered; Sta. Luiza, the blind patroness⁵³ whose statues hold two eyeballs on a saucer, and St. José, a specialist who cures all types of diseases.⁵⁴ Our Lady of the Rosary and St. Benedict are the two most popular coloured saints, patrons of the negro slaves.

There is also a spectrum of family saints, personalised and humanised, despite their supernatural qualities. Jesus is both Baby and Adult; Grandmother, usually Sta. Anna (Mother of Mary); Mother, Sta. Maria, the Virgin or Nossa Senhora; and Father (or stepfather), St. Jose.

Many new saints have been added to the official Roman Catholic pantheon: St. Anthony of Padua, a former soldier whom the Brazilians favoured until the 19th as the recoverer of fugitives and lost slaves; the Jesuit Anchieta who performed more than 200 miracles in Pernambuco when Holy Water was poured over one of his bones, and Friar Joam d'Almeida, originally John Martin, the English successor of Anchieta, renowned for the scourging and physical ill treatment of his own body, and whose blood, let during his last

50)c.f. D. Warren 1965 "The Negro and Religion in Brazil" Race VI (3) p.199-216

51) E. Willems 1967 "Followers of the New Faith" p.35-36

52) Musée d'Ethnographie 1973 Geneva "Ex-Voto du Sertão"

53) C. Castaldi 1955 "Um Exemplo do Catolicismo de "folk" na Bahia" p.250. Sociologia XVII (3)p.231-253

54) D. Pierson 1966 op.cit. p.312.

illness, was collected and divided as relics for use in the treatment of disease.⁵⁵

Numerous legends and tales surround these people and become incorporated in the history of local areas, while even non-canonised heroes find themselves raised to similar saintly status as protectors and thaumaturges; shrines are built in their honour, and bones or possessions are sold as protective Holy trinkets. Perhaps the best known example of such an unofficial saint is Padre Cicero of Juazeiro.⁵⁶

From the point of view of the doctrinal prescriptions of the orthodox Church, various distortions have occurred. The stress on the Virgin Mary as protector of fertility and procreation, and the stress on Jesus as a saint rather than the Son of God hazards the rigid adherence to the doctrine of the Holy Trinity, which insists that the Son and Holy Spirit are of one substance and co-eternal with the Father. The focus on Jesus, the God who became human and descended to earth emphasises the personal, living aspect of the religion, rather than an eternal, transcendent Kingdom of Heaven.

Furthermore, the saints have displaced the Roman Catholic clergy as mediators between this world and God. The individual can appeal directly to the saints for help and protection and be assured of their favour, rather than have to rely on the ministrations of the ecclesiastical hierarchy. At the same time, individuals pray to tangible concrete images or representation of the saints⁵⁷ which afford a much greater immediacy than the formulas of Latin worship and the ritual of orthodox service.

55) T. Ewbank 1856 op.cit. p.239.

56) R. della Cava 1970 "Miracle at Juazeiro" 1968 Brazilian Messianism and National Institutions". Hispanic American Historical Review XLVlll p.402-420.

57) D. Pierson 1966 op.cit. p.303
Here he describes the importance of the carved and sculptured images of the saints.

Yet, although the saints occupy a central position in folk catholicism the organisation of worship in the folk catholic communities has tended to reflect the form and organisation of the socio-economic groups existing in those areas. For instance, many towns and villages are geographically isolated, and as a result, the qualities of folk catholicism are geographically diverse and vary with the different regions. Local liturgies and worship have developed around local saints, domestic oratories, and regional shrines.⁵⁸

However, despite this local nature of folk catholicism, apparent in the communal gatherings at fiestas and processions held on various saints days, and in the pilgrimages to regional shrines, folk catholicism itself remains essentially a privatised⁵⁹ and personal religion. Each pilgrim or participant is generally more concerned with his own particular relationship to the saintly supernatural and the immediate rewards and promises this will bring. As a result, shrines and pilgrimages offer little social contact for different communities or even for different families of the same locality,⁶⁰ but each individual tends to identify with one particular, personally chosen saint.

To obtain the benediction or blessing of such a chosen saint, and to obtain luck and prosperity and protection from danger and illness and misfortune, various prescriptions are necessary. Promessas and ex-votos fulfil individual requests to the saints. The former are the promises of a pilgrimage to be

58)c.f. Z. Aradi 1968 "Shrines to our Lady" J.Fletcher & D. Kidder 1879 op.cit. p.90 & 140. C. Wayley 1963 op.cit. p.232.

For example, the State of Bahia has the Senhor do Bomfim as patron saint, whose sanctuary is known throughout the country, while Rio is renowned for the numerous churches built to Nossa Senhora da Gloria.

Similarly, in various regions, saints have become temporary, transitory patrons at times of crisis. St. Sebastian, for instance, was adopted in Rio in 1840 as protector and healer during a cholera outbreak.

59) For a discussion on the use of and difference between the words "privatized" and "individualized" to describe folk catholicism c.f. T. de Azevedo 1963 op.cit. p.361.

60)c.f. D. Gross 1971 "Ritual and Conformity" Ethnology p.129-140.

undertaken or an act to be accomplished on behalf of the saint if a certain wish is granted.⁶¹

Ex-votos, most renowned in the North East region, are usually pictures or graphically carved models of an afflicted or diseased part of a person's body. These are hung on the statue or shrine of a particular saint so that this saint will be able to cure the illness.⁶² Today Castaldi remarks on the miniature models or photographs of students that are placed by the statues of saints to thank them for help in solving current problems of bad housing and health facilities, and competition in employment and exams.⁶³

Processions to honour a particular saint's day are common occurrences. Special offerings and acts are performed in favour of the saint, while pilgrimages to various shrines are usually considered of greater value and obligation than attendance at any official orthodox mass.⁶⁴ Shrines are centres of popular action, erected mainly by the lay population rather than the clerical authorities, and become the object of a form of worship parallel to the liturgy of the official Church, yet without any mediating ecclesiastical hierarchy.

Apart from the various ritual practices belief in the miracles of saints is cause for dependence upon the protection and efficacy of various

61) Idem D. Pierson 1966 op.cit. p.326. M. Mota "Votos and Ex-votos: Aspectos do Vida Social do Nordeste".

62) Musée d' Ethnographie 1973 op.cit.
C. Castaldi 1955 op.cit. p.242. R. Ribeiro 1969 "Estudo Comparativo dos Problemas de Vida em Duas Culturas Afins : Angola-Brasil". Journal of Inter-American Studies XI (1) p.2-15.

These authors report the continued use of ex-votos, although other writers report that this way of seeking a saint's benediction is becoming less common.

c.f. C. Wagley 1963 op.cit. T. de Azevedo 1960 op.cit.

63) C. Castaldi 1955 op.cit. p.252.

64) D. Pierson 1966 op.cit. p.362.

saintly objects, relics and Holy charms,⁶⁵ which can still be found in use and for sale in more isolated rural areas and at popular shrines.⁶⁶

Such beliefs and practices of popular catholicism have obviously had (and still persist in having) many implications for the practice and tenets of the orthodox faith, and do of course, provide a readily accessible and comprehensible understanding of the supernatural for the majority of the population. Yet, it must be noted that although these liturgical prescriptions towards the saints are peculiar to Brazil in detail, many parallels can be found in other Roman Catholic countries such as Spain and especially Italy, where similar folk catholic practices have evolved as an alternative to the intricate nature of the ties between a socio-economic elite and ecclesiastical structures.⁶⁷

Thus, the central focus of folk catholicism is the possibility for individualistic choice and supplication of saintly favour. The saints are supernatural, benevolent beings who transcend human life. They have thaumaturgical and healing powers, perform miracles and therefore possess qualities which raise them far above the status of ordinary humans. Consequently, they can be adequately relied on to conquer problems inflicted by "fate" or any form of supernatural displeasure.

Each individual is able to directly contact the saints and has only to carry out his vowed promessas and to fulfil the promised pilgrimages and processions to feel assured that this supplications will be answered. At the same time, the great range of saintly folk catholic protectors engenders a certain fluidity

65) D. Pierson 1967 op.cit. p.366.

For example, the charms consist of folding pictures of the saints which can be carried on the person, portable images, medals of the saints and Pope, symbols of the cross and pieces of Holy rock.

66) E. Willems 1952 "Buizos Island" p.84.
D. Gross 1971 op.cit.

67) Note 6 chapter I.

through which individuals are able to rely on alternative supernatural favours if one source fails or obstinately refuses to rise to expectations. The individualistic choice of saintly favour available in folk catholicism and therefore the power of an ordinary person to control the implementation of this favour by being able to rely on more than one source of supernatural grace, determines a certain assurance and a security of religious worship which is virutally impossible in the Roman Catholic Church. There salvation rests on the performance of prescribed rituals, the lack of attendance to which limits the certainty of absolute grace. In contrast, the fact that certain prayers can be answered by the saints, who may grant immediate requests, emphasises the assurance and security gained through direct personal contact with the supernatural.

In view of the historical circumstances in Brazil, outlined in chapter III, it is not surprising that folk catholicism has distorted or refocused orthodox doctrine and belief to meet the needs of those individuals continually excluded from full participation in, or recognition by, elite Brazilian society and the Roman Catholic Church.

Even today, such comments as the following can be read (of pilgrimmages):

"--- Such demonstrations are a peculiar religious experience which is not typical of Roman Catholic Worship ---. They allow room for enthusiasm, an element to which the Roman Catholic cult historically has not been sympathetic ---. A Catholic who attaches more importance to his devotions than to the liturgical act of the sacraments is certainly a poorly instructed Catholic ---". 68

Comments of this kind illustrate the continual lack of understanding of the orthodox Church towards any of its congregation. Rather than provide material

68) J. L. McKenzie 1969 "The Roman Catholic Church" p.162.

and practical aid for unsatisfactory social and economic conditions reform in more conservative Catholic circles if focused on insisting on conformity to orthodoxy. Absolute adherence to Roman Catholic tenets, it is urged, will in itself, ultimately lead to spiritual perfection and therefore to those material reforms that the more "radical" clergy would like to implement.⁶⁹

Yet, although folk catholicism represents the response of the marginal sectors of society to their exclusion from the ecclesiastical elitism of the Roman Catholic Church, it is generally agreed⁷⁰ that the personal and particular quality of the relationship of each individual to the folk catholic saints is also a reflection of the distinctly secular socio-economic conditions and relationships of these individuals: saintly relationships are seen

69)c.f. I. Vallier 1970 "Catholicism, Social Control and Modernisation in Latin America". E. de Kadt 1971 op.cit.

70)c.f. B. Hutchinson 1966 "The Patron-Dependency Relationship in Brazil. A preliminary examination". Sociologia Ruralis VI p.3-30. E. de Kadt 1970 op.cit. C. Wagley 1952 op.cit.

as a "sacralisation" of earthly patron-client bonds.⁷¹

For example, social relationships between individuals in the same (rural) community are usually very weak and unstable; kinship is relatively unimportant; the household is the basic social unit; and the effective community is territorily and not genealogically defined.⁷² The

71) There has been much debate as to the relationship between the development of folk catholicism and the socio-economic conditions of its adherents.

Initially this debate revolved around the opinions of Foster and Wolf & Mintz. The latter two authors point out that although compadre and patron relationships are derived from and dependent upon the formal traditions of the Roman Catholic Church (the Church and its ecclesiasts acting as patrons who mediate with God) they are not part of these traditions, but completely independent of them.

On the other hand, Foster argues that the Church with its formalised system for the distribution of power and desiderata, constitutes the formal, institutionalised framework within which the interaction of individuals and their social relationships are to be examined. Its formal rules and structures set the constraints and limitations for individually negotiating relationships that are believed to bring men the benefits and values they desire.

c.f. G.M. Foster 1961 "The Dyadic Contract: A Model for the Social Structure of a Mexican Peasant Village". American Anthropologist LXIII p.1173-92
G. Foster 1963 "The Dyadic Contract in Tzintzuntzan II Patron-Client relationships". American Anthropologist LXV p.1280-94.

72)c.f. D. Gross 1971 op.cit. E. Willems 1967 op.cit.

most frequent social bonds of any strength are those between compadres; ritualised or contractual relationships designed to provide both partners with some emotional and material security in times of stress.⁷³ On the whole, there is little sense of community identity and vertical patron-client relationships between individuals and families with individuals who are their socio-economic superiors serve to weaken community links.⁷⁴

73) E. Wolf 1965 "Types of Latin American Peasantry" American Anthropologist LVII (3) E. Wolf 1966 "Peasants" J. Fitchen 1961 "Peasantry as a Social Type" Proceedings of the Annual Spring Meeting of the American Ethnological Society Seattle p.114-119

Generally, such conditions are the result of the economic structures in rural areas, where labourers, not in debt to a landlord, or not tied by renting a piece of land are able to travel within a certain region to seek employment.

74) Characteristics of these compadre relationships have been much discussed in the literature on Latin America and the Mediterranean countries of Europe. c.f. S. Eisenstadt 1956 "Ritualised Personal Relations" Man LVI p.90-95.

This thesis maintains that certain social conditions give rise to certain types of institutional behaviour in the form of "ritualised personal relations". S.W. Mintz & E. Wolf 1950 op.cit. G. M. Foster 1953 "Confradia and Compadrazgo in Spain and Spanish America" South West Journal of Anthropology IX p.1-28 S. Deshon 1963 "Fictive Kinship" American Anthropologist LXV p.574-583. M. Kenny 1960 "Patterns of Patronage in Spain" Anthropological Quarterly XXXIII (1) p.14-23; A. Hall 1974 "Concepts and Terms. 'Patron-client Relations'". Journal of Peasant Studies I (4)

In the urban areas, the particularistic and personal emphasis of folk catholicism and of patron dependency has also been a noticeable feature since colonial times, despite the fact that in these areas, because of a greater density of population, folk catholicism has always been more communal in organisation. For example, Brotherhoods were frequently established to venerate one particular saint.⁷⁵ Even when the socio-economic upheaval of industrialisation in the early C20th caused urban folk catholicism to lose its communal form, the role of the saints has today adapted to this change. They now satisfy requests associated with the material

75) The Brazilian patron is the pivotal, paternal figure of the whole rural social structure, demanding loyalty and obedience from his dependents in return for his supporting them in times of hardship or for helping them to fulfil normally unattainable aims (for example, providing hospital treatment in the case of sudden illness or accident). Such debt-credit relationships were particularly prevalent in the colonial and Imperial periods when landlords offered the only contact any employee or tenant had with the world outside of the latifundio. Today, however, these socio-economic relationships are still as cogent in the isolated areas of Brazil, and furthermore, tend to be reinforced at the political level through the mechanisms of both local and national politics.

c.f. G.M. Foster 1961 op.cit. J. Johnson
"Sharecroppers of the Sertão" J. Campbell 1964
"Honour, Family and Patronage" C. Wagley 1952
"Race and Class in Rural Brazil" A. Hall 1973
"Social and Economic Obstacles to Agrarian Reform in N.E. Brazil" (M. Phil. Glasgow). B. Hutchinson 1966 op.cit. L. Claudio Veliz 1967 "The Politics of Conformity in Latin America" S. M. Greenfield 1972
"Charwomen, Cesspools and Road Building: An Examination of Patronage, Clientage and Political Power in S.E. Minas Gerais" R. W. Shirley 1972
"Patronage and Co-operation: An Analysis from Sao Paulo State".

The latter two readings are taken from Strickon & S. Greenfield 1972 "Structure and Process in Latin America". A. Leeds 1964 Brazilian Careers and Social Structure: An Evolutionary Model and Case History. American Anthropologist LXVI p.1321-48.

benefits of urban living⁷⁶ and they still act as patrons for their individual supplicants.

Thus, in folk catholicism, as in earthly relationships, individuals appeal to these superiors who have access to the resources they themselves do not have. They negotiate exchanges, that if successful, result in continuing relationships. If the reciprocities are not forthcoming, and thus, no debt-credit relationship is entailed, then the parties concerned move on to try again with other saints. They appeal to them in a succession that will hopefully lead to the "right" partner, with whom a more permanent relationship of reciprocity can be established.

As a result of this emphasis on divine assistance, and the knowledge that the saints may possibly ensure that material and emotional needs will be met, the similar qualities that characterise the earthly patron-client relationships are intensified. Appropriate behaviour in respect to earthly benefactors is assured because of this association with divinely validated relationships and therefore each individual's identification with, and reliance on, the various values and norms of his society is enforced.

Consequently, folk catholicism tends to be a singularly conservative religion insofar as the saints can potentially be relied^{on} to provide the ultimate solutions to whatever social problems are encountered. In fact, many have argued that as a result of this dependency upon the supernatural to provide solutions to all physical and emotional ills an ethos and world view inimical to change have been produced.⁷⁷

76) G. Castaldi 1955 op.cit. p.242.

77) E. C. Banfield 1958 "The Moral Basis of a Backward Society" G. M. Foster 1964 "Treasure Tales and the Image of the Static Economy in a Mexican Peasant Community" Journal of American Folklore 77 p.39-44. G.M. Foster 1965 "Peasant Society and the Image of the Limited Good" American Anthropologist 67 p.293-315. F. Cancian 1961 "The Southern Italian Peasant: World View and Political Behaviour" Anthropological Quarterly 34 p.1-18. R. Redfield 1969 "Peasant Society & Culture" ibid 1972 "Change and Uncertainty in a Peasant Economy". R. Braibant and J. Spengler (Eds.) 1961 "Tradition, Values and Economic Development".

Religious devotion on the part of the suppliant has little bearing on the success or failure of his plea for divine assistance. There is no idea of placating the saints or God for sins committed, and the respect accorded to a saint merely establishes ties between bargaining partners. Success depends solely on these reciprocal bargains established between saint and suppliant through promesses and pilgrimages.

At the same time, because each individual is entirely reliant upon his own personal saint, it is very difficult for any group of people to build up a frame of reference which will provide for communal action. There is little opportunity for uniformity of religious expression or the development of local and supra-local interest groups. Thus, it is argued⁷⁸ that dependency on patrons, both at the human and supernatural levels, leads to a restrictive pattern of mental thought that precludes any formal co-operation or even self-help at the socio-structural level, while each individual continues to compete for the favour of a patron with whom he seeks to establish personal ties.

However, there has been much debate as to whether or not this emphasis on "fatalism" and a reliance on providence is, in fact, wholly valid. Contrary views, which will be discussed in chapter IX, take instances of folk catholic messianism or the Peasant Leagues of the North East to demonstrate that these movements indicate the stirrings of a common awareness among the peasantry. They are seen as an incipient desire on the part of the lower classes to discard their dependency on old patrons in favour of community co-operation and self-help.⁷⁹

78) c.f. M.I.P. de Queiroz 1965 "O Messianismo no Brasil e no Mundo". R. Faco 1965 "Cangaçeiros e Fanáticos". G. Huizer 1973 "Peasant Rebellion in Latin America".

79) Although European and Brazilian folk catholicism are similar in many ways, the quality of the historical tie between Church and State in Brazil has not produced the intense clericalism that is apparent in France or Spain.
c.f. E. Willems 1967 op.cit. p.38-42.

Throughout the history of folk catholicism, patterns in its development can be traced. Initially, it arose as the response of a group of people to their neglect by both Church and State and their exclusion from full participation in Brazilian society. Yet, because these people had little sense of community, as well as having little unity or strong relationships among themselves, folk catholicism emerged as a particularistic and personal religion. No strong communal group is needed to sustain its existence. Each person can rely on his patron saint without reference to others in either the supernatural or human world. As a result, although no communal unity has developed out of this religion except when messianic movements have occurred, the patron saints have always been available to supply supernatural favours.

At the same time, folk catholicism has retained its form over the centuries due to its close connection with the Roman Catholic Church. Unlike the Spiritualist groups and Afro cults, folk catholic practices have never been systematically harassed. Although disapproved of by the Catholic clergy, and more recently so than in the past, practitioners of folk catholicism have a certain respectability in that they do conform to a minimum of Roman Catholic doctrinal requirements. Folk catholic practices have either been tolerated or ignored, rather than persecuted, and as such, have never been forced into positive unity against oppression as have many of the Afro cults and Umbanda groups.

Additionally, because of the omnipotence of the folk catholic saints, and because of their respectability many Afro cult and Spiritualist members have been able to rely on claims to folk catholic membership to provide themselves with a certain social acceptability. While, practising their own religion, they are always assured of the protection of the saints in times of State censorship or persecution.

In summary, the past two chapters have attempted to show that Brazilian Catholicism's singular character, although essentially very similar in form to European popular Catholicism, obviously includes the specific and peculiar details of its Moorish, African and Indian influences.

The temporal control of Church by State until 1891 allowed the development of folk catholicism for two major reasons. First, those ecclesiastical structures of the Church (the body of clergy) through which salvation is acquired, were accessible to a small minority elite who dominated Church life and therefore, for the majority (with only the hope of limited attainment of such heavenly rewards) an alternative interpretation of man's relationship to the supernatural was necessary. Secondly, this alienation was intensified by neglect of the teaching of the Roman Catholic doctrine by the priests themselves.

Folk catholicism has refocused various beliefs and concepts of the relationship of man to the universe and the supernatural so that the doctrinal requirements of Roman Catholicism have been modified in their salvatory infallibility and absolutism.

However, the very individualistic and particular nature of these modifications has tended to keep the folk catholic community in a state of dependence and reliance upon its socio-economic and political superiors. For the most part, the relationship of man to the saints reflects secular ties, and at the same time serves to preserve and maintain them.

In chapter IV the socio-economic conditions that encouraged folk catholicism to develop were described. Extending this historical perspective, the present chapter will examine the position of slaves and their descendants in Brazilian society and will demonstrate the background against which the emergence, growth and diversity of the Afro cults took place. Although the character of these Afro cults has been constantly changing over the years, the historical emphasis of this chapter will illustrate some general aspects of those material conditions which have contributed to the present day forms of these religious groups.

First, the effect the close alliance of Church and State has had on the development and form of the beliefs of the Afro cults, until the beginning of the C20th, will be explained.

On the one hand, State and ecclesiastical policies have constantly prevented the slaves from full participation in both the religious and social life of the country. On the other, a "laissez-faire" attitude towards any negro activities that posed no threat to the economic and religious power of the State, meant that through adherence to their African religious beliefs and rituals, the slaves were able to create for themselves a social identity denied them by their superiors.

Secondly, the impact of the Jesuit dissemination of Roman Catholicism, and the influence of folk catholic beliefs on the African ones retained by the slaves will be examined, and thirdly, some geographical features which have played a major part in determining the development and form of the Afro cults will be outlined.

Until the middle of the 19th the acquisition and ownership of slaves¹ formed a dominant part of Brazil's economy. The negroes imported from West Africa and their mulatto descendants were considered merely as an economic investment and labour force. Even the State itself owned slaves and employed them in public services, such as wet nurses for foundlings in orphanages.²

Discrimination against the negro is well documented. Numerous accounts can be found of ill treatment and torture.³ On the rural plantation, punishment was left to the whim of the master, and the whip, iron stock, iron collar and thumb screw were all common devices to tame the errant slave.⁴

1) In the 17th and early 18th slaves outnumbered freemen and white men by three to one. By 1819, 33% of the total population was slave, while 10-15% of this total were free and coloured. T. E. Skidmore 1974 "Black into White" p.40. R. Bastide 1967 "African Civilizations in the New World" p.6.

The author offers the following figures:

1798	-	406,000	free mulattoes and negroes		
1817	-	585,000	"	"	
1847	-	1280,000	"	"	
1798	-	1582,000	slave	"	"
1817	-	1930,000	"	"	
1847	-	3120,000	"	"	

Obviously such figures can only be estimates as census' were inaccurate and colour categorisation very vague.

2) P.A. Martin 1933 "Slavery and Abolition in Brazil" p.64. Hispanic American Historical Review XLIII (2)

3) Accounts vary in their evaluation of the harshness and necessity of slave punishment. For example, several authors explicitly outline the severity of slave life.

c.f. S. Stein 1969 p.62-70 in R. Graham (ed.) "A Century of Brazilian History". J. Fletcher & D. Kidder 1879 "Brazil and the Brazilians". L. Couty 1881 "L'Esclavage au Brésil".

In contrast c.f. M. Williams 1930 "The Treatment of Slaves in the Brazilian Empire." Journal of Negro History XV (July)

The author maintains that although harsh punishment did exist it was never carried out without just cause.

"--- slaves were severely punished by legal action --- where they had proven incorrigible or had raised their hands against their owners". (p.329

4) P.A. Martin 1933 op.cit. p.167. S. Stein 1969 op.cit. p.63.

The punishments issued by the urban slave holder, however, were regulated by law. Runaways were chained together or had weights fixed to their feet and by 1830, the "Pena de Gales", prescribed in the Criminal Code, legalised public flogging.⁵

Slaves were never allowed to possess slaves themselves, take public office or enter the priesthood.⁶ Such discriminations also extended to the free negroes and mulattoes and it was a common belief that the mulatto especially, was incapable of keeping the vow of chastity, and was therefore ineligible for the religious orders.⁷ Marriage laws (relaxed in 1774 for mulattoes) were designed to prevent negroes and their descendants marrying outside their social and racial class, while a separate judicial system for the "coloured" sector of the population served to enforce this discrimination.⁸

Positions of honour and the wearing of silk, lace and jewels were forbidden to coloured people, and slave owners were urged by the State, especially during the colonial period, to be cautious in liberating any great number of their slaves lest the

5) S. Stein 1969 op.cit. p.63. P.A. Martin 1933 op.cit. p.170.

6) R. Bastide 1960 "Les Religions Africaines au Brésil". T. de Azevedo 1960 "Social Change in Brazil" p.42.

By the 19th century however, it was legal for free negroes to become secular priests.

D. Warren 1965 "The Negro and Religion in Brazil" p.205. Race VI (3) p.199-216.

7) D. Warren op.cit.p.206.

Not all coloured people remained in this low status category but could, under favourable circumstances, achieve high positions particularly in the later years of the Empire when Dom Pedro II employed coloured ministers and Ambassadors. For such purposes these people were often classed socially as white, being able to enrol in religious Brotherhoods of the white and upper classes and even marry into wealthy families.

8) D. Pierson 1967 "Negroes in Brazil" p.70

negroes' self esteem grow out of proportion to their assigned social position.⁹ Negroes and mulattoes were separated in hospitals and were forbidden membership of certain masonic lodges and political clubs.¹⁰

Both Church and State opposed the effects of miscegenation which might produce a combination of the worst characteristics of both parents,¹¹ or rather, this principle was often used to disguise the fear that these "half-castes" might cause uncontrollable disruption of the class order and status quo. The ambiguity of the mulatto's social status, was seen as a threat to the established status quo. A person claiming European ancestry might also claim the civil rights associated with this heritage and this would result in a degradation or contamination of the purity of the white population, its prestige and material power.

9) However, despite this policy, there were usually a great many manumissions in Brazil - on the death of a master or on public holidays, and it was customary to emancipate all slaves who could obtain their own market price.
c.f. P. A. Martin 1933 op.cit. p.170.

10) R. Bastide 1960 op.cit. p.189. G. Freyre 1966 "The Mansions and Shanties" p.81. D. Warren 1965 op.cit. p.206.

In 1783, during the time of Pombal, ruled that members should follow "no base trade" and should be free "for three generations back of negro, Jew, or mulatto blood".

11) G. Freyre 1966 op.cit. p.403.

