

CHRISTIAN COMMUNITIES IN CHILE AND PERU

Michael Fleet

Working Paper #183 - November 1992

Michael Fleet, a Residential Fellow at the Institute during the fall semester 1990, is Associate Professor of Political Science at Marquette University. He received his doctorate from the University of California at Los Angeles. He is the author of *The Rise and Fall of Chilean Christian Democracy* (Princeton University Press, 1985) and of many articles and chapters on religion and politics in Latin America. The topic of this paper, drawn from research he conducted while at the Institute, is part of a book-length study he is conducting with Brian H. Smith.

ABSTRACT

Christian communities and other popular Catholic organizations in Latin America have been objects of controversy in recent years. At issue are the nature of their religious and political radicalism and the extent to which they represent the feelings and commitments of popular sector Catholics generally. This paper looks briefly at recent work on Christian communities in Chile and Peru and goes on to discuss surveys conducted by the author in Santiago and Lima in 1987 in which he elicited the views of Christian community activists and other Catholics on a variety of religious and political topics. The author evaluates the data in terms of political and theological attitudes, differentiating among his respondents according to the degrees of their organizational and ritual involvement with the Church and their experience of secular influences.

RESUMEN

Las comunidades cristianas, así como otras organizaciones populares católicas en América Latina, han sido objeto de controversia en los últimos años. Los temas debatidos son la naturaleza de su radicalismo político y religioso y el grado en el que representan los sentimientos y compromisos de los católicos del sector popular en general. Este ensayo analiza brevemente la investigación reciente sobre las comunidades cristianas en Chile y Perú y discute las encuestas llevadas a cabo por el autor en Santiago y Lima en 1987, que presentan las opiniones de activistas de la comunidad cristiana y otros católicos sobre una variedad de temas políticos y religiosos. El autor hace una evaluación de los datos en términos de las actitudes políticas y teológicas, diferenciando a los encuestados de acuerdo con el grado de su asociación organizativa y ritual con la iglesia y con su experiencia en términos de influencias seculares.

Christian communities and other popular Catholic organizations in Latin America have been objects of controversy in recent years. At issue are the nature of their religious and political radicalism, and the extent to which they represent the feelings and commitments of popular sector Catholics generally.

The prominent role that their members played in struggles against military rule, and their willingness to work with Marxist and other leftist groups, helped to give the communities a solidly progressive if not radical political image during the 1970s and early 1980s. Brazil, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Chile, and Peru were among the countries whose Christian communities were hailed in these terms. Following the resumption of open, partisan political activity in Brazil in the early and mid-1980s, however, doubts were voiced as to both their radicalism and representativity.¹

Recent work on Colombia, Venezuela,² and Central America³ has stressed the importance of local traditions, conditions, and dynamics in the development of Christian communities, underscoring the difficulty of generalizing across national boundaries. Despite the Church's efforts on behalf of human rights and democratization in Chile, and notwithstanding the role of Catholic activists in the development of the *Izquierda Unida*⁴ in Peru, relatively little attention has been focused on the role of Catholic groups and movements in these countries. Studies have focused on clerical elites,⁵ and offer little empirical evidence for generalizing about Christian communities and other grassroots phenomena.

Analyses of the Church and politics in Chile and Peru offer conflicting views of the character and role of Christian communities. Spokespeople and others sympathetic to the communities see them as genuinely representative institutions. They concede that some are politically "more developed" (radical) than others, but deny that these are out of step with the majority or that their criticisms of Church authorities imply rebellious or separatist designs.⁶ Other observers have argued that highly politicized communities could be found in certain

¹ Hewitt (1986); Bruneau (1982); and Bruneau and Hewitt (1989).

² Levine (1981 and forthcoming).

³ Williams (1989); and Berryman (1984 and forthcoming).

⁴ The *Izquierda Unida* is a coalition of mostly Marxist leftist parties in Peru that was launched following the 1980 presidential campaign, in which the left was hurt politically by its inability to unite in support of a single candidate.

⁵ Smith (1982), Correa and Viera-Gallo (1986), and Castillo (1986) on Chile; Klaiber (1988) and Pásara (1986) for Peru.

⁶ See Castillo's article "Las Comunidades Cristianas Populares, Una Iglesia Nacida del Pueblo" in Castillo et alia (1983), and Ricardo Antoncich, S.J., "Situación de la Iglesia Popular en el Perú" in CELAM (1984).

neighborhoods, but that their “notoriety has exceeded their concrete impact,”⁷ and that their radicalism has pushed many popular sector Catholics into the waiting arms of evangelical sects.⁸

Church officials in Chile and Peru appear ambivalent on these matters. They are critical of the theological radicalism, the hyper-politicization, and the rebelliousness of some communities.⁹ But they also acknowledge that the Church has not done enough to encourage base community development, and that many communities are too narrowly spiritual and inward looking in their attitudes. Their ambivalence reflects the uncertainty of both progressive and conservative bishops regarding the communities in these countries.

This is understandable given their varied sizes, shapes, and orientations. Many have episodic or short-lived existences. Others have changed in composition and orientation over time, and little or nothing is known about the growing number of independent communities that are not tied to the local chapel or parish.

It is clear, however, that the communities make up a very small minority of the practicing Catholic population of Chile and Peru. Studies of Christian communities in the greater Santiago area indicate that fewer than 1% of the Catholic population and roughly 2.5% of the active or practicing Catholics belong to a Christian community.¹⁰ Impressionistic data from Peru suggest higher levels of involvement in some areas (Cajamarca and the Southern Andean region), but modest levels in and around Lima. Despite their relatively modest numbers, however, base communities have helped the Churches of both countries reestablish their presence and influence in the popular sector.

In the pages that follow, I look briefly at recent work on Christian communities in these countries, and then discuss the survey data that I gathered in Santiago and Lima in 1987. The

⁷ Constable and Valenzuela (1990), p. 241.

⁸ This argument is made by Stoll (1990). Also see the *Declaración de los Andes*, Paragraphs 6 and 11, drafted at the end of a conference on liberation theology organized by the conservative Catholic magazine *Comunio et Liberatione* in April 1985.

⁹ For an expression of the views of the Chilean bishops, see Conferencia Episcopal Chilena, *Carta a las Comunidades de Base*, in CELAM (Boletín), no. 228, June 1989. The Peruvian bishops scarcely mention the communities in their pastoral letters. When they do, as in Conferencia Episcopal Peruana (1989, pp. 103, 121, 130, 201, and 205), it is as a subordinate unit in the hierarchical chain of command, although some bishops encourage the communities to function in a relatively autonomous manner.

¹⁰ A CISOC study (Valdivieso, 1989, p. 39) identified 750 adult Christian Base Communities (CCBs) in the greater Santiago area, 313 of which they were able to survey. Average community membership was 12 persons, making a total of roughly 9,000 people. Most of these CCBs were part of larger Ecclesial Base Communities (CEBs) that were run out of an area chapel or social center. Another 2,000 to 3,000 Catholics belonged to CEBs without belonging to a CCB, and there may be as many as 5,000 to 10,000 young people who belonged to special youth communities, and an equal number of Catholics who were active in communities that function without formal ties to either local or Archdiocesan Church structures. Using figures for 1985 (see Van Dorp, 1985, p. 67), these roughly 25,000 Catholics constituted 0.8% of the 3,250,000 nominal Catholics, and 2.6% of the 975,000 practicing Catholics (those who attend mass either weekly or several times a month) of greater Santiago.

surveys elicit the views of Christian Community activists and other Catholics (activists and non-activists alike) on a range of religious and political topics. They differentiate among organizational, sacramental, and cultural Catholics. *Organizational* Catholics actively participate in one or more Church-sponsored organizations at the parish or subparish level (most of whom are also regular or occasional mass attenders). *Sacramental* Catholics have ongoing contact with the ritual life of the Church but are not organizationally involved. *Cultural* Catholics are neither sacramentally or organizationally active, but may or may not retain values and sentiments from their Catholic upbringing.

Cultural Catholics are more directly linked to the civil society around them. Sacramental and organizational Catholics live in the secular world and are subject to its pressures, tensions, traumas, and distractions as well, but their ties to the Church condition their social experience and the lessons they draw from it. In contrast, cultural Catholics experience secular influences more directly. Their religiously based loyalties, commitments, and concerns are weaker and less likely to inform or condition the impact of their social experiences.

The analysis that follows focuses primarily on organizational Catholics. I also look at sacramental and cultural Catholics, however, not only because they represent Catholicism in significant ways, but also because they can help to explain how the Catholics of various sorts come to hold their respective views and how they are affected by their country's social and political settings.

PART I - CHILE

During the period of military rule, the Chilean Church helped to sustain hundreds of educational, cultural, and humanitarian organizations. It provided them protective space and resources without which they would not have survived or had the political impact that they did. Some of these organizations, like the local branches of the *Vicaría de Pastoral Obrera*, were programs or administrative units of the Church itself; others, such as the *Comité de Familiares de los Detenidos y Desaparecidos*, were autonomous but worked out of offices provided by the Church.

The activities of most of these organizations were only indirectly political, but their staffs and constituencies supported and participated in antiregime activities and often worked with the organizers on planning and coordinating committees. They were ideal political collaborators. Their Church ties gave them a special respectability and greater (though still relative) immunity to government repression, while their access to Church facilities and resources further enhanced their value to other regime opponents.

Socially and politically committed Catholics were also active at parish and community levels in popular neighborhoods, where antiregime sentiment and activity were particularly intense. Their involvement in antiregime protests and strikes were an outgrowth or extension of their religious convictions and commitments. Many young Catholics, on the other hand, developed political interests while preparing for the sacraments of First Communion and Confirmation, and left their religious organizations for full-time political party involvement.¹¹

Catholic activists thus figured prominently as leaders and supporters of antiregime activities between 1983 and 1989. The Church's role in directing and encouraging them, however, is more difficult to determine. It is tempting to assume that they played the same role in the struggle against authoritarianism in Chile that they had in Nicaragua (1975-1979), El Salvador (1970-1990), and Brazil (1978-1982). But in the Chilean case, it is not clear whether the Church was responsible for the attitudes and involvement of these Catholics, or whether they arose from other, e.g., secular societal, factors and forces.

A 1987 survey conducted by the Jesuit Center for Socio-Religious Research (CISOC) confirms the limited social and political involvement of Catholic activists,¹² but sheds little light on their political views or on Church responsibility in promoting and encouraging them. Another survey, focusing on communities in the politically active Southern zone of Santiago, confirmed these findings. It found that only 5.6% of their members admitted belonging to a "political group," that their meetings were more likely to focus on ecclesial (42.4%) or personal (22%) than on social or political issues (27%), and that their activities rarely (11.6%) included "social action." But it also discovered that their group reflections involved a mixture of spiritual, ecclesial, and social matters, that they often (55%) discussed social and political "realities" at their meetings, and that 76.9% had members who "participated" in social or political organizations. Their members, it seems, were socially and politically involved citizens who looked to their communities for help in integrating their social and spiritual concerns, but did not regard them as political organizations or vehicles (a view the hierarchy repeatedly cautioned against).¹³

¹¹ The Communist party, the Christian Left, the MIR, and MAPU Lautaro were the parties with which they most frequently affiliated. Many continued to believe but ceased to be religiously active because of the political demands on their time; others abandoned their faith because their political commitments provided them with "more meaningful" solutions to their country's problems and made their religious beliefs seem naive or superfluous. For interesting interviews with several such people, see Politzer 1989.

