POWER AND INFLUENCE: ANALYSIS OF THE CHURCH IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CASE OF BRAZIL

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The Catholic Church in Latin America was until the mid-1960s one of the most ignored topics of research in a neglected continent. It was not only overlooked by North Americans and Europeans; stranger still, it received only cursory attention from Latin American scholars. The meagre consideration it did attract was overwhelmingly historical in nature and frequently came from authors promoting or attacking particular religious beliefs and institutions. The controversy in Colombia over the persecution of the Protestants (Goff, 1965), and the dramatic events caused by the reactions of the Church to the Mexican revolution (Brown, 1964), stimulated a literature that was at times extremely biased.

Yet, it is not easy to explain the neglect of the Church in the literature since, unlike peasant leagues or guerrilla movements, it is not a novelty in the region. The Church was founded simultaneously with the Iberian societies; much of the culture of Latin America derives from within the Church and has evolved in relationship to it; social fields such as education and charity have always been heavily influenced by Church doctrine and organizations; and the vast majority of the population are declared Catholics. In addition the Church is a highly structured organization in a region of low organizational development; in all countries Catholic groups have been politically active and in some cases assumed the form of Christian Democratic parties (Williams, 1967) which have held power; and the political models currently being formulated in Brazil and Peru would appear to owe much of their content to traditional Catholic principles of hierarchy, paternalism, and corporate identity.

The Church would seem to demand the scrutiny of scholars, yet studies on it and religion, published before 1965, are few and far between.¹ One notable exception is Mecham (1934; rev. 1966); and reflection of the sense and texture of this book helps us to understand why so little research has been conducted. Through his historical and institutional approach Mecham overemphasizes only slightly the Catholic spirit or image in the era before the Second Vatican Council of 1962–65. This image was that of the First Vatican Council of 1870, which highlighted the static, immutable, and conservative aspects of the Church. The Church had been defined in such documents as the Syllabus of Errors (1864) and the declaration of Papal Infallability (1870), which left the impression that nothing further could be said. The Latin American

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Churches were not studied, therefore, as their essential features were already known: their positive contributions to society were minimal and their only possible value resided in the realm of salvation, which was not amenable to research. Therefore, despite the centrality of the Church, there was little purpose in studying the institution: it did not change; it was already known; and it was not interesting. In this regard it is worth noting that a high proportion of the available studies were carried out by clergy, nuns, and others who were closely involved with religious institutions, and these works were printed by religious publishers.

The intention of this article is to discuss the rapid increase in studies of the Church since 1965; to pose some questions of a methodological character; and to suggest an approach found useful in the author's work on Brazil (Bruneau, 1972; 1973). While this effort does not attempt to be a review article per se, much of the literature published during the last decade has been reviewed in order to evaluate the state of the subject. We are primarily concerned with cataloguing the problems found in the literature on the Church and religion in Latin America, and are making an argument for the adoption of a particular approach to analysis. The approach is offered so that others may at least be aware and can subsequently accept, reject, or modify it.²

1. DISCOVERY OF THE LATIN AMERICAN CHURCH

A. The Reasons for Discovery

Three main reasons exist for the awakening of interest in the Latin American Church. The first reason is the oft-cited general one: the discovery of Latin America after the Cuban Revolution of 1959. As attention has been increasingly directed to Latin America with the radicalization of the revolution and the promise that it would spread throughout the region, it seems only logical that all groups and institutions would receive increased scrutiny from laymen and scholars. Similarly, the number of scholars increased with the augmented funds available for research in the area.

The second reason drew particular attention to the Church out of myriad possible subjects. Pope John XXIII and his revolution (Hales, 1966) substantially modified the fact and image of the Church as defined by the First Vatican Council. Through his very personality as Pope (1958–63), John opened the Church to change and to scrutiny. In convoking the Second Vatican Council he stimulated the institution to update itself to assume a new role in the world, and to begin a process of ferment and questioning that still continues. It should be noted that *periti* (experts) were invited to Council debates and since then the Church has been increasingly open to sociological analysis.³ In his two social encyclicals ('Mater et Magistra' of 1961 and 'Pacem in Terris' of 1963) Pope John encouraged the Church to assume a rather more progressive role in society than it had at any time in the past.

Pope John's importance for the study of the Latin American Church is tremendous in that he both stimulated it to change and at the same time encouraged its study. Both factors apply to the Church throughout the world but in the case of Latin America the first factor is particularly significant, for these are Catholic countries, the Church is a central institution, and without exception the societies are much in need of change. That is, the potential impact of Pope John's revolution promised to be greater in Latin America than elsewhere.

The third reason suggests that action was taken by the Latin American Church commensurate with the appeals of Pope John. As early as the mid-1950s, sectors of the Church, at least in Chile and Brazil (Sanders, 1970a), had innovated and assumed socially progressive roles. Initially, innovation was caused by indigenous processes in the countries, in combination with the import of advanced European theology (Ferrari, 1968). Innovation spread rapidly with the social encyclicals and the Council, however; and the proliferation of Church research institutes affiliated with FERES helped to publicize these changes through their work and publications. The book of Houtart and Pin (1965) probably more than any other indicated to the world outside the Church that an important transformation was taking place in Latin America. Once interest had been aroused, journalists and scholars discovered fascinating phenomena which included Church-sponsored agrarian reform programs in Chile, rural unionization in Brazil, radical statements by the hierarchies of Chile and Brazil as well as by the Latin American Bishops in CELAM, the election of a Christian Democratic president in Chile in 1964, and the death of a 'rebel priest'—Camilo Torres—in Colombia in 1966.

Thus, the combination of these factors attracted attention to the Latin American Church as an institution that was not only changing and interesting but also amenable to research. The proliferation of both journalistic and scholarly literature is a testament to this unprecedented attention.

B. Impediments to Research on the Church

The combination of the three reasons for an interest in research on the Church, in conjunction with the weak basis in previous studies, and magnified by the difficulty of elaborating a methodology for analysis of an institution whose goals are transcendental, resulted in literature that is extremely mixed in focus and quality. Particularly because of the Second Vatican Council and the subsequent discovery that sectors of the Church in Latin America were engaged in progressive activities, the context strongly suggested that the Church promised to do great things for the continent. This attitude is particularly pronounced in journalistic accounts, in articles published in North American, European, and Latin American journals, and may even be found in more scholarly works (D'Antonio and Pike, 1964; Williams, 1969).