"Brazil's mulattoes, in particular, in the words of an English traveller "seem to unite the vices of savage and civilized life". The very word "mulatto" became a term of abuse and in early works, such as Antonil's "Cultura e Opulencia do Brasil" we find ---- expressed ---- contempt for the mulatto who is commonly branded as perfidious, overbearing, arrogant and generally depraved. The classic figure of mulatto treachery ---- was traditionally held to be the able but unscrupulous Calibar who offered his services to the Dutch". 12

In fact, the only way any coloured person could elevate himself in face of such prejudice was through the sponsorship of a patron. A former slave once liberated, might become a dependent of an old master. This obviously entailed a continued indebtedness and obligation to this patron while such a relationship persistently fostered and maintained the dependence of the negro on his social superiors.

The Church officially upheld and maintained this discriminatory attitude of the State towards its slaves. Negroes were summarily baptised on arrival in Brazil as a necessary precaution for eliminating heretics from a Roman Catholic country and ^{this} incidentally ensured State control of any dissenting political factions not allied to Roman Catholicism.¹³

Landowners viewed the Roman Catholic religion as a potential restraining force that would dampen any threatening behaviour or ideas of flight. Once baptised, slaves, no longer "brute animals", could "lawfully go to mass, confess their sins and receive the sacrament".¹⁴ As a result, they would conform

12) S. Clissold 1966 "Latin America" p.138.
c.f. D. Pierson 1967 op.cit. p.160 for an outline of past and present attitudes towards the mulatto.
E. Brody 1973 "The Lost Ones" p.147

13) L. Vianna Filho 1946 "O Negro na Bahia" p.106
D. Pierson 1967 op.cit. p.92.

At the same time as they were baptised, slaves were branded with the royal crown, a sign that the king's duty had been paid.

14) H. Koster 1817 "Travels in Brazil" p.199

to, and moderate their behaviour in accord with Roman Catholic teachings.

"Through the confessor --- the slave learned that this life is as nothing compared to eternity --- the slave who bears his captivity patiently finds recompense in the heavenly kingdom where all are equal before God". 15

Through insisting on conformity to the Roman Catholic Church, slave owners attempted to quell any rebellious feelings and hostility among their labour force.

"Planters regarded slaves as baptised work machines. The patriarchs were more fearful of the slaves in revolt than of blacks in demonic possession --- not orthodoxy but dominion was the planter's goal". 16

But, for the most part, there was no serious or sustained religious instruction and teaching to explain the act of baptism or the need to attend mass. 17

Couty writes:

"No-one has seriously taken the job of Catholicising the Blacks --- they are baptised. But most of the time, they are born, live and die without having had any contact with the representative of the divinity." 18

Proselytisation by the Roman Catholic clergy was not insistent and apart from a few isolated cases, there was no effort by the Church to missionise in the African language, or even understand the African history of the slaves.¹⁹ This neglect by the official Church meant that many features of African culture were enabled to survive and were used by the negroes to make tolerable the prejudice and alien culture they encountered in Brazil.

15) S. Stein 1969 op.cit. p.66, quoting a Vassouras plantation owner.

16) D. Warren 1965 op.cit. p.203.

17)c.f. N. Rodrigues 1957 "As Racas Humanas" 1932 "Os Africanos no Brasil". A. Ramos 1940 "O Negro Brasileiro"

18) Quoted by S. Stein 1957 "Vassouras; a Brazilian Coffee Country" p.199 from Couty "L'Esclavage".

19) R. Bastide 1960 op.cit. p.72.

Often, both ecclesiasts and their upper class patrons explicitly viewed the negroes as souls unworthy or incapable of being saved. They were regarded as inferior, submissive creatures, often denied even the possession of a soul and, consequently were refused Extreme Unction and buried without any religious ceremony. In most Churches, separate masses were said for black and white, and the slaves and mulattoes were permitted only in the courtyard of the church rather than the nave. Similarly, no sanctuary was available to runaway slaves who took refuge in a church.²⁰ As a result of this discrimination, in the colonial days, there were several reports of "pagan" funeral rites. Mourners and dead were washed with the blood of newly killed animals to help the soul leave the body and reach the after-life denied it by its masters. 21

Other aspects of the inferior position ascribed to the negroes are manifested in the belief that St. Peter was supposed to hold his nose if a negro happened to pass by, as the smell was so unbearable, while popular rhymes featured such verses as:

"The negro isn't born he just appears!
He doesn't die but just disappears!
The white man gave his soul to God
The negro gave his to the Devil". 22

20) C. Prado 1967 "The Colonial Background of Modern Brazil" p.98 & 482.

Only the Indians were free souls and until 1759 had Jesuit protection. The Jesuits did protest against negro slavery and labour, but **this** merely added to their unpopularity with the Brazilian State and landowners and therefore, speeded their expulsion from Brazil.

21) J. Fletcher & D. Kidder 1879 op.cit. p.142
L. Vianna Filho 1946 op.cit. p.108.

22) R. Bastide 1960 op.cit. p.194. The author also cites this verse:

"When the old negro dies
There's such a strong smell
That Our Lady cannot allow
The blackman to enter heaven".

One explanation of this discriminatory religious attitude is that just as slave owners and Church dignitaries were afraid of allowing negroes too much social leeway, they were equally afraid of any levelling process and destruction of social boundaries that might occur if the negro actually realised his right to the same Heavenly salvation as his superiors. In fact, the whole attitude of the colonial Church is reflected in its non-condemnation of slavery. For example in 1768, the property of Santa Luz which had belonged to the Jesuits is reported as having 1,205 slaves, and the convent of Bahia, 400 slaves for 74 sisters.²³ In such cases, the Church justified these policies by declaring the slaves to be the property of the black saints such as Benedict and Dominic and who expected servitude and obedience from their personal labourers and petitioners.

Similarly, the discriminatory attitude of the Church towards the slaves can be seen in the organisation of religious processions when the order of the march reflected a strict hierarchy according to skin colour.²⁴ Mulattoes and negroes generally marched first, white persons and aristocracy behind, and the clergy paraded in the middle. Although the positions in these processions were sometimes reversed, what is significant is that colours never mingled.

Thus, individual negroes were discriminated against in social terms, and by the Roman Catholic Church to which they officially belonged. Negroes, en masse, whether the gatherings were large or small, were constantly viewed with suspicion, and were continually harassed by landowners in the rural areas and by the police in towns.

23) Idem p.72

24) J. Fletcher & D. Kidder 1879 op.cit.

In colonial times, black activities were often associated with witchcraft and sorcery. Sorcery was forbidden in Portugal and the royal ordinances against this were also applied to Brazil, and to the "demonic dances", music, songs and festivities of the slaves and mulattoes.²⁵ Later, influenced by French and North American liberal ideas, the 1829 constitution proclaimed the liberty of all Christian communities as long as they did not worship in a Church building. No reference was made to the negroes, although, in the "Criminal Code" of 1831, "fetishism" was likewise officially tolerated as long as it was practised on the senzalas and not in a public temple. However, one article of this code permitted all police intervention in any cases where such activities caused offence to public opinion.²⁶

In theory, nobody was to be persecuted for religious reasons as long as he respected the State and did not offend public opinion. But as this public opinion was left strictly to police and administrative definition, persecution of African groups still continued under the Empire, and even intensified from 1870 upwards when agitation for Abolition gave a suspected political motive to any religious or lay organisation, especially in the South of Brazil, where anti-slavery sentiment was most extreme.²⁷

However, despite the persecution of any negro activities that appeared as potential threats to the security of the established status quo, official and ecclesiastical measures were essentially rather ambivalent. As long as the behaviour of the slaves offered no physical threat to their owner or to the quality of plantation and urban life, then a blind

25) R. Bastide 1960 op.cit. p.190.

26) Idem p.191

27) G. Freyre 1970 "Order and Progress" p.98.

eye was turned to less orthodox negro activities. This policy of "let sleeping dogs lie" even allowed the negroes to follow their own group pursuits on certain specified occasions. For example, early in the colonial period, Sunday evenings were allotted as holidays and free time because slave owners recognized that such a break improved the quality of slave labour.²⁸ Slaves were allowed to congregate in various groups to perform their African dances or batuques, and their owners would turn a blind eye to the fact that this dancing was associated with traditional African religious practices, involving the gathering of slaves in "nations" or "cantos" of ethnic origin. Other occasions when it was legal and publicly accepted that the slaves might practice their own festivities and use African costume, dance and song were The Vespers of Reis, Christmas Day, New Year's Day and certain Carnival or Saints days.²⁹

As long as the "nations" did not become out of control, the indifference of the masters enabled various groups of slaves to join together for the celebration of their native religious activities. It has also been suggested that one reason for this general disregard of African gatherings was that it was quite common for an ethnic faction in the town or on a plantation to denounce a rival slave or slave group to their master so that the latter was adequately informed and assured as to the activities of his various slaves.³⁰

28) D. Pierson 1967 op.cit. p.46

29) G. Freyre 1970 "Masters and Slaves" p.267

30) R. Bastide 1967 op.cit. p.13.

"The white man was interested in his slave's religion, only if this had some effect on his life - by disturbing his sleep with the raucous din of chanting voices, the deafening tom-tom of the drums, or if the black priest should become the head or leader of a revolt --- but if these activities did not affect his immediate interest, then he shut his eyes". 31

The ambivalence of State and ecclesiastical policies towards the slaves is also shown in other measures which allowed and even encouraged the development of Afro religious groups.

For example, although certain white Brotherhoods were forbidden to the negroes and mulattoes, excluding them from association with white society, the "coloured" sectors of the population were assigned their own special "clubs" and black Brotherhoods.³² The tribal king of any African population was frequently exhorted to become the "King" or leader of a Brotherhood, and would then act as an intermediary between the majority of the slave members and their masters.³³

However, many such Brotherhoods, apparently conforming to the example of their superiors, would use their own African language at meetings and under such linguistic protection would often serve as retreats for unorthodox religious views and practices.

For the most part, in early colonial days, it was the Jesuits who actively encouraged and carried this Church/State policy of "laissez faire" towards the negroes.

31) R. Bastide 1960 op.cit. p.178.

32) G. Freyre 1970 op.cit. p.252. R. Bastide 1960 op.cit. p.74.

These "clubs" were actively encouraged by the Jesuits while methods of evangelisation were based on two criteria:

a) acceptance of certain native values that were congruent with the tenets of the Roman Catholic Church and could be reinterpreted in Christian terms.

b) the use of force against values opposed to the Church, for example, the Indian *pagé* or African *medecine man*.

33) R. Ribeiro 1952 "Cultos Afro-Brasileiros do Recife" p.32.

On the one hand, they urged:

"You should not make it difficult for them to choose their king and to sing and dance as they desire on certain appointed days of the year and legitimately to enjoy themselves on Sunday afternoons when in the morning they have executed the ceremony in honour of Nossa Senhora do Rosario, St. Benedict or the guardian Spirit of the chapel". 34

On the other hand, they encouraged the integration and assimilation of African gods to Christian beliefs. This was carried out in the hope that the power of the latter would eventually conquer all "pagan" leanings. However, instead of encouraging slaves to reject all their past traditions in favour of the virtues of Roman Catholicism, this policy swiftly substantiated African beliefs in oblique or modified forms.

The missionaries continually equated certain African gods, because of their characters, with the absolute supremacy of the Christian God. However, little is known or chronicled of the past religious beliefs of the African tribes³⁵ and, therefore, it is difficult to assert whether, at the time of their contact with the Portuguese, these peoples had a conception of an absolute divinity or whether this principle is abstracted from their beliefs because of the influence of Western religious concepts.

Herskovits,³⁶ attempting to discover the connections between West African and New World religious beliefs writes:-

"----what then of the further assertion that African religions hold to an original belief in one god? ---- in the West African areas of which Dahomey forms a part, the name of the Sky God is rendered by European writers as the equivalent of their own monotheistic deity, and Christian missionaries have from the earliest times used Mawu in translating the Bible, as a synonym for the

34) Quoted by D. Pierson 1967 op.cit. p.94.

35)c.f. R. Bastide 1960 op.cit. A.B. Ellis 1894
"The Yoruba-speaking Peoples of West Africa".

36) M. Herskovits 1967 "Dahomey, an Ancient West African Kingdom" vol.II p.292.

European God, just as they have employed the name of the deity Lisa for Jesus, and that of Legba for the Devil. The fact that the Dahomeans have no figure who even remotely corresponds to the Jesus of European theology is patent after the most cursory investigation; that Legba is not to be regarded as the parallel of the Christian Devil has been made apparent when Legba was discussed. In Dahomey, at least, Mawu is one of a number of Gods, all of whom have large powers, but none of whom is thought to be all powerful. ---- Mawu is the parent of the other Great Gods; ---- Mawu is envisaged as controlling life and death, yet she is in no sense omnipotent ----".

Similarly, it is difficult to confirm the belief in a supreme being among the Yoruba. Olorun, the Sky god was commonly assumed to be their high divinity, as Nyankupa was to the Tshis, Nyonomo to the Gas³⁷ and Nyame to the Ashanti.³⁸

"----Just as the missioneries have caused Mawu, Nyankupon and Knyomo to be confused with the Jehovah of the Christians by translating these names as "God", so have they done with Olorun who they considered to be a survival from a primitive revelation made to all mankind in the childhood of the world. But Olorun is merely a nature god. ---- He is not in any sense an omnipotent being". 39

Likewise, Oshala, Oxala or Orishala, son of Olorun and head of the Yoruba pantheon of lesser deities has often been identified with Jesus,⁴⁰ while Elegba (Elegbara) or Eshu (Exu) the phallic divinity and mischievous messenger to Olorun has been equated with the Christian Devil.⁴¹ Traditionally in Africa, Exu has never been an evil malevolent god, or even specifically identified within the Brazilian cult groups as any Roman Catholic divinity, yet, because of his capricious nature and his direct interference in daily life, this deity has been most frequently equated with the Devil by the Roman Catholic clergy.

37) A. Ellis 1894 op.cit. p.35.

38) Capt. Rattray 1923 "Ashanti" p.139-145

39) A.B. Ellis 1894 op.cit. p.38

40)c.f. M. Herskovits 1973 "African Gods and Catholic Saints in New World Religious Beliefs". American Anthropologist XXXIX p.635-643

41) R. Landes 1940 "Fetish Worship in Brazil" p.264.

As in their policy of missionising the Indians, the Jesuits incorporated the most powerful and influential gods into Christian beliefs, but at the same time they ensured that these gods possessed little or no active worship, priests, shrines or liturgy⁴² to impede this transformation and translation. If they did play a greater active part in human life, then they were regarded as possessing devilish and evil attributes which had to be denounced by their followers before salvation could be achieved.

Amongst the Bantu, Leza (or Zambi) has most often been associated with the Christian God,⁴³ although originally ancestor cults were predominant among this group.⁴⁴ The Yoruba and Dahomey also believed that all men were descended from a particular divinity, each family having a god at its head. This god, however, also controlled a certain department of nature, and as such served as protectors for the whole community. In this latter role, however, the god could only be contacted through the mediation of a specialised priest.⁴⁵

The lineage element of these latter religions quickly disappeared in Brazil with the mixing of tribes and families and miscegenation between black slave and white master. Similarly, the ancestral forms of worship among the Bantu also vanished and were greatly influenced (apart from those geographically isolated areas where they merged with indigenous Indian worship of dead souls) by the community aspect of the Yoruba religion. The ancestral spirits retained only their

42) Capt. Rattray 1927 "Religion and Art in Ashanti" p.36.

43)c.f. E.W. Smith 1950 "African Ideas of God". E. Idowu 1962 "Olodumore; God in Yoruba Belief"; K. A. Dickson 1972 "Biblical Revelation and African Belief" p.40. J. Mbiti 1969 "Concepts of God in Africa". Ibid 1969 "African Religions and Philosophy".

44) G. Parrinder 1969 "Religion in Africa". L. Fallers 1956 "Bantu Bureaucracy" p.79-81. E. Idowu 1973 "African Traditional Religion". M. Fortes 1965 "Some Reflections on Ancestor Worship in Africa" p.127. Fortes & Djeterlen (eds.) "African Systems of Thought". I. Bascom 1969 "Ifa Divination".

45) R. Bastide 1960 op.cit. p.83.

godly universal forms and became associated with a pantheon of deities rather than with an individual family.⁴⁶

Consequently, because of missionary policies and dispersion of tribal groups on their arrival in Brazil, it is very difficult to ascertain whether the African and Indian gods, although possessing various characteristics similar to the supremacy of the Christian God, were initially of the same, alien, distant, yet benevolent personality as Jehovah.⁴⁷

At the same time, to encourage the negroes to adapt more readily to the Brazilian way of life, and, of course, to continually assert the supremacy of Christianity, the missionaries pursued a policy whereby black saints and virgins were especially made over as patrons of the slaves. For example, St. Cosme was a negro who had gathered a considerable reputation as a thaumaturge and after his death a cult became centred around his miracles. Similarly, to bring his followers under the wing of the orthodox Church, another negro, Benedict, was canonised in 1807.⁴⁸ Other black saints donated to the negroes for their use alone were former slaves who had received visions of Christ or professed a strong adherence to Roman Catholicism, e.g. Sta. Gertrude and St. Jean Francois.⁴⁹ Yet as will be illustrated in the following chapter, rather than wholly accept the Catholic merits and virtues of such saints, the negroes often made use of them in order to cover unorthodox "African" activities and worship.

46) Yet the "family" aspect of African religion is still retained in present day Afro cults, in the sense that each cult group member has his own personal god from whom he seeks advice and help. R. Bastide 1958 "O Candomblé da Bahia" p.293.

47) E. Smith 1950 op.cit.
The author insists that their characters are the same but in contrast
M. Herskovits 1967 op.cit. chap.34 vol.II outlines the distinctly different characters of the African and Indian gods from the Christian God.

48) R. Bastide 1960 op.cit. p.70

49) Idem p.71.

Thus, assimilation between the African religions of the slaves and Roman Catholicism took place because of two major factors. First African slaves were never isolated completely from contact with other sectors of the Brazilian population and therefore, they encountered to a greater or lesser degree, folk and indigenous Indian traditions in their daily lives. Secondly, there was a certain amount of State owner pressure for conformity to Roman Catholicism and at the same time, the slaves were influenced by the Jesuit missionaries in the towns and by those who travelled to the plantation.

However, such explanatory process proceeded selectively in accordance with the specific environment in which the various slaves became structured. Factors varied in their intensity of favouring, accommodating, reinterpreting or rejecting Roman and folk Catholic values, and thus would effect the detailed construction and development of any Afro religious group.

At this point it is important to note the strong influence that the geographical distribution of slaves had on the form and growth of the Afro cults. Although all the groups originated as a response to discrimination by white society, numerous local nuances existed which reflected the varying qualities of the social situations encountered by each group of slaves.

Initial differences in the "ethnic" groups that developed among the negro population may be understood by referring to the historical roots of the slave trade in Brazil. The Portuguese had colonised the North and West coasts of Africa before they discovered the New World, and so it was from these areas that, from 1539-1850, negroes were shipped for labour on Brazilian plantations and as household servants.⁵⁰

The negro slaves formed two main ethno-linguistic groups: the Sudanese and the Bantu,

50)c.f. J. P. Calogeras 1939 "A History of Brazil"

each of which can be internally divided, although there are difficulties in distinguishing the exact origins of the slaves because they were most often recorded by their known point of embarkation.⁵¹ Many different life styles were thus imported to Brazil, as for example that of the Hausa, hunters and gatherers, while many of the Congo groups were agriculturalists.

However, the importance of these tribal groups is shown in their pattern of dispersion within the country. In general, from Bahia to Maranhão and within Rio Grande do Sul, Sudanese elements (especially Yoruba) predominated. In the South, including Guanabara, Estado do Rio, São Paulo and Minas Gerais, there was a greater Bantu influence. This was especially so in the C19th when the 1815 treaty between Britain and Portugal forbade slave traffic above the Equator, and therefore, effectively excluded the Sudanese tribes from being imported to the coffee plantations.⁵²

Yet none of these slave groups could preserve a pure ethnic identity and modifications of values occurred due to the pressure of dominating white society and the actual social situation of the negroes. Although one might find in any region, the beliefs of one African tribe or group predominant, these values were always tainted and mixed with those of other African communities with whom contact was made.

The policies of dispersion of slaves to prevent the gathering together of potentially dangerous tribes meant that great care was taken to mix different ethnic groups and to break up families. Mixed lots of men, women and children were shipped to the rural interior. Consequently, the type of African groups formed in the various regions of

51) R. Bastide 1960 op.cit.p.63. E. Carneiro 1961 "Candomblés da Bahia" p.12-14. R. Ribeiro 1952 op.cit. p.19-20.

52) For a breakdown of the dispersal and origin of tribes century by century. c.f. N. Rodrigues 1932 op.cit. c.f. H. Klein 1971 "The Internal Slave Trade in C19th Brazil: A Study of Slave Importations into Rio in 1852". Hispanic American Historical Review LI (4) p.567-585.

Brazil was related to the qualities and opportunities of contact with masters and other slaves found in those areas.

The three main factors that influenced the way in which the African slave cults developed in Brazil have now been described. First, the attitude of the Church and State to this labour force prevented the slaves from full participation in both the social and religious life of the country. The slaves therefore turned to their African traditions to find the identity and comfort otherwise denied them.

Secondly, State and missionary insistence on Roman Catholic conformity caused a certain amount of assimilation between African and Roman Catholic beliefs, especially when Roman Catholic ceremonies and forms of worship were superficially employed by the slaves to disguise their illegal African religious practices.

Thirdly, the geographical origins and dispersion of the slaves determined the degree to which, and the way in which, the assimilation between Catholic, Indian, and African beliefs took place and was thus an extremely significant factor in determining the quality of the Afro cults in the various regions of Brazil.

AFRO CULTS

Having already outlined the varied material conditions that the African slaves encountered on their arrival and dispersal in Brazil, the following chapter will focus on the character of the religious response of the slaves to these conditions.

First, the assimilation and syncretism between African and Roman Catholic values will be explained, taking account of the fact that State and Church pressure for Roman Catholic conformity, together with the Jesuit's missionising policies, both directed and limited the form of the slave's response to their position in Brazil.

Secondly, the way in which geographical factors also limited and influenced the religious response of the slaves to daily problems and tensions will be outlined, concentrating especially on the difference between rural and urban conditions and changing urban conditions in the early 17th.

Yet, although this religious response has been limited by material conditions, it has offered concrete resolutions of, and comfort for, incomprehensible and unintelligible experiences. Thirdly, these resolutions will be explained, and finally, their innovatory potential will be assessed in relation to their effect on the socio-structural conditions out of which they originally arose. In other words, the degree to which the ritual process of the religious group mirrors or refracts the religious process will be considered.

As already noted in the previous chapter, the official Church of Brazil, the State, and the Jesuit missionaries pressed for negro conformity to the orthodox tenets and practices of Roman Catholicism. However, what is perhaps most significant about this insistence on Roman Catholic orthodoxy, is that in emphasising the virtues of

a High God, the missionaries rather neglected the plethora of lesser deities of African religious beliefs. These deities had a certain degree of autonomous power and interfered very directly in all human activities, but as well as acting on their own accord at a human level, they acted as mediators between this world and the higher gods. Obviously, their personalities were much closer to those of the folk catholic saints, and as a result, assimilation between these two types of supernatural beings began to take place. This mergence was especially intensified because both African slaves and low class white sectors of the Brazilian population found themselves in the same unsatisfactory social position. They could rarely afford the priestly fees associated with God's favour or were blatantly excluded from participation in the necessary rituals for immediate heavenly attention. Consequently, they turned towards those gods which could be directly supplicated and which would quickly attend to their requests.

Examining the lower echelons of the deity pantheon of the Afro cults, it becomes clear that the way in which such gods or orishas were originally equated with Roman Catholic saints occurred in a variety of ways. For example, today, the mythological parentage and position of the god in the hierarchy of the cults consistently relates to saints of similar position in Roman Catholic belief. Ananburuku is identified in both the Xângos of Recife and Candomblés of Bahia as Sta. Anna, mother of the Virgin Mary, because of her status as oldest divinity and creator of nature. Similarly, in Recife Yemanjá, goddess of salt water, is a virgin mother to many gods and is therefore identified with, and related to, various Roman Catholic virgins such as Nossa Senhora do Rosario/do Conceição/do Carmo.¹ Likewise, because

1) R. Ribeiro 1952 "Cultos Afro-Brasileiros" p.47.

Oshala often shares powers with two other gods, Oshaguan and Olleashai, the three are very often identified with the Catholic Trinity and if a fourth divinity, Olhaoufan, is present, then each god is thought to represent one of the phases of the Passion of Christ.²

Identification is also made on the base of the similarity of the lives of the saints to those of the gods. Thus, Shango, god of thunder, and Yansan, wife of Shango, controller of lightening and wind, and guardian of the souls of the dead, are both allied to Recife and Bahia to Sta. Barbara, who in the Roman Catholic encyclopedia of saints is represented as an intercessor in favour of the dead, assuring them of communion with God.³ Omouloa, the African god of smallpox or syphilis is most frequently associated with St. Lazare, healer of skin diseases; St. Roque who is usually depicted with a dog licking his wounds; or St. Sebastian, represented in popular lithographs, attached to a tree with blood pouring from many arrow wounds. As another example, Oba, the African protector of prostitutes or Oshoun, goddess of love, are often connected with Our Lady of Pleasure.⁴

It is also not surprising that the African calendar was adapted to the Portuguese Roman Catholic one,⁵ so that African traditions and practices could take place without fear of persecution on Roman Catholic feast days, public holidays and Sundays. Likewise certain Roman Catholic practices were adopted by the slaves and

2) R. Bastide 1960 "Les Religions Africaines au Brésil" p.38. c.f. M. Joel 1972 "African Traditions in Latin America C.I.D.O.C. Cuadernos.

3) R. Bastide 1958 "O Candomblé da Bahia" p.326. R. Ribeiro 1952 op.cit. p.59-64.

4) R. Bastide 1960 op.cit. p.56. O. da Costa Eduardo 1948 "The Negro in Northern Brazil: A Study in Acculturation". E. Carneiro 1961 "Candomblés da Bahia". M. Herskovits 1943 "The Southernmost Outposts of New World Africanisms" American Anthropologist XLV p.495-510.

5) R. Bastide 1958 op.cit. p.104-106.

and reinterpreted to coincide with their own traditional beliefs in a way similar to the integration of the saints and orishas. In many existent cults, there is use of both the cross and chalice in the liturgical acts of worship; among some Bahian groups, the birth and baptism of Christ are remembered in several songs at initiation ceremonies, when a ritual mass similar to the one taken at Roman Catholic communion is performed.⁶

However, all these connections were, and still are, fluent, mobile and never rigidly crystallised, and many articles have been written on this phenomenon of the local correlations of saints and orishas. Numerous variations occur not just between the various cults but within the geographical areas themselves over which such groups extend. For example, Oshala in Recife, in the various terreiros, has been identified with the Holy Spirit, Nossa Senhor do Bomfim the Eternal, and the Holy Trinity, while in Rio and Bahia, he is represented as God and Sta. Anna respectively.⁷

This geographical variation between the cult groups is even more marked if one turns to an examination of the differences arising from the rural or urban background of the slaves.

On the whole, although most landlords were afraid that any prolonged gatherings of slaves were a potential threat to the plantation harmony,⁸ those fazendas with a minimum of 60-80 slaves⁹ were

6) E. Carneiro 1961 op.cit. p.59.