¹² It found that Catholics belonging to Christian communities in the greater Santiago area were not very active socially or politically. Sixteen percent of the communities whose members were surveyed had members active in health organizations, 10% in unions, 8% in human rights organizations, 8% in soup kitchens, and 7% in political parties. Most of those interviewed agreed that the country's socioeconomic conditions were bad and that changes were necessary, but didn't think that their community had any special responsibility in this regard.

¹³ *Caracterización Comunidades Eclesiales de Base, Zona Sur de Santiago*, n.d., no publisher.

Unfortunately, neither of these studies says much about people's political ideas or their origins. They did not probe the religious or political views of individual members and did not include Catholics who were not members of Christian Communities, making it difficult to consider non-Church influences on attitudes.

My survey, also conducted in 1987, helps to fill these gaps. It covered all of Santiago, probed attitudes as well as involvement, and included Catholics with varying relationships to the Church. It was based on a purposive sample with quota controls. The 518 respondents were drawn from lists of interviewees provided by priests and pastoral agents in 24 greater Santiago parishes.¹⁴ The parishes represented all socioeconomic sectors (upper-, middle-, and lower-middle-class neighborhoods, and *poblaciones*), and included an equal number of socially and spiritually oriented parishes.¹⁵ In each, informants were asked to identify and help establish contact with a representative mix of organizational, sacramental, and cultural Catholics (in the rough ratio of 3 to 2 to 1).

Their estimates were not always accurate. Of the 518 respondents, 209 (40.3%) were Catholics belonging to one or more Church-sponsored organizations; 86 (16.6%) attended mass weekly or monthly but did not belong to any such organization; 38 (7.4%) described themselves as Catholics but rarely or never went to mass; 103 no longer considered themselves Catholics but said they once were; 36 (6.9%) were non-Catholics who had never been Catholics ("seculars"); and 46 (8.9%) were Protestants of one sort or another.

To facilitate comparison with the Peruvian survey, whose respondents were drawn entirely from lower- and lower-middle-class neighborhoods, I have excluded the residents of upper- and middle-class neighborhoods from the Chilean sample. This leaves 312 respondents, of whom 133 belonged to Church-sponsored organizations, 52 were sacramental Catholics, 78 were cultural Catholics of one sort or another, 21 were "seculars," and 28 were Protestants.

In relation to the broader Catholic population, the sample over-represents organizational Catholics and under-represents sacramental and cultural Catholics. In addition, the cultural Catholics included in the sample were somewhat more radical and more politically committed than the general cultural Catholic population. Informants were asked to identify cultural Catholics who

¹⁴ Warwick and Lininger (1975, pp. 72-74) describe a purposive sample as based on selection from significant groups chosen for their importance in testing hypotheses. A representative sample of all Catholics would not have yielded enough organizational activists to provide a basis for generalization (Christian community members make up less than 1% of the nominal Catholics in greater Santiago). In addition, my Chilean colleagues were virtually unanimous in advising against using a representative sample. They felt that in the prevailing political climate (mid-1987), few respondents were likely to respond candidly to delicate questions posed by someone suddenly appearing at their door. Garretón (1987) makes this point with respect to the findings of the many public opinion surveys conducted during this period.

¹⁵ See below, pp. 11 and 12, for definitions of these terms.

were also leftist political activists, so that organizational Catholics could be seen in relation to them.¹⁶

The sample provided balanced representation of “spiritually” versus “socially” oriented parishes and residential areas. But it contained more culturals (35% as opposed to 17%) and fewer sacramentals (18% as opposed to 33%) than initially hoped for. The sample also produced more males than expected (given the widely acclaimed prominence of women in Church and neighborhood organizations in Chile). Although in no sense a representative sample, it does contain a sufficient number of Catholic activists to shed light on the forces affecting their religious and political views.

Chilean Catholics living in *poblaciones* and popular (lower-middle-class) neighborhoods held progressive views on both political and religious matters. On religious matters, most (86.3%) strongly endorsed the Church’s “preferential option for the poor.” Most (53.9%) also believed that Christ was put to death for being a political or moral revolutionary; few (less than 10%) were willing to base their moral decisions solely on the basis of the position of the Catholic Church (as against their own consciences, or a combination of their own consciences and the position of the Church); and more (46.8%) would follow their local priest (as against the 30.4% that would follow their bishop) in the event of a conflict between priest and bishop.

On political matters, 82.6% considered themselves “leftists,” more than 80% found much within the Marxist tradition to be positive, and an equal percentage favored political collaboration with Marxist groups.

These attitudes are suggestive of the Catholic progressivism seen elsewhere in Latin America.¹⁷ But to know whether they are the result of an earlier Catholic formation, of more recent Church involvement, or of other factors, the religious experiences of these Catholics must be examined more closely and placed in social context.

When Catholics are distinguished in terms of their involvement with the Church, for example, those with the least contact with the Church (cultural Catholics) emerge holding the most progressive religious and political views. Asked “Why was Christ persecuted and put to death,”¹⁸ cultural Catholics were more inclined to view him as a moral or political revolutionary, whereas organizational and sacramental Catholics tended to depict him in conventional “spiritual”

¹⁶ See below, pp. 8-10, and 22-24, for a discussion of the reliability of comparisons among the different subcategories.

¹⁷ They also provide support for the analyses of Berryman (1984), Lernoux (1980 and 1989), Houtart and Lermecini (1982), and others whose studies of popular Church groups have stressed their progressive or radical views.

¹⁸ Liberation theologians tend to emphasize the political nature of Christ’s role and the political implications of religious commitment. Accordingly, this question was designed as a measure of theological radicalism. Its wording, and that of other questions used in the survey, are given in the appendix.

terms. Somewhat surprisingly, organizational Catholics (many of whom were members of Christian communities) were almost as likely to see Christ in purely spiritual terms as were sacramental Catholics.¹⁹

When respondents were asked how they approached the making of important moral decisions, similar patterns emerged. Cultural Catholics were more inclined to rely on their own judgment, while organizational and sacramental Catholics were more willing to take the Church's position into account.²⁰

On other religious questions,²¹ cultural Catholics were much closer to organizational and/or sacramental Catholics. If responses to these questions are ranked ordinally from 1 to 3, with 1 representing the most and 3 the least progressive response, cultural Catholics averaged 1.67, sacramental Catholics 1.73, and organizational Catholics 1.8 for the three.²² Thus, on religious questions generally, cultural Catholics held the most progressive views, while organizational and sacramental Catholics were similar to one another but substantially more moderate.

The political views of these Catholics exhibited slightly different patterns. On questions dealing with political tendency, the most appropriate political regime for the country at the time (mid-1987), the country's "best" government in recent years, the legitimacy of political violence, and the propriety of collaboration with Marxists,²³ sacramental Catholics were marginally more progressive than organizational Catholics, but both groups were less progressive than cultural Catholics.²⁴

The more progressive views of the culturals may be at least partially a function of the sample. Informants (local priests and other pastoral agents) helping to construct it were asked to identify purely cultural Catholics who were politically active. It is likely, therefore, that the cultural

¹⁹ Fifty-eight (75.4%) of the 77 cultural Catholics thought Christ was persecuted because he was either a revolutionary or a moral revolutionary. Only 60 (45.8%) of the 131 organizational Catholics and 20 (40.8%) of the sacramental Catholics thought so.

²⁰ Thirteen of the 23 (57.1%) cultural Catholics (only those who still considered themselves Catholics answered this questions) indicated that they would rely on their own judgment; the remaining 10 (42.9%) said they would integrate the Church's position with their own judgment. Seventy-nine (59.4%) of the 133 organizational Catholics and 35 (67.3%) of the 52 sacramental Catholics said they would either abide by the Church's position entirely or combine it with their own judgments.

²¹ These dealt with the propriety of Church involvement in economic policy issues, the extent to which one identified with the orientation of the bishops, and whether in the case of conflict between them one would follow his/her priest or bishop.

²² Their ordinal averages for the questions dealing with Christ and conflicts between bishops and priests were 1.6, 2.0, and 2.0 respectively.

²³ The wording for these questions is provided in the Appendix.

²⁴ On a scale of 1 (most progressive) to 3, 4, or 5 (least progressive), the responses of organizationals to these questions averaged 1.3, 2.1, 2.1, 2.6, and 2.1 respectively. Those of sacramentals averaged 1.1, 2.0, 2.0, 2.6, and 2.1, while those of culturals averaged 1.1, 1.8, 1.5, 2.2, and 1.8 respectively.

Catholics from poorer neighborhoods include a disproportionately large number of leftist activists with more progressive views than the average Catholic.

In fact, the sample's cultural Catholics were more involved in social organizations (24.8% and 19.4%) and political parties (42.9% and 45.5%) than either sacramental (15.3% and 24.2%) or organizational (10.5% and 24.2%) Catholics.²⁵ However, those cultural Catholics who rarely or never attended mass, but who considered themselves Catholics ("lapsed" Catholics), were less politically involved than those who no longer considered themselves Catholics ("fallen-away"), and were no more involved than organizational or sacramental Catholics.²⁶ In other words, lapsed Catholics appear to be "ordinary" cultural Catholics, and thus a legitimate reference point for organizational and sacramental Catholics.

When organizational, sacramental, and cultural Catholics are broken down into their respective subgroups,²⁷ the thinking of Catholics with varying associations with the Church becomes clearer. Table 1 compares the religious attitudes of these subgroups. As it indicates, Catholics belonging to Christian communities and reflection groups were more progressive than those belonging to religious organizations, but less progressive than those belonging to social organizations, than regular or occasional sacramental Catholics, and than "lapsed" Catholics.

Christian community and reflection group activists were among the most independent (Church authority) of the subgroups, but felt closer to the bishops, and were willing to defer to them. Their conception of Christ, on the other hand, was remarkably moderate for Catholics reputedly formed in the tradition of liberation theology.

Similar patterns emerge with the political views of these subgroups. The members of Christian communities and reflection groups were significantly more progressive than other organized Catholics, only marginally more so than sacramental Catholics, and less progressive than either occasional sacramentals and lapsed Catholics.

²⁵ If participation in all four areas is averaged, the figures are more comparable, i.e., 13.9%, 12.4%, and 20.2% for organizational, sacramental, and cultural Catholics respectively.

²⁶ "Lapsed" Catholics were actually less socially involved (25%) than members of Christian communities (32.4%) and less politically involved (26.1%) than Catholics belonging to religious organizations (27.5%) and than either regular (26.3%) or occasional (37.5%) sacramental Catholics.

²⁷ Among organizational Catholics, those belonging to Christian communities and reflection groups, those belonging to religious (e.g., apostolic) organizations, and those belonging to strictly social organizations (concerned with human rights, employment, child care, food purchasing, etc.) are differentiated. Among sacramental Catholics, those attending mass regularly (daily or weekly) are distinguished from those attending occasionally (monthly). Among culturals, "lapsed" and "fallen-away" Catholics are included.