An empirical basis for that attitude lies in the fact that the Church is changing in some countries and in ways that give a basis for optimism. From another point of view, however, evidence suggests that there is more discussion than action. After the euphoria of the Second Vatican Council dissipated, the 1964 coup occurred in Brazil, and the non-spectacular achivements of the Christian Democrats in Chile became clear, a more 'realist' set of studies emerged (Einaudi, et al, 1969; Mutchler, 1969; 1971). While both interpretations of change in the church are true, the former-optimistic-

view most often claims too much while the latter-realist-view suffers from a lack of tolerance and understanding. In more than one case the reader may detect a sense of pique or deception that the Church did not seem to fulfill the earlier optimistic expectations of the writer, who then adopts the more realist interpretation (MacEoin, 1970). The novice has ample reason to be confused by the different interpretations, for while one writer shows how the Church has changed, another will convincingly argue that the institution is stagnant and without influence (MacEoin, 1970 vs. Gall, 1970).

The relative paucity of previous studies indicates at least two impediments to the healthy development of research on the Church. Primarily it conveys a lack of adequate historical material for the four and a half centuries of Church evolution. While it is true that some material exists in Spanish, Portuguese, French, and English, it is difficult to locate, usually concerned with minute topics, and is uneven in coverage and reliability. With the possible exception of Mexico, it is fair to say that we lack adequate historical material for an accurate understanding of the background to today's Latin American Church. Material is available in archives on three continents but few so far have bothered to gather it. In lieu of the historical background, current researchers have of necessity relied on the often polemical and unreliable general histories written by individuals such as priests and Protestant missionaries. In addition to the skewed perceptions one obtains from a dependence on scanty and biased works, there is the additional problem for non-Latin Americans that the long and complex histories of the Church in different areas are compressed into brief and inadequate capsules which even in themselves are inaccurate, since they are perceived as though they were the Churches in the author's home country. A European sees the history in the light of European experiences (Comblin, 1966), while an American is fascinated by clerical immorality and the integration of Church and state (Boehrer, 1968). In short, the scarcity of solid historical studies allows the student of the contemporary Church too much leeway in interpreting past evolution and present trends.

Even without solid historical material, some control might be possible over the perceptions of researchers if one or two commonly accepted paradigms existed for the study of the Church. When a particular topic has been the focus of research for a period of time, a few approaches to its study are developed, modified with further research, elaborated, and finally become sophisticated and accepted by the majority of students. Whereas paradigms have been developed for the study of Latin American villages, political parties, interest groups, bureaucracies, sectors of the economy, and so forth, not any are commonly accepted for the study of the Church. The ferment in the Church since the Second Vatican Council does not facilitate the adoption of a paradigm, because even bishops and theologians do not seem to be able to agree on the nature of the Church. For the Pope the Church seems increasingly to fit the fortress image of the previous council; for some bishops it is a community; for some laymen it is the people of God. Research, in the absence of a paradigm, is chaotic. Some study the Church as organization (Mutchler, 1971); others study it as an in-

stitution relating to different sectors of society (Bruneau, 1973; Vallier, 1970b); while still others look to groups (Sanders, 1967), movements (de Kadt, 1970), or parties (Williams, 1967) supported by the institution. The resultant literature is valuable as a collection of monographs but unless some common approach is adopted it is highly unlikely that the state of research will advance in the near future.⁵

The next impediment concerns the distinctive nature of the Church, and its consideration may well persuade us that slight likelihood exists that paradigms can be formulated. The Church, unlike interest groups, political parties, and peasant unions, has a unique goal: its members believe that God created the Church to lead men and society to salvation (Congar, 1967). If the Church is itself holy, and has a transcendental goal, then how do mortal and finite men pretend to study it? How does the research conceptualize and qualify the Holy Spirit? Or, for that matter, how is it possible to state with certitude that the Church has failed or succeeded when such failure or success cannot be evaluated? Most researchers have simply avoided this issue, maybe as an interim measure in order to begin work, but in so doing have frequently come to deceive themselves that they are dealing with a purely secular organization. The focus has tended to be on the Church as a secular power vis-à-vis the state, as a stimulator of agrarian reform, and as educator. This attitude is the greatest weakness of the realist school (Einaudi, et al, 1969; Mutchler, 1971) for they tend to treat the Church as a wholly secular organization. On the other hand, those who appear to have the keenest sensitivity are often from religious backgrounds although not directly linked to the institution (Sanders, 1970a; Shaull, 1970). Any approach which does not conceptualize the Church's special goal is bound to be misguided. While it is true that this goal might, as interpreted, demand structural change in society, primacy must always be paid to the ultimate goal, salvation.

Because of the combination of these impediments to effective research, recent literature on the Church and religion in Latin America is less than excellent. Since the seminal work of Ivan Vallier (1967a) and the promising studies published by FERES affiliates, one finds little indication that research on the Church is improving. Articles and books are published which seek to analyze the same institution, but they arrive at vastly different conclusions. A cursory overview of the literature suggests the following arguments: the Church is the fastest changing institution in the region (Gall, 1970; Sanders, 1970b); the Church is stagnant (MacEoin, 1970); the Church is a force for change (Williams, 1969); the Church lacks force and is not really changing (Mutchler, 1971); the Church is important at the first stage of modernization (Vallier, 1970b); the role of the Church is liberation (Colonnese, 1971); the radical priests are in fact anti-revolutionary (Vallier, 1972).

The literature is not only contradictory on a number of important points but lately there appears to be less interest in research concerning the Church and religion. This essay is written in the hope that some of the impediments to valuable research can be eliminated and that one or two paradigms may be accepted which will encourage more and better studies.

II. NECESSARY OPTIONS IN RESEARCH

Before setting forth my own approach to analysis, it is necessary to suggest and discuss alternatives in order to clarify options and convey a certain amount of information regarding the functioning of the Church. By neglecting these options one risks misleading the reader, because the Church as a topic is extremely amorphous, despite its organizational character, and can be approached in a number of different ways. Then, too, by discussing other views the author suggests he has already considered them and opted for one over the others, presumably for valid reasons.