7) R. Bastide 1960 op.cit. chap.IV.
c.f. M. Herskovits 1937 "African Gods and Catholic Saints in New World Belief". American Anthropologist 39, p.635-43

8) D. Pierson 1967 op.cit. p.92.

9) Plantation slaves composed 5/6 of the slave population in the C.16th, C.17th and C.18th and their living and working conditions depended entirely on the whim of the master.
c.f. R. Bastide 1960 op.cit. chaps.IV & V.
D. Pierson 1967 "Negroes in Brazil" p.XX. P. Martin 1933 Hispanic American Historical Review vol.XIII "Slavery and Abolition in Brazil". L. Santos Filho 1956 "Uma Comunidade do Brasil Antigo" p.117-120. The author also lists the prices paid for the slaves, their duties and the wages (in kind) they received.

too large for the owner to constantly supervise his work force. For the most part, the slaves, who lived in huts away from the casa grande could congregate undisturbed. However, as most fazendas were far apart, slaves had little opportunity for contact with neighbouring groups to form the larger and distinct ethnic gatherings encountered in the towns. Instead, the African religion of the plantation was susceptible to every kind of African tribal belief that happened to belong to the various slaves present.

As a result, in these rural areas it was the "diviner" successor to the "medecine man" and known as "quimbandeiro", "curandeiro", "feiticeiro" or "benezedor"¹⁰ who emerged as the focal point of the slaves' religion. This man was a source of counsel and was the mortal through whom all contact was made with the supernatural. His tasks were to placate and care for the spirits of the gods, to work with these gods, and with certain Roman Catholic saints, to solve both physical and mental problems ranging from the curing of disease to prevention of a beating, or the prescribing of a love potion. His existence was always sub-rosa as his activities were often associated with sorcery and black magic by the white population.¹¹ Frequently, if the plantation was large enough, two or more of these diviners with rival following would be present.

Because of their numerical scarcity, together with continual contact with other negroes, it was impossible for any members of one African tribe

10) S. Stein 1957 "Vassouras: A Brazilian Coffee Country" p.199-200.

11) D. Warren 1965 "The Negro and Religion in Brazil" p.200. Race VI (3) p.199-216;
- R. Ribeiro 1956 "Religião e Relações Racais".
Social attitudes towards the negroes pre-date European arrival in Brazil. The Portuguese thought of African worship as "fetishism", based on intuitive belief in the magical power of bizarre, inanimate objects, and pertaining to the most primitive of societies.

to conserve their traditional pantheon of gods and spirits and the necessary rituals required to please these supernatural forces. Consequently, on the plantations, it was usual that one god would become supreme over his contemporaries and become the focus of religious pleas and liturgy. This god would have the feiteceiro as personal priest, who was rewarded with food or goods in kind for his mediatory counsel.¹²

However, on the plantations of North East Brazil, because it was mainly Sudanese groups transported to that area in the 16th and 17th, and these were little influenced by any consequent importations of slaves or internal migrations,¹³ the Yoruban religious element tended to dominate all others, Yoruban deities becoming supreme. On the other hand, in the cattle areas of the North East only a few slaves were needed to care for the herds so that any African traditions were ultimately swamped by their contact with indigenous Indian and folk catholic beliefs.

Similarly, in the rural towns of the interior with a mainly Indian population, African traditions became very much modified by their contact with caboclo and folk catholic values.¹⁴ African, Indian and Catholic beliefs became fused in varying quantities and qualities to form a completely new set of religious ideas and traditions. For example, there would emerge a mixed pantheon of divinities, consulted via a medium (c.f. the Indian pagé or African medecine man). Advice and help would be received from the gods through the intervention of this medium or healer who was also able to contact

12) c.f. S. Stein 1957 op.cit. G. Freyre 1970 "Masters and Slaves".

13) R. Landes 1940 "Fetish Worship in Brazil" p.261. Journal of American Folklore 53 p.261-70. M. Herskovits 1943b "The Negroes of Brazil" p.263 Yale Review XXXII p.263-9.

14) C. Wagley 1967 "Amazon Town"

spirits of the dead caboclos or negroes in a similar way. One other important factor was the disappearance of initiation rites, the one major way in which African cult groups are able to socialise their new members and make them familiar with African values and traditions.¹⁵

Thus, on the whole, in the rural areas - the plantations and small towns - it was the diviner or healer who became the focus of slave religion. His status^{was} forged from the fusion of African, Indian and folk catholic beliefs which had initially come into contact because of the social and geographical structures of these rural regions. In these areas, where slaves from different tribes were freely mixed together, and where relationships with the owner were frequently paternalistic but impersonal, the religion that arose was not rigidly delineated or organised. Usually, it was rather individualised in its beliefs and practices and especially more so if the slaves had assimilated any indigenous Indian traditions into their African ones.

Consequently, the rural cult group as a whole was less ready to communally obey the dictates of its leader or benzedor, while communication with the supernatural, through possession and divination was haphazard and individualised and generally lacked any type of formalised control.

In contrast in the urban setting, for example and in the mining towns in Minas Gerais there was a greater opportunity than on the plantations to authentically re-create "pure" ethnic nations¹⁶

15) R. Bastide 1960 op.cit. p.401. R. Bastide 1973 "Estudos Afro-Brasileiros" p.59.

The author gives an adequate account of the history, beliefs and rituals of such Caboclo religions as the rural Candomblé, Catimbo and Pagelance. However, due to the diversity of all these groups and the various admixtures of African, Indian and Catholic belief in each, it is very difficult to schematically trace the development of such groups.

16) R. Bastide 1967 "African Civilisations in the New World" p.9.

and preserve original African values. Basically, in the urban areas two types of slave can be distinguished.¹⁷

1) Negros de ganho

a) the urban slaves who were left to their own initiative as long as they provided a source of income for their master. These slaves offered their services as stevedores, porters and longshoremen.

b) urban slaves who worked as artisans, masons and carpenters, carriers of parcels and street merchants.

2) Domestic - urban slaves who were chosen for their beauty, intelligence and delicacy of habits.¹⁸

Thus, in spite of a stricter control over the individual by the masters, slaves had a greater freedom of movement and choice of work in the cities. They had opportunities to slip away from their tasks to contact other slaves from the same tribe or region of Africa and gather together for religious worship.

This greater concentration of ethnic groups and stricter white surveillance determined a stronger resistance to folk catholic influences and patriarchal domination than on the plantations. Non-acceptance of coloured people and their consequent lack of indentivity was, in fact, more intense in urban areas where there was a much wider

17) P. Martin 1933 op.cit. p.165. M. Williams 1930 "The treatment of Brazilian slaves in the Brazilian Empire p.318-319. Journal of Negro History XV (July)

18) The Yoruba were most often chosen as domestic slaves, and were therefore the most predominant in the towns. Rural and plantation slaves were usually treated more harshly and chosen from the agricultural Bantu. This is another fact which points to the predominance of Yoruba and Dahomean religious beliefs in the urban areas of Brazil, while in the Amazon and the interior Caboclo cults are greatly influenced by the combination of Bantu ancestral cults and indigenous Indian ideas of spirits of the dead.

social hierarchy. Manual work was very much despised¹⁹ and caused those of limited means such as small traders and shopkeepers to look down upon the negro population as the most menial and lowest strata of society. Awareness of this discrimination could only fire enthusiasm for the particularity and unity of the African ethnic groups in which the coloured individual could find a valued existence as a person rather than as a machine.

At first in the towns, "cantos" were formed with a "captain" as leader.²⁰ This captain was usually a freed slave or a free mulatto, less dependent on a white patron or employer and consequently better able to organise the meetings and practices of these gatherings. At the same time, because there was a constant contact with new slave arrivals to Brazil until the 1850's, traditional African values retained in those cantos were continually rejuvenated. Warren²¹ similarly argues that the main focus of negro organisation in the towns until the 19th was the Brotherhoods. These, modelled after the white Brazilian societies, were centres of social welfare, worship and entertainment. They were encouraged by the Jesuits and were regarded by the elite as one means of containing potential negro unrest. For the most part, they were tolerated yet placed at the bottom of Brazil's social hierarchy, although from time to time, they were actively discriminated against and persecuted because of State fear that they might induce rebellious feelings among the slaves.²²

Later, during the first half of the 19th these cantos and Brotherhoods developed into the

19) Note 30 chapter III

20) R. Bastide 1960 op.cit. p.220. H. Klein 1969 The Coloured Freedmen in Brazilian Slave Society" Journal of Social History III (1)p.30-52

21) D. Warren 1965 op.cit. p.205.

22) Idem p.206.

traditional type of cult which still exists today. Realising that the emulation of white organisations did not increase their social acceptability, urban negroes began to create more definite structures to encompass the "separateness" assigned to them by white society. Greater emphasis was placed on the value and merit of distinct ethnic African traditions. The most noted case of this explicit insistence on a return to Africa is, of course, the emergence of the Bahian Candomblé in 1830, founded by two priestesses of Shango.²³ However, Bastide²⁴ also remarks on a similar group established in Bahia in 1796 be descendents of a royal Dahomean family.

Thus in the urban areas, cantos or nations arose which more clearly defined and expressed the identity of their members vis à vis their superiors. In these areas, slaves had greater opportunity to gather together in groups of similar ethnic origin, and although, normally, there were no formal ties between them, social relationships that united them into one community were established through their religion.

At the same time as the groups in their urban settings gained a greater sense of solidarity both vis à vis socio-structural conditions and in their relationships with each other, contact with the supernatural became more ritualised and structured and it is such groups that have provided the origins for the traditional Afro cult groups that still exist today.

However, towards the end of the 19th hoping for social recognition and prestige, and for greater toleration of their African heritage once slavery had been abolished, many negroes joined

23) E. Carneiro 1940 "The Structure of African Cults in Bahia" p.272. Journal of American Folklore 53 p.271-278. D. Wareen 1965 op.cit.p.207.

24) R. Bastide 1960 op.cit. p.65.

these more traditional religious groups as Abolition agitation increased.²⁵ Through them they hoped to express the identity which had been denied them for so long.

Yet, even though the negro became prominent in Abolition literature, he soon disappeared from sight. Brazilian authors never idealised him as they did the Caboclo, but from his first literary appearance in 1873, the stock negro of fiction was generally depicted as a type of wizard or magician.²⁶ Furthermore, as will be seen in the following chapter, for years after the Abolition of 1888 the status of the coloured sector of Brazilian society remained relatively unchanged, and therefore, realising that Abolition had done little to aid integration into white society, many members of the Afro cults began to organise themselves more rigidly and strictly around their African identity.

"Now the negro "plebs" suffered a loss in social status from the vogue of the urban elite to re-Europeanise, Anglicise, or Americanise themselves". 27

Consequently, the traditional Candomblés and Xangos of the North-East increasingly retreated towards Africa and began to turn their backs on the mainstream of Brazilian society from which they were still effectively excluded. For example, the "whitening" policy of the early Republic discriminated against equal access of coloured people to education and various types of employment,²⁸ while the influx of foreign European clergy and their orthodox enthusiasm to rejuvenate the Brazilian Church, heightened public opinion against the "pagan" survivals of African religion.²⁹

25) E. Carneiro 1940 op.cit. p.275.

26) D. Warren 1965 op.cit.p.207.

27) Idem p.209.

28) T. E. Skidmore 1974 "Black into White" p.173

29) R. Bastide 1967 op.cit. chap.X.

The traditional groups began to separate themselves as much as possible from an association with a Brazilian identity. Security was sought by adherence to African religious beliefs and practices.³⁰

Although these traditional groups remained diverse and localised, as had the various cantos and nations, a "Union of Afro-Brazilian Sects" (União das Seitas Afro-Brasileiros) was organised in 1937. Its main purpose was to "combat sorcery and quackery"³¹ and to maintain standards in the face of a sudden proliferation of upstart temples, to cut down chicanery, and to defend ---- against persecution".³²

Traditional groups attempted to retain the ethnic identity of their original founder nations and explicitly preserve their African heritage and traditions. A high qualification for any participant was to be a pure black, the son or grandson of Africans, with no mixture of white blood,³³ and today an emphasis on these African traditions is retained through the African origin of certain foods, musical instrument (especially the drums) songs and religious liturgy used by the Afro cults. ³⁴

Bastide refers to this withdrawal of the Afro cults as the "negritude myth":

"But since in cultures there is no "unconscious collective" or hereditary factor, but only what is inherited in apprenticeship, this Africa can be no more than an imaginary concept floating in the void---". ³⁵

30) E. Carneiro 1940 op.cit. p.262.

31) Idem p.278.

32) R. Landes 1940 op.cit.p.268

The Union was organised by Carneiro in an effort to perpetuate African traditions in Brazil. In 1937, this Union asked the government of Bahia for recognition of Candomblé as a religion, with certain rights and privileges under the Brazilian constitution, and equality with other religions. The request was denied.

c.f. D.Pierson 1967 op.cit. p.278

33) E. Carneiro 1940 op.cit.p.277.

34) C.P. Camargo 1961 "Kardecismo e Umbanda" p.9-11.

35) R. Bastide 1967 op.cit. p.214-215.

Africa has become mythical and idealised, the country where members of the Afro cults can find freedom and material wealth if given the opportunity to travel back, and the country in which all African souls will eventually find a place of rest.³⁶ Yet this return to Africa is hardly a modern innovation, a reaction to C20th events, but is, rather, an ideal inherited from the first Brazilian slaves and which has since become intensified and more cogently expressed.

For example, especially in the colonial period, slaves would commit suicide³⁷ in order that their soul, freed from its human bondage could return to Africa and be united with its ancestors. Although such an act was rare in their native societies, the slaves justified it by regarding it as an act of battle or vengeance against a master who debased and harshly treated his workers.³⁸

Another example of the way in which the values and lifestyles of white society were rejected in the past is seen in the custom of "Burning Judas".³⁹ This custom derives from the Portuguese tradition of burning the Jew who betrayed Jesus. For the negro slaves, Judas became the substitution for authority, and a symbolic means of fighting against their inferiority. On certain feast days, Judas in the form of Judas-of-the-court, a business man, shopkeeper, or government official could be burnt, hung or mocked without fear of retaliation from those represented as the traitor.

Songs⁴⁰ were similarly used as a cynical,

36) E. Carneiro 1940 op.cit.p.278. E. Carneiro 1961 op.cit. p.92.

37) Slaves either killed themselves or killed each other. For example those of the Minas tribes frequently resorted to the former, and the Mozambique tribes to the latter.

38) Idem p.113.

39) Idem p.113. D. Kidder 1845 "Sketches of Residence and Travels in Brazil" p.153. J. Fletcher & D. Kidder 1879 "Brazil and the Brazilians" p.154.

40) S. Stein 1957 op.cit.

oblique comment on the inferior position of the slaves in society. On the plantations, although slaves used "mixed up" Portuguese to speak to their masters and overseers, songs with African words would be used to allude to treatment received from these men. Riddles or Jongos⁴¹ likewise referred to situations of which there was more than one possible interpretation. For example, the word "monkey" was often a substitute for the slave ill-treated by his master.

Today, these past attitudes towards Brazilian society are reflected by the way in which the more traditional Afro cults have become increasingly formalised, Africanised and insistently separate from any association with a Brazilian identity. Their self-sufficiency means that the influence of the Afro group itself rarely extends beyond its religious boundaries.

For instance, the actual social organisation of the traditional cults provides a complete set of regulations which guarantees an immediate and concrete identity within the cult itself. Initially, especially during the colonial and Imperial eras, it was very difficult for the marginal coloured sectors of Brazilian society to actually participate in any activities other than those of their local social equals. Because of this restricted mobility, African influence was found in dress, folklore, magic, music and work habits, so that affiliation with a cult group was also obligatory or taken for granted. Every social situation brought the

41) Idem p.163 & 208.

The author gives several examples of these Jongos, but also notes that very few records of them are available. At the same time, the incidents inspiring them, mostly at the end of the C.19th ceased to exist, so that the riddles themselves also died out of use on the plantations. c.f. L.C. da Cascudo 1962 "Dicionário do Folclore Brasileiro" p.471-473.

individual into contact with his community's patterns of thought, feelings and action, so that each member of the religious group could either choose between conformity or solitude.

Individuals who strayed away from their religious society were ostracized and eventually officially excluded from the group by the Mãe or Pãe de Santo.⁴²

Thus, throughout the centuries, members of the Afro "nations" have been initiated and socialised into the hierarchical etiquette and power structure of their religious groups. In these traditional cults, the relationship of the group as a whole is articulated by the Mãe (Pãe) de Santo.⁴³ She is the person who sees that the gods are properly worshipped, who directs rituals, forecasts illnesses and forthcoming events, initiates into cult and trains newcomers. She usually identifies each member's personal deity through divination (unless a previous unorthodox possession has made this relationship explicit and obvious), and she exacts the discipline that is required for ritual performance. For the most part, her position depends on her knowledge of the theology and ritual of the cult and her superior ability to communicate with the orixas. As a result, she is respected and her commands are generally obeyed.

42) E. Carneiro 1940 op.cit. p.270 c.f. J. Goody & I. Watt 1963 "The Consequences of Literacy" p.342-343. in P. Giglioli (ed.) 1972 "Language and Social Context".

This discussion involves an explanation of group identity in non-literate societies.

43) In the following, for ease and clarity of expression, I shall refer the leader of the Afro cults as "Mãe de Santo". In the past, most leaders were women, although today, it is certainly quite common to find a man or "Pãe de Santo" at the head of a cult group.
c.f. R. Landes 1947 "City of Women". F. Gonçalves 1937 "Xangos do Nordest". R. Bastide 1958 op.cit
E. Carneiro 1961 op.cit.

The Mãe de Santo is responsible only to the orishas, but she herself commands a strict hierarchy of her "spiritual" children. Position in the hierarchy is related to the length of time initiated, while each person has a special role associated with his status, and must also observe a strict system of etiquette. ⁴⁴

Highly formalised ceremonies with much drumming call the orixas to contact their worshippers; to descend to earth and to "mount" their "horses". Each member of the group has his own personal orisha with whom he frequently communicates and on whom he can always rely at times of crisis. However, not all the orishas descend and while most act as protectors and advisors, some, such as Exu, delight in playing tricks or causing upsets in the community. ⁴⁵

Consequently, any challenge to the priestly authority of the Mãe de Santo challenges the whole socialisation process and organisation of the group itself, and ultimately the supernatural sanctions upon which it is founded and by which it is legitimised.

As both Douglas and Turner have demonstrated, if all members of a religious group are permitted to contact the supernatural individually, then the emergence or power of a dominant person is necessarily curtailed. ⁴⁶ Any individual can personally contact the supernatural, gain supernatural (and, therefore unquestionable) authority for his actions, and openly flout the dictates of established leadership. But, in the traditional

44) R. Bastide 1958 op.cit. R. Landes 1947 op.cit.

45) For this reason, Exu is usually appeased by certain rituals or offerings before the main part of an Afro ceremony begins.
c.f. J. Pemberton 1975 "Eshu-Elegba: The Yoruba Trickster God" African Arts IX (Oct).

46) M. Douglas 1970 "Natural Symbols".
V. Turner 1969 "The Ritual Process".

Afro cults, a common identity and solidarity has been retained through the fact that "deviants" have always been severely reprimanded by the leader of the cult. Unorthodox behaviour incurs the wrath of the orishas and disinclines them to act benevolently towards their followers, while because such behaviour has also frequently attracted the unwanted attention of the police or the condemnation of public opinion it has therefore been avoided if at all possible.⁴⁷

Yet, although discipline within the Afro cults is strictly maintained and enforced, the cult group has constantly provided its members compensation for lack of material assets and tangible alternative rewards to those offered by Brazilian society. Mutual help and friendship is found from other members of the group and this collective unity is maintained through common adherence to rituals and liturgical worship as a nominative code of behaviour. Personal power is attained through a member's position in the religious hierarchy, the length of time initiated, and occasionally, the quality of possession by his orisha. Consequently, within the cult group, an individual can acquire the prestige and respect denied him by the wider society and therefore, in many ways, can find compensation for lack of power and status in daily life.⁴⁸

At the same time, certain features of the individual's contact with the supernatural do tend

47)c.f. E. Brody 1973 "The Lost Ones". R. Bastide 1973 op.cit.

48) M. Herskovits 1943a "The Negro in Bahia, Brazil; A Problem in Method" p.272 American Sociological Review VIII (4)

A Survey of Afro cults revealed a great variety of reasons for affiliation of individual members, ranging from the desire for supernatural protection in making daily life more secure to the prestige offered in the hierarchy of the group. c.f. R. Bastide 1973 op.cit. p.249-293. F. M. Rust 1972 "The Afro-Brazilian Religious Cults" S.S.R.C. Project Report.

to intensify a withdrawal from wider Brazilian society. One of the main characteristics of Afro cult activities is the central concern of each member for immediate solutions to problems and illnesses. Because these marginal sectors of the population have constantly been denied both the material rewards of their society and full access to the Roman Catholic salvation awaiting the "humble and meek", they have developed alternative conceptions of their place in the universe and of man's relationship to the supernatural. To compensate for peripheral positions and statuses, salvation has become focused on immediate and tangible explanations and solutions of personal problems associated with these conditions.⁴⁹

Through the means of possession, each individual acquires personal power over the problems encountered in his daily life. Despite the fact that in the most traditional cults the Mae or Pae de Santo has strict authority, the ability to contact the supernatural is learnt gradually over a long period of time and every member of the group is permitted or has the necessary qualifications to communicate personally with the orishas. Each member has close contact with one specific deity who can be called on at all times for advice, and each cult member, can, and does, perform duties and make offerings in order to communicate directly with his own personal orisha.

However, once immediate satisfaction has been achieved, there is little sense of continual obligation or continual debt to the supernatural world. Communication with the orishas is merely regarded as an immediate therapy for everyday concerns and religious commitment therefore consists only in the recourse to the specific thaumaturgical attributes of each god.

49)c.f. E. Brody 1973 op.cit. E. Carneiro 1961 op.cit.

As a result, as in folk catholicism, the rituals of the Afro cults tend to be propitiatory and supplicatory rather than expiatory.⁵⁰ Individuals ask favours from the supernatural, but rarely atone or assuage their deities. Orishas are rarely taken as aesthetic or moral models to be imitated. Supernatural entities influence, for good or bad, the life of an individual, so that worldly success, outside of the cult group is often viewed as "the wish of the gods". Consequently, this frequently engenders a greater devotion to the religious community and to those rituals which have contributed to acquiring supernatural favour.

In fact, the orishas are only occasionally wrathful with their followers and only directly cause illness or suffering when an individual neglects to pay them adequate attention or neglects cult group etiquette. Correct ritual performance, however, will instantly rectify such a situation because rituals have intrinsic power in themselves and are rewarded with automatic results. The merits of the daily life of the supplicants counts less than the exact and correct execution of rituals in gaining the favour of the supernatural.

Thus, in general, the identity generated by concepts of the relationship of man to the supernatural is confined to the cult group and is not applicable beyond this. No code of conduct outside that of the religious community, and the correct performance of religious ritual is offered or demanded by the orishas, but ultimately,

- 50) R. Ribeiro 1953 op.cit. p.64.
Five types of ritual are listed:
- a) life-cycle
 - b) protective - against black magic of the evil eye
 - c) divinatory - for protection and advice
 - d) festive or celebratory - for a certain orixa
 - e) weekly and daily rites - for each orixa to assure his continuing influence over human life.

the individual relies upon the supernatural to influence his daily life.

At the same time, Brazilian society takes a rather ambiguous attitude towards the Afro cults which causes these groups to continue to retreat and withdraw to the hope and promise of a mythical Africa.

On the one hand, Africanisms are looked down upon by the majority of the population because such traditions are associated with the slave trade and "primitive" lifestyles. The Afro cults are despised as anachronisms, relics of Brazil's colonial past and quite unrepresentative of national development and ideals. This prejudice and discrimination forces many of the traditional groups into a more retreatist and defensive position, protecting the religious identity of their members who are still excluded from social mobility and economic advancement.⁵¹

On the other hand, in recent years, many of the Afro cults have become increasingly commercialised. Attracted by their exotic character, tourists, and members of the upper classes donate sums of money in order to attend rituals or to take part in divination ceremonies. Explanations for this appeal have been offered by both Douglas and Bastide who emphasise the way in which the Afro cults offer a means of releasing tensions and frustrations associated with modern city life.

"Now urban whites, like negroes, are slaves to their jobs --- apart from one another, and sunk in the grey drabness of day to day life --- mechanical actions dictated by a factory job --- the anonymity of social controls". 52

51) Idem p.104

52) R. Bastide 1967 op.cit. p.225.

Douglas likewise highlights the tendency to participate in such groups if one's own socio-structural status is insecure and uncertain, and one's established or accepted place in society is continually threatened through competition.⁵³ The immediate and tangible advantages offered by the Afro cults, through divination, or through seeking the advice of an orisha compensate for the uncertainties inherent in everyday urban existence.

However, to avoid any adulteration of their beliefs and rituals as a result of this commercialisation, several Afro cults rejected white participation and tourist interest and have tended to retreat into the isolation of their own religious worlds.⁵⁴ By withdrawing to Africa, cult members gain an exclusive importance that cannot be defiled by contact with the rest of Brazilian society.

In summary, it can be seen that the survival of the Afro cults is distinctly related to those historical socio-structural circumstances surrounding the early days of slavery, the quality of outside contact slaves were allowed, and the amount of geographical dispersion of tribes that took place. As seen previously, the North East of Brazil has always been an area of Sudanese religious elements that, especially in the urban areas, were an articulating focus through which the slaves provided themselves with the identity otherwise denied them. Until very recently, this region has had little sustained contact with other central and southern areas of Brazil and therefore, the Afro cults that exist there tend to conservatism and an insistence on the supremacy of traditional African values and beliefs.

53) M. Douglas 1970 "Natural Symbols" p.114

54) D. Warren 1965 op.cit. p.211. D. Pierson 1967 op.cit. p.316.

In contrast, at the turn of the century, many of the Southern Afro cult groups began to adopt rather different attitudes towards their African identity and heritage, and began to cultivate Spiritualist beliefs and values which had become popular with the introduction of Kardecism to Brazil in the 1880's. Opposed to the relatively static nature of the North East, the rapid industrialisation in the South potentially afforded greater opportunity for geographical and social mobility, thus attracting many coloured people from their traditional communities.

It was also to the South that many of Brazil's European immigrants arrived in the early C20th, and it was with this population that urban negroes had to compete for jobs. Consequently this increased contact with non-African traditions lessened the likelihood of an African heritage being consciously preserved.

Historically, too, Bantu slaves had been in the majority on the C18th and C19th coffee plantations, and therefore, the retention of beliefs in ancestral spirits by some of the Southern cult groups were quite readily assimilated with Kardecist ideas of spirits of the dead.

Macumba and Umbanda groups began to develop rapidly in the Southern states during the early C20th. African traditions began to merge with the Kardecist ones of the intellectuals and some of the middle classes, whose life styles were seen to be materially rewarding and prestigious. In other words, the former Afro cults began to adapt to contemporary circumstances rather than emphasise the exclusive value of African traditions and beliefs, and as a result, white members of low social status were also attracted to these new religious groups, as through them, they saw a means of acquiring material gain and social elevation.