TABLE 1

| Religious Attitudes—Chile | | | | | |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| SUBGROUPS | Christ's Death (1-3) | Church Authority (1-3) | Economic Involvement (1-3) | Close to Bishops (1-3) | Priest or Bishop (1-3) |
| CEB-Reflection Groups | 2.3 | 1.7 | 1.3 | 2.3 | 1.9 |
| Religious Organizations | 2.4 | 1.7 | 1.3 | 2.2 | 1.7 |
| Social Organizations | 2.4 | 1.9 | 1.5 | 2.3 | 1.8 |
| Regular Sacramentals | 2.5 | 1.8 | 1.4 | 2.0 | 1.9 |
| Occasional Sacramentals | 2.0 | 1.9 | 2.1 | 1.6 | 1.3 |
| Lapsed | 2.0 | 1.4 | 1.7 | 2.0 | 1.8 |

As Table 2 makes clear, occasional sacramentals held the most progressive views (averaging 2.0) and Catholics belonging to religious and social organizations the least progressive (both averaging 2.3). The views of “lapsed” Catholics, regular sacramentals, and those belonging to Christian communities and reflection groups were somewhere in the middle (averaging 2.1, 2.2, and 2.1 respectively).

Christian community members thus exhibited little of the radicalism with which they are sometimes credited. Their views on questions dealing with the best regime, class interests, and political violence are difficult to distinguish from those of other organizational or sacramental Catholics. They were more progressive than other organizational Catholics with respect to political tendency and best government, but less progressive than occasional sacramentals, and about as progressive as lapsed Catholics and Catholics attending mass regularly.

TABLE 2

Political Attitudes—Chile

| SUBGROUPS | Political Tendency (1-3) | Best Regime (1-5) | Best Gov't (1-4) | Political Violence (1-3) | Collaboration with Marxists (1-3) |
|-------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------|------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| CEB-Reflection Groups | 1.2 | 2.0 | 2.0 | 2.6 | 1.4 |
| Religious Organization | 1.5 | 2.1 | 2.5 | 2.9 | 1.5 |
| Social Organizations | 1.4 | 2.2 | 2.0 | 2.5 | 1.6 |
| Regular Sacramentals | 1.2 | 2.0 | 2.1 | 2.7 | 1.5 |
| Occasional Sacramentals | 1.0 | 2.0 | 1.6 | 2.4 | 1.4 |
| Lapsed | 1.3 | 2.0 | 1.8 | 2.5 | 1.5 |

Even if some cultural Catholics are excluded (on grounds that they were disproportionately politicized to begin with), therefore, Catholics most closely involved with the Church (i.e., members of Christian communities, those belonging to religious organizations, and regular mass attenders) emerge holding consistently less progressive political views. This does not mean, however, that the Church has made these people more conservative. Although less progressive than others, Christian community activists, regular sacramentals, and others close to the Church were hardly “conservative.” At most, the Church could be said to have had a “moderating” impact on them. Moreover, the differences in political views could be the result of factors, such as secular political involvement, class status, or the characteristics of one’s neighborhood of residence, over which the Church has neither control or responsibility.

Social and political involvement, for example, appears to have had a significant impact on political views, with those who were more involved holding more progressive views.²⁸ Class, on

²⁸ Lapsed Catholics, those belonging to religious organizations, and members of Christian communities were the most involved (in that order), and the second, the fourth, and the third most progressive. Those belonging to social organizations and attending mass regularly were the least organized and the least progressive in their views.

the other hand, has no consistent or predictable effect.²⁹ Lower-middle-class (white-collar workers) rather than blue-collar respondents held the most progressive political views. But none of the more progressive groups (occasional sacramentals or lapsed Catholics) had particularly large concentrations of either lower- or lower-middle-class respondents. Moreover, two of the three subgroups in which lower-class respondents held more progressive views (occasional sacramentals and lapsed Catholics) had minimal contact with Church.³⁰ With these patterns, it is more plausible to argue that more active participation in the Church dilutes the progressiveness of respondents from all social classes than to claim working-class status as a predominant influence.³¹

Differences were sharper in terms of residential sector and parish type. Chilean Catholics living in slums (*poblaciones*), for example, were more progressive, averaging 1.8 in their political views, than those living in lower-middle-class neighborhoods, whose views averaged 2.0. But their attitudes could reflect the type of parish or community with which they were affiliated as well. In Santiago, these might be of either a “spiritual” or “social” orientation.³² Spiritually oriented parishes stress sacramental ministry, encourage traditional (e.g., devotional) apostolic activities, and view social commitments and concerns as potentially distracting and/or divisive. Socially oriented parishes encourage the integration of social concerns and commitments into the life of the religious community.

Among organizational Catholics (those most actively involved in the life of the Church) living in *poblaciones*, those affiliated with “socially oriented” parishes were substantially more progressive than those living in “spiritually oriented” parishes. Among sacramental Catholics, patterns were less consistent, with those attending in spiritually oriented parishes occasionally holding more progressive views.

²⁹ The respondent’s occupation defined his or her class status. If (s)he did not work, that of the head of the household was used.

³⁰ The views of lower-class members belonging to Church-sponsored social organizations averaged 1.7, as against 1.8 for lower-middle- and 1.9 for middle-class members. The views of lower-class members who were occasional sacramentals averaged 1.5, as against 2.0 for middle-class members) and those of lower-class members who were lapsed Catholics averaged 1.6, as against 1.9 for lower-middle-class and 2.0 for middle-class members. Among members of Christian communities and reflection groups, on the other hand, independent and blue-collar workers were the least progressive, 1.94 as against 1.86 and 1.56, while among regular sacramentals and Catholics belonging to religious organizations, independent and blue-collar workers (1.88 and 2.1) were more progressive than middle-class elements (1.92 and 2.4) but less progressive than lower-middle-class types (1.74 and 2.0).

³¹ During the Pinochet years, class sentiments and loyalties weakened and were superseded by solidarities rooted in the neighborhood and/or religious community. This change was related to high levels of unemployment and political repression, which made workers less inclined to think or act in ways that could jeopardize their jobs.

³² The religious sociologists of CISOC assisting in the survey’s design classified parishes in terms of their “spiritual” or social orientations, including an equal number of each in the sample.

Of course, the progressiveness of a parish or a community could be the product of its activities and programs over the years, the work of a particular pastor or pastoral team, or the history and characteristics of its neighborhood. The fact that the attitudinal gap (between more and less progressive people) was widest among people actively involved in parish activities (organizational and regular sacramentals) suggests that the parish was responsible. But it could be that Church authorities assigned their most progressive personnel to “political hotbeds” areas, or that pastoral agents were radicalized by the communities to which they were assigned.

These questions can be pressed further by looking at the experience of three parishes in the sample. The first is a spiritually oriented parish, Nuestra Señora de Dolores of Quinta Normal. The other two, Nuestra Señora de los Parrales of La Granja, and Comunidad Cristo Liberador of Villa Francia, are socially oriented parishes.

Three Parishes

Nuestra Señora de Dolores serves some 60,000 to 70,000 Catholics in the comuna of Quinta Normal on Santiago’s near west side. Since 1965, it has been staffed by the Schoenstatt Fathers, an offshoot of the Pallotine order founded by German-born Fr. Joseph Kentenich. Four Schoenstatt priests currently attend to the spiritual needs of the main church, three satellite chapels, an adjoining parish, San Vicente de Palotti, and a nearby shrine, the Medalla Milagrosa. They are assisted by seven Schoenstatt nuns, and a large number of lay volunteers.

The parish’s main church offers three Sunday masses, attendance at which averaged around 500 people during the 1980s. Three satellite chapels, two of which are located in poorer sectors of the parish, offered a Sunday mass as well. The parish sponsored a full range of catechism classes, retreats, and apostolic organizations for men, women, and young people. Dolores is out of sync with most other parishes in the Archdiocese’s progressive Western Zone. It has not used pastoral or catechetical materials produced by the Zonal Vicariate for a number of years because they were “too political.” And unlike other area parishes, it was never a staging ground or arena of antiregime agitation in the years of military rule. Because of its proximity to an industrial park with a number of large factories, there were occasional strikes or demonstrations in which some parishioners took part. But there was little or no political activity as such.

In fact, during the period of military rule, pastoral programs and activities (youth organizational meetings, catechetical groups, support groups, etc.) were organized and carried out almost exclusively at the parish complex. Apparently, people felt more secure there, less likely to be roused by military or police authorities. The same fear is said to have inhibited the development of Christian communities, although these began to spring up following the relaxation (in 1987) of restrictions on “public” meetings and “political” activities.

The nuns and parish activists with whom I spoke appeared to share the pastoral outlook of the Schoenstatt priests. This consensus reflects and further contributes to the effectiveness with which the parish has been managed since 1965. Mass attendance and participation in parish activities have been high, indicating a positive response to the leadership of the Schoenstatt Fathers.

The character of Quinta Normal has something to do with this. It is an established “popular” comuna, with a predominantly lower-middle-class population known for its pragmatism, social stability, and upwardly mobile (*arribista*) mentality. Although its support for the NO option (61.4%) in the 1988 plebiscite and for opposition candidates in the 1989 presidential (57.7%) and parliamentary (59.4%) elections exceeded the averages for Santiago as a whole, these levels were lower than those of the other two parishes.³³

Nuestra Señora de los Parrales is a working-class parish on Santiago’s south side. From 1978 to 1988 it was staffed by the Sacred Heart Fathers (or “Padres Franceses”), an order known for its theological, pastoral, and political progressivism.³⁴ Sacred Heart priests also staffed two adjoining parishes, San Gregorio and San Pedro y San Pablo, both known for their strong community life and political activism.

Parish activities are centered in the main Church located on Santa Rosa avenue. It offers several masses on Sunday, and houses a variety of pastoral programs and activities. During the 1970s and 1980s, three smaller chapels functioned as miniparishes and community centers in their respective sectors. On Sunday, priests came to hear confessions, say mass, and meet with sector organizations. Ecclesial Base Communities of up to 80 people functioned in each, and people were encouraged to center their religious and organizational activity in them and not in the larger (and more prestigious) parish church.³⁵

Parish members, particularly young people, were very active in protests and other antiregime activities during the mid-1980s.³⁶ Protests and demonstrations would begin suddenly, be sustained for brief periods, give way to periods of relative calm, and then erupt again, weeks or months later. The parish community was very much a part of this process, given its insertion in the life of the area (La Granja) and its proximity to Santa Rosa Avenue.

³³ Santiago’s averages were 58.7% for the plebiscite and 55.2% for the presidential election.

³⁴ Most of the order’s priests working in Chile are themselves Chileans. Prominent theologians Pablo Fontaine and Ronaldo Muñoz are both members of the order, as is Mons. Felipe Barriga, formerly Vicar of the Archdiocese of Santiago’s Southern Zone.

³⁵ One Sacred Heart priest with whom I spoke noted that for liturgies, special occasions (like weddings and first communions), and even organizational activity, some people were drawn to the main church because of its prestigious location “on the avenue.”