A. The Individual or the Institution?

Should attention be given to the beliefs and practices of individuals as members of the faith, or to the institution which claims to mediate between them and God? Opting for the former might include research on such topics as the following: participation in the cult and other religious activities (Deelen, 1966); syncretic faiths compared to orthodox beliefs and practices (Willems, 1961); the relationship between beliefs and behavior (Pin, 1966); the socio-political implictions of different patterns of faith. Some material is already available for many of the countries on all the suggested topics except the last. The last is of course the most important: it was the interest of Weber (1958) and more recently has been studied in the United States through sample survey research (Glock and Stark, 1968; G. Marx, 1967). Although actual research has not been carried out in Latin America on this particular topic, it has been the subject of a fair amount of speculation (Audrin, 1963; Leers, 1967; Williams 1969). Anthropologists such as Willems (1967) begin to confront this subject but have not as yet committed themselves to the elaborate research projects such a study would require. In the absence of such projects it might appear logical that we begin immediately; however, I do not feel such work would be justified.

While some research has already been carried out on practice and belief, much less is available on the institution per se. There are structural descriptions compiled by the FERES affiliates (Alonso, 1964; Plagge, 1965), to be sure, and static descriptions such as Mecham (1934; 1966), but to my knowledge Mutchler (1971) and Bruneau (1973) are the only studies of the institutional dynamics. We urgently require more of these studies for the essential characteristic of the Catholic Church is its organizational format (McKenzie, 1971) as the link between God and man. That is, the institution must first be analyzed and understood, and then the individual in relation to it. This argument is strengthened by the fact that the institution, at least since the Second Vatican Council, is changing rapidly in Latin America. Further, the institution is changing in different ways and at a different tempo from one country to another (Vallier, 1967b). It therefore seems more efficient to study first these changing institutions, and then consider the impact of these changes on the individual, than to analyze individual beliefs and practices when the institutional context is in the process of transformation.

One of the most telling arguments for initiating research on the institution is the

fact that religion in Latin America covers far more than a relationship between God and man. The Church is a central institution in virtually all countries except Cuba; as such it interacts with all sectors of society in complex relationships. Only one aspect of the Church's role has been to relate man to God in a personal sense; the interpretation of this function has been historically very broad and has involved the institution in education, politics, the economy, and virtually every other realm of state and society. It may well be that the importance of change in the Church lies less in its direct impact on the individual than on the force it creates for the transformation of other social institutions (Vallier, 1970b:6). Therefore, because the organization is the essential characteristic of the Catholic Church, because it is changing rapidly, and because it is linked throughout society, I would argue that we must first study it and how it changes, before considering the individual.

B. Location of the Religious Message

Should we pay particular attention to the orthodox, although changing, messages stated and broadcast by the institution, or to the message as understood and appreciated by the masses of the population? The official component includes not only theology but also papal encyclicals, statements of national and regional bishops' conferences, and documents emanating from clerical and lay organizations. Examples of this approach would include the many articles on the Medellín meeting (Drekonja, 1971:53), the valuable analyses of McGrath (1970), and most certainly the work of Turner (1971). A study of the documents and statements will suggest that the Church's position on political and social matters has changed radically during the last decade, and in many cases priests have been in the vanguard of rapid social change (Aguiar, 1970). The latter consideration—the beliefs of the people—would dictate studies on how the faith has actually been internalized by the faithful and modified by them through the centuries. Research has already shown that there are many ways of being Catholic (Rolim, 1970), and studies suggest that what the institution says or does not say may have no impact whatsoever on the individual's religious beliefs (Ribeiro de Oliveira, 1970).

My inclination is to emphasize neither the official statements nor the message as internalized by the people. Concerning the former I would have to agree with some sceptics (MacEoin, 1970) that talk is cheap: it is relatively easy to issue encyclicals and national pastoral letters on justice and reform but action is another matter. Also, as Sanders (1970b) shows, it is an error to think that the Church changes from above with official statements; the process of innovation is much more complex. Regarding the message of the people, I believe that scholars must first examine matters that are linked to the institution and then relate them to the individuals and their beliefs. At present there is such a diversity in religious beliefs that a great many complicated studies would be required to specify them adequately. My option would be to examine the official message as only one indication of the position of the Church in society, and then evaluate its application through time. In this way it will become evident that the statements far exceed actions but that changes in the goals have oc-

curred; in this way we can suggest the direction in which Church elites desire to guide the institution.

C. What Level of the Institution?

The Church is not a monolith, as McKenzie (1971) skillfully demonstrates. Much of the misinformation currently disseminated in the studies on the Latin American Church arises from failure to be specific. When the Pope speaks, the national churches do not necessarily comply. Moreover, jurisdiction between the Pope and the bishops is not clear and offers ample room for ambiguity. The papal nuncio is not a representative of a national church; he is the representative of the Pope. However, because of the nuncio's role as a communication's link, and because of his civil functions, he can at times effectively direct a national church. In strict terms there are no national churches but rather hundreds of dioceses; this is the primary level for decision-making (Metz, 1960). Today, however, with the formation of national episcopal conferences, something akin to national churches are being formed. The episcopal conferences do not include the religious orders, which usually form organizations of major superiors. Thus there are at least two dominant forces at the national level; indeed, in some cases, the orders control directly more religious personnel than do the bishops. The laity may be considered the Church, but certainly the 90 per cent-plus of the population of a given nation cannot be seen as a unity. Even if we analyze the religious groups we are likely to find something between twenty and sixty in any Latin American country. In short, the Church is truly a complex institution, but this need not mean that it is immobilized, as some imply (Einaudi, et al., 1969).

Making a decision for purposes of analysis we would opt for studying the Church as a national institution. In the past this meant essentially studying the cardinal in the capital city, his relations with other bishops and with the nuncio, and all of them in relationship to the civil authorities. These cardinals are still central figures but they now operate in conjunction with the national episcopal conferences and national levels of organizations such as Catholic Action. Despite the paradoxical characteristics of over-centralization in the papacy and extreme decentralization in the dioceses, a national church can be specified and analyzed as such.

D. Single Country Studies or Comparative Works?

There is much to recommend comparative work and it must remain the ultimate goal if theories are to be reformulated and tested. However, while agreeing in principle with the argument of Vallier (1969), I believe that there need be initial research within single countries before hypotheses can be formulated and tested. Since the national church in a country is the combination of the dioceses, religious orders, lay groups, and other groups and structures found in the territory, there is every possibility to engage in comparative work within a single country. There is not, however, available at this time enough research to move into comparative work between national units, and the background must be elaborated before the political variables can be specified. Then, after four or five single countries have been studied, they can be

consolidated, the hypotheses distilled, and comparative work carried out not only within Latin America but also in Europe.