Even those Afro cults that developed in isolated regions of the interior, strongly influenced by indigenous Indian traditions have now begun to adopt Spiritualist beliefs in varying quantity⁵⁵ as Indian emphasis on spirits of the dead are assimilated with similar Kardecist ideas.

It is these latter groups, the Afro cults turned Spiritualist, that will be examined in the following chapter to demonstrate how the lower class sectors of the population, due to changing socio-structural circumstances, have changed their attitude as to the best way man can communicate with, and benefit from, supernatural power and influence.

55) S. Leacock 1972 "Spirits of the Deep"
O. da Cossa Eduardo 1948 op.cit.

Both authors detail Afro cults of the interior influenced by Caboclo and Spiritualist beliefs.

Chapters IV and V focused on the historical development of folk catholicism and the Afro cults, and also illustrated the way in which external factors influenced the form and organisation of these religions.

This chapter will pursue this same perspective by describing the development of Kardecism in the C20th, and will first explain how the nature of new nationalistic perspectives, filling the void left by the withdrawal of the Roman Catholic Church from interest and participation in national life, provided a suitable climate for the development of this Spiritualist religion, yet, at the same time, determined its form in Brazil.

The negligence of the Roman Catholic Church towards its congregation and the alienation of its personnel from the mass of the population has already been outlined in chapter III. In the early 1900's, although Roman Catholicism was no longer tied to State dictates, the Church continued to neglect its followers and became very much concerned with regaining the power and prestige it had formerly enjoyed as the definitive and official religion of Brazil. However, in turning away from Roman Catholicism the State itself refocused aspirations of national identity on the explicitly economic criteria associated with increased industrialisation.

Secondly, the actual characteristics and qualities of Kardecism will be explained both in their original form and in the popularised version which later emerged as Kardecism became modified and adapted to fit the needs of a wider section of the Brazilian population.

However, major emphasis in this chapter is on a description and exposition of these Kardecist ideas and beliefs; the way in which they were adopted, and have become modified, to reflect contemporary socio-economic conditions. Their influence on folk catholicism and the Afro cults, and their implications for the lifestyles of the members of these groups is more fully discussed in the following chapter on Umbanda.

During the monarchy and Empire from 1809, there had been an increasing rift between the elitist classes of rural and urban areas. Both groups were discontented about Brazil's relative economic impoverishment but diverged in their opinion on remedies to be used. The landowners feared that their social status and monopoly of Brazil's scanty capital would be jeopardised if industrialisation took place on any intensive level.¹ On the other hand, the coffee fazendeiros of São Paulo, wishing to use their land as capital for the investment in industry, began to challenge the nepotism of the traditional landowners.²

The resolution of this difference of opinion occurred in 1888 when slavery was abolished, and a year later, the Republic was established. From this time onwards, "industrialisation" was the explicit and major focus of the Old Republic's policies and although industrial growth did not take place as quickly as anticipated, it was certainly the ideal of all those who had fought for the overthrow of the Empire in 1889.³

1) D. T. Viera 1971 "Industrial Development in Brazil" p.157-158 in J. Saunders (ed.) "Modern Brazil". c.f. R. Graham 1969 "A Century of Brazilian History" p.8.

2) C. Furtado 1971 "The Economic Growth of Brazil" p.42.

3)c.f. J. Nabuco 1883 "O Abolicismo"; I. Lins 1964 "História do Positivismo no Brasil".

However, the anti-slave, anti-racist movement can be genuinely characterised as a "white" cause,⁴ upheld by those of Republican sympathies and the leading intellectuals of the time. It offered little participation to the slave in deciding his own fate, but chief emphasis was placed on the retarding, unprogressive economics of slavery. In fact, the coffee planters had supported Abolition from material motives rather than from any primary concern and interest in the miseries of slave life. Ultimately, they envisaged Brazil as a prosperous industrial nation based on private enterprise⁵ and expectantly saw themselves holding key positions within this economy. As such, they desired a more flexible and plentiful source of cheap labour and slaves were therefore seen as potential consumers within this new system.⁶

At first, the programme for industrial development in Brazil was supported by the "whitening" policy avidly pursued by the State until the 1920's.⁷ The intellectuals⁸ and the aspiring industrialists, aware of their own economic and political dominance within the country, stressed the importance of "whiteness" as a nationally distinctive unifying force.

4) D. Pierson 1967 "Negroes in Brazil" p.64-66

5) R. Graham 1969 op.cit. I. Lins 1964 op.cit. B. Burns 1970 "A History of Brazil".

6)c.f. J. Nabuco 1883 op.cit.

"There are still others whose development is retarded by slavery; the labourers, the industrialists, and in general the commercial classes. Slavery does not permit the rise of real industrial workers---."

"It (slavery) stifles each one of the elements that industry requires; accumulation of capital, abundance of labour, technical re-education of the workers, confidence in the future".

7) T. E. Skidmore 1974 "Black into White" p.46

8) B. Burns 1968 "Nationalism in Brazil" p.69.

During the 1930's attacks were still made on the freemasons and Jews who were both regarded as groups not contributing to Brazil's national unity.

"We need a Brazil of white men --- nothing of other races".⁹

Whiteness of skin was regarded as a symbol of wealth, strength of character and the "equality" of opportunity and social status¹⁰ that Brazil needed for the national solidarity that would ultimately encourage and foster industrial growth and prosperity.¹¹

However, in the 1930's, ideals of a national "whiteness" as one means of acquiring industrial wealth were superseded by Vargas' more overt emphasis on the value and supremacy of industrialisation itself. Consequently nationalism at this time was increasingly characterised by a resentment of foreign capital and personnel and private enterprise, while there was a preference for State ownership and domestic production.¹²

"Development Nationalism"¹³ was used to indentify and justify priorities and to invest the State with the authority to initiate actions contributing to this plan. In 1943¹⁴ the Volta Redonda steel works were established. National defence was strengthened by army and navy reforms while the "Five Year Plan" of 1940 included the "interior unification of Brazil", through

9) R. Levine 1970 "The Vargas Regime, 1934-38" p.21. Quoted by the Ambassador for Brazil in Washington, 1935.

10) Idem p.48.

11) For example, beauty competitions were limited to caucasians as the State wished to avoid the stereotype of the mulatto abroad as being representative of the Brazilian population, while the "colour before merit" policy of Rio Branco (1902-1912) limited employment of coloured persons especially in the Navy and for diplomatic posts.

c.f. C. Wagley 1963 "Introduction to Brazil" p.273. D. Warren 1965 "The Negro and Religion in Brazil" p.210. Race VI (3) p.199-216.

12) B. Burns 1970 op.cit. p.308.

13) J. D. Wirth 1970 "The Politics of Brazilian Development, 1930-1954" p.217. R. Levine 1970 op.cit. p.181.

14) R. Graham 1969 op.cit. p.138.

increasing roads, railways, telegraphs and telephones. Labour was organised through various laws,¹⁵ while other laws dealt with immigration.¹⁶

Although Vargas' goal was to generate sufficient economic power to assure Brazil's independence from foreign countries, his policies were rarely used for political mobilisation. Rather they were chosen to relate group interests to primary economic aims without upsetting the basic social structure. In other words, through balancing and manipulating the conflicting interests of landowners and urban classes. Vargas' political use of public investment and economic development turned to the traditionalism elitism and paternalism that had so characterised Brazil's past. Materially, little was achieved to improve the conditions of the marginal sectors of society.¹⁷

The major aims of the leaders of Brazil during the first half of this century were to stress and increase national unity through economic and industrial development.¹⁸ They moulded a new

15) For example, one such law decreed that there should be 2/3 of the workers in any foreign company, of Brazilian nationality; workers were to be granted paid vacations, a 48 hour week, compulsory pensions and paid sick leave. c.f. J.D. Wirth 1970 op.cit.

Yet, despite these reforms campaigning for popular support, Vargas refused to introduce legislation about low wages.

16) T.E. Skidmore 1979 op.cit. p.198.

An example of an immigration law was one that decreed that in any year, the number of immigrants arriving in Brazil could not exceed 2% of the total number of that nationality resident in the country over the last 50 years. This particular law was aimed mainly at the Japanese who lived in very clannish, tightly closed communities, refusing to integrate with the rest of the Brazilian population.

17) J.D. Wirth 1970 op.cit.

18) B. Burns 1968 op.cit. p.132. B. Burns 1970 op.cit. p.335.

identity for Brazil, independent of the Portuguese and Roman Catholic ones assumed in the past.¹⁹ Yet, as illustrated in chapter IV, despite these rejuvenating policies, many of the lower class members of society still remained in the same physical conditions and social positions as in the colonial and Imperial periods. The "whitening" policy, for example, asserting Brazil's national identity, discriminated against a major sector of the non-white population. Industrial development increased employment opportunities for those skilled in certain work, but untrained labourers could not compete with those better qualified and, as a result, found survival in the cities particularly hazardous.

However, as the State and its intellectuals began to refocus Brazil's "national unity" during the periods of the Old Republic and the Estado Novo, the Kardecist religion concomitantly began to flourish and began to attract a greater proportion of the Brazilian population. In the following, especial emphasis will be placed on the way in which those nationalistic opinions already described have influenced the growth and dissemination of this Spiritualist religion, particularly amongst those sectors of society excluded from full participation in the new national unity.

Initially, the introduction of Kardecism to Brazil was bound up with the Republican cause and anti-slavery movements. The religion appealed to those intellectuals who, influenced by the European

19) This is not to say that Roman Catholicism was completely discarded. The religion still remained the primary one for most Brazilians. However, the State did wish to assert Brazil's influence in the world without other countries automatically associating her with either Portugal or Roman Catholicism.

Positivist movement, were agitating for a modernisation of Brazil and a "rationalisation" of her economy.²⁰

In 1853, in France, Léon Hyppolite Denizard Rivail (nom de plume Allen Kardec) had published the "Book of Spirits" which became a basic reference work on Spiritist²¹ doctrine and belief. The book was based on a comparative analysis of "psychic" messages whose truth could be verified by rational criticism. One thousand and eighteen questions were posed by the author and Spirits provided answers in the form of pencils writing on pads, and voices speaking in darkened rooms. All these answers were then categorised and coded in a "rational" "logical" manner.²²

Spiritism was thus presented by Kardec as primarily a science and philosophy, and secondly as a religion.

"At the same time, a science of observation and philosophical doctrine. As a practical science it consists of the relations that are established between ourselves and the spirits; as a philosophy, it comprises all the moral consequences emanating from these relations." ²³

20) J. Cruz Costa 1967 "História das Ideias no Brasil". (esp. Chap.III).

The Positivist solutions to Brazil's economic and political problems proposed by Teixeira Mendes, were to free the slave, but, in respect to property to bring this labour force under the complete direction of former slave owners.

The scientific "rational" outlook of Kardecism was particularly appealing to all those who wished to "rationalise" industrial development on such a basis.

21) Allen Kardec preferred to call his Spiritualist doctrine "Spiritism" as it differed considerably from much of the original American "table rapping" of the Fox sisters and Andrew Jackson Davies who gave birth to the American Spiritualist movement of the 1840's.

However, "Spiritism" is often used in Brazil to include a whole spectrum of religious groups from Umbanda to those rigidly adhering to the scientific basis of Kardec's original works, and is used interchangeably with "Spiritualism". Many authors, therefore, tend to prefer to distinguish between the two groups by the use of "Umbandist" and "Kardecist" labels. While admitting that both can be included as "Spiritist" and "Spiritualist".

22) P. McGregor 1967 "Jesus of the Spirits" p.90

23) Quoted by P. Gregory 1967 op.cit. p.92
c.f. J. T. Orres 1968 "As Ideias Religiosas no Brasil" p.281.

No distinction was made between the natural and the supernatural, science and religion. There would be no historical "revelation" through religion as in Christianity, but a continual unfolding of "knowledge" and "truth" through natural evolution.

Although several neo-spiritualist groups had existed in Brazil from the beginning of the 19th,²⁴ it was only in 1865 that the first authentic session of Kardecist Spiritism took place in Salvador, Bahia.²⁵ Within the next few years, many differences in interpreting the Kardecist message had arisen amongst its intellectual followers, so that by 1873 two sectarian groups had already broken away from the original,²⁶ one of which was the "Grupo Confucio"²⁷ founded in Rio by Antonio da Silva Neto. This group was already looking towards a Brazilian rather than French leadership as Neto emphasised the practice of homeopathic medicine to cure all physical illnesses. Ismael was the guiding spirit of this group and was conceived of as the spiritual guide of the whole of Brazil. He advocated the special mission of that country as

"--- the mission of Christianising. It (Brazil) is the promised land, the land of all. The land of fraternity -- with the Gospels explained in the light of Spiritism, Jesus' morals sown by the Jesuits and fed by the Catholics will accomplish its purpose which is to rejuvenate the old man ---!" 28

24) At the beginning of the 19th, several neo-Spiritualist groups had existed in Brazil, notably one at the court in 1818 led by the minister José Bonifacio de Andrada, with an emphasis on homeopathic curing. Later, in 1840, there was a group led by a Portuguese doctor who cured the poor free of charge through "magnetic treatment" and the passing of outstretched hands over the patient, together with prayers to God.

c.f. P. McGregor 1967 op.cit. p.88-89

25) The first Kardecist group was the Grupo Familiar do Espiritismo founded by Menezes, who in 1869 published the first Kardecist magazine, "O Eco do Allem Tímulo". C.P. Camargo 1973 op.cit. p.10.

26) These two groups were: "O Associação Espírita Brasileira", and "O Grupo Santa Teresa de Jesus".

27) J. Torres 1968 op.cit. p.282

28) Quoted by P. McGregor 1967 op.cit. p.112.

In 1876, the "Sociedade de Estudos Espíritos" was founded upon the principle of "Dios, Cristo y Caridad", a slogan borrowed from one of the early (1840) Spiritualist groups.²⁹ Great emphasis was placed on the virtues of conversion to the Spiritist faith, so that already the Spiritist movement was becoming increasingly Brazilianised. Its focus was changing from its original scientific and philosophical base to a greater accentuation of a religious, therapeutic base, although it still retained the reformist nature of its moral teachings.

Yet, although Kardecism had been influenced by and had assimilated some of these characteristic beliefs and practices of Brazilian folk catholicism, during the 1880's, the majority of Spiritualist groups in Brazil initiated a Kardecist evangelisation campaign. Kardecist groups became known in the interior through careful use of propaganda (preaching and newspapers) and were strengthened with the financial support of the anti-Imperialist, anti-Catholic masonic orders. Most of the groups diverged as to the quality of the scientific or religious orientation of their beliefs, although most of them were anti-clerical in outlook. For example, in 1883 "El Reformador", a Spiritist magazine, entered into open polemics with "El Apostol", one of the Roman Catholic periodicals. The former wished to register Spiritism as an official religion, but the latter heatedly opposed this intention.³⁰

29) C.P. Camargo 1973 "Católicos, Protestantes e Espíritos" p.12.

Originally, the maxim of the Grupo Confucio was "sem caridade não ha salvação, sem caridade nao ha verdadeiro espirita".
c.f. P. McGregor 1967 op.cit. p.93, 89 and 97, who notes that the motto "without charity, there is no salvation" is based on St. Paul's letter to the Corinthians VIII:3-13.

30) C.P. Camargo 1961b "Aspectos Sociológicos de Espiritismo em São Paulo" p.14.

However, in 1884, the Federação Espírita Brasileira (F.E.B.) was established in the hope of preserving some doctrinal unity between these various groups and their interpretations of Spiritism, and for the purpose of recruiting membership. This initial move towards a nationalistic perspective was then made much more explicit in the 1930's when the Kardecist doctrine was popularised and refocused by Xavier to appeal to the "cultural heritage" of Brazil. The writings of Candido (Chico) Xavier coincided with the intellectual and political movements that were trying to assert Brazil's identity and power through "whiteness" and industrialisation. "Coração do Mundo; Patriado Evangelho", published in 1938, emphasises the religious nature of the Kardecist doctrine and specifically relates this to the historical traditions of Brazil. It gives prominence to the role of Brazil in the evolution of the world, especially in the future - in the "constructive" period that will follow the "destructive" ending of the world as it is at present.³¹

On the whole, Xavier's interpretation, although still retaining the moralistic Kardecist emphasis of charity and assistance to fellow humans, more closely follows the influence of Neto. There is a bias towards the practical, emotional, and therapeutic qualities of the Spiritist doctrine rather than the theoretical and philosophical consideration of Kardec.

In fact, the emergence of Kardecism in Brazil can be compared to the "prophetic break"³² outlined by Weber, inasmuch, at the end of the 19th, a religion appeared which offered a new, alternative

31)c.f. F. E. Xavier & W. Viera 1966 "The World of the Spirits".

32)c.f. T. Parson's introduction to M. Weber 1966 "Sociology of Religion" pp. 19-67

model for daily living and thus afforded viable and tangible alternative solutions to coping with the social dilemmas that had come into existence at the turn of the century. At first, the religion appealed to those anti-Catholics who were disillusioned with the character of the Roman Catholic Church and her relationship with the State, while, because of its claims to "scientific rationality", Kardecism also appealed to those Positivists and Republicanists who were agitating for an industrial reform of Brazil's traditional agricultural economy. As will be discussed later, after the 1930's, due to Xavier's influence, the Kardecist movement began increasingly to appeal to the expanding middle classes. These people were attracted to Kardecism's socially prestigious intellectual origins and also by the religion's emphasis on the merit of Brazilian traditions and the leading role Brazil would eventually play in the salvation of the world.

Yet, at the same time, the increasing appeal of Kardecism to a larger part of the Brazilian population can be seen through the religion's links with folk catholicism and Christianity.³³

Because the works of Allan Kardec arose from a Christian base, the God of Roman Catholicism and the God of Kardecism are essentially the same, although in both folk catholic and Spiritist groups, the powers of God are somewhat curtailed in favour of his lesser associates; angels, saints or karmic spirits.

33) Several authors have suggested that the character of Portuguese Christianity that was initially brought to Brazil had many aspects and beliefs similar or comparable to those of Spiritualism. c.f. D. Warren 1968a "The Portuguese Roots of Brazilian Spiritism". Luso-Brazilian Review V (2) p.3-33. P. McGregor 1967 op.cit. p.220-221. L.C. da Cascudo 1947 "Geografia dos Mitos Brasileiros".

Warren argues that Portuguese folkloric beliefs in Sebastianism and communication with souls of the dead "could be an adequate historical explanation for the beliefs in reincarnation now held in Brazil". (p.4)

In fact, Kardec completely refocused the Roman Catholic concept of God, maintaining that up to the present day there have been three manifestations of God-on-Earth. First, Moses (Judaism); secondly, Christ (Christianity) and thirdly Kardec (Spiritism). Christ, rather than being the Son of God and a part of the "three in one" Trinity, was merely a representative of a godly manifestation, a medium with similar powers to Kardec and Moses.

Although Kardec conceived of God as an ultimate perfection, but immeasurably distant from human life, he denied that the Bible arose from the influence of this divine being, because there are too many contradictions contained within it. Only the Decalogue in the Old Testament and the Ethics of Jesus in the New have not needed modification.

Similarly, Kardec rejected the "blind faith" and dogmatic character of the Catholic Church. In his writings he maintains that all the sacraments are superfluous inventions of the government, designed to enrich the Church. Adherence to any ritual or liturgy is therefore of no importance as long as one continually tries to improve the quality of charity of one's own actions towards others.³⁴ Kardecism therefore began to infiltrate the Catholic Church by presenting itself as a religion through which all, without exception could contact and find personal salvation with God.

The evangelistic policy of the Kardecists also relates to this rejection of the dogmatic "truth" of Christianity. In the "Book of Mediums", Kardec sets out the direction which Spiritist propaganda should take:

34)c.f. D. Warren 1968b "Spiritism in Brazil"
Journal of Inter-American Studies X (3) p.393-405
C.P. Camargo 1961a "Kardecismo e Umbanda".

"It is necessary that we make ourselves understood. So long as anyone has a firm conviction as far as false teaching is concerned we must take this away from him gradually. For this purpose, we will often use his own expressions, so that he will not immediately shy away from our teaching." 35

In order to become Spiritists, Catholics need not at first surrender their own beliefs, but as they become more attuned to Kardecist ideas, it is inevitable that they will realise the supremacy of the Spiritist doctrine. In other words, Kardecism does not wholly reject Christianity, but maintains that it reinterprets the Christian doctrine, clarifies it, and improves on the message of Jesus as a medium of God. In 1934, the F.E.B. Council officially outlined this evangelisation policy and has since, consistently applied it to Brazil, seeking to attract more members to the Spiritist religion.³⁶

Yet, although Kardecism has now filtered into the interior of Brazil, its main focus is still the towns and cities, especially in the South, where industrialisation first made an impact. One reason for this, which has been outlined previously, is that its initial appeal was to the Positivist, Republican, anti-slavery sentiment that was concentrated mainly in the Sao Paulo area while later, it began to appeal to the increasing urban middle classes of that area who have had no strong historical ties with traditional Roman Catholic elitism.³⁷

35) Quoted by P. McGregor 1967 op.cit. p.97

36) B. Kloppenburg 1959 "Der Brasilianische Spiritismus als Religiöse Gefahr" p.237. Sociaal Kompaas V p.237-55.

37) Lists of numbers and professions of the middle classes who attend Kardecist sessions can be found in:

E. Pressel 1968 "Structure Beliefs and Ritual Behaviour in Umbanda" p.1. E. Pressel 1973 "Umbanda in São Paulo: Religious innovation in a Developing Society" p.316 in E. Bourignon "Religion altered States of Consciousness and Social Change". C.P. Camargo 1961a op.cit. p.111.

With the advent of industrialisation, there emerged a growing sector of "arrivistas" who had no equivalent in the social structures of the colonial and Imperial periods. Cultivating technical and managerial skills, this group has acquired status and prestige within Brazilian society. To surround this newly found wealth with the respectability it lacked traditionally, many members of the industrial middle class seized upon the intellectual history and philosophical origins of Kardecism. The religion's emphasis on "morality" and "good works" to accumulate spiritual merit offered an alternative code of behaviour to Roman Catholicism and was also socially advantageous in that these rules for spiritual life were (and still are) conducive to the acquisition of material wealth on which the status of the middle class largely depended.³⁸

Thus, especially after its popularisation by Xavier, the Kardecist doctrine of progress to perfection through successive incarnations, achieved by individual merit and the practice of "charity", increasingly appealed to those growing middle class sectors of Brazilian society. It was amongst these classes that the vertical social mobility associated with industrialisation was a potentially realisable possibility, while in many cases, their professions in industry inclined them towards the "rational" and "scientific" world view that Kardecism offered.³⁹

38) C.P. Camargo 1961 a op.cit. p.112

39) In this context, it is interesting to note that when disincarnate spirits are contacted by Kardecist mediums, they are most frequently the spirits of former doctors, lawyers, and school-teachers, all of professional and middle class status. At the same time, most mediums (60%-70%) are members of the middle class.

c.f. G. Pressel 1973 op.cit. p.316 and 276.

G. Brody 1973 "The Lost Ones" p.381.

"A Brazilian Spiritist takes the evolutionist ground that the doctrine of the Last Day of Judgement is unworthy of the creator of Spiritists. Any Brazilian has only to witness the world of misery pressing down upon so many wretches - while a few others lead the good life - for logic to win him over: God would not consign His creations to but one wordly test. Hence, evolution, is the most plausible theodicy for Brazilians". 40

In fact, the philosophical core of Kardecism and its attraction for many Brazilians, lies in this evolutionist concept⁴¹ of souls or spirits advancing intellectually and morally through vast space and endless time to inevitable union with God, their creator. When the body dies, the disincarnate spirit⁴² wanders in space, according to the Kardecist Karma (the Law of Cause and Effect) until its next embodiment, either on earth, if expiation for poor past conduct is called for, or on a higher, more "elevated" one, if not. In any one embodiment although a spirit may perhaps not make any moral or intellectual progress, the Kardecist doctrine postulates continual mental and spiritual evolution.

40) D. Warren 1968b op.cit. p.404.

41) More than anything else the idea of multiple existence of the spirit sets Kardecism apart from Anglo-Saxon spiritualism. In this sense, the Latin philosophy of Spiritism may be called evolutionist, because it dwells on the immortality of the soul and the Anglo-Saxon philosophy of Spiritualism, static, because it embodies resurrection.

42) For the Kardecist, man is essentially a spirit, materially enveloped by a body. The spirit itself is non-material, but has a semi-material, an electrical, magnetic fluid surrounding it. This is the peri-spirit, which individualises the spirit, endows it with personality and connects it to the body. When the body dies, the spirit continues to live enclosed by its peri-spirit. The peri-spirit is usually invisible, but can become visible under certain conditions when it is heard, smelt or felt and can then be used to convey messages to its disincarnate spirit.
c.f. P. McGregor 1967 op.cit. C.P. Camargo 1961a op.cit. D. Warren 1968b op.cit.

However, according to the Kardecist doctrine, man alone is responsible for his own "fate" or Karmic elevation. Illness and misfortune are the result of misdemeanours in human conduct. First, they can result from man's own imperfections, his misdeeds, and his inattention to charitable acts.⁴³ They can also occur as a result of a person having to pay penance in order to redeem sins committed in a former life, while "underdeveloped mediumship" is also another cause. Sufferers from this latter type of misfortune are generally cured by perfecting their own spirit through performing charitable acts towards others and by learning to communicate with disincarnate spirits. Many potential mediums therefore have to attend either medium schools or formal Kardecist sessions devoted to the development of this ability.⁴⁴

As stated previously, the "scientific" and philosophical basis of the Kardecist doctrine initially appealed to those intellectuals and upper classes who prided themselves on their "rational" plans for modernising Brazil. Yet, once the doctrine became popularised, although its scientific philosophy still remained it was superseded by a greater emphasis being placed on its healing and curing properties. These, of course, had more affinity to similar qualities found in folk catholicism and the Afro cults, and therefore, held a more comprehensible and tangible appeal for a greater proportion of the population.

Today, even in those groups that still aspire to pure intellectual Kardecism, healing sessions are very important, but take place in a restrained atmosphere.

43) C. P. Camargo, 1961a op.cit. p.78.
c.f. A. Kardec 1857 "The Book of Spirits".

44) P. McGregor 1967 op.cit. p.211.
The São Paulo Federation of Kardecists, for example holds a 4 year course for medium training. Trained mediums can carry messages between the visible and invisible worlds and by using the magnetism of their own peri-spirits they can perceive disturbances in the peri-spirits of others who come to them for advice and cures.
c.f. C.P. Camargo 1961a. op.cit. p.22-24.

Typically,⁴⁵ small gatherings are presided over by a Director and selected mediums. For each session, a specific spirit is chosen with which the medium will make contact and through the help and guidance of which the medium will counsel and advise against misfortune and evil. The Director strictly controls the whole session, directing the participants when to ask their questions and directing which medium (or spirit) can speak. Usually most cures recommend attention to "charity" towards others and adherence to the lessons of Kardec.

However, in the larger Kardecist centros,⁴⁶ if the Director feels that there is not sufficient reason for a member to consult the spirit mediums, then scientific aspects of healing are advised, such as chromotherapy, music therapy and modern western medicines.

Thus, in general, the more purely Kardecist a Spiritist group claims to be, the more it concentrates on correct doctrinal allegiance and attendance to "charitable" acts which can be justified and validated both through philosophy and science. The progress of any individual's spirit depends exclusively on charitable "merit" accumulated on earth in successive incarnations, and therefore, the concept of "charity" entails a self-censorship of every daily action in order to ensure eventual maximum perfection in the Karma. As a result, no behaviour can be considered to be accidental, and no person can ever escape the consequences of his own actions. Grace, miracles and special pardons do not exist, but "charity" towards others and leading a "good" life according to Kardec's teaching are principle virtues.