³⁶ The support for the NO vote in the 1988 plebiscite in La Granja was 63.1%. Its support for opposition candidates was 60.1% in the presidential and 62.2% in the parliamentary elections.

The Sacred Heart priests sympathized with these activities but were not themselves instigators or activists. They reminded people that Christians had civic responsibilities and should be doing something to improve current socioeconomic and political conditions, but stressed that such activities were the responsibility of lay people, and not the business of the Church or its pastoral programs. In mid-1988, they relinquished control of the parish to a conservative Spanish priest, although they continue to work with two of the satellite chapels (communities). Since their departure, the main parish has continued to function sacramentally but the level of organizational activity has diminished markedly. Apparently some activists have moved to neighboring parishes (also run by Sacred Heart priests) whose orientation and general environment they found more congenial.

Cristo Liberador is a large Christian community located in the west Santiago neighborhood of Villa Francia. Although part of Jesús de Nazaret parish, it has functioned as an autonomous ecclesial community since its foundation in 1970 by Fr. Mariano Puga, a well known worker-priest. Since the mid-1970s, it has been “accompanied” by Fr. Roberto Bolton with the help of Sisters of the Divine Master, most of whom come from Argentina and Uruguay.³⁷

The community functions as an Ecclesial Base Community (CEB) with an active membership of between 60 and 100 in the years since its establishment. It meets in a chapel built on the edge of a large vacant lot in the middle of Villa Francia. It also makes use of the Mons. Enrique Alvear Center, a complex several blocks away, where workshops, classes, and social activities are held. In addition to the CEB, the community encompasses six Christian Base Communities (CCBs), with memberships of from 10 to 20 adults (mostly couples) each. They meet weekly for bible study and general reflection, mostly on their own although occasionally Fr. Bolton or one of the sisters joins them. Each of the communities sends a representative to the monthly pastoral council of the CEB at which administrative matters and broader pastoral, social, and political questions are treated.³⁸

The community has enjoyed periods of expansion and vitality and has survived moments of crisis and collapse over the years. As a religious community in solidarity with the neighborhood and its struggles, it has brought together as many as 300 and as few as 30 people. A number of its original members (couples) are still active. Others have moved on to communities and similar

³⁷ Fr. Bolton prefers the notion of accompaniment to that of leadership and for years refused to serve as “pastor,” believing that people could minister to one another. Most community people, on the other hand, wanted a “real” pastor, and in 1989 Fr. Bolton was persuaded to assume conventional pastoral responsibilities.

³⁸ Typical issues include whether or not to allow a political group use a community facility, whether or not to support as a community a candidate in neighborhood board elections, and so on.

commitments elsewhere.³⁹ Some have been discouraged by government repression or internal political conflicts, and have returned to more conventional faith lives; others have taken on full time political commitments, and no longer have time for religious activities or commitments.

Villa Francia has been a hotbed of political radicalism since the late 1960s. Under the military, it was frequently a center of protest and opposition activity and almost as frequently the object of occupations and sweeps by police and military forces. In some instances, its political activism has had an invigorating effect on the life and activities of the Christian community and the neighborhood as a whole; at other times it has generated division and disillusionment. The level of support for the NO vote and for opposition and left candidates in recent elections was slightly higher than in the areas around either Dolores or Parrales parishes.⁴⁰

These parishes provide sociopolitical and ecclesial contexts for the attitudes of respondents living in them. In their responses to political questions, the residents of the Cristo Liberador community and Nuestra Señora de los Parrales parish held the most progressive views, averaging 1.9, while those from Nuestra Señora de Dolores parish held the least progressive, averaging 2.1. The question, of course, is to what to attribute these attitudes. They could be the consequence of Church involvement, neighborhood forces, or both.

The incidence of these various influences can be partially determined by looking at people's involvement with the Church and at the relationship between their religious and political views. For political attitudes to be taken as a consequence of parish or community involvement, they should be consistent with its particular (socially progressive or spiritual) orientation, the impact should clearest on those (organizational) most intensely involved, and people's religious and political views should be congruent (the former somehow producing or entailing the latter). Where these conditions are not met, it would be more reasonable to think in terms of societal or environmental influences.

The religious views of the residents of these parishes or communities were generally congruent with their political views. When all residents are included, the averages (across all four questions) for Dolores, Parrales, and Cristo Liberador were 1.9, 1.7, and 1.5 respectively. Among organizational Catholics, these patterns are even clearer, as can be seen in Table 3.

³⁹ Two such cases are those of Mons. Rafael Hernandez, who was one of the seminary students who lived with Fr. Mariano Puga in the early 1970s and is currently Vicar of the Archdiocese's Southern Zone, and of Manuel Vergara and Luisa Toledo de Vergara, who have worked with Archdiocesan pastoral programs for more than 30 years and whose three sons were killed by government security forces during the mid-1980s.

⁴⁰ Support for the NO vote in the Las Américas section of Estación Central was 66.1%. Support for Aylwin's presidential candidacy was 63.5%, and for opposition candidates for the Senate and Chamber of Deputies 65.5% and 62.7% respectively.

TABLE 3

Religious Attitudes—Chile

| PARISH | Christ's Death (1-3) | Church Authority (1-3) | Economic Involvement (1-3) | Priest or Bishop (1-3) | |
|------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------------|------|
| Dolores | 2.6 | 1.6 | 1.4 | 2.0 | n=35 |
| Parrales | 2.2 | 1.7 | 1.3 | 1.6 | n=18 |
| Cristo Liberador | 1.7 | 1.5 | 1.0 | 1.4 | n=22 |

Respondents from Dolores gave the least progressive answers (averaging 1.9) to three of these questions. Those from Cristo Liberador gave the most progressive reasons to all four questions, with people from Parrales trailing slightly behind in three of these. Dolores respondents indicated a greater willingness to go along with the bishops in the case of conflict with their parish priests, while respondents from Parrales and Cristo Liberador were more inclined to side with their priests. And yet, people from Dolores felt most distant from the positions adopted by the Chilean bishops as a whole.⁴¹

Before claiming any causal link between the political views of organizationally involved Catholics and the pastoral orientations of their priests, their views must be seen in relation to the parish or community environment. Of the three, Dolores is clearly in the “least progressive” area. Quinta Normal is a stable and politically moderate comuna in which, prior to 1973, the left was much weaker than in either La Granja or Estación Central, the comunas in which Parrales and Cristo Liberador are located. Additionally, Quinta Normal's support of the NO vote in the 1988 plebiscite (61.4%), while above the average for Santiago as a whole, was less than those of either La Granja (63.1%) or the Las Américas sector of Estación Central (66.1%). Finally, the political

⁴¹ In Dolores 44.6% of the people admitted feeling distant from the positions adopted by the bishops, as against 22.7% of those from Parrales and 33.3% of those from Cristo Liberador. Between 1983 and 1987, the Chilean bishops were frequently critical of the Pinochet regime and were often attacked by the government and its supporters. Organizational Catholics from Dolores appear to have been caught between their apolitical priests and the more involved and critical bishops. For Catholics in the other two parishes, on the other hand, there was greater congruence between the teaching of the bishops and the orientation of their local priests.

views of its lapsed (1.7) and cultural (1.7) Catholics were less progressive than those of the same groups in Parrales (1.6 and 1.3) and, although not consistently, Cristo Liberador (1.9 and 1.6).⁴²

While living in a moderately progressive area, the residents of Dolores have been ministered to by relatively conservative priests and nuns for many years. Their religious and political views were the least progressive of any of the three groups. Residents of the Cristo Liberador community, on the other hand, lived in an area that appears very progressive by some measures and not so progressive by others. They have been exposed to very progressive pastoral leadership and displayed the most progressive religious and political views. Residents of Parrales parish, finally, lived in a very progressive area, were exposed to moderately progressive pastoral leadership, and displayed progressive religious and moderately progressive political views.

Differences in the views of organizational, sacramental, and cultural Catholics in the three parishes offer yet another basis for assessing the respective impacts of pastoral agents and the area itself. Among Dolores residents, the religious views of organizational Catholics (1.91) are hard to distinguish from those of their sacramental (1.96) and cultural (1.93) counterparts, making it more difficult to discern the impact of the priests and nuns. Among Parrales residents, on the other hand, organizational Catholics (1.7) were more progressive than sacramentals (1.8) but less so than culturals (1.3). These figures suggest a moderating role, albeit more pronounced in the case of sacramentals than organizationals. Among residents of Cristo Liberador, finally, organizational Catholics (1.4) were much more progressive than sacramentals (1.7) and slightly more progressive than culturals (1.6), strongly suggesting a progressive impact on the part of the pastoral agents.

The characteristics and conditions of the environment have thus exerted a significant socializing impact in all three parishes but Church influence has cut across the environment in two of the cases, exerting a moderating influence in Dolores and a sharply progressive impact in Cristo Liberador. In Parrales, on the other hand, it is difficult to distinguish between the effects of the environment and parish.

Each of these parishes and communities has been responsive to its environment and to the needs of its people as defined and conditioned by that environment. Pastoral agents have had a significant impact on the religious views of the people to whom they minister and, though less directly, on their social and political views and activities (or lack thereof) as well. But it is possible that in some instances (in Dolores and to a lesser extent Parrales) parish activities may

⁴² Their minimal contact with the Church, and the fact that they were not markedly more involved socially or politically than other Catholics, make lapsed Catholics the more reliable expression of an area's political character. They may not be in Villa Francia area, however, which has a tradition of political militancy and progressivism and whose cultural Catholics and secular Chileans (both 1.6) may more accurately represent its sentiment.

have attracted people who already held moderate views, and that in others (Cristo Liberador) some of those who became active in community organizations had been politicized independently and brought their concerns to the Church seeking refuge and support.

In helping to place the survey data into specific contexts, these three cases suggest several conclusions. They confirm that highly progressive, if not radical, Christian communities (like Cristo Liberador) do exist in Chile. But they also indicate that most communities reflect and respond to their immediate social environments, that many of them (like Dolores) are anything but radical, and that even when their pastoral orientations are generally progressive (as in the case of Parrales), they may serve to deflect or moderate more radical influences stemming from their socioeconomic and political environments.

On balance, however, the impact of environment appears to be greater than that of pastoral orientation. The areas in which each of these parishes or communities have operated have been as they are for some time. Some priests and pastoral agents have come and stayed. Others have come, ministered for a number of years, and then moved on, although the effects of their work have endured. Over the years, it seems, the neighborhoods have had a greater effect on the priests and their effectiveness, and these priests and other pastoral agents have had either a reenforcing or moderating effect on the attitudes and concerns of area activists.

PART II - PERU

The Peruvian Church has been less widely studied than its Chilean counterpart. Less is known about its internal operations and the attitudes and activities of its priests, nuns, lay activists, and general following. Studies done during the 1970s⁴³ focused on the Church's transformation under Cardinal Landazuri and its relationship to the government of General Velasco. Later work assessed the influence of liberation theologian Fr. Gustavo Gutiérrez and the Church's ties to the political left.⁴⁴

Observers attribute responsibility for much of the Peruvian Church's development during the last twenty-five years to Fr. Gutiérrez, his Bartolomé de las Casas Institute, and an organization of progressive priests known as ONIS in which he played a leading role in the 1960s and 1970s. Gutiérrez is widely credited with influencing both Cardinal Landazuri, who headed the Archdiocese of Lima for more than 30 years before retiring in 1990, and many of the priests and nuns (many of them foreign born) working with the country's rural and urban poor.