Those are only the most important options that must be discussed, but their presentation may clarify some of the problems the researcher will encounter in studying the Church. Our path among the options is to analyze the Church as an institution whose mission is spiritual but which is linked politically to the state and to the people, and which has demonstrated a changing emphasis on goals. The analysis here will be done on one country, and predominantly at the national level.

III. THE INSTITUTION AND INFLUENCE

The most useful way in which to combine the options is to analyze the institution in its origins and growth stages (Selznick, 1957: 14). There should be further specification, however, in accord with the special purposes of the Church: this can be achieved through an analysis of the setting and the implementation of goals which are basically definitions of the institution's relationship with its environment (Thompson and McEwen, 1958). The goal of the Church is to influence individuals and whole societies, and to mark the object of influence with the message of Christ, with which the Church, as carrier and instrument, is entrusted. Influence is a capacity whereby one actor has another respond in a way in which the latter ordinarily would not act (Dahl, 1963: 18). The Church seeks to influence people in such a way as to lead them to salvation.

Our understanding of the Church's goal of influence is very broad. It includes for present purposes the stated end in salvation, the particular formulation of this goal in specific environments, and the mechanisms or instruments whereby the goal is pursued. We are joining the message and the institution in the goal of influence because one without the other is not particularly relevant. Change is a modification in either the goal or the instruments which implement the goal.

In order to specify more precisely the changes over time, some categories are required which might be used to construct a model. The categories are: (1) the dominant organizational principle which describes the Church's perception of the environment and the obstacles to implementing influence; this is an intermediate principle in that it mediates the general goal of salvation; (2) the groups or sectors of society to which the Church directs its particular attention; (3) Church-society relationships; or the manner in which the institution links itself with the larger environment; (4) the instruments or mechanisms whereby the Church exercises influence and generates commitments. Social scientists have encountered problems in measuring influence, as Dahl notes (1963: 17–34); and the problem is much greater with spiritual influence. Intermediate criteria such as mass attendance, baptisms, vocations, and donations can be used. At the minimum we can know how influence is perceived by the bishops and whether they believe the Church is influential.

Of vital importance is the influence model formulated by the Latin American

Church in the early sixteenth century. The initial model and the conditions that favored its growth have created the peculiar situation in which politics is critically important for change. The organizational principle in the colonial Church was territorial coverage of the New World with the message of Christ. Exploration was very much a religious activity, to bring new territory and new souls into the realm of the Church (Gibson, 1966: 68–72). The groups or sectors included all men; the Church was universal. Indeed, the Indians were converted directly, while the slaves were baptized before they had even set foot on the new lands. The Church sought, and largely achieved, a monopoly of religion for all society. At the same time, the Church was linked with all other groups and institutions. In this era no distinction existed between Church and state, religious and secular; the two swords cooperated to bring new wealth and souls under claim. The instruments consisted only in part of the clergy and the cult. The Catholic ruler insured that all strands of society, from bureaucracy to tribe, became infused with religion; in a real sense the culture carried the religion. What is most obvious in this initial model is its great aspirations—of comprehensiveness, monopoly, total coverage. But the systems created certain long-term drawbacks that make the Latin American Church unique today.

Because the Church could rely on the state and the larger society to achieve influence, it had no need (and probably no possibility, in any case), to create its own independent infrastructures (Rolim, 1965: 26). Further, it had no need to develop a deep sense of commitment or belief on the part of the faithful, simply because everyone had to be Catholic. Religious commitment was therefore never developed and the present situation of the Church demonstrates this lack of personal involvement (Pin, 1966; Ribeiro de Oliveira, 1970). No special Church institution operated independently of the state and society. True, there were bishops, priests, nuns, and schools, but they were not well integrated as an organization, and communications internally and with Rome were almost impossible.

The state controlled the organizationally weak Churches. As a reward for spreading the faith to foreign lands, the popes had granted the monarchs of the Iberian Peninsula extensive privileges of patronage which were expanded legally and traditionally so that by the eighteenth century they covered virtually every aspect of Church affairs (Mecham, 1966: I, II; Shiels, 1961). The crown appointed the bishops and other high clergy, the state collected and administered the tithes, churches were built by the state and private groups, communications went through Spain and Portugal to Rome, and Church law could be superseded by appeal to the crown. (For aspects of the supremacy of the state over the Church, see Farriss, 1968; Oliveira, 1964; and Thornton, 1948.

Because of the integration of Church and state, the total aspirations of the religious institutions, and the lack of autonomous structures and religious commitment, the Church from its inception tended to confuse religious influence with political power. That is, if the Catholic ruler guaranteed the faith, and if the tithes were distributed by the state, it was only logical that religious influence became synonymous with state power. Influence can take many forms. In the case of religion we

normally stress the role of belief, faith, and personal motivations. Just as important in Latin America was the role of power, which obliged the population to convert, spread the message of the Church, and supported the institution. Power, which is a mechanism, implies positive and negative coercion, thus necessarily involves the state.⁷ This suggests that change in the Church, if only for a simple fact of reliance upon state support, involves politics.

Given the often weak personal hold of the religion, the control by the state of the institution, and the identification of influence with power, the working hypothesis that change in the Church takes place in interaction with Rome and the state is clear. On some issues of change the role of Rome is greater, such as particular points of dogmatic theology and seminary training; on others the state is more important, as in socio-political matters like education, formation of Catholic parties, and positions on agrarian reform. It follows from this hypothesis that levels of influence are determined in the same interaction. This is because the environment of an institution changes, and in order to maintain or increase influence the institution must also change. If the institution cannot change, or changes in the wrong ways, then influence should decrease.⁸ Many observers suggest that the Second Vatican Council was the adaptation of the Church to the modern world, and argue that the Church can regain the influence it lost during previous centuries (O'Dea, 1968).