45) E. Brody 1973 op.cit. p.388

46) Idem p.420

However, although most Kardecist institutions are financed and attended by those of middle class status whose incomes derive from their employment in industry and management, the Kardecist religion is still as equally accessible to all members of Brazilian society. In their capacity to progress spiritually, in their origins and goals, all men are regarded as alike and equal. They are only unequal if "charity" is neglected and spiritual evolution not cultivated.

Consequently, besides the regular participants at Kardecist sessions, there are those members who have been referred to Spiritist help and advice by friends and neighbours.⁴⁷ Very rarely are people turned from the meetings and centros when they go there to seek medical or psychiatric advice, while to encourage new members, the Kardecists, as noted previously, pursue an active evangelisation programme. The establishment of youth centres, and work in the favelas are perhaps the most important projects of this policy.

"When we got in to receive our gifts --- I and others got presents and food: clothes, tea, potatoes, rice and beans. Senhor Pineiro invited me to come regularly to the centre".⁴⁸

Thus, the "prophetic" attraction of later 19th Spiritism is now becoming "routinised". Initially, great stress was laid on the "scientific" and "rational" aspects of the Kardecist doctrine by those local, professional and intellectually independent groups of people who wished for a scientific and philosophical validation of their reformatory plans for Brazilian society. However, as the position of these middle and professional classes has increasingly stabilised and gathered socio-economic prestige, so the Kardecist centres have reflected this stability and solidarity by becoming unified and organised on a national basis.

47) E. Brody 1973 op.cit. p.432.

48) C. M. de Jesus 1962 "Child of the Dark" p.124.

Rather than remain locally diverse, congregations are unifying under the selective authoritative leadership of certain Directors and mediums who are attempting to establish a nationally extensive Kardecist doctrine and code of behaviour.

Inevitably, this doctrine of "charity" and Karmic evolution is concretely symbolised in the building of charitable institutions, such as schools hospitals and libraries.⁴⁹ These have all added to the prestige and status of the Kardecists, as they are tangible proof of their wealth and prosperity, yet, at the same time offer a means by which lifestyles, education and life chances in a competitive, acquisitive society can be improved.

However, despite ^{the} increasing social acceptability of Kardecism, especially since its formal recognition as an official religion in 1953, and although adherence to the Kardecist doctrine has brought material rewards and social success to many members, most Kardecist groups tend to set themselves apart from the social activities of the wider extra-religious society. Kardecist groups still insist on their exclusiveness and separation from other religious communities, denying the "truth" of Christianity and the idea of a Christian revelation. Alternatively, they emphasise the evolutionary supremacy of their own religion and

49) C.P. Camargo 1961a op.cit. p.137.

The author lists the number of schools hospitals and other welfare institutions established in Brazil in 1958 by the Kardecists. c.f. E. Brody 1973 op.cit. p.400 who also offers figures on the number of Kardecist "assistance centres."

E. Willems 1966 "Religious Mass Movements and Social Change in Brazil" p.219 in E.Baklanoff (ed.) "The Shaping of Modern Brazil".

The author lists the institutionalised assistance offered by both Kardecist and Umbandist groups.

the fact that knowledge and truth will be continually unfolded through the inevitable and natural progression towards a Kardecist view of the world. The more "evoluted" ethos of Kardecism will eventually replace Latin Catholicism and all other religious and secular ways of life.

Consequently, many, although not all, shun active participation in Brazilian politics and refuse government and foreign aid.⁵⁰ Self-sufficiently, they establish orphanages, clinics and food dispensaries. They encourage their members to qualify as doctors, lawyers, dentists and school teachers, in order to maintain these institutions, which are exclusively Kardecist and are not indebted to any non-Kardecists. Concomitantly, they insist that the Kardecist way of life can be preserved from contamination by other aspects of Brazilian society, and the purity of the Kardecist doctrine can be intensified and strengthened. Thus, in effect, the Kardecists tend to ignore the socio-economic policies of the Brazilian government, and instead, initiate their own plans and establish their own institutions, which by the Law of Natural Evolution, will ultimately dictate the dominant way of life for all Brazilians.

However, although (or perhaps because) many shun active participation in Brazilian politics, the strength of the Kardecist religion was recognised in 1950, when it was permissible to answer the census question on religion by "Catholic, Protestant, or Spiritualist". In 1953 Kardecism was eventually given formal recognition as a religion and there is an official organisation of the government in which the Spiritist rules are registered. In 1956 special stamps of Kardec were issued to commemorate the centennial of the

50) D. Warren 1968b op.cit. p.402.

publication of the "Book of Spirits", and later, the centenary of the "Hospital according to Spiritism".⁵¹

In 1953, upon its recognition as the official directing body of Kardecism the F.E.B. published some general rules for all Brazilian Spiritists. Such duties include the studying and understanding of the Spiritist doctrine, participating in study sessions, prompt payment of financial obligations and membership dues, and attendance at talks and Spiritist weeks. Evangelistic campaigns were proposed through the media of magazines, newspapers, radio and regional congresses, and there was a special effort planned to intensify the work of the youth department (founded in 1949).⁵²

Although many groups adhere to the dictates of the F.E.B., several are still outside its bounds and belong to other federations that have been established with the similar aims of trying to unite the various institutions and doctrinal strategies.⁵³ There is no union between these federations, and very often each will refuse to attend congresses held by the others.⁵⁴

Yet, despite a great deal of overlap between the practices of the groups and federations, most do adhere fairly rigourously to the main tenets of the Kardecist doctrine, but tend to emphasise the emotional, individual and Xavier-influenced aspects of the philosophy.

51) P. McGregor 1967 op.cit. p.101.

52) B. Kloppenburg 1959 op.cit. p.251.
C.P. Camargo 1961 op.cit. p.30.

53) B. Kloppenburg 1959 op.cit. p.240 gives a complete list of existent federations, dates of their foundations and states of origin.
c.f. E. Brody 1973 op.cit. p.388, offering a similar list for 1951. C.P. Camargo 1961b op.cit. p.15-16 who provides a list from 1887-1951.

54) C.P. Camargo 1973 op.cit.
For example, in 1948, the F.E.B. refused to attend the Federation of São Paulo Spiritists.

On the other hand, the minority try to retain the original intellectualist appeal of the Kardecist doctrine, insisting on its scientific and philosophical purity, but these have little impact on the Brazilian population as a whole. For example, Carlos Imbasshy in "Religião, Refutação as Razões dos que combatem a Parte Religiosa no Espiritismo",⁵⁵ insists that the truth of Kardecism is found in its "rational" and scientific form. Hercilio Mães⁵⁶ prophesies the end of the world at the end of the present century as the result of a natural disaster which will de-ice the Poles. At this time, the "good" will be separated from the "bad" by a divine law working through electro-magnetic force. This force will be able to single out those whose thoughts and actions operate on a wavelength in harmony with Christian and Spiritist teachings. Similarly, Annibal Vaz de Melo⁵⁷ fuses historical materialism, Spiritism and Christianity by predicting that capitalism and the consequent switch to socialism will not arise as the result of economic forces and changing relations of production but will be achieved as a result of the position and conflict of certain astral bodies.

Apart from these groups, others calling themselves Spiritualists but with a complete disregard for Kardecist doctrine are found in small numbers throughout Brazil. For example, "Scientific Spiritualism" founded by Luis José de Matos, "The Estorics" and "The Occultists".⁵⁸

This outline of the development of Kardecism shows, that, at first, it was a movement of the Brazilian intellectuals who were attracted by its

55) B. Kloppenburg 1959 op.cit. p.247.

56) J. Tôrres 1968 op.cit. p.294. P. McGregor 1967 op.cit. p.135.

57) J. Tôrres 1968 op.cit. p.295

58) B. Kloppenburg 1959 op.cit. p.242.

scientific and philosophical appeal and which membership still lends the religion a certain status and prestige. Increasingly, in the 20th, due to the apathy of the Roman Catholic Church until the 1940's, the popularisation of Kardecism by Xavier, and its doctrinal affinities to folk catholicism, Spiritism began to attract more and more members from the upper and lower middle ranks of the expanding urban population. Spiritism was seen to offer a means of solving the physical and mental stresses engendered by the social upheavals of industrialisation; its doctrine of Karmic evolution offered an alternative and viable explanation of man's place in society and thus, especially appealed to those whose traditional customs and values had been rudely shattered by the social upheavals of the inter-war years.

Yet, as those middle class members of Kardecism have begun to gain recognition and social status within Brazilian society, so the Kardecist religion has reflected this growing unity and organisation and has begun to organise itself on a national basis, claiming formal recognition for its doctrines and beliefs.

Having previously examined the development of Kardecism in Brazil, this chapter will focus on the way in which, over the last few decades, as more and more people have flocked to the urban areas, the rapid increase in Kardecist groups has been paralleled by the growth of two other Spiritualist religions: Macumba and Umbanda.

First, the socio-economic conditions of the the urban lower classes during the early C20th will be reviewed in order to highlight the social background against which these Spiritualist groups have developed.

Secondly, the characteristics - the beliefs and plausibility structures - of Macumba will be examined, together with the way in which this Macumbist participation is both a reflection of and a reflection on the socio-economic conditions and positions of its adherents.

Finally, the specific qualities and peculiar characteristics of Umbands will be considered. The conscious syncretism of its belief system and its associated organisational structure represent the stirrings of a common unity or awareness among the lower classes. Yet as the religion becomes more rigidly structured internally, so the relationship of its participants to wider social structures of Brazilian society becomes increasingly delineated and defined.

As previously mentioned, the "whitening" ideals of the Old Republic and the policies of Vargas' administration did little in reality to materially improve the position of the marginal sectors of Brazilian society. For example, after 1888, when the freed slaves gradually began to migrate to

the cities¹ seeking asylum with the Abolitionists, there were many landowners and industrialists who were not averse to using this coloured population as a cheap form of labour.²

The position of the slave and negro changed relatively little apart from the removal of the legal ownership of the master, and is reflected in one popular verse of the early C20th:

"Everything in this world changes
Only the life of the negro remains the same:
He only works to die of hunger
The third of May fooled him".³

Fernandes accounts for the present day relations of black and white by the inability of former slaves to compete with the more able white labour force and European immigrants. The employability of the ex-slaves or rural migrants was impaired because many would refuse certain jobs associated with their slave past⁴ and others were excluded from employment for which they had no training. These problems were especially intensified after the 1930's when the increased movement to cities caused a breakdown of traditional family ties. Failure to reorganise these meant that the old and sick were often

1) As illustrated in chapter IV, figures for internal migration are discrepant and unreliable, but a greater move to the cities is definitely apparent after the 1930's. Until that period, migration took place only gradually.
c.f. J. Saunders 1971 "Modern Brazil" for tables of regional population growth from 1872-1960. It is noticeable that urban growth rates, especially in the south, outstrip those of rural areas.
c.f. B. Cowell 1975 "Cityward Migration in the C19th: The case of Recife, Brazil", Journal of Inter-American Studies XVII (1); L. Bethell 1970 "The Abolition of the Brazilian Slave Trade".

2) D. Warren 1965 "The Negro and Religion in Brazil" p.209 Race VI (3) p.199-216.

3) E. Burns 1970 "A History of Brazil" p.195
J. H. Galloway 1971 "The Last Days of Slavery on the Plantations of North East Brazil". Hispanic American Historical Review LI (4) p.586-605

4) F. Fernandes 1969 "The Negro in Brazilian Society" p.13.

abandoned, and unemployed men became demoralised when they could not support their families, turning to drink and gambling,⁵ and frequently resorting to street gang crime for a living.⁶

Consequently, former stereotypes of the negro slave were once again brought to the fore, The coloured population was branded as unreliable, lacking incentive, dirty and dangerous. The early Republican image of the negro as a backward, anti-social element was revived, and the failure of the coloured person to rise economically only heightened the elite's conception of him as a drag on national development, and encouraged police repression and government discrimination.⁷

Today, social classification still correlates significantly with colour. In traditional Brazilian society, economic categories consisted of free and slave, but since the former was white and the latter black, this colour factor has always been an important indication of social status.⁸

5) T. de Azevedo 1960 "Social Change in Brazil" p.15

6) T. E. Skidmore 1974 "Black into White" p.47
F. Bonilla 1962 "Rio's Favelas; The Rural Slum within a city" Dissent IX (4)

7) F. Fernandes 1969 op.cit. J.P. Calogeras 1939 "A History of Brazil" p.326; R. Morse 1953 "The Negro in Sao Paulo, Brazil", Journal of Negro History XXXVIII p.290-306.

8) However, Wagley reports on increasing discrimination against coloured people in the industrial centres of Rio and Sao Paulo. Here, the coloured strata is beginning to show a certain independence and an unwillingness to occupy subservient positions. As problems of class relations become more important, so does the criteria of physical type, although wealth and education are still major determinants of social status. Tensions are produced as a mainly coloured marginal sector challenges the traditional white dominance so that race is increasingly used to discern social positions.
c.f. C. Wagley 1952 "Race and Class in Rural Brazil"
D. Pierson 1967 "Negroes in Brazil" p.ixviii
E. Brody 1973 "The Lost Ones" p.144.

"Since our first social stratification was based on pigmentation, this distinction of classes established on an economic basis not in the distinction of races a material and visible sign of differentiation. Lords and slaves, white and negroes, the races, white and African formed an ethnic stratification, the layers of which corresponded exactly to social stratification". 9

The 1967 data from the Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística¹⁰ reveals that the majority of coloured people are still illiterate, have had none or little schooling, are rarely of supervisor or employer status, and are almost totally unrepresented in the government, in the officer class in the army, and in the professional classes.

Because it was difficult for the marginal sectors (especially in the urban centres) to ameliorate their positions in industrialising Brazil, post 1889, and because migration to the towns broke apart black communities, many of these people turned more insistently to their religious beliefs to provide adequate explanations and solutions for problems encountered in daily life.

The traditional Afro cults that had existed during the Empire began to diverge in their responses to these changing socio-structural conditions. On the one hand, as illustrated in Chapter VII, several Afro groups began to focus on the distinctiveness of their African identity.

On the other hand, viewing their African and slave origins as a definite impediment to their acquiring recognition in Brazilian society, many African groups consciously rejected traditional cults and began to emphasise the "caboclo" and spiritualist aspects of their religion, which with the literary romanticisation of the Indian, and the introduction of Kardecism respectively, had

9) F. de Azevedo 1944 "Brazilian Culture" p.92

10) Tabled by E. Brody 1973 op.cit. p.148.

gained a certain degree of social prestige in Brazil. Consequently, Macumba religious groups began to appear in Rio and São Paulo, depending on African slave spirits, caboclo spirits, as well as African orishas and Catholic saints to descend to earth and give advice and counsel.

Thus, through drawing on traditional folk catholic and African values¹¹ and merging these with ideas and beliefs taken from intellectual Kardecism, Macumba began to provide solutions for immediate problematic experiences and began to account for the insecurity and disorder of urban existence.

Although it is difficult to outline the actual connections and transition of Afro and folk catholic forms of belief to these Spiritualist oriented groups of the C20th,¹² it is obvious that Kardecist ideas of the karmic spirits of the dead could be easily reconciled with those Indian and African concepts of the interference of dead spirits in everyday life. At the same time, these Karmic spirits, like the orishas and folk catholic saints, play a much more direct part in daily life than does the God of Roman Catholicism, while the necessity of a medium to translate karmic messages and to carry out ceremonies under Spirit guidance, corresponds to the African diviner, Indian pagé or folk catholic curandeiro.

11)c.f. R. Bastide 1973 "Estudos Afro-Brasileiros" part II chaps. 2. & 3.

The author argues that there is a predominance of caboclo rather than African or Spiritualist influence in the Macumba groups of São Paulo.

c.f. M. Conniff 1975 "Voluntary Association in Rio, 1870-1945" Journal of Inter-american Studies XVII (1)

12) R. Bastide 1960 "Les Religions Africaines Au Brésil".

Here, the author illustrates quite thoroughly the difficulty of systematically tracing any transition from Afro cult to Macumba.

Similarly, as with the Afro cults, it is very difficult to generalise about Macumba practices and beliefs as each terreiro differs in local detail, depending on the degree and intensity with which various folk catholic and African elements have come into contact. For example, in Rio, where traditional African values due to Yoruban predominance have been well preserved, the Macumba form is more like that of an Afro cult group or the traditional Bahian Candomblé. In São Paulo, on the other hand, the hierarchical order and community influence of the Afro cults appears less frequently and there is a greater emphasis on the individual. The role of the Macumba leader is more equivalent to that of the rural curandeiro or diviner than director of a well articulated cult group.¹³

Conversely, it could be suggested that the greater adhesion to Caboclo, Spiritualist and Catholic practices is not a result of varying degrees of contact with these religions, but rather represents the hope that acceptance and access to greater material rewards will be achieved through emulation of the practices associated with, and favoured by, the middle classes.¹⁴

However, despite such emulation of respectable social and religious movements, the actual internal organization of the Macumba groups has tended to reflect the social-structural positions of their adherents in relation to Brazilian society as a whole.

13) R. Bastide 1973 op.cit. II(3) in which the difference between Macumba groups of Rio and São Paulo are outlined. E. Brody 1973 op.cit. p.370

14) T. E. Skidmore 1974 op.cit. p.46.

For example during the 1920's the literary movement of caboclo romanticisation was intensified. The Indian was singled out and stereotyped as the historical representative of Brazil's cultural identity and heritage. The Indian also became the symbol of national aspirations and cultural unity. Some families even discarded their Portuguese names in favour of Indian ones and every effort was made to prove that they had noble Indian blood. Even Tupí was seriously proposed to replace Portuguese as the official language.

For instance, within the lower class sectors of the population, who began to join the Macumba groups, there was very little sense of communal solidarity or unity. As the conditions of daily life in the cities began to change with the intensification of industry, so the Brotherhoods, nations and cantos, which had provided an identity and unity in the past, began to lose their influence and appeal. The rapid influx of European immigrants at the turn of the century introduced new customs and life-styles to the urban areas. These immigrants also began to find employment in industry and business administration, using their skills to an advantage with which the untrained and uneducated sectors of the population could not compete, while rural migrants, gradually filtering to the cities during these years, added to the numbers of badly paid and unemployed. Concomitantly, because of their occupations and skin colour, most of these poorer classes were regarded as inferior by the rest of society.¹⁵

As a response to these circumstances, most Macumba groups were and still are, thoroughly eclectic and disorganised in their beliefs about man's relationship to the supernatural and in their practice of associated rituals. Members of Macumba can be "horses" for several supernatural beings over a period of time.¹⁶ Rather than being under the care of Mãe de Sant, and one personal and particular orisha, as in the Afro cults, or having to develop mediumistic ability, as in Kardecism, possession in Macumba is spontaneous and uncontrolled.¹⁷

15) R. Bastide 1973 op.cit. p.204-6.

He lists the professions of Macumba followers in São Paulo, and reveals that nearly all consist of servants, street sellers and peddlars.

16) E. Carneiro 1940 "The Structure of Afro cults in Bahia". p.276. Journal of American Folklore 53. p.271-278. E. Brody 1973 op.cit. p.365.

17) R. Bastide 1973 op.cit. II. 3.

The initiation period is much shorter and often non-existent, so that all rituals are much simplified and require less formal preparation and participation. Emphasis is on the ability of each individual to contact the supernatural without reference to others, and consequently, individual Macumbeiros, exploiting their spiritually-guided curing and healing talents, have become the focal point of a religion which lacks any coherent organisation. This has led one author to remark:

"From this poverty of mythology and dogma arises the laxness of hierarchy which in its turn allows for "fathers" like Pedro-of-the tile, Pedro Seven-devils, Ass of Jackass ---- and others, all celebrated drunkards, homosexuals and magicians of Bahia". 18

This individual and disorganised nature of the religion has been continually reinforced and perpetuated because Macumba has been, and still is, severely discriminated against. For example, under the Old Republic many groups were harassed by the police, lest their practices present an unfavourable picture of the Brazilian nation.¹⁹ Many of the middle and upper classes feared the individual curandeiro as a sorcerer or practitioner of black magic, and in public opinion, Macumba was associated with Quimbanda²⁰ which explicitly uses black magic. The fact that Exu was the principal god worshipped by the Macumbistas reinforced this view because Exu has always been associated with the Christian Devil by the Roman Catholic Church.

18) E. Carneiro 1940 op.cit. p.275-6

19) E. Pressel 1973 "Umbanda in São Paulo: Religious innovation in a developing society" p.276 in E. Bourignon 1973 "Religion, altered states of consciousness and social change".

A special police force which dealt with "moral affairs" was established to investigate complaints stemming from being disturbed by loud drumming during the night.

20) R. Bastide 1973 op.cit. p. 200-205

Also, cases of bizarre murders,²¹ when Macumba followers have become "possessed" and obeyed their spirits' instructions, have disfavoured the religion in public eyes and have increased police persecution. Under Vargas, everything associated with Macumba was automatically categorised as bad and systematically harassed.²²

Moreover, this religion also attracts much criticism through the fact that certain Macumba priests commercialise and exploit their following,²³ use the religion to gain material power and personal wealth. For example, upper class patronage and financial support is often obtained for a well choreographed exhibition of exotica, such as frenzied possession, or the reservation of a particularly spectacular animal sacrifice until the culmination of the Macumba service.

As well as pursuing discriminatory policies, even the Government is not averse to exploiting the groups for financial gain, and in 1955, Rio officials invested ten million cruzeiros in the Macumba centres of their municipality in order to attract tourists.²⁴

Police persecution, unfavourable public opinion, and continual exploitation by Macumba religious leaders and some members of the upper classes has resulted in the continuing disaggregation of the religion. On the one hand, as the religion has been associated with "bestiality" and the lowest social status, many have wished to dissociate themselves from its practices. On the other hand, because of exploitation of the religion by several of its leaders, who use its ritual practices to provide public entertainment, many Macumbistas feel that their beliefs in the power of the supernatural have

21) E. Brody 1973 op.cit. p.377-8

22) Idem p.378

23) R. Bastide 1960 op.cit. p.415

24) B. Kloppenburg 1959 p.239. Sociaal Kompaas V. p.237-55. "Der Brasilianische Spiritismus als Religiöse Gefahr".

been adulterated. They feel that their beliefs, when regarded as measurements by others, lost their authenticity and can no longer serve to identify and comfort a group of people with the same problems.²⁵

Consequently, Macumba has become increasingly disfavoured since the 1930's and Umbanda has rapidly asserted its superiority, attempting to counteract the disreputable character of Macumba and the stereotypic view of the black person as drunk, lazy and unreliable.²⁶ Umbanda has arisen because certain members of the lower urban classes wished to combine socially respectable African traditions and Macumbist practices, but paradoxically, at the same time, wished to dissociate themselves from the socially unacceptable aspects of these two religions.

Accounts of the origins of Umbanda are diverse. For example, Bastide²⁷ reports the birth of an Umbandist group in 1935 by a Pernambuco schoolmaster, attempting to make a creed of new values out of the conservative and traditional ones of the Afro cults; values better adapted to the new social conditions of the Pretos and lower classes in the industrial urban areas. Brody and McGregor²⁸ report that during the 1920's, a Kardecist medium, Zealio de Moraes, incorporated a spirit known as "Caboclo of the Seven Crossroads", into his Kardecist sessions in an effort to purify Macumba from many of its African associations, and he established a spiritualist-oriented church in Guanabara called "La Tenda Nossa Senhora da Piedade".

25) R. Bastide 1960 op.cit. p.406

26) R. Bastide 1960 op.cit. p.434. C.P.Camargo 1961a "Kardecismo e Umbanda" p.55.

27) R. Bastide 1960 op.cit. p.430

28) E. Brody 1973 op.cit. p.384; P. McGregor 1967 "Jesus of the Spirits" p.169; A.C. Bandeira 1961 "Umbanda: Evolução Histórico-Religioso". A. Fontenelle 1953 "A Umbanda através Dos Seculos".

Umbanda appears to have arisen as a consciously syncretic movement among those sectors of the population who wished to improve their position within Brazilian society. For the most part, the leaders of Umbandist groups are those who have broken away from either Afro and Macumba cults or Kardecist groups. Generally, in the former instance, their hope is to emulate the socially respectable and acceptable practices and beliefs of the Kardecists and to gain local social prestige for their religious following. In contrast, when a leader breaks away from Kardecism, it is more often because he believes that Kardecist practices and lifestyles do not completely satisfy the immediate material and emotional needs of the lower and poorer urban sectors of the population from which he wishes to gain support.

Thus, although the Umbandist leaders have quite widely varying opinions on a national basis. Similarly, the process of syncretism is much more selective and consciously made to correspond to these national aims.

At this point, it is worth examining the differentiation between Kardecist and Afro traditions and beliefs²⁹ in order to illustrate the way in which they effect the internal organisation of the Umbanda groups, and consequently, the way in which they influence the lifestyle and life chances of their adherents in wider Brazilian society.

African influence is perhaps most clearly marked in the Umbandist concept of the supernatural. For example, the orishas of African belief are equated with certain Catholic saints (orishas-santos)

29) c.f. C.P. Camargo 1961a op.cit. ibid 1961b "Aspectos Sociológicos del Espiritismo en São Paulo"; ibid 1960 "Aspects Socio-Culturels du Spiritisme au Brésil" Sociaal Kompas VII p.407430.

Camargo analyses the Spiritualist religions, Kardecism and Umbanda, the "mediumistic religions" through the use of a "mediumistic continuum" which is discussed in the following chapter, note 3.

who are in charge of the spiritual hierarchy of Umbanda. Within this hierarchy there are seven "linhas", each commanded by an orisha-santo. Each line is divided into seven "falanges", which are in turn subdivided into seven "legiões", although within the various regions of Brazil, because of the variety of initial African influence, there is much disagreement as to which spirits belong to, and command, which line, phalanx or legion of the hierarchy.³⁰

Besides the orishas, African influence is seen in the Exus of evil spirits, who those hostile to Umbanda confuse and identify with the Christian Devil or the fallen angel, thrown out of Heaven by God.³¹ While alive, these Exus led particularly wicked lives, and as spirits, spend much of their time in cemeteries, appearing as skeletons and ghosts. While other spirits perform free services, helpful to their supplicants, the Exus demand a fee for causing harm. Most of the Umbandist centres despise the explicit use of the Exus, considering it to be black magic or Quimbanda, and shun any associated with these spirits, although they still incorporate them in their pantheistic hierarchy. If the use of Exus is permitted, then it is only to perform contra-magic which undoes the results of evil magic.³²

African influence likewise persists in the correspondences between colour, days, food etc., favoured by the various spirits, but, as has happened in many of the less conservative Afro

30)c.f. E. Pressel 1968 "Structure, Beliefs and Ritual Behaviour in Umbanda"; O. Magno 1961 "Umbanda e Seus Complexos"; E. Zespo 1961 "Codification of Umbanda Laws".

31) R. Bastide 1960 op.cit. p.414.