The Peruvian Church's image as a progressive Church is the result of its active involvement in the lives and struggles of these people. It was a forceful advocate for social

⁴³ Macauley (1972), Klaiber (1977), Mooney (1976), Langton (1977), and Maloney (1978).

⁴⁴ Romero (1989), Pásara (1986, 1989), and Klaiber (1988).

programs and reforms under the Velasco government (1968-1975) and a major source of opposition to the Morales Bermudez government that succeeded it (1975-1980). Contributing further to its progressive credentials were the close ties that many pastoral agents and Catholic political figures maintained with the *Izquierda Unida* (IU) during the 1980s.

The IU's substantial electoral support in *pueblos jóvenes*⁴⁵ where the Church was active in promoting Christian communities has fueled charges that the Church has helped to radicalize Catholics in the "popular" sector and that it has aided and abetted the left politically.⁴⁶ To date, however, little empirical evidence has been offered in support of such claims.

Until recently, research on religion in Peru has been dominated by Church people and anthropologists. Church people have been hesitant to take up politically sensitive themes,⁴⁷ while the anthropologists have been concerned with popular religious beliefs and practices.⁴⁸ As a result, the political views of Catholics and Catholic activists have been virtually ignored, and little has been written on Christian communities beyond occasional news reports and magazine articles and short, quasi-promotional pieces appearing in Church publications.

In fact, the development of Christian communities in Peru has been relatively modest. It has been hampered by the enduring appeal of religious brotherhoods (*hermandades*) and other traditional associations, and by the distractive influence of secular social and political movements. Where communities have been formed they have helped socially and politically active Catholics to integrate their work and their faith lives. Since 1980, priests and pastoral agents have been more successful in persuading youths and adults completing catechetical or sacramental preparation courses to stay together, form communities, and become more involved in social and political affairs.

Groups vary considerably in size, from as few as 10 or 12 to as many as 50 or 60. Most meet weekly during the evening, with reflection and discussions centering around biblical themes and materials provided by the local diocese or Fr. Gutiérrez's *Centro de Estudios y Publicaciones* (CEP). Theoretically, equal importance is attached to spiritual growth and the development of a Christian presence in society through acts of social and political solidarity. Communities differ in

⁴⁵ *Pueblos jóvenes* are shanty towns (previously known as *barriadas*), roughly equivalent to Chilean *poblaciones*, in which much of the housing is constructed by their residents (often with light-weight and makeshift materials) and in which few areas are likely to have sewers, running water, or paved streets and sidewalks.

⁴⁶ This is the view of conservative bishops and theologians in Peru (most of whom are highly critical of Fr. Gutiérrez), and of Catholic supporters of the country's right-wing political parties (*Acción Popular*, the *Partido Popular Cristiano*, and Mario Vargas Llosa's *Movimiento Democrático*) as well.

⁴⁷ Many of them appear to believe that certain information in the wrong hands could be harmful to the Church and to its progressive wing in particular.

⁴⁸ Marzal (1972 and 1986) and Gonzalez (1987). The journalist Pásara (1986) and the historian Klaiber (1977 and 1988) are exceptions to this rule, as is Romero (1987 and 1989), a sociologist whose book-length study will appear soon.

the priority they assign to each. Some of them are essentially prayer groups while others function as interlocutors between the active Catholic population and district government and political organizations.

To gather information about the country's Christian communities and to help place them in the appropriate social and ecclesial context, I sought the help of sociologists at the Catholic University in Lima. Together, we designed a purposive sample with quota controls. It consisted of 485 respondents from seven Lima districts with a preponderance of *pueblos jóvenes* and popular neighborhoods. As with the Chilean survey, pastors and pastoral agents were asked to identify and help establish contact with organizational, sacramental, and cultural Catholics from their areas in a ratio of 3 to 2 to 1.⁴⁹

Their estimates proved no more accurate than those of Chilean informants. The final sample included 300 Catholics ("organizational") who belonged to one or more Church sponsored organizations; 40 Catholics ("sacramentals") who attended mass weekly or monthly but did not belong to any such organization; 106 Catholics ("culturals") who did not practice their religion at all, did so only rarely, or did so through participation in rituals (processions, fulfillment of pledges, etc.) or similar social-religious activity; 31 Peruvians ("seculars") who did not consider themselves Catholics at all; and 8 Protestants. In relation to the broader Catholic population, the sample over-represented organizational Catholics and under-represented both sacramental and cultural Catholics. As in the Chilean case, its cultural Catholics were more radical and more politically committed than Catholics generally.

The sample contained more organizational Catholics (62% as opposed to 50%), more cultural Catholics (22% as opposed to 17%), and far fewer sacramentals (8% as opposed to 33%), than the quotas had called for. Unlike the Chilean sample, however, its percentage of males (48%) was generally representative of the population at large. Although it is not meant to represent all Peruvian Catholics, it can help to characterize Catholic activists and to identify the forces that affect them.

On the whole, the religious attitudes of local-level Peruvian Catholics were similar to those of their Chilean counterparts. Most (66.7%) Peruvians thought that Christ was killed because he was either a political or moral revolutionary, almost half (49.6%) thought that the Church should devote its attention to the country's socioeconomic problems (as opposed to orienting the daily lives of the faithful or satisfying their spiritual necessities), and only 12.2% thought that they

⁴⁹ As in Chile, I was advised not to attempt to construct a representative sample. Although Peru was under a democratic government at the time (mid-1987), divisions, controversies, and mistrust abounded within the Church. Most academic and Church people with whom I spoke doubted that Catholics (whether activists or not) living in poorer neighborhoods would answer questions candidly unless given prior assurances by a trusted priest or nun.

should follow the instructions of Church authorities (rather than make their own judgments) in dealing with community problems.

Politically, 87% of the Peruvians in the sample considered themselves leftists, 63% favored a “popular” democracy (as opposed to liberal democracy from which no one was excluded), 71% considered Velasco’s reformist military government to have been the country’s best in recent years, and more than 90.4% favored close ties with “leftist” political parties.

In Peru, however, the different types of Catholics thought differently on these matters. Organizational Catholics held the least progressive views on three of the four religious questions asked.⁵⁰ Sacramental Catholics, on the other hand, were the most progressive on two of the these and cultural Catholics on the other two.⁵¹

Similar patterns emerge with political attitudes.⁵² Peruvian Catholics were uniformly more progressive than Chileans, but organizational Catholics (those most involved with the Church) were less progressive than either sacramental or cultural Catholics.

These patterns may reflect the disproportionately politicized character of the sample’s cultural Catholics. As in Chile, informants were asked to identify cultural Catholics who were also politically committed leftists, and they were socially and politically more involved than the sample’s organizational and sacramental Catholics. They were less involved (40.6% and 70.7%) than sacramental Catholics (57.5% and 72.5%) in neighborhood and survival organizations, but more involved than either organizational or sacramental Catholics in labor unions (31.1% as against 25% and 13.6%) and political organizations (45.3% compared to 27.5% and 16%).

This greater political involvement may be partially responsible for the consistently more progressive views of cultural Catholics. But it cannot account for sacramental Catholics holding more progressive views than organizationals. Moreover, if each of these categories is broken down (as was done with the Chilean sample), the social and political involvement of most (i.e.,

⁵⁰ Three of the questions had were ones asked of the Chileans (the reasons for which Christ was killed, the propriety of the Church’s speaking on economic issues, and Church authority), although the last two were phrased differently. A fourth question, asking whether or not the poor were obliged to love the rich, was also included. For the wording of all questions, see Appendix.

⁵¹ On questions dealing with Christ’s death and Church authority organizational, sacramental, and cultural Catholics scored 2.1 and 1.9, 1.8 and 2.3, and 1.9 and 1.7 respectively. On questions dealing with the economic involvement of the bishops and whether the poor should love the rich, organizationals scored 1.7 and 3.0, sacramentals 1.5 and 2.2, and culturals 1.4 and 2.5.

⁵² Three of the five political questions (political tendency, best regime, and best government) were ones asked of the Chileans. The Peruvians were also asked whether they thought it was better to defend their own class interests or to work for the harmonization of all, and whether or not they approved of collaboration between Catholics and “leftists.”

“lapsed” and traditional) cultural Catholics was not much higher than that of other Catholics, and they remain an appropriate benchmark against which to compare the views of other Catholics.⁵³

Table 4 compares the religious views of the various subgroups of organizational, sacramental, and cultural Catholics. As in previous tables, responses are represented ordinally.

TABLE 4

Religious Attitudes—Peru

| SUBGROUP | Christ's Death (1-3) | Church Authority (1-3) | Economic Involvement (1-3) | Poor Love Rich (1-5) |
|-------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------|
| CEB-Reflection Groups | 2.1 | 1.8 | 1.7 | 3.2 |
| Social Organizations | 2.1 | 2.0 | 1.8 | 2.8 |
| Religious Organizations | 2.1 | 2.1 | 1.7 | 3.4 |
| Regular Sacramentals | 1.9 | 2.4 | 1.4 | 1.8 |
| Occasional Sacramentals | 1.7 | 2.0 | 1.7 | 2.1 |
| Lapsed | 2.0 | 1.6 | 1.4 | 2.6 |
| Traditional | 1.7 | 1.9 | 1.2 | 2.1 |

According to these data, traditional cultural Catholics held the most progressive views on three of these questions, and lapsed culturals were the most progressive on the fourth. In general, however, the views of sacramentals and culturals were quite similar, and substantially more progressive than those of all three organizational subgroups (among whom the members of religious organizations were the least progressive).

The members of Christian communities and reflection groups in Peru showed as little inclination toward radicalism or separatism as did their Chilean counterparts. They held more progressive views on the question of Church authority but were among the least progressive on

⁵³ The extent of political involvement among organizational subgroups ranged from 11.3% to 20.5%. Twenty-four percent of regular sacramentals and 33.3% of occasional sacramentals were involved. The figures for lapsed, traditional (those participating occasionally in processions and fulfillment of promises), and fallen-away Catholics were 41%, 40%, and 75% respectively.

the theologically more substantive issues (“Why was Christ persecuted and put to death?” and “Should the poor love the rich even though the latter may be responsible for their poverty?”).

Somewhat different patterns emerge with respect to political issues (Table 5). Lapsed culturalists and regular sacramentalists held the most progressive attitudes, followed closely by traditional culturalists. Catholics belonging to Christian communities and reflection groups were somewhat in the middle, while occasional sacramentalists and the remaining organizationalists held the least progressive views.