This hypothesis may leave room for confusion: therefore, the idea must be elaborated. Bearing in mind that there is no such thing as a national Church, it seems logical that an institutional Church within a nation, located in any region of the world, is but part of the Universal Church and thus is controlled by it. After all, the Pope is head of the universal institution; all formal changes have to be motivated or at least approved by him; bishops are appointed under his direction; and they report to him. In the formal sense all this is true. However, concentric circles of Church doctrine and action exist which, from the core out, are less and less crucial to the center in Rome. While Rome cannot tolerate claims to reinterpret key teaching on the nature of God and the Church, it is somewhat less concerned with matters which are of importance to a social scientist, such as the nature of Church education, the role of the Church in local power groups, and the stance on agrarian reform. Much leeway is found within the institution on matters of largely secular interest. Here too we must make the distinction between words and action. The Church has always claimed to be in favor of justice and charity, and for the past seventy years or so, in a series of social encyclicals, it has emphasized its progressive position. However, even though Rome has frequently gone on record in favor of social justice, this did not mean that the Latin American Church, for example, did anything to promote its attainment. What is suggested is that even while the Universal Church may have favored actions of great secular interest, it did not necessarily follow that local Churches implemented them. The links with the state and local power groups and the identity of power with influence have been far more important in matters of social and political concern than the formal position of Rome. Therefore, if we view the Church as both the institution and behavior, it changes only in interaction with both other actors, Rome and the

state. This is a crucial point that is not often recognized because words are considered synonymous with action, but by reference to influence models we shall see that change —as demonstrated by actions—takes place only under these condition.

We must be more precise concerning the levels of control exerted over the Churches in the Latin American nations. Today Rome claims full jurisdiction in Latin America except in one or two countries where the state plays a part in bishops' appointments (Kennedy, 1970: 164–172). We must, however, closely examine the actual levels of control. The best way to understand the variations is by an examination of relations of autonomy which include both goals and structures. From the level of least autonomy to that of the greatest, four relationships might be stipulated: (1) coalition—the virtual identity of goals and structures; (2) cooperation—at times identical goals pursued through separate structures; (3) competition—similar goals pursued through separate structures utilizing different strategies; (4) conflict—mutually exclusive or antagonistic goals pursued through distinct structures. All of these have been characteristic of Church-state relations in Latin America, and at least two of them have applied to Church-Rome relations. We are leaving aside, for the moment, questions of incentives for change, and dealing primarily with what is possible. There are very different stimuli for change, not all of which originate in Rome, and they can be indicated empirically for each case. The crucial factor is not whether some elements in the national or Universal Church want change, but whether such change is possible. It is to this latter point that attention must be directed, and thus it follows that we are concerned with control and autonomy relationships. The working hypothesis is based upon comprehension that in many crucial respects the Latin American Church is unique. Of particular importance is the reliance upon political power for influence, and the direct and indirect controls which follow from this fact. The hypothesis will be illustrated and tested with material drawn from Brazil.9

IV. PATTERNS OF INFLUENCE MODELS IN BRAZIL

In Brazil the autonomy relationships between the Church, Rome, and the Portuguese Crown were similar to those pertaining to the Spanish colonies, but were greatly intensified. Because of the vigor with which the Portuguese had explored the Atlantic region, vanquished the Moors in Africa, and spread the Catholic religion, their rewards in patronage were complete (Oliveira, 1964; Thornton, 1948: 15–23). Through patronage, placet, appeal to civil over religious law, and attendant privileges, the state's relationship with the nascent Church in Brazil was a coalition: the goals and structures of the Church and state were, for all intents and purposes, identical. Because of the crown's control and the problem of direct communication (which was not allowed), the Brazilian Church's relationship with Rome was one only of cooperation. The goals of Rome were by and large mirrored in Brazil but the structures were those of the state and local power groups and not those of the larger institution. The institution barely existed in Brazil; for although priests, monks, nuns, seminaries, and convents existed, most of them were supported and directed by the state or local groups.¹⁰

The influence model had comprehensive goals which with the support of the crown were achieved, at least in the formal sense. All of Brazil was touched by the message; everyone was Catholic; and the whole society and state supported the religion. The Church had little need to mobilize support and deep commitments, develop its own structures, or define autonomy from the state and local society. During the more than three centuries between the discovery and the formation of a separate empire in Brazil (1500-1822), the society evolved considerably, but the Church could not keep pace and subsequently lost influence. From the mid-eighteenth century, beginning with Pombal in Portugal and followed by the emperors in Brazil (1822–1889), the government continued to encourage Catholicism for the people but was wary lest the Church attempt to become independent. This attitude subsequently led to a policy of intentionally limiting the growth of Church organization and to controlling it minutely. Rome, having always been separated from the Brazilian Church, was unable to change these policies, and the Brazilian Church was too weak to protest. Therefore, given the initial relationships of autonomy and the change in goals of the political elites so as to restrain the Church, it had little influence and in fact almost disappeared as a body. Such then was the nature of the Church in Brazil: linked to the state; relying on power for influence; lacking its own bases of support; and continually decreasing in influence (Maria, 1900).

Rome and a few Brazilian bishops attempted to increase the influence of the Church but within the original autonomy relationship they failed (Cardozo, 1953). These attempts gained momentum under the papacy of the ultramontane Pope Pius IX (1846–1878) and led to a famous conflict between the government of Emperor Pedro II and two bishops (Thornton, 1948). The causation of the Religious Question of 1874 is complex but it was essentially related to the complete assimilation of the Church by the state, the efforts of Pius IX to bring the Church under the control of Rome, the attempts by two bishops to control civil-religious lay groups in their dioceses, and the reaction by the state that was jealous of its prerogatives. The short imprisonment of the two bishops demonstrated the Church's lack of influence but it did set the stage for a change in the autonomy relationship. The dramatic events of 1874 largely persuaded the founders of the Republic fifteen years later to declare the separation of Church and state, for they realized that these types of tensions were bound to increase as Rome became stronger and as the Brazilian state assumed a new and modern form. They went far beyond simple separation in 1889, however, and legislated the virtual isolation of the Church from the public realm. This was a crippling blow indeed for a Church that had always been integrated with the state and which had defined influence through power. Separation caused a drastic shift in the autonomy relationships and also in the model of influence.

At the national level, both legally and in fact, the autonomy relationship between the Church and state varied between cooperation and competition. The goals of the state became secular; its structures were not permitted the Church; and their strategies had little in common. In brief, the Church was barred from public affairs and the state religion ceased to exist.¹¹ Because of separation and the abolition of

patronage and of all other pretensions by the state to control the Church, the Holy See could establish a relationship of coalition with the Brazilian Church. For the first time in four hundred years Rome could communicate directly with the Church in Brazil: it called meetings, sent in personnel whenever it wished, and in general took charge and built the institution.