32) R. Bastide 1960 op.cit. E. Brody 1973 op.cit. E. Pressel 1968 op.cit.

cults, the Christian and Kardecist influence in Umbanda has re-directed the spirits to control moral values rather than natural objects. Ogoun is no longer the God of War, but a judge; Shangô is not longer the thunder god, but is represented with a pair of scales in his hands to weigh up the destinies of human beings, to elevate the humble, and help the misfortunate.³³

However, the Kardecist influence in Umbanda is apparent in the emphasis which is placed on the spirits of the dead, or eguns, while the African orishas play less part in every day life. In Umbanda, the orishas are thought to be so powerful that a person would explode if possession were to occur. Instead, the orisha sends a disincarnate spirit envoy from the "invisible world" to communicate with the human world. The envoy is less powerful than the orishas, but exists on a higher level of spiritual development than the other disincarnate spirits, which can be reincarnated in a new born infant, and live through another earthly incarnation. These spirit envoys are usually of three types: caboclos, old blacks, and children, all having distinct characteristics which become apparent in their mediums when possession occurs.³⁴

Similarly, although most Umbanda groups accept the Kardecist concept that illness and misfortune arise from man's imperfect relationship with the supernatural, three additional causes of illness are found.³⁵ First sickness, as a result of religious negligence or ignorance, which occurs when a medium or supplicant has neglected to fulfil obligations due to God, the orishas or the disincarnate spirits from whom he seeks advice. Secondly, illness due

33) R. Bastide 1960 op.cit. p.412.

34)c.f. S. Leacock 1972 "Spirits of the Deep" p.62
E. Pressel 1968 op.cit. p.10.

35)c.f. E. Pressel 1968 op.cit. C.P. Camargo 1961a
op.cit. P. McGregor 1967 op.cit.

to the practice of black magic with the aid of the Erus. Revengeful fluids of the victimised person will bring illness to their sorcerer. Lastly "bad fluids", accompanied by illness and misfortune, are passed from person to person through the mechanism of the evil eye or "mau olhada". Children and those with strong, inborn mediumistic inclinations are particularly susceptible to this influence.

These additional illnesses explicitly reveal the African base of the Umbanda groups, for they are caused, not so much by neglect of a person's moral obligations of "charity" towards others in everyday life, but by neglect of the religious rituals that the supernatural expects and demands, and as a result of which the orishas and spirits influence human life for good or bad. The curing of these illnesses focuses less on atoning for human inadequacies, but more on the fact that appeal to the supernatural will offer immediate solutions to any earthly problems and misfortune, whatever their cause. Curing sessions are in fact, central attractions of any Umbandist meeting, and besides the "magnetic passes", "fluidified water"³⁶ and counsel of mediums, more spectacular, tangible cures are readily available in many Umbanda tendas and centros. McGregor cites several examples of the more renowned Umbanda healers such as Jose Pedro de Freitas,³⁷ the "yokel", who according to the spirit guiding him used to specialise in curing many types of physical illness. Without anaesthetics, and wielding such instruments as rusty kitchen knives and scissors,

36) "Fluidified water" is water which has been submitted to the outstretched hands of a medium and through which disincarnate spirits pass those fluids of a magnetic nature specifically designed to cure and alleviate human illness and misfortune. "Magnetic passes" make use of a similar process whereby a medium can remove negative and harmful magnetic particles from the sufferer's peri-spirit and replace them with positive ones.

37) P. McGregor 1967 op.cit. p.137.

he performed an operation in thirty seconds, sealing the wound only with his hands. The spirit of Dr. Fritz a German surgeon of the First World War, usually removed growths and tumours, while the spirit of the French surgeon, Gilbert Pierre, specialised in opthalmic surgery.³⁸

Yet, in general, as the Umbandist groups become more distinctly Kardecist in character, African traditions of possession and healing, and personal contact with the supernatural appear less frequently. Although a Mãe or Pãe de Santo heads the organisation of a Kardecist-oriented Umbanda centro and makes decisions about ritual behaviour and the religious and social activities of the group, rather than each member communicating personally with the supernatural, certain regular mediums are appointed by the cult leader and act under his direction.

These mediums can be possessed by a number of spirits, and through these, have the ability to communicate with most other spirits in the invisible world. Cambonos or assistants have the task of ensuring that mediums do not fall and hurt themselves while possessed and direct those of the audience who wish to converse with a particular spirit to stand in the appropriate queue for receiving advice. Occasionally, a member of the audience may become possessed, but is subdued by a Cambono, although if possession continues to occur out of order, then

38) Similar curing sessions can be found in most of the Caribbean where Spiritualist religions exist. c.f. G. Simpson 1970 "Religious Cults of the Caribbean; Trinidad, Jamaica and Haiti"; M. Frankland 1974 Healers of Cruel Hoaxers", Observer Magazine 25/8/74; A. Kiev 1964 "Magic, Faith and Healing"; ibid 1968 "Curanderismo" ibid 1961 "Spirit Possession in Haiti" American Journal of Psychiatry CXVII p.133-138. F. & W. Mischel 1958 Psychological Aspects of Spirit Possession", American Anthropologist LX p.249-260; G.E. Simpson 1945 "The Belief System of Haitian Voodoo" American Anthropologist XLV p.35-39. A. Metraux 1972 "Voodoo in Haiti".

For comments on spirit possession amongst indigenous Indians in Brazil c.f. K. Stewart "Spirit Possession in Native America" 1946. South Western Journal of Anthropology II; J. Stewart & L. Faron 1959 "Native Peoples of South America".

the leader frequently advises the development of spirit mediumship as a cure.³⁹

Often a person with well developed mediumistic ability will start holding his own private Spiritualist sessions and will establish himself, after performing appropriate rituals, as a fully qualified cult leader in his own right. As mentioned previously, he will then make personal decisions as to what amount of Kardecist doctrine and Afro ritual should be adhered to by the new group. In such cases, possession by the supernatural provides the ultimate, absolute validation or justification for this establishment of a new group, as the leader can claim to have received his instructions from his guiding spirit.⁴⁰

This ability for all to develop spirit mediumship and possibly become the leader of an Umbanda group, indicates the way in which Umbanda effects and directs the lives of its members. For example, the role of medium can be adopted by those whose socio-economic positions are most unstable and disordered. The medium can then use his spiritual ability to contact the supernatural world in order to gain a sense of superiority over others, and to express his normally hidden aspirations. At the same time, he is assured of the social support of an Umbanda or Kardecist centro because within the religious world of the Umbanda group each individual can find an identity and community which compensates for those aspects of secular social life in Brazil that are ordinarily unattainable by him. Contact with the supernatural, through possession, also often sanctions behaviour that is otherwise socially unacceptable. For instance, while in a trance, Umbandistas can express political or anti-government feelings,⁴¹

39) E. Pressel 1968 op.cit. p.24.

40) P. McGregor 1968 op.cit. p.200.

41) E. Brody 1973 op.cit. p.428.

although, generally, these are quickly controlled or repressed by the leader of the group in case they lead to police persecution.

The centro or terreiro provides friends and a sense of belonging and security, while personal attention and interest is also paid to the problems of all members, as the mediums are constantly at hand to seek advice from the spirits.

"It seems likely that Spiritualists are protected to some degree from adaptive stress by their intimate and regular sense of connection with supernatural forces. These forces are more powerful than the usually white middle class bosses for whom they work and who regulate their rewards. Supernatural forces provide a refuge; participation in Spiritualist centres offers immediate gratifications and the support of belonging to a system outside the conventional work-orientated one which is a source of frustration and alienation". 42

However, as the Umbandist groups become more purely Kardecist in their beliefs and practices, possession is no longer regarded as a mere therapy for an unexpected illness or confusing social problem but becomes transformed into a worship of powers whose competence extends to all aspects of daily life.

As noted by Douglas and Turner (c.f. chapter II) as the ritual process of a religion (its beliefs and plausibility structures) become more distinctly and coherently organised, so its religious process, or its influence on secular activities outside of the specific religious group, reflects this change. Thus, in Umbanda, although supernatural powers still solve and provide remedies for individual and immediate problems, their influence extends into dictating or providing certain regulations for daily behaviour outside of the religious world.

For example, Umbanda groups that aspire to Kardecism tend to increasingly concentrate on moral deeds of "charity", while expiation for one's sins is considered to be of much greater importance

42) Idem p.531.

than propitiation of the orishas or spirits. Consequently, a decline in ritual is apparent, which manifests itself in such features as forbidding all alcoholic drinks, tobacco, drums, handclapping, dancing and chanting. Divination ceremonies such as reading palms or throwing shells are also excluded from the programme of worship, while all ritual adornments such as incense, saintly statues, ritual greetings and offerings are prohibited or modified.⁴³

"Depending upon the particular centre, Umbandists continue aspects of the form of Macumba and Candomblé ceremonies, all the while deprecating the ritual".⁴⁴

In fact, certain Umbanda groups maintain that ritual activities are not really at all necessary for the sake of the spirits, but are practised solely for "those people who would not be able to understand a spirit without form".⁴⁵

The supernatural progressively becomes more superior and distant from the human universe as each individual relies more on his own personal actions than solely on supernatural intervention. Each person's relationship with the deities therefore become rather more limited. Contact with the supernatural is mediated by a separate body of worshippers who have greater access to supernatural commands, and can relay the means of access to others to help them live their lives in a fashion worthy of an Umbandista.

Thus, as the Umbandist groups become more Kardecist in character, so they become more rigidly structured and organised in their beliefs and rituals. This process was initially apparent at the first Umbanda Congress at Rio, in 1941 when ideas were put forward to uniformise and systematise

43) c.f. B. Kloppenburg 1959 op.cit. C.P. Camargo 1961a op.cit.

44) B. Kloppenburg 1959 p.379

45) Idem p.409.

Umbandist ritual and doctrine. The Congress agreed on seven key issues which were formulated in the "Catechism of Umbanda" and led to the foundation of the "Spiritualist Federation of Umbanda"⁴⁶ in 1942, as opposed to the Kardecist federation, the F.E.B.

These attempts at unity and national recognition met with failure, but were fleetingly revived in 1951 and 1954 with revised editions of the "Umbanda Catechism" and the "Doctrine and Ritual of Umbanda". A second Umbanda conference took place in Rio in the Maracanazinho Stadium in 1961⁴⁷ again with national ideals in mind, but emerging without any agreement as to a national structure or nationally recognised leaders.

As with the Kardecists, there are many federations vying with each other to claim authentic Umbandist status and unite the multiplicity of groups which are now spreading to smaller cities of Brazil's interior.⁴⁸ Each federation usually meets annually, gathering together representatives from all its centres⁴⁹ to listen to the leaders of the federation talk on the qualities of Umbanda as a religion, and very often, as the meeting proceeds, mediums of each centre will enter collective simultaneous trances and transmit messages from the spirits which verify these sermons of the leaders.⁵⁰

Yet, despite this diversity of the federations, Umbanda is definitely moving towards a common nationalistic perspective. There is a more vigorous and insistent declaration of the validity of the Umbanda religion per se, rather than an assertion of Kardecist acceptability as was initially claimed.)

Several reasons for this particularity and separation can be suggested. On the one hand,

46) C.P. Camargo 1961b op.cit. p.42.
B. Kloppenburg 1959 op.cit. p.245.

47) E. Pressel 1968 op.cit. p.3.

48) B. Kloppenburg 1959 op.cit. p.241. The author gives a list of major Umbanda federations.

49) E. Pressel 1968 op.cit. p.5.

50) Idem p.6.

despite a constant emulation of Kardecist values, and a striving to gain the material success and social acceptability associated with the Kardecists, the Umbandists are still discriminated against in Brazil.⁵¹ For example, local police, hostile to certain Umbandist activities can charge their leaders with "pursuing medicine without a licence".⁵² On the other hand, for many Brazilians, the practice of Umbanda is still related to the lower classes and to a low level of socio-cultural development.⁵³ Even those who practice "high" Spiritualism often regard Umbanda as an inferior or rather, less "evoluted" religion, but, bound by the Law of Karmic Evolution to eventually divest itself of its primitive attributes and so emerge as more purely Kardecist.⁵⁴

At first, many of the local Umbandist centres used the word "Spiritist" in the titles of their associations. Similarly, the federations pressed for legal rights to use the word and so gain for themselves the social recognition accorded to many of the Kardecist groups, but denied to the Umbandists because of their African overtones. Yet, the upper echelons of Kardecism refused Umbanda any recognition. Not wishing to be stigmatised through association with African traditions they claimed:

"We are the only heirs of Allen Kardec; he coined the word for our Spiritist movement. No relationship exists between Spiritism and those cults or religions which include in their principles a) rituals of any nature, b) sacrifices, if only symbolic, c) priesthood of any type or hierarchy, d) formulas, invocations, promises or written indications of any nature intended to solve problems of material life, e) payment for spiritual services, f) worshipping of images, symbols or idols, g) practice of witchcraft, magic or necromancy".⁵⁵

51) E. Brody 1973 op.cit. p.381-400

52) P. McGregor 1967 op.cit. p.154. E. Brody 1973 op.cit. p.381 & 412.

53) C.P. Camargo 1960 op.cit. p.416-423.
Here, he offers a survey of Brazilian attitudes towards Umbanda and its participants.

54) D. Warren 1968b "Spiritism in Brazil p.403
Journal of Inter-American Studies X No.3.

55) P. McGregor 1967 op.cit. p.211. Quoted from an F.E.B. Statement in the 1950's.

However, in 1965, the F.B.B. declared:

"Everyone who believes in the manifestation of spirits is a Spiritist but every Spiritist is not an Umbandist, since not every Spiritist accepts the practices of Umbandist". 56

The attitude of Kardecism towards Umbanda is still ambiguous, although there is not such a vociferous denial of its associations with the Kardecist doctrine as formerly. Nevertheless, a large number of Umbandist groups are beginning to react against continual discrimination and have attempted to separate themselves from the Kardecist influence and character they have previously claimed. Whereas Kardecists believe that, ultimately, the values and merits of their doctrine will overcome all competition, Umbanda leaders tend to a rather more apocalyptic stance towards the future of the world, and insist on the immediate authenticity and perfection of their own religion.

In this attitude, the Afro base of the Umbandist groups is again clearly revealed. "Africa" becomes their distinctive and definitive characteristic, as for example, when spirits of the dead are contacted, the black spirits of old slaves always appear to be happy and satisfied, but those of whitemen are invariably oppressed and miserable.⁵⁷ Umbandists attempt to elevate their origins to proportions of mythical grandeur. Pre-historical validation is sought to add prestige to a continent and people continually regarded as inferior by the upper sectors of the Brazilian population.

"Yet Africa obstinately refuses to die and still clings on - at least, as an ideal dream ---. Negro culture --- has not been destroyed by urbanisation and industrialisation; on the contrary, it is responding to new needs which the city per se could not satisfy." 58

56) B. Kloppenburg 1959 op.cit. p.241.

57)c.f. E. Pressel 1973 op.cit.

58) R. Bastide 1971 "African Civilizations in the New World" p.222-224.

For example, the first Umbandist Congress at Rio recognised Kardec's works as the base of the Umbandist doctrine, with Jesus Christ as a supreme spirit, and the exclusion of such "primitive" rituals as hair-shaving and blood baths.⁵⁹ Although still forbidding these types of rituals, the second Congress in 1961 refocused its allegiance to emphasise the distinctiveness of Umbanda through its roots in slavery and the negro culture. On May 13th, 1965, Umbandists first celebrated the anniversary of the Abolition.⁶⁰

Other individual federations also try to demonstrate the historical or pre-historical roots of their religion as a spontaneous creation in the past. Many claim to have originated from the Ancient Egyptian civilisation,⁶¹ or have a Sanskritic origin, and produce long etymological justifications of the word "Umbanda" to prove this antiquity.⁶² Others say Umbanda is of Christian origin and that the word is derived from the name of one of the guardian angels, Michael or Raphael. The "Ekletiker",⁶³ an Umbandist sect founded by Oceana da Sa, who believed he was the reincarnation of John the Baptist, maintain that their origins are with the Holy Apostle, Jakobus the Younger of Alexandria, a Christian martyr who disappeared in 44 A.D.

Some groups claim justification and authenticity for their beliefs by attributing the invention of their pantheistic hierarchical system of spirits

59) C.P. Camargo 1961 a.p.36.

60) E. Brody 1973 op.cit. p.385.

61) E. Brody 1973 op.cit. p.445-6. C.P. Camargo 1961 op.cit. p.42. D. McGregor 1967 op.cit. p.180.

At the 1961 Conference, a speaker claimed Pharaoh Akhination to be the first Umbandist before Moses and Jesus.

62) Umbanda is a Bantu word which means priest. Other words used in the religion, such as cambono (assistant) and Quimbanda (black magic) are also of Bantu origin, although the whole pantheon of gods is of Sudanese origin as are other expression of ritual use such as babalorixa and babalao for the priests. c.f. C.P. Camargo 1961 op.cit. p.34

63) B. Kloppenburg 1959 op.cit. p.248.

to several Greek philosophers such as Plato. On the other hand many Umbandist groups are constantly Christianising⁶⁴ themselves through the acceptance of innumerable angels, saints and mythological characters. Curing sessions are sometimes referred to as the "Christian magic" that Joseph of Aramathia taught to Jesus, while some federations postulate that Umbanda is the fourth manifestation of God on earth, after Moses, Jesus, and Kardec respectively.

Umbanda is now claiming national appeal. It is trying to elevate its social status by providing itself with historical and theological justification for its association with African traditions. National claims to acceptability and legality have also been put forward in various appeals to the government to recognise Umbanda as a religion with an official codification of its doctrine and priestly hierarchy. But, in 1950, when Kardecism was accepted for the official census, public officials expressly instructed those claiming Umbandist status to register as Roman Catholics,⁶⁵ and in 1964 a similar appeal to the military government was ignored.⁶⁶

Aspirations for national unity have also been expressed through the fact that certain politicians have been elected to senate on an Umbandist ticket, including Moas Caldas in 1960 for Rio Grande do Sul who said that:-

"If elected, I will take my oath dressed in my white Umbandist uniform and I will "receive" my caboclo in the State Assembly".⁶⁷

Thus, Umbandists are attempting to gain both social acceptability and respectability within

64) E. Brody 1973 op.cit. p.385

65) B. Kloppenburg 1959 op.cit. p.239.

66) E. Brody 1973 op.cit. p.388.

67) Quoted by P. McGregor 1967 op.cit.p.178.

Brazilian society. On the one hand, this is partially achieved by emulating Kardecist doctrine and values and thus attaining status as "high" Spiritualists. On the other hand, as they become more conscious of their position in relation to the rest of Brazilian society, Umbandists are beginning to assert a separate identity for themselves, based on their African origins. Concomitantly through the processes of syncretism, emulation, and separation, the beliefs and plausibility structures of the Umbanda groups are becoming more organised and coherent. They are gradually acquiring national appeal, and in the following chapter, the effect this increasing Umbandist solidarity has on the socio-economic positions of its adherents will be discussed.

As outlined in the introductory chapter, the aim of this thesis has been to examine the development and character of religious pluralism in Brazil. The economic and political roles of selected religious groups have been analysed in relation to the specific historical and contemporary socio-cultural circumstances in which these groups have emerged, survived, maintained themselves, and become modified.

Attention has been primarily focused on Berger's extension of Geertz's ideas on religion as both a "model of" and "model for" social structure. Berger insists that in order to fully understand the relationship of each religion to the social conditions out of which it arose, the internal dynamics, or the internal process of construction and maintenance of each religious group, must be outlined. Through analysing such processes, the way in which the religion resolves socio-structural problems and the influence it may ultimately have on these conditions can be more adequately explained. That is to say, the interaction between religious beliefs or man's concept of his relationship with the supernatural, and the plausibility structures engendered to uphold these beliefs, is seen as the mediatory phase between the "model of" and "model for" processes in the existence of any religion.

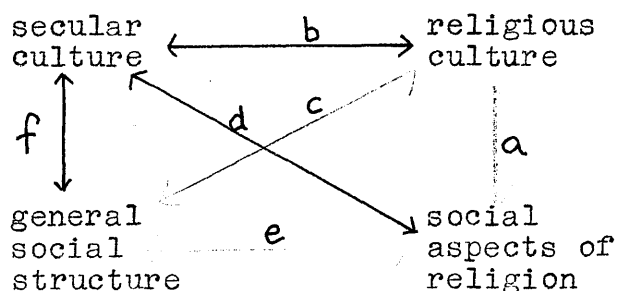
Throughout this thesis, central concern has rested on this phenomenological perspective. Religious beliefs and their associated religious organisations should not be analysed as a separate part of life, or as solely a religious sphere of activity, set apart from secular activity. Rather, they should be explained both in relation to their socio-historical origins and to their role in structuring the reality of the daily lives of their adherents.

In the previous chapters, the "model of" aspects of religious beliefs and plausibility structures were emphasised by an exposition of the social roots of each religious group, and through the way in which their beliefs and organisations reflect secular exigencies. In Brazil, several religious groups have continually been at variance with the dominant culture of the country and it is the social forces that have engendered these oppositions or alternative world views that have been outlined.

Similarly, the "model for" aspects of religious beliefs and religious organisations and their implications for ordinary secular social conduct and the everyday existence of the believer has also been explained, but in this final chapter will be more fully discussed.

However, in order to assess the extent and/or limitations of these "model for" characteristics of religious beliefs, it is necessary to constantly bear in mind the three way processual religious model put forward by Berger; the way in which the "ritual" process, or the internal articulation of the beliefs and practices of a religious group is related to the "religious" process of this religion's development and interaction with co-existing religious groups and with wider secular social structures. This three way process was diagrammatically outlined in chapter II, and in the following brief resume, I shall refer back to this schema.

diag.c)



The "model of" process demonstrates the way in which a religious response of the internal dynamics of a religious group ("a") arises as a result of the impact and influence of various socio-economic conditions ("c" and "e"). The actual functioning belief system and plausibility structure of this response (the ritual process, or relationship "a") explains, compensates for, and offers ways to overcome or improve such conditions (relationship "a" therefore modifies and mediates relationships "c" and "e"). Consequently, any changes that affect the quality of one variable of this relationship inevitably produce changes in the other variables.

For example, in an attempt to make paradoxical or incomprehensible aspects of life intelligible and morally acceptable, religious responses offer ways of overcoming and resolving the restrictive qualities of socio-structural positions. Their appeal is grounded in their credibility and their ability to demonstrate workable solutions to what at first appear as insuperable problems. Thus, as well as being a "reflection of" social conditions, the ritual process of any religious group is also "reflection on" these social conditions insofar as it offers rules and directives for behaviour within, and attitudes towards them. Religious solutions afford their adherents increased instrumental control over a hazardous natural or social environment and it is in this particular aspect of "reflection" or "refraction" that the possibility of cultural innovation lies.

Thus, the primary concern of this present chapter will be to explain the type and quality of this three way relationship that exists between these ritual and religious processes of each of the Brazilian religions dealt with in this thesis. The specific and dynamic characteristic of each religious group can be used as the focal point to illustrate the way in which it acts as "model of" and "model for"

the social structures out of which it initially arose. The correlation between the degree of structuredness (or unstructuredness) in each of these three processes, previously discussed by Turner and Douglas, will act as the base of the following exposition, but will be briefly elaborated with the help of similar theories expounded by Camargo, Lewis, Bastide and Peel respectively.

Douglas and Turner maintain that a consonance of structure exists between religious and ritual processes. A correlation exists between the actual construction of a religious group (its beliefs and plausibility structures) and the character of its socio-structural origins, and therefore it follows that the "model of" process limits the "model for" capacities of any religion. Such consonance tends to act as a brake or conservative force on religious resolutions or proposals for social change at the wider secular level and thus tends to preserve the original status quo.

However, several authors¹ argue to the contrary and maintain that religious values and associated plausibility structure do in fact contain a potential for political and socio-structural upheaval. Taking this debate into consideration, I secondly intend to discuss the political potential of the various religious groups in Brazil. For instance, at times of socio-structural crisis, when wider socio-economic conditions have been rapidly changing and have become disrupted, there has been a radical and abrupt change in the consonance between "model of" and "model for" processes.

1)c.f. P. Worsley 1970 "The Trumpet Shall Sound" E. Hobsbawn 1959 "Primitive Rebels"; E. Willems 1966 "Religious Mass Movements and Social Change in Brazil", E. Baklanoff (ed.) "New Perspectives of Brazil".

Finally, the historical implications that the development of the present plural religious situation has had for the Roman Catholic Church and the State, and the attitudes of each of these institutions to the religious groups, will be examined.

Taking folk catholicism, the Afro cults and and Spiritualist religions in turn, it is apparent that although these religious groups arose, as the response of certain sectors of the Brazilian population to dissatisfaction with their allotted positions in society, the attempts made to resolve the material and emotional difficulties of their members have been continuously limited and restricted by background socio-structural conditions.

For example, in rural folk catholic areas, although orthodox Roman Catholic tenets have been refocused to meet the needs of those who have been constantly denied access to Roman Catholic salvation, the geographical isolation of each community, its lack of contact with priests, and the individual, personalised relationships between the pivotal figure of the landlord or patron and the community members have all been reflected in the particularistic and privatised form of folk catholic beliefs and practices that exist today. The central concern of the religion rests on the relationship of each man to his personally chosen saint, and despite processions, pilgrimages and fiestas in honour of local saints, little communal action or feeling is ever generated.

In the urban areas, although the establishment of Brotherhoods did reflect a greater, but still limited potential for community gatherings, the poor in general were fairly fragmented. Therefore, as in the rural areas, the folk catholic response in the towns was limited by the social organisation of the lower strata, and the religion emerged as an individualised and privatised response which offered solutions for all immediate ills and misfortunes, rather than offering any model for

sustained social change.

In the case of the Afro religions, the individual and personal nature of the rural cults (c.f. chaps. V. & VI) can also be explained as a direct reflection of the material conditions existing in those areas. The dispersion of African tribes and families afforded little chance for plantation slaves to congregate in ethnic groups, but instead brought the individual slave into close contact with the beliefs of slaves from other African tribes, with the Roman Catholicism of his master and the Jesuit missionaries, and with the indigenous Indian and folk catholic beliefs of other employees on the Casa Grande. As a result, the religion of the rural slaves tended to be eclectic and disorganised and varied in character according to the degree to which traditional African beliefs retained their original status or were merged and assimilated with alien ideas and values.

In contrast, the more communal character of the Afro cults in the urban areas arose because of the tighter and more numerous networks of slaves in the cities with common ethnic origins. Brotherhoods and Cantos were formed around these ethnic groupings, and traditional African values were retained as much as possible. In order to support this retention of African beliefs and practices, the organisation of the cult was necessarily rigid and systematically structured with formal rules of entrance and participation. This strictly ordered common allegiance to, and focus on, distinctly African values may also have been intensified by the fact that in the towns, much care was needed to dissimulate African practices if public disapproval and police persecution were to be avoided. A well organised cult group with well defined rules of membership and cult activity was able to exert some degree of control over its individual participants whose moderated behaviour roused less suspicion and

hostility towards Afro cult practices.²

Yet, because the slaves and their descendents have always been on the periphery of Brazilian society, and regarded for the most part as "primitive" inferiors and mere labourers, the Afro religious response has constantly reflected this peripherality. In spite of the fact that the urban and more traditional Afro cults have always been well organised and rigidly structured, on the whole, the cult groups have tended to withdraw or separate themselves from the rest of Brazilian society. They have reflected their stigma of inferiority by turning to the land of their origins. Emphasis has been placed on "Africa" and African values as the focal point of their religion and as a consistent example against which their behaviour and conduct have to be measured.