TABLE 5

Political Attitudes—Peru

| SUBGROUPS | Political Tendency (1-3) | Best Governmentt (1-5) | Best Regime (1-4) | Class Interests (1-3) | Collaboration with leftists (1-4) |
|----------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------------|
| CEB-Reflection Groups | 1.2 | 2.0 | 1.5 | 2.4 | 2.0 |
| Social Organizations | 1.2 | 2.1 | 1.6 | 2.5 | 2.0 |
| Religious Organizations | 1.2 | 1.9 | 1.5 | 2.2 | 1.8 |
| Regular Sacramentalists | 1.1 | 1.7 | 1.3 | 2.0 | 2.0 |
| Occasional Sacramentalists | 1.1 | 2.0 | 1.5 | 2.2 | 2.0 |
| Lapsed | 1.0 | 1.9 | 1.4 | 2.2 | 2.2 |
| Traditional | 1.0 | 1.8 | 1.3 | 2.0 | 2.0 |

The views of regular sacramentalists are particularly noteworthy. Among the least progressive Catholics in the Chilean sample, they were among the most progressive in Peru. Also significant was the more progressive character of Peruvian Christian community members and lapsed and traditional culturalists in relation to Chileans from these subcategories.⁵⁴ However, the

⁵⁴ The averages responses of Chilean and Peruvian Christian Community members to the four questions were 2.1 and 1.8 respectively. Those of Chilean and Peruvian “lapsed” culturalists were 2.1 and 1.6. In general, Peruvian attitudes towards politics were similar to the Chilean attitudes except on the issues of best regime, where the discrepancy averaged 0.8. After almost 14 years

overall pattern is the same in each case. The members of Christian communities and reflection groups fell into the middle of the road. Their views were more progressive than those of other organizationals, and less progressive than those of some sacramentals and all cultural.⁵⁵

As in the Chilean case, these data call into question the notion of radicalized Christian communities at odds with institutional authorities, conventional parish structures, and supposedly more conservative sacramental Catholics. Christian community members in Peru were socially and (to a lesser extent) politically committed and held relatively progressive views on many issues. But they were outflanked not only by secular radicals (seen by conservative critics as having corrupted them) but also by cultural Catholics and supposedly more docile rank-and-file Catholics as well. As in the Chilean case, these patterns suggest the possibility of influences coming from outside Catholic organizations and settings, against which the communities may have a moderating or buffering effect.

Looking at the class composition of Catholics, the residential and parish environments in which they live, and the religious leadership and materials to which they have been exposed can help to clarify these matters. Unfortunately, the Peruvian data contain some information on class and sector of residence but little on either parish type or socioeconomic conditions.

Class status exerts even less influence on Catholic attitudes in Peru than in Chile. When the attitudes of organizational Catholics are controlled for class, distinctive patterns emerge on only two of the questions (socioeconomic involvement and Church authority), with workers holding the least progressive positions. Responses among sacramental and cultural Catholics were virtually indistinguishable. Class thus appears to affect religious attitudes only marginally. Catholics in Lima's *pueblos jóvenes* and *barrios populares* held relatively progressive religious and political views, but these did not conform to the pattern implied in the notion of a "popular Church."

The Peruvian sample did not include people living in middle- and upper-class neighborhoods. Its lower- and upper-middle-class elements live together with workers in *pueblos jóvenes* and *barrios populares* whose social history, extent of social consciousness, and levels of current activism differ significantly. These environmental forces appear to have influenced organizational Catholics. Table 6 details the religious views of organizational Catholics living in each of the seven sectors of Lima with large concentrations of *pueblos jóvenes*.

of exclusionary military rule (at the time of the survey), Chilean Catholics were markedly more sympathetic to the notion of a liberal democratic regime than their Peruvian counterparts.

⁵⁵ Oddly enough, regular sacramentals were among the least favorably disposed of Peruvian Catholics to leftist ideas (2.0) and collaboration with the left (2.2). Members of Christian Communities and reflection groups (1.9 and 2.0), members of social organizations (1.8 and 2.0), and all three subcategories of cultural Catholics (1.7 and 1.8, 1.8 and 1.7, and 1.6 and 1.7) all had lower (more progressive) scores.

TABLE 6

Religious Attitudes—Peru

| DISTRICTS | Christ's Death | Church Authority | Economic Involvement | Poor Love Rich |
|-----------------|-------------------|---------------------|-------------------------|-------------------|
| Villa El Sal | 2.1 | 1.8 | 1.8 | 2.8 |
| San Juan de M | 2.1 | 2.1 | 1.6 | 3.7 |
| Villa Ma. del T | 2.1 | 2.0 | 1.9 | 3.4 |
| San Juan de L | 2.0 | 2.4 | 1.8 | 3.2 |
| Carabayllo | 1.8 | 2.0 | 1.8 | 2.9 |
| Independencia | 2.0 | 1.9 | 1.4 | 2.8 |
| Comas 2.2 | 1.6 | 1.7 | 2.8 | |

Residents of Comas and Independencia held more progressive views on three of these questions, while people living in Carabayllo held marginally more progressive views on the fourth. Patterns vary somewhat with regard to political attitudes. Independencia and Comas remained solidly progressive, but residents of Carabayllo, on the other hand, were among the three least progressive politically.

Again, the views of Peruvian organizationals were more progressive than those of Chileans. Of some note, however, are the relatively moderate attitudes of the residents of Villa El Salvador, a *pueblo joven* virtually synonymous with radical political activism, and with progressive elements of the Peruvian Church.

It is possible to identify the parishes with which most Peruvian respondents were affiliated in these areas. Although they cannot be labelled as in the Chilean sample, it will be helpful to look more closely at three of them.

TABLE 7

| Political Attitudes—Peru | | | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------------|
| DISTRICTS | Political Tendency (1-3) | Best Government (1-5) | Best Regime (1-4) | Class Interests (1-3) | Collaboration with leftists (1-4) |
| Villa El Sal | 1.2 | 1.9 | 1.6 | 2.5 | 2.0 |
| San Juan de M | 1.4 | 2.3 | 2.1 | 2.6 | 2.2 |
| Villa Ma. del T | 1.7 | 1.8 | 2.2 | 2.6 | 2.0 |
| San Juan de L | 1.2 | 2.1 | 1.5 | 2.4 | 2.1 |
| Carabayllo | 1.3 | 1.5 | 1.5 | 2.4 | 1.7 |
| Independencia | 1.1 | 1.8 | 1.3 | 2.2 | 1.9 |
| Comas | 1.2 | 1.9 | 1.5 | 2.1 | 2.0 |

Three Parishes

El Señor de los Milagros parish is located in the foothills of Comas, a district on Lima's north side that was invaded and settled by ex-hacienda workers in the late 1950s. Residents named their new settlement after *El Señor de los Milagros*, a popular Peruvian devotional figure.⁵⁶ A parish of the same name was established in 1962 by Canadian priests of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate order, who were assisted by four Dominican sisters, also from Canada. The current pastor is a Peruvian Oblate priest who grew up in the parish and was ordained in 1987.

For most of the period since 1962, two or three priests and seven to ten sisters have ministered to an area with a population of more than 40,000 that has continued to expand. The Oblate Fathers provided a full sacramental ministry, encouraged lay participation in a variety of apostolic groups (Legion of Mary, the *cursoillos* de Cristiandad, etc.), and actively advised and supported neighborhood organizations (often led by their parishioners) in their struggle (with government authorities) to obtain water, sewers, and other basic necessities.

⁵⁶ Massive processions, involving hundreds of thousands of people, are held each year in honor of the Lord of Miracles. The Lord of Miracles is a 16th-century mural depiction of Christ painted by a slave on a Lima prison wall that remained intact through an earthquake that destroyed the rest of the city.

Lay people with leadership potential were encouraged to go through *cursillo* training, and to help form large Christian communities along the lines of the Chilean CEBs in different sectors of the parish. During the late 1980s, more than 200 lay pastoral agents were at work in 13 such communities, each of which sends representatives to the Parish Pastoral Council. Lay men and women routinely conduct liturgies, give catechism classes, visit the sick, provide leadership for the Christian communities, and are authorized by the Archdiocese to perform baptisms.

The area in which the parish is located has been known for its social and political activism since its founding. In terms of living conditions it ranks among the more “prosperous” of Lima’s *pueblo joven* districts, although the areas into which it has expanded in recent years are among the city’s most deprived.⁵⁷ The Northern Cone, and Comas in particular, have been the best organized and most effective in Lima in pressuring the government and providing support for popular causes.⁵⁸ During the government of Morales Bermudez in the late 1970s, it was an area of active mobilization and the scene of frequent clashes between government troops and demonstrators. Since the return of elections and partisan political competition in 1978, it has strongly supported candidates of the United Left.

El Salvador is the “official” parish for Villa El Salvador, a one-time *pueblo joven*, now municipal district, of more than 300,000 inhabitants located on Lima’s desert-like southern coastal plain.⁵⁹ “Villa” was established by the Velasco government in 1971 and has grown from a single sector to an agglomerate of seven sectors, each with its own relatively distinctive social conditions and experience. It has been a highly successful self-development community, thanks to the skills and dedication of the many social activists it has drawn to its cause, its honest and efficient municipal administration, and its amazing network of religious, cultural, and political organizations.

The pastor of El Salvador until the mid-1980s was an American priest of Polish descent who was a good organizer, popular with his people, and adept at dealing with local officials and political types, although not himself socially or politically oriented. As new areas of Villa opened up, sector churches and their networks of satellite chapels (some seven or eight apiece) were established, under the auspices of Maryknoll, St. James the Apostle, and Irish Dominican priests. These priests and the foreign (particularly Spanish) and Peruvian nuns who arrived over the years ranged from moderately conservative to radical in terms of their pastoral orientations.

⁵⁷ Tuesta Soldevilla (1989, p. 17) cites García (1981, p. 127), who gives Comas a relative poverty rating of 5.05 (based on a scale of 8 indicators) as compared to 9.55 for Villa El Salvador and 4.88 for San Juan de Miraflores.

⁵⁸ Between 1980 and 1986, the number of neighborhood and urban mobilizations organized in the Northern Cone (which comprises the districts of Carabaylo, Comas, and Independencia) was 51, compared to 23 for the entire metropolitan area, 21 for the Eastern Cone (San Juan de Lurigancho), and 17 for the Southern Cone (which comprises San Juan de Miraflores, Villa María del Triunfo, and Villa el Salvador). See *Lima en Cifras*, p. 78.

⁵⁹ For an informative article on Villa El Salvador, see Teresa Tovar, “Para entender el movimiento barrial: El caso de Villa El Salvador,” *Páginas*, Vol. XII, No. 85, August 1987, pp. 20-25.

They were less prominent social actors than they might have been because of the large number of government functionaries, lay Catholic activists, and party militants at work in the area. With these groups providing social and community leadership, priests and nuns could concentrate on conventional pastoral activities, i.e., mass, the sacraments, religious education, parish administration, the preparation of catechists, and the promotion of Christian communities and reflection groups.⁶⁰

Christian communities have been one of the vehicles through which the Church has attempted to promote lay involvement in social and political affairs in Villa El Salvador. Left to themselves, however, many residents appear to prefer sacramental Catholicism or the more traditional spirituality of their religious brotherhoods. As of 1988, there were virtually no Christian communities in the first sector, where the main parish is located. In the second, third, and fourth sectors, on the other hand, they have flourished in recent years, and have played an important role in social and political affairs in the district.⁶¹

Since the resumption of electoral politics in 1980, Villa El Salvador has been a bastion of support for the *Izquierda Unida*. It has provided IU candidates with greater backing than any other district, and the IU has led its municipal government since 1983.⁶² This loyalty may be less ideological, however, than an expression of appreciation for a job well done. Working with neighborhood organizations, Villa officials have been very effective at the community level and in obtaining services and resources from the national government.