The dominant organizational principle was no longer territorial coverage but identification with the Universal Church in this post-First Vatican Council era. The aim was to defend the faith against various menaces in the modern world, such as secularism, liberalism, and socialism. In effect, the Church in Brazil became less national while it fought the Universal (i.e., European and Italian) Church's enemies (Bastide, 1951). A secondary organizational principle arose from the separation of Church and state; the commitment to work politically in order to regain the right to state power for Church influence. The Church thus worked at various levels such as letter writing, publication of books, efforts with politicians, and the reformation of groups, to regain political support (Deschand, 1910).

Formally, the whole society—all its strata and groups—remained the targets of Church interest. However, in becoming united with the Universal Church and its orientations from Europe, the main focus of attention became the small urban middle and upper classes. True, there were missionaries, mainly foreign, it seems, who looked after the peasants and directed charitable institutions for the urban lower classes, but in terms of sermons, orientations in the cult, religious groups, schools, and overall spirit the Church was mainly directed toward the urban middle classes. Such orientations and forms were only logical since the majority of innovations came from Europe, as did the personnel to implement them, and Europe was heavily middle class in comparison to Brazil.

The Church-society relationship changed structurally at the national level but remained largely the same locally. At the latter level the priest was still a person to be reckoned with, and he cooperated with the civic notables for mutual support. At all levels of society the Church claimed the right to guide the morals and spirit of the nation but it was not encouraged by the government and so tended to become isolated.

It was in mechanisms or instruments for the promotion of influence that the most obvious changes took place. Before separation the government had pursued a policy of attrition for the Church; for example, Brazil had only nine dioceses in 1889, and all but four of these had been founded before 1840. With separation from the state and closer ties to Rome, the Church rapidly developed as an organization as resources were channeled in. The number of dioceses increased rapidly: 1900=17; 1910=30; 1920=58. Foreign priests were directed to Brazil and seminaries were staffed with foreigners to encourage local vocations, as a result of which the numbers of priests increased: 1889=700; 1946=6,383; 1964=12,000. Nuns were sent from Europe and came to play a most important part in educating the female elite of the country as well as in the fields of charity and health. Regional meetings were held and improved communications throughout the national organization added to its coherence. In short, for the first time since its establishment, the Brazilian Church be-

came an organization much like its commonly held image (Plagge, 1965). This organizational development was necessary because with separation and the impossibility of relying on power for influence, the Church no longer had the structures and finances of the state for the exercise of influence.

The change in autonomy relationships resulted in a different influence model. Because of the break with the state and consolidation with Rome it was both possible (as with the goal of defense against enemies) and necessary (as with organizational development) to change the nature of the Church. No studies have been done to indicate whether or not the Church became more influential with the changes but it stands to reason that it did, if for no other reason than that it expanded tremendously as an organization and became coherent and active. Internally the clergy were pleased with the Church and its growth but they never reconciled themselves to exclusion from the public realm; they still labored under the image of religious influence through power and worked to reintegrate themselves with the state (Amoroso Lima, 1936).

During the First Republic (1889-1930) the Church had no success in regaining political power. In 1930, however, Getúlio Vargas led a movement which overthrew the regime and established in sequence a provisional government, a democratic system, and a dictatorship (from 1937 until 1945). Vargas was aware, in contrast to the elites of the previous regime, that the Church could help a government with support and legitimacy. The Church took advantage of the political change and promoted publicity campaigns and pressure group tactics to show that it was indeed a political force to be reckoned with (Regina do Santo Rosário, 1962; 309-323). By this time, after forty years of organizational development and refinement, the Church wielded substantial prestige, and under the leadership of Cardinal Leme of Rio de Janeiro (1928–1942) the point was effectively made. In the legislation of the provisional government; then in the constitution of 1934; and de facto during the Estado Novo after 1937, the autonomy relationship with the state reverted to a form which had much in common with that of pre-1889. Legally, the Church became almost established: the Constitution was promulgated in the name of God; religious education was put into the public curriculum; the Church could receive state funds for many activities (Fernandes, 1948: 845-853). The relationship with the state became much closer in goals and in structures, so that it varied between coalition and cooperation.

With the modification in the relationship and the return of power, the model of influence substantially changed. The organizational imperative remained that of the Universal Church concerning threats but at least on a secondary plane the previous model of full coverage was re-established. With a pro-Catholic government and support through structures and finances, the Church could more realistically aspire to cover all the national territory. The main groups and strata of concern were still the middle class but through Church administration of social fields such as charity and medicine, made possible by state finances, the institution gained more contact with the urban lower classes.

The relationship with the society broadened as the Church once again fused with the state in some realms (e.g., education), had state support in claiming the role as moral arbiter of all society, and remained integrated with local power groups. The mechanisms once again comprised the linkages and structures of the state, as in education, charity, political celebrations, and of course continued to include those of the Church proper. In sum, the overall model did modify somewhat but the most obvious change was the Church's increased capability to make comprehensive and monopolistic claims to influence. At this time it was common to claim that 'to be Brazilian is to be Catholic' and 'God is a Brazilian'. Church influence was considered high because the Church enjoyed state support and by definition all society was Catholic.

However, while the influence of the Church was high during the time of Vargas, its position changed rapidly, as did the entire nation, after World War II. In the economic and social transformation of post-war Brazil it became clear that the Church's influence was a myth and its foundation nonexistent. A great deal of sociological data exists indicating that the Church lost influence with all forms of change—political, economic, and social.¹² Of great importance was the fact that sectors within the Church became aware of this situation and responded. The response was not uniform, however, and the possibility for different responses was caused by modifications in the autonomy relationship. A typical response following the pattern re-established by Vargas was the Law of Directives and Bases of National Education of 1961, in which the Church acted as a pressure group, with conservative elements in politics and society, and cemented a traditional and essentially conservative role for itself in education (Moreira, 1960).