However, in the late C19th, the introduction of Kardecism to Brazil gradually began to erode some of these traditional attitudes of the Afro cults. Disillusioned by the non-fulfillment of Abolition and Republican promises, and realising that traditional African values did little actively or positively ^{to} attain the material rewards of Brazilian society, many of these Afro groups began to turn to Spiritualist beliefs and practices for additional comfort and support. Gradually these Spiritualist values became assimilated into traditional African ones, especially in the more rapidly changing South, where, during the beginning of the C20th, industrialisation, internal migration and immigration were all increasing.

2) Many authors argue that, despite a certain acceptance and assimilation of Roman Catholic beliefs being necessary for the African gods to be tolerated and left unmolested by the Church and State, dissimulation was actually the main force in operation and the retention of African lifestyles was deliberately contra-acculturative.

c.f. R. Bastide 1960 "Les Religions Africaines au Brésil", E. Carneiro 1961 "Candomblés da Bahia".

Thus, as material socio-economic conditions began to change during the early years of the present century, disrupting traditional social structures, so the character of the ritual and religious processes of the religions existing at this time began to reflect these changes.

For example, the extremely haphazard and unstructured organisation of the religious groups that arose during this period, and the spontaneity of their contact with the supernatural, is a distinct "model of" the social and physical upheaval occurring in Brazil at this time. In fact Macumba, arising in the early years of this century can be typically considered as a transitional religion. On the one hand, it combines or bridges the religious traditions and religious solutions for social and material ills offered by both the Afro cults and Spiritualist groups. On the other hand, its lack of structured organisation reflects the changing composition of Brazilian society, especially among the middle and lower sectors of the population (c.f. chapter IV). The former classes were rapidly expanding, becoming wealthier and gaining social prestige. The latter, many of whom were rural migrants, uprooted from traditional lifestyles, found their lack of education and technical skills an impediment in competing for the material rewards of industrialising Brazil.

Yet, as this particular lower urban sector of the population began to congregate in certain areas of the towns, began to find work in the same types of employment, and, as a result began to compare their lot and become aware of their lack of material goods and needs and their social position in relation to the rest of Brazilian society, Umbanda and popular Xavier-influenced versions of Kardecism began to be adopted by, and began to reflect the aspirations of a proportion of the lower classes. Taking as their base the Kardecist doctrine of individual merit and salvation gained

through acts of charity, both these religious responses gradually became more rigidly and strictly organised. A definite code of behaviour for religious and daily life was created to overcome the difficulties and problems of survival in an urban environment, and rather than remain dispersed and locally various as do folk catholic groups, the Afro cults and Macumba groups, both Umbanda and popular Kardecism have begun to claim national unity and membership. Furthermore, Kardecism has been given official recognition as a religion by the Brazilian government.

Congruent with observations of Douglas, Berger, and Turner, it is apparent from this brief foregoing summary that a consonance exists between the ritual process (the articulation of beliefs and plausibility structure) of a religious group and the socio-structural background of this religion. The less structured, or the more peripheral the position of a group of people in society, the less structured their religious response. In Brazil, the internal organisation of the various groups has been influenced by the material and social environment out of which these groups originally arose. The ritual process of the religious group is a "model of" wider social structures and conditions, and as these latter change in structure, so the former, the ritual process, adjusts accordingly and adapts itself to account for and explain any differences and alterations in wider social structures.

Folk catholicism and the rural Afro cults have individualised, particularistic and personal beliefs and practices, all of which reflect the social positions of their adherents in Brazilian society. The traditional Afro cults and Macumba groups both represent the influence that different urban environments have had on African values. On the one hand, the opportunity for slaves of similar ethnic origin to gather together to celebrate their African religions gave rise to the traditional cult

groups, while, on the other, the changing social conditions at the turn of the century, together with the influence of Kardecism, gave rise to the spontaneous and transitionary religion of Macumba.

In the latter part of this century, both Umbanda and popular Kardecism have begun to reflect the growing national identity and awareness of common needs among Brazil's lower classes. In adjusting to the changes occurring in Brazil's social structures, both religions have moved from local, regional and individual explanations of man's place in the universe and his relationship with the supernatural to nationally and formally organised perspectives and aims.

However, as noted in previous chapters, Brazil's religions not only reflect and are not only "models of" their material background conditions, but they are also "models for" these conditions. They offer solutions and means by which men can lessen the anxieties, doubts and insecurities associated with these conditions. They provide guidelines both for the supplication of supernatural help to counter these misfortunes and for pursuing daily activities in a manner pleasing to the supernatural. As such, the influence a religious response has on the lives of its adherents is limited according to the degree of formal organisation and articulation it exhibits. The less structured a religious response, the less sustained the impact of this response on the lives of its participants.

To express the three way articulation of this relationship more clearly a continuum of marginality³ can be constructed to illustrate the

3) C. P. Camargo uses a "mediumistic" continuum to express the correlation between the religious response of the Brazilian Spiritualist groups and the environmental conditions out of which these groups arose.

/over

specific correlativity between a religious response and the environmental conditions out of which it arose and upon which it bears influence. This continuum will also explain the correlation between the "model of" and "model for" aspects of a religion as well as the degree to which these latter characteristics influence daily life. At one pole lie those religious groups with a peripheral position in society and whose contact with the supernatural is similarly unstructured and ill-defined. At the opposite pole lie those religions whose position in society, as well as their religious response is more rigidly and formally organised.

3)cont'd) This continuum:

"--- tienden a constituir en el Brasil un sistema religiosa, pero bipolar. Este sistema esta, por cierto, en efferescencia constante y esta formada no sólo de realidade analagous que se intercalan, sino de concepciones que se complican dialecticamente". (1961a p.31)

Due to the all pervasive influence of Kardecism, all these religious groups have certain common elements: belief in reincarnation; belief in a Karmic evolution; and an emphasis on the development of mediumship. Yet, each religion can be placed at any point on the "mediumistic continuum", according to the quality and character of its beliefs and associated rituals. At one pole are the Africansied terreiros of Macumba and lower Umbanda and at the other, the intellectualist and scientificall inclined Kardecist centros.

Similar to the "consonance" ideas of Turner and Douglas, Camargo maintains that the character of each religious group can be seen to be directly correlated with the socio-structural conditions out of which this religious response has arisen. At the same time, the type of beliefs and organisation of each group and the way in which these are maintained has a direct bearing on the relationship of this group to the activities outside of the religious world.

The continuum is in a "constant state of flux" because of the continual syncretism that is taking place between the various religious groups. These groups, Camargo suggests, are forever emulating and borrowing the characteristics of the Kardecist religion, which has now gained a certain respectability in Brazil because of the "moral" lifestyle it advocates and the material success it has made potential attainable to many of its members. c.f. C.P. Camargo 1961 "Kardecismo e Umbanda"; 1961b "Aspectos Sociológicos del Espiritismo en São Paulo"; 1960 "Aspects Socio-Culturels du Spiritisme au Bresil" in Sociaal Kompas vol.7(5-6)p.407-430; 1973 "Católicos, Protestantes Espíritas".

In order to elucidate this point, use will be made of Lewis'⁴ distinction between peripheral and central "possession" cults. "Quality of contact with the supernatural" can be substituted for "possession" because possession is only one form or expression of man's relationship to the supernatural. This then enables us to include folk catholicism in the continuum of marginality as possession rarely takes place in this religion through visions or occasional illness.

Peripheral religious responses⁵ can be delineated by three outstanding characteristics. First, they are responses of "deprived" groups of people, "women", and "downtrodden categories of men", the "weak" and the humiliated"⁶ who can voice their frustration with their allotted positions in society through no other means than through their religion.

Secondly, contact with the supernatural is open to all participants. Through this contact, the supplicant becomes a highly privileged person insofar as he can use supernatural favour to his own benefit and can therefore gain for himself a certain degree of security and temporary mastery over the problems of daily existence.

4)c.f. I. M. Lewis 1971 "Ecstatic Religion".

The author compares the way in which possession by the supernatural is variously expressed in "peripheral" and "mainline" or "central" religious groups. The following exposition of the characteristics of such groups is based on Lewis' distinctions.

5) For further distinctions between "peripheral" and "central" religions c.f. I.M. Lewis 1966 "Spirit Possession and Deprivation Cults", Man I p.307-29. R. Prince (ed.) 1968 "Trance and Possession States," E. Bourignon 1973 "Religion Altered States of Consciousness and Social Change".

6) I.M. Lewis 1971 op.cit. p.32-33

Lastly, however, although supernatural powers resolve physical and mental misfortunes, these solutions are only temporary. This is because the supernatural acts without reference to the moral character or conduct of its supplicants. Immediate help is requested of the supernatural and this is granted without sustained obligation from the supplicants being required in exchange.⁷

In contrast, in central religions, the religion itself is that of a dominant or well established group within society, or is the religion of the whole society, rather than of the oppressed.

Lewis defines such religions as "the mystical idiom in terms of which men of substance compete for positions of power and authority in society at large".⁸

Secondly, contact with the supernatural becomes the institutionalised property of the religious establishment. The majority can only gain such knowledge and favour through mediating rituals performed by duly accredited officials. Individual contact with the supernatural is discouraged, and often discredited unless such contact happens so frequently that it can only be regarded as a mark of divine inspiration and proof of a person's fitness for religious vocation.

Lastly, whereas in the peripheral cults, the supernatural was indifferent to the moral contact of its supplicants, in mainline religions, supernatural powers act as moral censors of religious society and of action in the wider, extra-religious sphere. Supernatural intervention in human affairs is a direct product of human misdemeanours and the

7) In fact, victims of illness and misfortune are entirely blameless for the problems that befall them. Thus, the supernatural has no direct moral significance for the daily lives of its supplicants and can be "typically considered to be amoral".
I. M. Lewis 1971 op.cit. p.34.

8) Idem p.53.

commitment of moral wrongs. Thus, on the whole, the task of the supernatural is not to solely alleviate misery and immediate problems but is rather to uphold and sustain morality within the religious group and thus to help feeble human beings to avert misfortune.

Transition from a peripheral to a central religion generally arises if there is an abrupt or rapid change in the social and material conditions of a peripheral cult that makes adjustments in this group's outlook both possible and necessary. Or, it can occur if a peripheral group comes into contact with another religion and syncretism begins to take place between the two; the emergent religion becoming a dominant and established one.

As the peripheral group becomes more structured within itself, in reflection of changed environmental circumstances, or because of syncretic tendencies, its members begin to gain a clearer view of their status in relation to the rest of society. Explanation of social structures determines a more delineated and articulated **ritual** expression of man's relationship to the supernatural universe. Religious plausibility structures gain order and control and begin to provide explicit views of the interaction of religious behaviour with wider social activities.

However,

"--- the boundaries between such movements (peripheral and central)--- are not absolute. They remain ill-defined and shifting, and it is often extremely difficult to assess --- the precise placement of a particular instance in the temporal and social setting". 9

Although peripheral religions may become centralised in structure, many exhibit the characteristics of both the peripheral and central religious responses and become what Lewis terms "separatist".¹⁰ This frequently happens when a

9) Idem p.128

10) Idem p.128-131

religion's rejection of the established social order and its own proposals for social change are discredited by the establishment. The religion struggles to achieve independence and dominance of supremacy, but is firmly held in check through persecution as a heresy.

On the other hand, peripheral cults may succeed in supplanting the old order, becoming monopoly religions in their ^{own} right, or at least, may be recognised by the establishment and are therefore able to compete successfully with it.

Thus, the distinction between peripheral and central religions highlights the correlativity between the articulated organisation of the beliefs and plausibility structures of a religious group and the social conditions out of which this group arose, and upon which it has varying degrees of influence. In Brazil, the different religions can be plotted against such a continuum of marginality and the way in which the "model of" processes limit their "model for" capacities can now be clarified.

Roman Catholicism, of course, can only be characterised as the central "historical" monopoly religion¹¹ against which the other religious groups have arisen to offer alternative explanations of man's position in the universe and in relation to the supernatural. Folk catholicism, the rural Afro cults and Macumba were towards the most marginal pole of the continuum. At the most "rational"¹²

11)c.f. R. Bellah 1964 "Religious Evolution", "American Sociological Review" XXIX p.358-374.

According to Bellah, with the advent of literacy, religion began to take on a "historical" form which demanded that a religious or cultural elite, coincident with and dominated by a political or military elite, mediated all paths to heavenly salvation and provided an ideology that justified and legitimated the existing status quo.

12)c.f. M. Weber 1966 "The Sociology of Religion"; P. Berger 1973 "The Social Reality of Religion" p.72-3.

The author gives a brief but efficient summary of Weber's "rationality" in religion.

or structured pole are the purely Kardecist groups which possess all the qualities of a moralistic central religion, and although not occupying a dominant place in Brazilian society, Kardecism is now officially accepted as a practised religion and is rapidly gaining national prestige and status.

It is very difficult to place Umbanda and the modern urban Afro cults at either the peripheral or central pole of the continuum. As seen from the previous data, the traditional Afro cults that now exist only in the North East can be classified as "separatist" religious movements, while Umbanda, at once insisting on its African identity and independence, but also pursuing those Kardecist goals of Charity that endeared Kardecism to official recognition, appears to have many of the characteristics of peripheral, central and separatist religions.

However, those three main characteristics of the continuum of marginality that were previously discussed, the personnel, the people who actually contact the supernatural and the way in which they do so, and the bearing that the supernatural has on everyday life, can now be distinguished in greater detail in relation to the more peripheral Brazilian religions, and later the same characteristics of the central/separatist groups will be analysed.

In folk catholicism, the Afro cults (both rural and urban), Macumba, and the Africanised Umbanda groups, the membership of these religions can certainly be described as "women and downtrodden categories of men". The focal role of women in the Afro cults and in folk catholicism has been mentioned previously and is well documented,¹³ while

13) E. Brody 1973 "The Lost Ones" p.355; S. Leacock 1964 "Fun Loving Deities in an Afro Brazilian Cult", Anthropological Quarterly XXXVII p.94-109; E. Pin 1963 "Elementos para una Sociologia del Catolicismo Latino-Americano" p.6-10; Folk catholicism, the latter states is a "cosa de mujeres y ninos".

membership of Macumba and low Umbanda consists of those sectors of the population in the lowest paid jobs and who lack the education and skills required for material advancement in the cities.¹⁴

In all of these groups, each member can personally contact the supernatural and therefore gain access to supernatural favour. Each folk catholic can choose a particular saint as his protector and can personally contact this patron through performance of appropriate rituals. Each Afro cult member is the chosen "horse" of a certain orisha,¹⁵ while in Macumba and the lower Umbanda groups, each participant has personal contact with a number of orishas or spirits.

In these latter groups, possession is the usual form of contacting the supernatural and the degree of spontaneity exhibited in the actual state of possession is related to the degree to which the group is structured as a whole. For instance, in the Macumba groups possession is uncontrolled and haphazard, whereas in the more formally organised Afro cults which tend towards the characteristics of central ones, possession is controlled and directed by the Mãe or Pãe de Santo and must be learnt formally. It requires a period of training and initiation and includes the use of pontos, dancing and drinking, all of which are necessary preliminaries to acquiring the proper receptivity for the descent of the supernatural.

In most cases, the bearing which the supernatural has on the life of its adherent in these peripheral groups is consonant with the degree of structure that the internal articulation of these

14)c.f. Chapters VII & VIII

15) For instance, the orishas constantly influence the personality of their "Horses" who are vulnerable to certain types of accident, inconvenience or favour". c.f. O. da Costa Eduardo 1948 "The Negro in Northern Brazil" p.54; E. Pressel 1968 "Structure, Beliefs and Ritual Behaviour in Umbanda".

groups exhibit. Such influence pertains solely to the individual and rarely extends to the whole community. The supernatural is merely propitiated by each individual for certain immediate favours, and has no direct or sustained moral significance for the lives of its supplicants.

Immediate tangible solutions to daily problems and misfortunes are sought but once the reward desired is gained, no further contact with the supernatural is needed and there is no idea of expiation of wrongs or atonement for sin. For instance, one consequence of the fact that the supernatural has little bearing on how supplicants carry out their daily lives is seen in the bet-hedging that takes place between folk catholic saints. If one saint fails to fulfil a need, then a request can be transferred to another potential protector. Similarly, in the less traditional Afro cults and Macumba groups, there is no specific allegiance to one orisha or spirit, and most participants can appeal to various supernatural beings often including folk catholic saints, to solve their problems.

Thus, for the most part, folk catholicism, the less traditional Afro cults and Macumba do bear the characteristics of peripheral religious groups. But, in discussing Umbanda and popular Kardecism, it is more difficult to assign them a definite place on the continuum as most of the groups have the characteristics of both peripheral and central religions.

The membership of the Afro cults and lower Umbandist groups tends primarily to be from the lower class sectors of the population, but as noted previously, Kardecist groups and higher Umbandist ones cull their membership from the rapidly expanding middle and professional classes who are currently enjoying a much more prestigious and dominant position in Brazilian society than ever before.¹⁶ Consequently,

16)c.f. Chapters VII & VIII

the internal religious structure of these groups and the influence of this religious response on the daily lives of its participants is much more rigidly organised. In these latter two groups, although contact with the supernatural is open to every individual through his potential vocation for mediumship, this contact has, in fact, become formally controlled and institutionalised and limited to the religious establishment itself. Selected and carefully trained mediums then mediate between the supernatural powers and the human world.

At the same time, membership, although it is open to all, does demand an exclusive allegiance insofar as participants must daily pursue that way of life which is dictated by their relationship with and supplication of the supernatural. Expiation of sins is demanded through a concentrated attendance to spiritual duties, while members must pursue their religious code of conduct at all times. The results of such behaviour are clearly seen in these tangible symbols of Kardecist and Umbandist Charity; the hospitals, schools, orphanages and libraries, that are built not only to benefit members materially, but also to encourage them to continue in their Kardecist or Umbandist way of life.

However, in relation to these qualities of peripherality and structure/unstructure exhibited by the religious groups in Brazil, it is interesting to note one other very important characteristic typical of the Brazilian religious responses, which reveals the way in which the "model of" aspects of these various beliefs and plausibility structures have limited these same religious "model for" capacities. This characteristic is syncretism. Essentially, syncretism has occurred in two ways. On the one hand, as noted previously, it has been forced, directed and restricted by external pressures such as Jesuit missionary policies and State insistence on conformity to Roman Catholicism. On the other hand, although modified by such external

pressures, assimilation of beliefs has occurred selectively in accord with each group's established conception of the qualities of man's relationship to the supernatural. Alien religious beliefs have usually been assessed in three ways: they have been rejected, or original beliefs have been refocused to accommodate these new ones and vice versa.

Within those groups that tend to the more peripheral pole of the marginality continuum, syncretism is generally a conservative force, operating only within the confines of the traditional structures of the religious group itself. Alien beliefs are typically rejected or modified to accord with traditional values. Bastide and Peel refer to this process as "preserved" and "implicit" syncretism respectively.¹⁷

Briefly, the label "preserved" emphasises the conservative, static nature of a religion. For example, the traditional Afro cults emerged because the negroes reacted to their continually low socio-economic status and the "whitening" policies of their superiors by fiercely clinging to African values and traditions, and retaining these in opposition to all others. Further, white persecution of their religion only strengthened this adherence to African values and this rejection of alien beliefs.

"At the very moment when faced by white refusal to accept them on equal footing, the negro abandons Africa in order to achieve fuller integration, he finds himself driven back to the continent of his ancestors ---. Our starting point was African survivals, now we have reached our last Africa - the mythical version".¹⁸

17) R. Bastide 1967 "African Civilisations in the New World", 1963 "L'Acculturation Formelle", America Latina VII (3); J.D.Y. Peel 1968 "Syncretism and Religious Change", Comparative Studies in Society and History p.121-141; M. Fortes 1938 "Culture Contact as Dynamic Process", International Institute of African Languages and Culture XV p.60-91.

18) R. Bastide 1967 op.cit. p.214 c.f. N.E. Whitten & J. F. Szewed 1970 "Afro American Anthropology" for a discussion on the insistent retention of African values in the New World and North America.

Although such African values have obviously been manifested through their contact with Roman Catholicism and Spiritualist beliefs, and although innovations within them have taken place to account for changing material conditions, on the whole, the syncretism that has occurred in the Afro cults has operated within the general framework that has traditionally been laid down by African values.

"A preserved religion is --- the expression of a threatened culture's will to live, to preserve its ethnic identity by crystallising tradition and removing it from the flux of history".¹⁹

In a similar way, "implicit" syncretism also acts as a conservative force preserving traditional structures. "Implicit" syncretism involves the cultural inconsistency of participating in several religions at the same time.

"For the ordinary man, "cognitive dissonance" is the least of all troubles which a man might seek to avoid".²⁰

To participate in several religions at once and to accept the reality and authenticity of each is not unusual, for example, among folk Catholics or among Afro cult and Macumbist members. Because of the material precariousness of their existence they want clear and well defined, this-worldly goals. Consequently, they pursue whatever means they may consider to be effective in gaining these material rewards. The sources of spiritual power are manifold and none need be rejected. Agreeing with these observations of Peel, Bastide remarks:

"The image --- of "marginal man", torn between two cultures which struggle within him for supremacy may be valid for the --- intellectual, but has no relevance to the man in the street. The latter finds no problem in occupying several distinct worlds; since these do not cover the same areas of existence (whether technical, economic, political, religious or social) they never once come into conflict".²¹

19) R. Bastide 1967 op.cit. p.131

20) J.D.Y. Peel 1968 op.cit. p.130

21) R. Bastide 1967 op.cit. p.195

For Bastide, participation in the Afro cults, Spiritualist groups and folk catholicism is, presumably within the same sphere of existence. These religious beliefs explain and solve the social and economic problems of everyday life. They also engender a religious social structure through which the practice of certain ritual observances and certain behaviour is ensured. Such behaviour may obliquely influence behaviour in the wider social structure, but on the whole, this religion offers a way of life that is separate, yet co-existent with daily activity. Until 1889 the Afro cults were an alternative source of comfort and security to the exclusive and discriminating control of State dictated Roman Catholicism over both the social and religious matters of the country. However, they remained purely religious alternatives because their intrusion into the Roman Catholic defined social sphere was limited by State and Church policy and by the elitist fear that such an intrusion might have detrimental effects on the established status quo.

In contrast, within those religious groups that were towards the more structured pole of the marginality continuum, syncretism occurs in a much more "rational", structured, and selective manner. For Peel, such "explicit" syncretism is a philosophical system which attempts to fuse two sets of belief into a logical and coherent whole to create a new system of behaviour. Assimilation is consciously planned to gain some ultimate religious or social objective, as for example, the Kardecist attitude towards Christianity mentioned in chapter VII. Rather than totally reject Christianity, Kardecism insists on gradually convincing people that Kardecism and Christianity can be reconciled, but that eventually, Kardecist values will predominate. Similarly, the original

founder of Umbanda wished to erase the socially unacceptable practice of the Afro cults through replacing them with "respectable" Kardecist values.

Likewise, Bastide regards what he calls a "living" religion as one which responds to, and gives expression to, modifications occurring in its contact with other religions and in the country's social structure, as and when these take place. Umbanda, for example, terms itself a national creed, actively concerned with the problems engendered by urbanisation and industrialisation and involved with the secular world by its nominating politicians for senate and building hospitals and schools. Rather than insisting on its separateness and isolation through emphasising a purely African identity, Umbanda selectively syncretises the values and ideas with which it comes into contact, so that ultimately, it can fulfil its aim of achieving for its adherents the material wealth and success associated with prestige and social status in Brazil. However, it intends to gain this on its own terms through eventually establishing itself and its selectively syncretised values as an official religion, and through open recognition of its African heritage and slave connections.

Although the traditional Afro cults and folk catholicism still provide religious explanations of existence, the advent of Kardecism and the creation of Umbanda, with their "explicit" and "living" syncretic qualities has meant that these beliefs have begun to acquire a significance which extends beyond the sphere of religion. They now compete with Roman Catholicism to provide not only explanations of supernatural benevolence and solutions for everyday problems, but to actively create what they consider to be a viable and moral alternative way of life which will eventually bring

social recognition, prestige and status to their adherents.

Thus, the way in which each religious group assimilates alien beliefs is also related to the degree of structure exhibited in its internal organisation and conception of man's relationship to God. The more peripheral the religious group, the less organised its religious response and the more haphazard the reaction to alien beliefs, using them only when they are able to tangibly and immediately satisfy individual problems and aspirations. On the other hand, the more rigidly organised a religious response, then the more formally and selectively, alien beliefs are assimilated. They are merged with old forms of beliefs to provide new and additional means of accounting for social and physical hardships.

In summary, then, it is noticeable that in Brazil, the structural consonance theories put forward previously by Douglas and Turner explain the relationship between the internal organisation and belief system of religious response, its social background and its influence on these social conditions out of which it originally arose. The continuum of marginality explains how such responses vary and fluctuate as syncretic trends take place between the religious groups in Brazil.

However, as noted in the introduction to this chapter (and in chapter II), Douglas and Turner view both peripheral and central religions as conservative forces, preserving the status quo in ways related to their degree of marginality to wider society and to the degree of formal structure and organisation exhibited in the internal mechanisms of the religious group. This view of religion tending to conservatism is part of a much wider discussion as to the political potential of religion and the radical nature of man's relationship to the supernatural. The debate revolves around two central

themes. On the one hand, there is the opinion that although membership of a religion may temporarily improve the social status of an individual within wider society, on the other hand, all religious beliefs and practices inevitably tend to act as a bulwark against change at a more extensive level.

For instance, the more peripheral the religion, the more transient the contact with the supernatural, and the less sustained the alleviance of present ills. Through contact with the supernatural, modifications occur in the social situation of an individual but this is only temporary and does not imply any permanent modification of that person's position in wider society or the social structure of that society itself. Generally, through the supernatural's favour, inferiors gain superiority and a more important position in the universe for a short length of time.²² Superiors are either levelled to lowly status, or inferiors are briefly able to assert their dominance over their degraded masters. For example, in folk catholicism, the saints are levelled to human status when they are scorned, mocked or scolded by their human supplicators for failing to fulfil requests.²³ Folk catholics

22) The following characteristics of peripheral or unstructured religious groups are noticeably similar to those of "status reversal" noted by Turner in chapter II. c.f. V. Turner 1969 "The Ritual Process" E. Bourignon 1973 "Religion, Altered States of Consciousness and Social Change". This latter author discusses the characteristics of peripheral religions as being those of "microchange" or the tendency of these types of religious groups to individualism.

23) c.f. E. Pin 1963 op.cit. p.68.

"El hombre del pueblo conoce muy bien a Dios. Conoce todos sus pensamientos, sus ideas, opiniones---"

O. Lewis 1965 "La Vida" p.236
Soledad: "It seems to me that the moment anyone descends to La Esmeralda, one must also bring down God and the saints by cursing them. My Mother says of God, "That Cuckold, that Fag. I shit on him". R. Bastide 1960 op.cit. c.f. C. Wagley (ed.) "Race and Class in Rural Brazil" p.55. Wagley notes a similar status reversal suffered by earthly patrons and employers, often reduced to complete imbeciles or fools in the folk tales of Brazil.

gain a greater knowledge and direction over their lives through establishing reciprocal bargains with these saints who advise and provide immediate solutions to everyday problems. Yet, in another sense, folk catholics can also gain a certain superiority over those persons of a higher social status than themselves, for once earthly patrons and relationships fail to meet their needs, they can always transcend these and appeal to the benevolence of the saints.