El Niño Jesús is a large parish in San Juan de Miraflores, also in Lima's Southern Cone. It was established in 1960 by Maryknoll priests, three of whom minister to a population in excess of 100,000 people. It began as a conventional US-style parish operation offering a full assortment of sacramental and apostolic activities from a large multipurpose parish center. Over the years the construction of satellite churches and smaller chapels in the district brought the priests into closer contact with community residents. They continue to celebrate a Sunday mass (attended by an average of 400 people) and other liturgies in the main church. But they now live in small houses or rooms in other parts of the parish, spend most of their time in the satellite churches and chapels, and serve as advisors or spiritual consultants to groups of young people, brotherhoods

⁶⁰ Priests in Villa El Salvador were occasionally approached for their good offices, the loan of Church facilities, or their arbitration of conflicts among local social organizations.

⁶¹ In an interview appearing in the August 1987 issue of *Páginas*, a nun who has worked in Villa since 1977, Sister Nelcida Solozano, describes these communities (similar to the Christian Base Communities in Chile) as coming together as church, maintaining a relationship with one another, and working with cultural or Christian community groups in the popular communities. Typically, she said, their members would be block leaders in their neighborhoods and Confirmation monitors or leaders of reflection groups.

⁶² *Lima en Cifras*, pp. 88-91.

and other traditional organizations, family catechetical groups, and reflection groups and Christian communities.

Most of the priests in El Niño Jesús have been progressive, socially committed men determined to help their people know God, obtain justice, and live peaceful and dignified lives. Their efforts to promote the Christian communities have attracted social and political activists, many of whom have wanted to deepen their faith, inform their activities and commitments, and share with others the religious significance of those commitments.⁶³ The priests have been less successful with other residents. Members of local *hermandades* are often more interested in their own spiritual lives, the once-a-year fiestas they organize, or the prestige that comes with their role in the *hermandad*, than in working on behalf of others. The priests and nuns have learned to be patient, and to work within the context of people's often narrow sentiments and practices, even as they attempt to expose them to new dimensions of the Gospel.

Socially and politically, the area around the parish offers a mix of conditions and orientations. On balance, San Juan de Miraflores is the least impoverished of Lima's seven *pueblo joven* districts. The areas close to the main thoroughfare and regional market are decent, well-serviced lower-middle-class neighborhoods, although conditions in Pamplona Alta, where most recent expansion has taken place, are as bad as any in the city. Politically, the district has favored the candidates of the United Left by narrow margins in municipal elections, but supported Belaúnde in the 1980 presidential election and Alan García in the 1985 election.

Data from districts in which these parishes are located can now be placed in sociopolitical and ecclesial context. El Salvador and El Niño Jesús are the only parishes in their respective districts. There are two parishes in Comas, although by far the greater number of survey respondents live in the area served by El Señor de los Milagros.

In analyzing the data, three aspects will be stressed: the district's general character, the relationship between people's religious and political views, and the political views of Catholics in the various subcategories. If, among involved Catholics in a not very progressive district, the more religiously progressive were also more progressive politically, for example, one might reasonably attribute their progressivism to the work of the priests. If the area were more progressive, on the other hand, there would be less basis for such a conclusion. If, in a more progressive area, those holding the most progressive political views did not hold particularly progressive religious views, it would be reasonable to argue that political attitudes were a function of the environment.

If those with less contact with the Church (e.g., sacramentals) were equally or more progressive politically, on the other hand, one might argue for the impact of the environment, and

⁶³ One priest with whom I spoke stressed the overlap between local ecclesial and social or political activists. At one recent meeting of sector Christians, he said, all but one of the eighteen people attending were community leaders and activists and veterans of more than 10 years of pastoral group activity.

the more so if it were relatively progressive. If those with more contact were also more progressive, differences could be attributed to the pastoral agents, particularly if they were pastoral progressives. Finally, if organizationals and sacramentals were significantly less progressive than culturals, it could be argued that the parish had a moderating effect, and if they were equally progressive, that it was “going with the flow.”

On balance, data from these parishes suggest that attitudes are more the result of the environment than of pastoral orientation. Respondents from San Juan de Miraflores (El Niño Jesús parish) held the least progressive religious and political views. Their average for the three religious questions (Christ’s death, Church authority, and Poor Love Rich) was 2.6. Their average for the five political questions (political tendency, best government, best regime, class interests, and collaboration) was 2.1. Respondents from El Salvador and El Señor de Milagros, on the other hand, had identical averages on religious questions, and differed only slightly, 1.9 as against 1.8, on political questions.

The political views of parish residents in Peru were significantly more progressive than their religious views, indicating that religious views were not very effective in moderating people’s political views. The different correlations between levels of religious and political progressivism, on the other hand, suggest that both religious and political views were being influenced by nonreligious factors.

These relationships become clearer when the views of subcategories within each parish are examined. In the case of Villa El Salvador, Christian community members (2.2), those belonging to social organizations (2.2), and those belonging to religious organizations (2.6) were the least progressive religiously. Regular and occasional sacramentals (1.7 and 1.5 respectively) and rarely cultural Catholics (1.8) were more progressive. Politically, all were more progressive, although the those belonging to religious organizations (1.7) were closer to regular sacramentals (1.5) than were members of Christian communities and reflection groups and social organizations (both 1.9).

On this basis, one could argue that the communities of Villa El Salvador have had a slightly moderating effect on their members’ political views. In fact, the same might be said of El Niño Jesús parish. The members of its social organizations (2.5) and Christian communities and reflection groups (2.8) were less progressive than their Villa El Salvador counterparts, while members of its religious organizations (2.3) were somewhat more so, and those belonging to social organizations were virtually indistinguishable from all others (2.2).⁶⁴

⁶⁴ Thirty-four percent of the interviewees from Villa El Salvador indicated that they were members of Christian communities and reflection groups, as against 24% of those from San Juan de Miraflores and 20% of those from Comas. Their involvement does not appear to have affected their religious and political views in a consistent manner. It may be that these organizations were not equally progressive or did not have the same impact on the religious views of their members.

Unfortunately, there were not enough sacramental Catholics in El Niño Jesús to compare with organizationals, making it more difficult to isolate the impact of Church organizations as a whole. Only those belonging to religious organizations were significantly active (33%) in political parties, but their political views do not appear to have been affected. Levels of political progressiveness, on the other hand, were not high (those of two of the three Chilean parishes were significantly higher), but do not appear to have been affected by parish organizations.

An even clearer case for the importance of the environment, finally, is Comas. There, levels of religious progressiveness were similar to those in the other two parishes, but generally indistinguishable across subcategory lines.⁶⁵ Political views were more progressive, however, although somewhat varied. Occasional (1.5) mass attenders were the most progressive. Regular mass attenders and the members of religious organizations (both 1.6) were next, followed by lapsed cultural (1.7), members of Christian communities and reflection groups (1.7), and those belonging to social organizations (2.0).

The limited correspondence between religious and political views makes it difficult to explain the progressive political views of parishioners of Señor de los Milagros in terms of pastoral orientation. The figures suggest that Church organizations and activities may have had a moderating impact on people's religious views but were less effective in influencing their political views. Although there was significant involvement (more than 25%) in political party activity in only two of the subcategories (lapsed cultural and those belonging to religious organizations), most of the respondents were very active (with levels ranging from 39% to 78%) in area social ("survival") organizations.

Although the political attitudes of organizational, sacramental, and cultural Catholics vary significantly when viewed in the aggregate, they did not vary much within a single district (or parish). When examined separately, the organizational, sacramental, and cultural Catholic residents of Villa El Salvador, San Juan de Miraflores, and Comas differed only marginally in their political attitudes. In the first two districts, the absence of differences may have resulted from the small number of sacramental and cultural Catholics in each.⁶⁶ The evidence for Comas, on the other hand, clearly indicates that something other than Church contact and pastoral style was conditioning people's attitudes.

⁶⁵ The average scores on the religious questions for members of Christian communities and reflection groups, social organizations, religious organizations, for regular and occasional mass attenders, and for rarely cultural Catholics were 2.4, 2.3, 2.2, 2.3, 2.3, and 2.2 respectively.

⁶⁶ Eight sacramentals and nine cultural (of a total of 123) in the case of Villa El Salvador; four sacramentals and two cultural (of a total of 40) in San Juan de Miraflores.

CONCLUSIONS

On balance, Christian communities in both countries were less radical in their theological and political views and activities than most critics and advocates have suggested. Moreover, they appear to owe much of their radicalism to the environments in which they have to operate, and in many instances actually moderate their impact.

In drawing these conclusions, a cautionary note is in order: neither sample is a probability sample and neither was fully successful in filling its initial quotas.⁶⁷ However, the people surveyed do make up a significant component of their respective national Churches: 312 local-level Catholics representing key parishes and communities in greater Santiago and 485 local-level Catholics in the case of Lima. More importantly, because the samples included a substantial number of different sorts of Catholics in each country, valid inferences can be drawn regarding the impact of the variables affecting the views of respondents.

Data regarding rank-and-file Catholics in Chile and Peru point up the difficulty of generalizing about the character and impact of Christian Base Communities and other Church organizations. Although their members held relatively progressive religious and political views, they did not differ greatly from other Church-sponsored organizations, and their character and impact varied with the type of parish and the social environment in which the parish was located.

Church organizations and activities, including Christian communities and reflection groups, exerted an indirectly moderating impact in Dolores parish in Chile (where the external environment was not particularly radical), and in Parrales parish in Chile and in Villa El Salvador in Peru, where social forces and pressures were indeed more radical. In El Niño Jesús parish in Peru, Church activities and organizations blended in with the relatively moderate social environment surrounding them, and it is difficult to identify an impact on the part of the Church as such.

In Cristo Liberador (Chile), Christian communities and other Church organizations were, in fact, as progressive as some observers and critics paint them, and raised even further the level of progressiveness and activism of the its surrounding area. In El Señor de Milagros (Peru), on the other hand, the Christian communities were much like those in the other Peruvian parishes, but do not appear to have deflected or moderated the pressures emanating from the area.

⁶⁷ The Chilean sample was deficient in its number of female respondents, and both samples had fewer sacramental Catholics than were initially hoped for. Accordingly, neither data set can be used as a basis on which to generalize about Christian community activists in these countries.

In recent years, the Vatican has taken steps to rein in what it has perceived to be the sectarian tendencies of some local-level Church organizations in Latin America. The data indicate that in two of the area's more progressive national churches, however, the members of these organizations were often the most spiritually inclined, the closest and most loyal to the positions of the bishops, and among the least likely to be involved in social and political movements. Thus, neither Rome's fears nor the hopes of scholars like Berryman, Houtart, and Lernoux, who look for radical base groups to either convert the bishops or establish a separate, more leftist Church, appear justified.