More significant, however, was the modification in this period of both Rome and the Brazilian state. In 1958, Pope John XXIII was elected, and he guided the Church in a socially progressive direction. Something similar happened in Brazil. After the war a limited democracy was established, governments from Kubitschek's onward (1955–1960) talked and sometimes acted to change society, peasants were mobilized, and an aura of change permeated the country. Therefore, Rome and the Brazilian state, while maintaining the same autonomy relationships, were changing in goals and offered alternatives to the Brazilian Church.¹³

Because of alternatives in the relationships, a large sector of the Brazilian Church formulated a radically new and almost contradictory model of influence during the period from the mid-1950s until 1964. This new model was based on the National Conference of Brazilian Bishops (CNBB) founded in 1952 by Mons. Helder Câmara and largely promoted and directed by a dozen younger bishops from the Northeast (Bruneau 1972: 310–315). With the Church, as stipulated in Canon Law, national episcopal conferences had minimal functions until the Council; yet this group within the CNBB was able to give a totally new and revolutionary orientation to influence. It could do so because it served as an entity which on the one hand established new links with Rome and its more progressive teachings on social matters, and on the other hand joined progressive elements in the government. While the sector of the Church involved in the 1961 Education Law remained linked with the

most conservative elements in both, the CNBB developed links with the most progressive. In short, one sector of the Church superseded the traditional relationships and innovated rapidly. The changes in the relationships made it possible for this sector to formulate a new model, promoted by the dozen bishops and a few score clergy and laymen, and make of the model national policy for the whole institution.

The new model of influence centered on the principle that the Brazilian masses had to become fully human before they could be expected to become Christians. The crucial point was the linking of man as soul with man as body. The impetus of the new model of influence was to promote preinfluence, or change structures of society, and then deal more specifically with man as soul. The programs arising from this orientation ranged from regional and national episcopal pastorals on the need and propriety of structural change, to the incentive for regional development programs (SUDENE) and agrarian reform, to programs of rural unionization, mass education, and politicization.¹⁴

Here in fact was a new model of influence with the following characteristics: the organizational imperative was the religious legitimation of social change to set the stage for evangelization; the groups focused upon were largely the rural poor but included the urban lower classes to a somewhat lesser extent; the relationship with society was, at the ideological level, to be established by continuing to speak for all society as moral arbiter but now to speak in favor of social change, while at the structural level, nationally and locally, it renegotiated its position; finally, the mechanisms were programs of mass education, rural unionization, statements of ethiocultural leadership, and the like. In sum, despite the fact that only a sector of the institution (CNBB) promoted the new influence model, the whole institution, because of the changed relationship of autonomy, formally supported it and thrust the Church into the forefront of social change. The Church became one of the main actors promoting the much debated "Brazilian Revolution."

We now understand that the efforts by the Church and others to promote change led instead to a reaction in which the military took power. It is most interesting to see the response of the Church to the change in government. First a word must be said about Rome in this period. The Second Vatican Council took place between 1962 and 1965, and observers have agreed that it had an important role in updating the institution and modifying its role in society. Pope Paul VI, despite his position on other issues, is clearly a progressive in economic, social, and political matters. His encyclical "Populorum Progressio" of 1967 is extremely advanced and speaks directly to the Latin American countries in their problems of injustice and underdevelopment. Therefore, the orientation initiated by Pope John had become by the mid-1960s formally that of all the Church. The Brazilian state was a far different matter. Taking power in April 1964, with the avowed aim to save the country from 'corruption, incompetence, and the threat of Communism,' the military has moved in an increasingly authoritarian direction and stifled all serious attempts to promote socio-political change.

The social change model promoted by the Church before 1964 was adhered to only verbally after the coup in April. One might argue that the Church had to stop its statements and programs because they would have been considered subversive by the government, but the rapidity and thoroughness with which the bishops moved indicated that there may have been other reasons for their actions than the fear of suppression. The CNBB was destroyed in all but form in 1964. The general secretary of the CNBB from its founding in 1952 had been Dom Helder Câmara. He was replaced in 1964, and the organization was reconstructed to represent all the bishops and not the small dynamic core. The effective destruction of the CNBB, despite the Council, which had broadened the jurisdiction of such bodies, meant that the progressive links with Rome were broken. Thus, as the Universal Church changed, Brazil lost its basis for the implementation of innovations. Quite simply, following the change in government, the majority of the bishops realized that their traditional image of influence through power was threatened and they removed the source of the progressive orientation. Now no national program of a progressive nature exists in the Brazilian Church, despite some claims to the contrary. The autonomy relationships are crucial but in this case it is a matter once removed because the relationships were mediated through the CNBB.

The description of historical stages in the approach to influence bears out the working hypothesis about change existing only in interaction with Rome and the state. Since 1964, efforts have been made within sectors of the Church to bring about changes in influence, but they have not been successful. However, a very important process has developed during the past six years which promises to alter the nature of the autonomy relationship and free the Church from control of the state. Because of the Church's social action before 1964 and the commitment to it in words and action by a few individuals within the Church even after the coup, and the tendency of the government to see any social action or criticism as subversion, a process of conflict has developed between Church and state. 15 It began when one or two bishops and some priests supported in words agrarian reform and decent wages and were attacked by individuals within the government. Larger sectors of the Church have come to support this orientation, which is fully justified in terms of the Universal Church, and they too are assailed. Over a period of years a momentum has developed in which unity is established around individuals and agreement is reached on the justification of a social mission. The process is extremely serious as at least one priest has been killed, many tortured, scores imprisoned, about twenty forced out of the country, and roughly a dozen bishops and forty or fifty priests attacked in the media.

What seems crucial is the government's over-reaction to criticism and the love/hate relationship with a Church which has always been a staunch ally. Today, when elements of the Church speak out for change, they are viewed as doing the work of the communists (Studart Filho, 1969). Most of the hierarchy still hold to the image of power for influence but in the context of conflict the relationship becomes less tenable. The multiplication of tensions and incidents has led to a process of conflict which increasingly seems to become a relationship of conflict in which the goals are

mutually exclusive and the structures distinct. Working in favor of this turn of events is an active minority of bishops and several hundred clergy and laity. In addition, there is a growing awareness within the government that a modern state does not require the legitimation traditionally provided by the Church. The Brazilian government can rely on its ideology of National Security for legitimation and has been actively promoting public support for it through both the schools and the mass media. Moreover, the "economic miracle" of the past years has so elated the government that the Church can almost be forgotten in the process.

Working against the separation are the majority of the bishops and the whole history of Church-State relations in Brazil. It seems that the officials in the highest levels of the government also desire continued cooperation because the state has always enjoyed the support that comes from the Church. It is my feeling, however, that the combination of a new social mission of the Church, adopted before 1964 and still legitimate today in the international Church; a continual process of conflict; and a decreased reliance of the state on the Church for legitimation will make for a functional separation of Church from state. When this happens—and it depends mainly on governmental actions and reactions—the Church will be free to define its influence model in coalition with Rome.