In the Afro cults and Macumba, the orishas and spirits are levelled to human status through possession. Human "horses" can then use their "riders" to obtain solutions to problems and cures for illnesses. At the same time, when possessed, each individual is able to carry out his own commands and desires through the power and authority of his god, and cannot be prevented or hindered from doing so by others. Similarly, within the hierarchy of the cult group, members gain a prestige and social status that is unavailable in wider society, although this is only temporary.

However, unlike Douglas and Turner, Lewis places more optimistic emphasis on the radical potential of peripheral religions whose "primary social function" is an "oblique aggressive strategy", working to help the interests of the "politically impotent",²⁴ those who otherwise have few effective means to press their claims within society. Although such religions ultimately act conservatively they do so only "within as uneasy acceptance of the established order of things", and are rather seen as expression of insubordination and dissatisfaction, allowing for the ventilation of despair and frustration.

Yet, in contrast to these peripheral religions, the more structured and formal the organisation of a

24) I. M. Lewis 1971 op.cit. p.32-33

religious group, the more explicit its "philosophy of power"²⁵ whereby man gains a certain degree of equality with, and control over, his relationship with the supernatural. Religions that are less peripheral in character incorporate a desire to innovate and revitalise the whole society. There is the desire to create a new society to replace the old or to restructure the old in accordance with certain religious beliefs and ideals of organisation. In central religions, participants are irreversibly conveyed from a lower to higher position in an institutionalised system of such positions.²⁶ Umbanda and Kardecism are obviously examples of this, for in both, participants are constantly conveyed (according to the charitable merit of their daily lives in the mundo visivel) through a succession of spiritual incarnations until perfection is reached. Even though the individual may make no progress after one earthly life, there is no back sliding down the hierarchy. Daily lives are carried out in a formally structured pattern according to supernatural sanction.

However, although central religions do serve to innovate at a societal rather than at an individual level, there still remains the debate about the conservative or radical qualities of this innovation. On the one hand, the religious group itself may be recorded as conservative insofar as, having established its values and ideals as being dominant and justified by supernatural favour, a religious hierarchy concomitantly emerged to uphold conformity to these ideals. While stressing that all might be equal before God, this hierarchy tends to thwart any individual opposition to established norms and tends to prevent any harmful dissension.

25) Idem p.204

26) Again these following characteristics can be likened to the "status elevation" or "macrochange" tendencies discussed by V. Turner 1969 op.cit. and E. Bourignon 1973 op.cit.

On the other hand, several authors maintain that the control over, and equality with, the supernatural that participants achieve can be explicitly directed to action in the political sphere. It can be used to justify the acquisition of social and material rewards normally unavailable or out of reach. Religious movements are seen as being pre-political²⁷ in the sense that they foreshadow, or will eventually evolve into political movements with secular ideologies. As the religion evolves, it either becomes less specifically religious or it is taken over and absorbed by a political organisation with a secular ideology such as nationalism or socialism. Religion is thus viewed as a transitory phenomenon that is ultimately destined to disappear

27) The idea of religion as a pre-political phenomenon is put forward by Hobsbawn. Religion as a vehicle of protest and as a plan for revolution of social structures appeals to a strata that is politically passive, has no access to political power and has no other way to express its feelings or political aspirations.

"They are pre-political people who have not yet found, or only begin to find a specific language in which to express their aspirations about the world".

E.J. Hobsbawn 1959 "Primitive Rebels" p.5.

J.F. Engels 1894-5 "On the History of Early Christianity" in Marx and Engels "On Religion".

"The history of early Christianity has notable points of resemblance with the modern working-class movement. Like the latter, Christianity was originally a movement of oppressed people: ---- Both Christianity and the Worker's Socialism preach forthcoming salvation from bondage and misery; Christianity places this salvation in a life beyond, after death, in heaven; Socialism places it in this world, in a transformation of society".

in favour of political action.²⁸

With regard to Brazil, the relationship between the social background of a religion, the formality and structure of its beliefs and practices and its political potential can now be discussed.

On the whole, there appears to be general agreement on the tendency of the individual nature of folk catholicism to produce "fatalism"²⁹ and a reliance on providence. Even when the role of folk catholic messianism is considered³⁰ a similar pattern of dependency is apparent.

28) Neo-Marxists like Hobsbawn and Worsley, view religion as a transitory phenomenon that is ultimately destined to disappear in favour of political expression of discontent and political modes of action. As long as men continue to hold "false" and "wrong" relationships with each other, religion will continue to exist and will be "true" in the sense that it will accurately reflect these "wrongs". Yet religion will disappear when man realises that he himself and not God or the supernatural is the producer of his own destiny, his relationships with others and any social or economic order that arises.

c.f. E. Hobsbawn 1959 op.cit. R. Worsley 1970
"The Trumpet shall Sound"

29)c.f. B. Galjart 1964 "Class and following in Rural Brazil" America Latina vol.7 p.3-24. The author maintains that movements such as that of the "peasant Leagues" are merely "evanescent" followings.

c.f. E. Pin 1963 op.cit. D. Gross 1971 "Ritual Conformity" Ethnology; G. Foster 1965 "Peasant Society and the Image of Limited Good" American Anthropologist vol.67 p.293-315.

30) Many authors have generally concentrated on the political potential of millennial movements, rather than religious movements per se, but their suggestions are useful for studying the implications for social change of other types of religious groups. For instance, Worsley argues that it is impossible to separate out millennial movements from other religious movements if both have in common an expectation of deliverance in the near future. The basic divisions in assessing the political potential of religious groups are not between millennial and non-millennial movements but between activist and pacifist.

"Whether the activist content is expressed in the form of separatist sect, prophetic cult or millennial movement, or is some combination of all three, these are similar responses to similar social situations. And all ultimately result either in the emergence of secular political organisation or turn into cults of passive resignation".

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For example, the two most well known messianic movements in Brazil are those of Canudos and Juazeiro which are usually seen as a specific response to the particularly harsh physical and social conditions in the North East of Brazil.³¹ Although both these movements gave birth to rigidly organised rural communities, because these communities³² remained purely local, and rarely gathered a wider national following or remained in existence after the death of the messiah, it is possible to suggest that such movements are just as fatalistic and conservative as everyday folk catholicism. The messiahs are seen purely as patrons upon whom their followers or creators depend when other earthly patrons,

30)cont'd)P. Worsley 1970 op.cit. p.243-244.

It is only the activist, this-worldly qualities of religion that are a direct expression of the drive towards change. The mystical aspects act as an opiate and therefore help to preserve the status quo. Religion becomes an activating, unifying force and an "important precursor of political awakening", and a forerunner of political organisation.

c.f. G. Balandier 1970 "The Sociology of Black Africa"; K. Burridge 1960 Mambu: A Melanesian Millennium ; P. Lawrence 1964 "Road Belong Cargo".

31) However, Ribeiro denies this explanation of hardship and negates the fact that these movements arose as a result of special occasion of insecurity,

"--- such occasions may exist in a harsh degree, as in the case of the Brazilian Indians, exposed to forced acculturation. But the situation in which --- other types of Brazilian movement arose were no more anxiety producing than the general run of conditions in other areas where neither millennial or social protest movements occurred.

R. Ribeiro 1962 "Brazilian Messianic Movements" p.17, in S. Thrupp "Millennial Dreams in Action".

32)c.f. E. da Cunha 1939 "Canudos".

For example, at Canudos, the community was hierarchically organised around rigid rules of behaviour and abstinence. Ideals of common ownership in land and property were practised, together with compulsory pursuits such as two hours of prayer daily. The ways in which the New Jerusalem or the Promised Land would be achieved were therefore explicitly organised and delineated.

c.f. R. Cunninghame Grahame 1920 "A Brazilian Mystic"
O. Anselmo 1968 "Padre Cicero, Mito e Realidade";
V. Lanternari 1963 "The Religions of the Oppressed";
P. Dantas 1963 "Místicos e Fanáticos do Nordeste",
Commentario IV (2)

the saints and God have failed them.³³ This process is most clearly revealed in the C20th insistence of elevating Padre Cicero to a saint, with shrines and pilgrimages established in his name in the North East.³⁴ The messiah has been deified to the status of supernatural patron, and messianic movements are therefore viewed by many as attempts by a group of people to forge new links of security and dependence rather than to create any form of communal solidarity and communal socio-political action, a precursor to wider political action.³⁵

33)c.f. I.M.P. de Queiroz 1965 "O Messianismo no Brasil e no Mundo" p.360, Ibid 1968 "OS Cangaceiros" p.15
In the latter book Queiroz outlines the way in which the Brazilian bandit has been deified like the messiahs.

"Repris par la radio et la télévision --- la figure du bandit a changé. --- La littérature populaire --- élaborée --- a perdu de vue ses aspects négatifs. Le brigand s'est fait chevalier, défenseur des opprimés et des faibles ---. Il est curieux qu'un phénomène si particulier, si régional, si limité, deviennent tout d'un coup un mythe national".
c.f. N. Macedo 1970 "Lampião"

34) R. Della Cava 1970 "Miracle at Juazeiro" chp.IX

35) E. de Kadt 1970 "Catholic Radicals in Brazil"

Similarly, those who view the role of the messianic movements as being essentially paternalistic, also tend to view the role of the Ligas Camponesas in the same light. They argue that these movements have occurred not from any common awareness of the peasants of their social situation, but because traditional patrons had failed to fulfil their protective roles, the peasants were searching for more powerful protectors, whether these were federal politicians, trade union leaders or the Peasant Leagues.

"It is very doubtful whether ^{these} organisations had gone far in laying a solid foundation for peasant mobilisation, for the creation, that is, both of commitment to action and of appropriate organisational forms to translate that action into observable behaviour". E. de Kadt 1970 "Catholic Radicals in Brazil."

On the contrary, several authors have viewed both the messianic movements and the Ligas as having common roots in the misery and oppression of the lower classes in rural areas and as representing the stirring of an initial common awareness and desire for political action and remedies.

c.f. G. Huizer 1973 "Peasant Rebellion in Latin America", ibid 1965 Some Notes on Community Development and Rural Social Research, "América Latina VIII"
R. Face 1965 "Cangaceiros e Fanáticos"; F. Julião 1972 "Cambão - The Yoke" p.95-96. "The Peasant League

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Such views as the above are, of course, completely in agreement with those of Douglas, Turner and Lewis on the characteristic features of all peripheral religious groups. The socio-structural background of the religious groups limits the quality and structure of their various beliefs and practices, which in turn limit the potential of these religions from modifying and influencing their social origins.

Turning to the more formally organised Spiritualist-influenced religions, a similar debate can be held on whether these religions have any political potential for initiating socio-structural change, or whether the change that they advocate remains purely at the level of the religious and therefore remains an "opiate".

From both conservative and radical points of view, the less traditional Afro cults and low Umbanda groups are transitional religions which seek to bridge the gap between old and new traditions. The significant question here is to whether the new tradition, the synthesis of old and new values, has any political potential.

From a conservative perspective, although Umbanda is a religion which provides for innovation in a developing society, in the lower Umbandist groups, changes take place only at the micro or individual level within the established status quo. Through participation in the religion, individuals can find help and comfort for the personal difficulties involved in the new economic and social roles they must adopt in urban areas. Conflict between traditional and industrial values and lifestyles can be resolved by appealing to the spirits for advice, and direction.

This conservative, individualistic nature of Umbanda is also reflected in the fact that (c.f. chapters VII and VIII) it is not unusual for those who belong to low Umbandist groups to participate

35)cont'd)is merely an expression of all this violent past --- reborn from the ashes of a thousand ancient fires" ---). H. Landsberger 1969 (ed.) Latin American Peasant Movements".

both in Spiritist meetings and the Afro cults as well as to appeal to folk catholic saints in a continual search for the most benevolent and helpful protector.

Similarly, it has been reported that in Minas Gerais, shrines have been erected in the name of Jose Pedro de Freitas³⁶ an Umbandist healer. To this pilgrimages take place every month and as such, the patron dependency characteristics of folk catholicism appear to be very much more predominant than any community that might eventually find political expression.

However, in the higher Umbandist groups, contact with the supernatural is less of an individual, micro level experience but rather, offers all Umbanda participants stereotyped directives for a new lifestyle. Through pursuing this new way of life, there is the possibility of gaining social status and prestige in wider society, and as a result, introducing Umbandist values into this society.

However, although Umbanda is creating a social community with certain secular aims and desires, the religion acts for the most part as an integrative force, rather than as a radical innovation. Rather than provide a viably alternative way of life or pointing to the possibility of change in Brazilian social structure, Umbanda, according to Brody "reduces the likelihood of political or revolutionary change in the overall social system".³⁷ The religion is increasingly tending to attract a larger percentage of middle class and professionals who are attracted by those Umbandist qualities that allow for supernatural guidance in dealing with mental strain, emotional pressures and tensions

36) P. McGregor 1967 "Jesus of the Spirits" p.137

37) E. Brody 1973 "The Lost Ones" p.461

associated with their daily lives and employment. As such, the use of supernatural help and guidance may eventually become the domain of these classes. The Umbandist religion will be used to justify and validate their aspirations and ideals and to maintain these as part of the existent status quo. Umbanda may, ultimately enable its participants to adopt or attain the social roles and values that are already defined by the materialist, capitalist and competitive Brazilian society.³⁸

However, in contrast, certain qualities of the Umbandist groups can be seen to be activist and potentially revolutionary, rather than pacifist and reformist. They possess the same qualities as those attributed by Hobsbawn to the pre-political millennial movements. The present world order is rejected and the ideology of belief system and plausibility structures of the religious groups are directed towards ending this old world order. According to Bastide, the religions reflect the first moments of a common awareness of certain urban sectors of the population to their socio-economic situation. Umbanda is a "creation of the proletariat".³⁹

"Before, it was the images of saints that served to mask the orishas, now the orishas serve as masks for the new needs and new attitudes of a group of people aspiring for social recognition".⁴⁰

This opinion as to the "pre-political" potential of Umbanda is substantiated by several facts associated with the development of the religion during the last few years. For instance, the religion has become increasingly insistent on the validity and authenticity of its exclusiveness as a way of life. It is trying to elevate its social status by providing itself with historical and theological justification for its association with African traditions. Modifying the evolutionary Kardecist aspects of its doctrine, several Umbandists

38) E. Bourignon 1973 op.cit.

39) R. Bastide 1967 op.cit.

40) Idem p.92

foresee a cataclysmic revelation of God on earth, then Umbanda will conclusively be established as the only true and valid religion.

At the same time, although Brody reports on participants at an Umbanda session "talking at length in a style which would have been impossible in the waking state because of its anti-government connotations"⁴¹ Umbanda has also made explicit aims to politicise its message and popular appeal, and to undermine the established social system by fighting from within it. For instance, it is agitating for official recognition as a religion, and as mentioned previously, several of its members have been elected to Senate on an Umbandist ticket.⁴²

Turning to Kardecism, however, it is probably the conservative elements of this religion that appear to override any radical aspects. Certainly neo-Marxists would argue, that like Buddhism and Hinduism, The Kardecist Karma allows no vision of the Kingdom of God on earth because attention is focused on the spiritual perfection one may attain after repeated incarnations, both in this world and in a spiritual one. Thus, this religion like others, is ultimately geared to non-earthly ends and must therefore remain passive rather than active in any secular, political sense.

The main emphasis of the Kardecist doctrine is on the inevitability of the evolution of the world towards a Kardecist purity. The emergence of a new society is unavoidable because of the slow but gradual evolution that is taking place towards the establishment of a Kardecist supremacy. However, although Kardecism does aim to establish a new and just society to replace the old, this aim has many conservative facets insofar as, for the most part,

41) E. Brody 1973 op.cit. p.428

42) P. McGregor 1967 op.cit. p.178

the goals that the Kardecists pursue are those materialistic ones of affluent Brazilians. Once these goals are attained there is the danger that the Kardecist vision of equal opportunities for all and equal distribution of rewards will fade and will be overruled by capitalistic competition and acquisitiveness.⁴³ The ideology and ideals of the "Kardecist Life" will yield to situational demands, will become modified and will become a justificatory rhetoric for use in the pursuit of wealth and power in Brazilian society.

Yet, although Kardecism still tends to place stress on the inevitable evolution of its universal ideals to dominance, the political potentio of this religion and also of Umbanda is probably most seen in the fact that both religions wish to keep themselves distinctly separate from Brazilian secular society. Umbanda does so through its emphasis on its African roots, while Kardecism has openly shunned all association with politics or with the mechanisms of the Brazilian State and government. Instead, the religion has effectively isolated itself in the sense that it has established its own welfare institutions, schools and hospitals which are finance solely by its own members.

In general terms, it can be argued that the traditional Afro cults, Umbanda, Macumba and folk catnolicism bring about social change only at the individual level. They are religions that, while providing for individual innovation and opportunities for release of frustration and tension, basically serve to maintain the established status quo. The

43)c.f. D. Warren 1968 "Spiritism in Brazil", p.403
Journal of Inter-american Studies p.393-405.

The author outlines the way in which Brazilian Kardecism is now gaining a very nationalistic outlook as opposed to its original aims of international unity.

"Brazil is shown as having more members, or more books, or more what-not than any other country --- Reports are published of how well Brazilian Spiritualists perform and look abroad ---- They can be likened to, and frequently are identical with the "national bourgeoisie", which holds that since their "national reality" is different from that of other parts of the world, Brazil must develop itself on its own".

ability of their religious beliefs and practices to influence wider social structures has been constantly limited over the years by their socio-structural origins. The less structured these various groups of people were in relation to the whole of Brazilian society, the less formal and organised their religious response and therefore the less influential their religion on wider social structures.

In contrast, the higher Umbanda groups and Kardecism have a wider social influence. Arising at a time of political and economic crisis, they have fostered the common awareness and initiative arising amongst many of the lower and middle class Brazilians at this time. They represent an initial recognition of the need to act in unity against unfavourable conditions, and the desire to establish a new society to replace the old. However, whether the political potential of these movements has ever been, or ever will be, realised is an open question. As illustrated previously, there is much debate as to the radical qualities of the folk catholic millennium, while though Umbanda and Kardecism affect changes at the wider societal level, rather than the individual level, these religions appear to tend towards ultimately conserving or contributing to the established status quo, rather than offering any radical means of transforming it. Then again, at the present time, the attitude of both the State and the still influential Roman Catholic Church continues to play a considerable part in the way in which these new religions can disseminate their ideas and gain national appeal and support.

The State, in keeping with its policies since colonial times, considers any non-conformist organisation a political threat to the equilibrium and complacency of its established dominance. Thus, Kardecism has now been given official recognition as a religion because once under official surveillance and once allowed to practice openly,

this religion can be more successfully monitored and vetoed as to its activities and can be more effectively and officially reprimanded for any display of defiance towards accepted State policies.

Umbanda, in contrast, is still outlawed. In 1950, when Spiritism was admitted to the official census, public officials expressly instructed those claiming Umbandist status to register as Roman Catholics, and in 1964 another appeal to the military government for legal recognition was ignored. This is probably because, as yet, Umbanda's affluent and lower class personnel do not pose such a potential threat to State stability as does the wealthier and more intellectual Kardecist movement.

Similarly, the Roman Catholic Church tends to be very hostile to the rising popularity of the Spiritualist religions. In the past, when the Church's actions were extensively directed and supported by the State, Roman Catholics had little to fear from the competition of non-conformist religions. The Afro cults of the colonial and Imperial periods, and the traditional ones that remain today offer no threat to the supremacy of Roman Catholicism because of their lack of geographical unity and organisation. Likewise, folk catholicism has always had one foot in the Roman Catholic fold and has, therefore, never been seriously regarded as a particular threat to its parent religion.

Today, however, although military State support is still given to the Roman Catholic Church as the official Church of Brazil, and although a reform of Roman Catholic attitudes and activities has taken place within the country, (c.f. chapter II) the Church, having lost her national monopoly, is fighting to regain and retain a national popularity. For example, many priests are increasingly concerned that folk catholic practices are falling prey to

Spiritualist influences. More effort is therefore made to "correct" these misguided beliefs and practices, through for instance

"--- exploitation of the people's devotion and religious instruction. Saint's, the traditional regard for whom has been misused by Spiritualists, must be worthily honoured in the Church. Great care must be taken to avoid anything which may have the appearance of superstition". 44

It is the Spiritualist religion as a whole, however, that is viewed as "above all other heretical doctrines as presenting the greatest danger to Christian beliefs"⁴⁵ and is seen as a threat to the supremacy of the Roman Catholic Church. At the Brazilian Episcopalean Conference of 1953, certain resolutions were passed that set out directives for Catholic action towards Spiritualism. Primarily it was decided that Spiritualism and Catholicism would never be compatible, as some of the more adventurous Roman Catholic clergy had hoped. Spiritualists were pronounced "true heretics" and were to be "treated as such". Roman Catholic priests were also given instructions as to the way in which they should teach against Spiritualism, but insistently stress the morality of the Roman Catholic faith. A series of pamphlets, "Contra a Heresia Espírita", provided material for preachers, conferences and courses about Spiritualist heresies and their elimination.⁴⁶

The conference concluded:

"All believers must be convinced of the absolute truth that one cannot be, at the same time, both Catholic and Spiritualist --- only a clear statement directed at the people can get this misunderstanding out of the way. Only in this way, analogous to the fight against the communists in their many guises, can an end be brought to the spiritual confusion of many believers." 47

44) B. Kloppenburg 1959 op.cit. p.254

45) From the Brazilian Episcopalean Conference at Belem in 1953.

46) R. Levine 1970 op.cit. p.146

47) B. Kloppenburg 1959 op.cit. p.254.

In 1964, when Umbanda failed for the second time to claim official recognition by the State, Msgr. Francisco Bessa, a spokesman for the Church, proclaimed that those Roman Catholics who repeatedly confessed to attending Spiritualist ceremonies would be threatened with the denial of the sacrament,⁴⁸ while to the Church, much Spiritualist activity is associated with "communist subversion" and unchristian ethics.⁴⁹

More recently, there has been an increasing trend for members of the Catholic Church to study Spiritualism as a psychic phenomenon. Societies have been established to research parapsychology and to disseminate books on this subject, mostly with ecumenical overtones. Where there was formerly a diabolist explanation for every Spiritualist phenomenon reported, there is now a parapsychological one, including clairvoyance or telepathy, and as such the Roman Catholic Church is claiming the same "scientific" validity for some of its truths as do the Spiritualist groups.⁵⁰ However, although the major part of the Roman Catholic priestly hierarchy tends to be openly disapproving and hostile towards Spiritualist beliefs and practices there are those few ecclesiasts (c.f. chapter III) who would prefer to pursue a policy of co-operation with the other religious groups in Brazil and would like to establish a greater concern for achieving social reform than religious purity.

48) E. Brody 1973 op.cit. p.388.

49) T. Cloin C.S.S.R. 1957-1958 "Aspects Socio-Religieuses et Sociographiques du Brésil" p.230 in Sociaal Kompas vol.V/VI p.200-236

The author views Spiritualism, communism, the cinema, the Masons and French Modernist Catholicism as opposing forces to the orthodoxy and Traditions of Roman Catholicism.
c.f. B. Kloppenburg 1956 "Posição Católica perante a Umbanda"

50) c.f. D. Warren 1968 "Spiritism in Brazil" p.403 in Journal of Inter-American Studies vol.X p.393-405

For example, better selling books of these Roman Catholic parapsychological studies of Spiritualism are: F. Palmes S.J. "Metapsíquica e Espiritismo"; C. Maria de Heredia S.J. "As Fraudes Espíritas e os Fenômenos Metapsíquicas".

Just as the proliferation of the Spiritualist groups since the end of the 19th has reflected the increasing socio-economic complexity of Brazil, so several authors maintain that the plurality of perspectives within the Brazilian Catholic Church reflects both the growing social and religious plurality of the whole country.⁵¹ As most literature on the 20th Catholic reform movement documents, the official Church in Brazil has had to review its long established doctrinal and ethical traditions, and as a result has certainly become very divided in its attitudes to, and solutions for, increasingly complicated social problems and increasingly persistent challenges from religious groups.

During the colonial and Imperial periods the Roman Catholic Church played an integral role in defining and legitimating the order of Brazilian society and enabled an elite of wealthy landowners and a Roman Catholic clergy primarily concerned with their own material prestige and status to dominate the majority of rural and urban poor. Denied any means of bettering their physical and social conditions, these latter sectors of the population turned to their own forms of religions for comfort and compensation and constructed and maintained their own religious subsocieties.

However, monopolistic Roman Catholicism, as an instrument in State hands, included all sectors of the population within its world view and community, assuming that as long as they offered no physical or disruptive threat to society, such "deviant" religious groups could be left alone. For the most part, African slaves were allowed to practice their African religious beliefs, while folk catholicism was

51)c.f.B. Smith 1975 op.cit. T. Bruneau 1974 op.cit. ibid 1975 "Power and Influence: Analysis of the Church in Latin America and the Case of Brazil". Latin American Research Review VIII (2)C. Antoine 1974 (ed) "Latin American Catholicism and Class Conflict".

regarded as an unorthodox but nevertheless basically acceptable form of Catholic worship.

Thus, until the middle of the 19th, folk catholicism and the Afro cults represented the only alternative to Roman Catholicism. Although such groups existed throughout the country, the character of their religious response reflected the social and physical conditions of their adherents and therefore tended to be concerned with individual and personal problems rather than with local community ones and certainly not with national ones. In other words, from the point of view of the State, the Church and their elite, the entire society of Brazil served as the plausibility structure for a religiously legitimated world. This world provided the necessary context for socialisation and repressed all other interpretations of socio-economic and political institutions. However, towards the 20th, social conditions in Brazil slowly began to change as industrialisation increased, slavery was abolished and the Republic ousted the Empire. Concomitantly, the religious situation in Brazil began to reflect these changes.

Although rural folk catholicism and the North Eastern Afro cults retained their traditional beliefs and practices, in the urban areas, Kardecist doctrine and values imported from Europe, made a striking impact on all forms of popular religion. Spiritualist beliefs and practices were personally interpreted and adopted by many groups of people whose lifestyles had been disrupted, and as a result, many different Macumba terreiros Umbanda tendas, and Kardecist centros appeared in the early years of this century. The degree of structure and formal organisation exhibited in the beliefs and plausibility structures of these various groups reflected the social position of their participants, but at the same time offered compensation, or a means of overcoming debilitating aspects of these

conditions. Although many may argue that religious values merely provide temporary, superficial relief for problems that need more intensive, far-reaching surgery, the Spiritualist groups today are beginning to gain a national strength and solidarity that fosters growing awareness of their adherents' social and political positions within Brazil. Adherents gain a status and prestige within their religious community, and for the Kardecist groups, self help in the form of hospitals, orphanages and libraries, rather than supernatural aid, is the focus and means of integration in urban society and urban aspirations.

Yet, as pointed out previously, it is possible that once integration is more fully achieved, these religious values will lose their singular qualities and their motivating force to attain equality of opportunity, and will be replaced by purely materialistic, secular ones. This possibility is, of course, a limit to any radical, socially transformative role of religion. However, at the present time, because the State in Brazil still regards Roman Catholicism as the official religion of the country, and because of the hostility of the Military government to all non-conformist social, political and economic activities, the concerns and actions of these 20th religious groups are still necessarily confined to the religious rather than the political sphere.

MONOGRAPHS

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