It would also be wrong to conclude,⁶⁸ however, that Catholic culture breeds either docile or conservative attitudes among the laity. Even the Catholics most intensely involved with the organizational life of the Church hold relatively progressive religious and political attitudes. In line with resolutions adopted at the Vatican II, Medellín, and Puebla conferences, they accept their responsibilities for working for social justice in the world, respecting the civil and political rights of all, and collaborating with persons of good will, regardless of ideological differences, for the common good.

The data rather support those scholars (Bruneau, Levine, Mainwaring, and Smith) who argue that religious values cut across those of class and exert a generally moderating but still progressive influence on people conditioned and in some (though by no means all) cases radicalized by secular social experience. At the same time, however, these generalizations need to be adjusted to accommodate case-specific factors such as the degree of social and political mobilization in local neighborhoods over the last 10 to 15 years; the social and religious backgrounds of people with considerable exposure to Catholic values and institutions and people with little or none; and types of leadership in the local church. These contextual factors help to shape Catholic lay attitudes, and need to be taken into account.

⁶⁸ As have Gismondi, Grigulevich, Langton, Maduro, Mutchler, and Williams.

APPENDIX

TABLES 1 and 3

Christ's death—This open question asked: “Why do you think Christ was persecuted and killed?” Answers that referred to Christ's role as a political leader or as someone opposed to the system of domination of his time are considered as the most progressive, those referring to his desire to “save us” as the least.

Church authority—This question asked: “In the great moral decisions of your life, do you take more into account your own conscience or the position of the Catholic Church?”

Economic involvement—This closed question asked: “Are you more or less in agreement with the fact that the bishops of the Catholic Church take positions (*se pronuncian*) on the government's economic policy?” Answers indicating unqualified agreement are considered the most progressive.

Close to bishops—This question asked: “There are people who feel very close to the orientation that the bishops as a whole are giving to the Chilean Church, and others who feel very distant from it. Could you tell me whether you feel closer to or further away from that orientation?” As the Church became more cautious and conservative in the period since 1985, answers indicating distance are considered the more progressive.

Priest or bishop—This closed question asked: “If there were a difference in pastoral orientation between the priest in charge of your parish or community and the bishops, which of those orientations would you follow?”

TABLE 2

Political tendency—This open question asked: “Do you sympathize with a particular political tendency or political party? Which?” Very few people identified a particular party. Answers indicating the left (as opposed to the center-left, center, center-right, and right) are considered more progressive.

Best government—This question asked respondents to choose the best government of the last 35 years (from among the Ibañez, Alessandri, Frei, Allende, and Pinochet governments). Answers indicating the Allende government are considered the most progressive.

Best regime—This closed question asked the respondent to choose the most appropriate regime for the country from among the following alternatives: a military regime, a civil government that excludes extremists and undemocratic groups, a civil government that excludes no one, or a civil government that excludes the rich. Answers preferring the last of these are considered the most progressive.

Political violence—This question asked: “Do you justify the use of violence as a means of political action?” The alternatives were “yes,” “yes, as a last resort,” “yes, when one’s adversaries do,” and “never.” Answers indicating an unqualified yes, are considered the most progressive.

Collaboration—This question asked: “Do you agree that there should be collaborative activities (*actividades conjuntas*) between Catholics and Marxists?”

TABLES 4 and 6

Christ's death—This open question asked: “Why do you think Christ was persecuted and killed?” Answers that referred to Christ's role as a political leader or as someone opposed to the system of domination of his time are considered as the most progressive, those referring to his desire to “save us” as the least.

Church authority—This question asked: “Do you think a person should accept or comply with Church teachings (*instrucciones*) even if (s)he disagrees with them?” The answer “no” was considered more progressive, “yes” less.

Economic involvement—This closed question asked: “Of the following Church activities, which do you think should be accorded the greatest importance today in Peru?” Those choosing “concern for the country's grave socioeconomic problems” are considered the most progressive, those choosing “satisfy the spiritual necessities of the Catholic population” the least.

Poor love rich—This open question asked: “Given that Christ said that we should love one another, do you think that the poor should love the rich?” Answers that said no, using ideological justification, are considered the most progressive, those saying yes, because God said so, the least.

TABLES 5 and 7

Political tendency—This open question asked: “With what political tendency do you sympathize the most?” Answers indicating the left are considered the most progressive, those indicating the right, the least.

Best government—This question asked respondents to choose the best government of the last 20 years (from among the Velasco, Morales Bermudez, Belaúnde, and García governments). Those indicating none are considered the most progressive, Velasco, the next most progressive, and Morales Bermudez the least.

Best regime—This closed question asked the respondent to choose the most appropriate regime for the country from among the following alternatives: a military regime, a civil government that excluded violent or undemocratic groups, a pluralistic democratic government that excluded no one, or a popular or socialist. Answers preferring the popular or socialist democracy are considered the most progressive.

Class interests—This question asked: “Do you think that one ought to defend the interests of one’s own class or accommodate the interests of all social classes?” Answers indicating the former are considered the most progressive, those indicating the latter, the least.

Collaboration—This question asked: “Do you agree that there should be collaborative activities (*actividades conjuntas*) between Catholics and leftists?”

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Antoncich, S.J. Ricardo. 1981. "Situación de la Iglesia Popular in el Perú" in CELAM, *Fe y política: Actualidad del pensamiento social cristiano en América Latina*. Bogotá: Ediciones Paulinas.
- Berryman, Phillip. 1984. *The Religious Roots of Rebellion*. Maryknoll, Orbis Books.
- _____. Forthcoming. *The Churches of Central America in the 1980s*.
- Bruneau, Thomas. 1982. *The Church in Brazil*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- _____ and W.H. Hewitt. 1989. "Patterns of Church Influence in Brazil's Political Transition," *Comparative Politics*, Vol. 22, October.
- Castillo, Fernando, et al. 1983. *La Iglesia de los Pobres en América Latina*. Santiago: ECO-SEPADE.
- _____. 1986. *Iglesia liberadora y política*. Eco: Santiago.
- CELAM (Consejo Episcopal Latinoamericana). 1984. *Otra iglesia en la base?* Bogotá.
- Conferencia Episcopal Chilena. 1989. "Carta a las comunidades de base" in *CELAM* (boletín), no. 229, June.
- Conferencia Episcopal Peruana. 1989. *Documentos de la Conferencia Episcopal Peruana, 1979-1989*. Lima: Asociación "Vida y Espiritualidad."
- Constable, Pamela and Arturo Valenzuela. 1990. *A Nation of Enemies*. New York: Norton.
- Correa, Enrique and José Antonio Viera-Gallo. 1986. *Iglesia y Dictadura*. Santiago: CESOC.
- Garretón, M.A. 1987. *Reconstruir la política: Transición y consolidación democrática en Chile*. Santiago: Editorial Andante.
- Gismondi, Michael. 1986. "Transformations in the Holy: Religious Resistance and Hegemonic Struggles in the Nicaraguan Revolution," *Latin American Perspectives*, Vol. 13, no. 3, Summer.
- Gonzalez Martinez, J.L., S.J. 1987 *La Religión Popular en el Perú*. Cusco: Instituto de Pastoral Andina.
- Hewitt, W.E. 1986. "Strategies for Social Change Employed by Comunidades Eclesiais de Base (CEBs) in the Archdiocese of São Paulo," *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, Vol. 25, No. 1, March.

- Houtart, François, and Genéviève Lermecinier. 1982. *Conciencia religiosa y conciencia colectiva en América Central*. Ottignies: Centre Tricontinental.
- Klaiber, Jeffrey, S.J. 1977. *Religion and Revolution in Peru*. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press.
- _____. 1988. *La Iglesia en el Perú*. Lima: Pontificia Universidad Católica Fondo Editorial.
- Lagos Schuffeneger, Humberto and Arturo Chacón Herrera. *Los evangélicos en Chile: Una lectura sociológica*. Concepcion: Ediciones Literatura Americana Reunida.
- Langton, Kenneth. 1986. "The Church, Social Consciousness, and Protest," *Comparative Political Studies* (19), October.
- Lernoux, Penny. 1980. *The Cry of the People*. New York: Doubleday.
- _____. 1989. *People of God: The Struggle for World Catholicism*. New Jersey: Penguin.
- Levine, Daniel. 1981. *Religion and Politics in Latin America: The Catholic Church in Venezuela and Colombia*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- _____. Forthcoming. *Approaches to Base Communities in Venezuela and Colombia. Lima en Cifras*. 1989. Lima: CIDAP.
- Macaulay, Michael. 1972. "Ideological Change and Internal Cleavages in the Peruvian Church: Change, Status Quo and the Priest: the Case of ONIS," Ph.D. dissertation, University of Notre Dame.
- Maduro, Otto. 1982. *Religion and Social Conflicts*. Maryknoll: Orbis Books.
- Mainwaring, Scott. 1986. *The Catholic Church and Politics in Brazil, 1916-1985*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Maloney, Thomas. 1978. "The Catholic Church and the Peruvian Revolution: Resource Exchange in an Authoritarian Setting," Ph.D. dissertation, University of Texas.
- Marzal, Manuel, S.J. 1972. "La religiosidad en el Perú" in *La Iglesia en el Perú*, April.
- _____. 1986. *Historia de la antropología indigenista: México y Perú*, second edition. Lima: Pontificia Universidad Católica.
- Mooney, Mary H. 1976. "The Role of the Church in Peruvian Political Development," MA thesis, University of Windsor, Ontario.
- Mutchler, David. 1971. *The Church as a Political Factor in Latin America, with Particular Reference to Colombia and Chile*. New York: Praeger.

- Pásara, Luis. 1986. *Radicalización y conflicto en la Iglesia peruana*. Lima: Ediciones El Virrey.
- _____. 1989. "The Church in Peru" in S. Mainwaring and A. Wilde (eds.), *The Progressive Church in Latin America*. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press.
- Politzer, Patricia. 1989. *La Ira de Pedro y los otros*. Santiago: Planeta.
- Puga, Josefina. 1985. *La imagen del sacerdote en el Gran Santiago*. Santiago: CISOC.
- Romero, Catalina. 1987. *Iglesia en el Perú: Compromiso y renovación, 1958-1984*. Lima: Instituto Bartolomé de las Casas.
- _____. 1989. "The Church in Peru" in S. Mainwaring and A. Wilde (eds.), *The Progressive Church in Latin America*. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press.
- Smith, Brian. 1982. *The Church and Politics in Chile*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Stoll, David. 1990. *Is Latin America Turning Protestant?* Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Tovar, Teresa. 1987. "Para entender el movimiento barrial: El caso de Villa El Salvador," *Páginas*, Vol. XII, no. 85, August.
- Tuesta Soldevilla, Fernando. 1989. *Pobreza urbana y cambios electorales en Lima*. Lima: DESCO.
- Valdivieso, Gabriel. 1989. *Comunidades de Base*. Santiago: CISOC.
- Van Dorp, Patricia. 1985. *Religiosidad en el Gran Santiago, 1985*. Santiago: CISOC.
- Warwick, David P. and Charles A. Lininger. 1975. *The Sample Survey: Theory and Practice*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Williams, Phillip. 1989. *The Catholic Church and Politics in Nicaragua and Costa Rica*. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press.