Independence vis-à-vis the state will not lead directly to just any influence model: the very process which allows the Church its freedom will also limit its alternatives. Conflict takes place over the definition of subversion. In the present process the links will be broken when the Church is beyond the pale politically; thus it will be independent but unable to implement any progressive measures. The latter condition has already been reached, although independence has not yet been achieved. Many sectors in the institution are adopting a role which seems to be the only possible one. This is the prophetic function, as in the Old Testament, of interpreting the word of God in concrete situations and thereby denouncing injustice. Prophecy was—and still is—revolutionary, and if it continues to be adopted at the present rate the Church institution as we know it today in Brazil, with schools, seminaries, newspapers, radio stations, and all the other paraphernalia acquired over the years, will be jettisoned.

This prediction is unusual, and not made without careful consideration, but it will be fulfilled providing the present political situation continues. The government may learn, however; and by avoiding conflicts and emphasizing the availability of power for Church influence, it can maintain a captive Church. If the military does not learn this lesson, or if it learns it but large sectors of the Church still will not cooperate, then the goals of Church and state become irreconciliable, and it is only a matter of time before their complete structural separation.

V. CONCLUSION

The approach developed in this article is primarily useful for analysis of the social and political dimensions of religion. It may be a more efficient way of research than the study of particular progressive statements of the continental and national hier-

archies, the role of particular Church groups in modernization, and programs of social and political change. One of the virtues of this approach is that it incorporates so much of what is and what concerns the Church. It takes consideration of the stated goals in theology and particular formulations, brings in the character of the organization, includes the mechanisms or instruments of influence, and queries the Church's relationship to its environment. Further, by composing models we can make time and space comparisons in order to show how the Church changes. In adopting this approach, through use of influence models, we can certainly include consideration of change programs and the Christian Democratic Parties, but we do not neglect the distinctive character of the Church as a spiritual body.

In the preceding essay we used four categories for the model but there is no reason why these could not be further expanded or elaborated. Another value of this approach is that it demands a study of the Church and its environment and will not allow us to forget that the institution alone is not particularly relevant if our interests are in its secular role in society. In studying the Brazilian Church we were particularly fortunate in that the shifts of 1889, 1930, and 1964 were obvious both in terms of autonomy relationships and in their effects upon the Church's action visavis society. One could come to the same awareness in studying the Mexican Church after 1910, the Argentine Church in the Perón era, and the Cuban Church from 1959, but in Brazil during a period of eighty years there have been at least three major shifts.

We should not leave the political importance of the Church only at the level of party support and voter preference. We can claim more: the Church has always been a key institution in these societies; as it changes, it will have an impact on other structures. It is no accident that the Brazilian government wants the Church to maintain the status quo; the elites realize that the Church provides legitimacy. Specialists have noted that changes in the religious institutions have led to transformation of societies in that they have forced greater secularization, increased pluralism, and further structural differentiation (Eisensadt, 1965: 670, Vallier, 1970b: 6). In the short range we can already see these effects in Brazil, and we may predict that with the adoption of the prophetic mission other changes can be expected. If one adopts this view, the study of the Church takes on greater significance. We are no longer dealing only with a religious institution which has meaning for man's salvation but also with a prominent political and social body which may well assist in the transformation of these societies.

NOTES

- 1. The date 1965 is used because within two years of this time the more interesting and innovative works appeared, including Dewart (1963), Houtart & Pin (1965), Sanders (1967), and Vallier (1967a).
- 2. The author was particularly fortunate in being invited to offer a seminar on Church and State in Latin America at Dartmouth College, Summer 1971, which provided the time and stimulus to update a review of the literature which had been completed before field research in Brazil in 1967. The author has particularly benefited from the works of Vallier and Sanders and from personal contacts with them. Their work is least subject to the criticisms offered here.

POWER AND INFLUENCE

- 3. See Caporale (1964) for a good sociological analysis of the Council and the role of the *periti*. FERES, the International Federation of Institutes for Socio-Religious Research, received its financial push after the Council, as did its Latin American Affiliates. IDOC (International Documentation on the Contemporary Church), was founded in 1962 and provides a link between progressive experts throughout the world. Other similar institutes and progressive publications began with the Council.
- 4. The work of Vallier (1967a; 1970b) is probably closest to being generally accepted in the field but Mutchler (1969) shows that less than unanimity exists in the subject.
- 5. To the best of our knowledge the only joint research suggestion following a single approach is made by Vallier (1969). FERES has coordinated research but of late resources appear to be lacking for any research at all.
- 6. I find Congar's (1967: 307) definition most useful, for he focuses on the two levels. "It [the goal] consists in two points: (1) to convert men to make them disciples; therefore, evangelization; (2) to guide the world towards God; therefore, action in the temporal sphere, or civilization." On influence see also Vallier (1970b: 12).
- 7. Influence and power are difficult concepts to distinguish and dissect but are clarified somewhat in Parsons (1963).
- 8. A provocative analysis of precisely this issue is Terreberry (1968).
- 9. The data for the hypothesis were gathered in the field during 1967 and 1968 and updated in the summer of 1970. The author's dissertation is entitled "Conflict and Change in the Brazilian Catholic Church," and was presented to the Department of Political Science, University of California at Berkeley, in 1970. One form of the revised manuscript will be published by Cambridge University Press and another, entitled "Mudança na Igreja no Brasil: Análise e Prognóstica," will be published by Edições Loyola of São Paulo, Brazil, in 1973. A brief statement of the findings can be found in Bruneau (1972).
- 10. The work of Freyre (1946) has clarified for us the role of the extended family in the formation of Brazilian society, and his description of the Church and the family is widely accepted as accurate. For the control of social groups over the religion, see Cardozo (1947).
- 11. Legal provisions in the constitutions from 1891 to 1946 can be found in Fernandes (1948).
- 12. These data are scattered and hard to obtain but they are most readily available in the author's work. Rolim (1965) also provides some of this information. See also Ribeiro de Oliveira (1970).
- 13. Specific examples of change in the Brazilian state may be found in Skidmore (1967), and in O'Dea (1968) for the Universal Church.
- For details see Bruneau (1972), Camargo (1966), Ferrari (1968), Moreira Alves (1968), de Kadt (1970), and Sanders (1967).
- 15. For details see Antoine (1971), Broucker (1970), Bruneau (1971), and Gall (1970).
- 16. An introduction to the extensive literature on prophecy is Weber (1952). For application to Brazil see Mesters (1969).

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